

# Monastic and Political Culture in the Late Period of the Northern Dynasties: ‘National’ Monasteries, Political Districts, and Battle Sites<sup>\*</sup>

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**Abstract:** During the medieval period, a system of official temples was established in Chinese history, with the imperial court assigning temple quotas to the various states of the country, most typically the Dayun Temples during the reign of Wu Zetian 武則天 (r. 690–705), the Zhongxing 中興 or Longxing 龍興 Temples during the reign of Emperor Zhongzong 中宗, and the Kaiyuan 開元 Temples during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–756). This landscape of institutional temples, built upon the dynastic system of local government, served both the functions of a religious institution and a local administrative facility, and became a new cultural phenomenon that profoundly influenced both the Korean Peninsula and Japan. Its origins are often traced back to the Daxingguo Temple 大興國寺 system, which was established in the Daxingguo Monasteries in ‘the forty-five provinces he toured before ascension’ after the reign of Emperor Wen of the Sui Dynasty 隋文帝. However, the institutional and cultural influences of the Eastern Wei (534–550) and Northern Qi (550–577), as well as the Western Wei (535–557) and Northern Zhou (557–581), can be seen in most of the many systemic imperial

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<sup>\*</sup> This is an English version of my article previously published in Japanese. See Wei, ‘Hokuchō banki no jiin to seiji bunka: Kokutera, gyōseikaku to senjō’.

monastic initiatives of the Sui period, including the Daxingguo Temple. This is precisely the question that this paper seeks to address: how did this monastic landscape, which was a combination of both a religious institution and a local administrative facility, come about? Did it have an earlier political and institutional cultural origin? And what kind of relationship between religion and the state did it embody?

**Keywords:** official temples (*guansi* 官寺), national temples (*guosi* 國寺), Wu Zetian 武則天, Emperor Zhongzong of the Tang 唐中宗, Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang 唐玄宗, Emperor Wen of the Sui 隋文帝, Dayun Temple 大雲寺, Zhongxing Temple 中興寺, Longxing Temple 龍興寺, Kaiyuan Temples 開元寺, Daxingguo Temple 大興國寺

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During the medieval period in China, a new monastic landscape appeared in which the imperial court standardised monasteries and distributed them throughout the provinces. The most classic examples of this are Empress Wu Zetian's 武則天 (624–705, r. 690–705) construction of Dayun Monasteries 大雲寺 in the first year of Zaichu 載初 (690), Tang Emperor Zhongzong's 中宗 (656–710, r. 683–684, 705–710) Zhongxing (Longxing) Monasteries 中(龍)興寺 in the first year of Shenglong 神龍 (705), and Tang Emperor Xuanzong's 玄宗 (685–762, r. 712–756) Kaiyuan Monasteries 開元寺 in the twenty-sixth year of Kaiyuan 開元 (738).<sup>1</sup> This kind of monastic system that bears strong 'institutionalised' 制度 characteristics was itself established upon the system of local governmental districts within the dynastic nation state. These monasteries have dual functions of being both religious sites and local official installations. This

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<sup>1</sup> 'Zetian huanghou ji' 則天皇后紀 [Era of Empress Zetian], *Jiu Tangshu* 6.121. 'Si' 寺 [Monasteries], *Tang huiyao* 48.847, 850.

was a new phenomenon in both Buddhist and Chinese political histories.<sup>2</sup>

As for the origins of this monastic system, the scholarly community usually traces it back to Sui Emperor Wen 隋文帝 (541–604, r. 581–604), who after ascending the throne built Daxingguo Monasteries 大興國寺 (Great Revitalising the Nation Monasteries) in ‘the forty-five provinces he toured before ascension’ (龍潛所經四十五州).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This kind of monastic system also influenced the Korean peninsula and Japan. The Japanese Emperor Shōmu 聖武 (r. 724–749) issued a decree in the thirteenth year of Tenpyō 天平 (741) for the construction of all the locally built Konkōmyō shitennō gokoku no tera (Ch. Jinguangming Si tianwang huguo si) 金光明四天王護國寺 (Golden Light Four Heavenly Kings Monasteries for the Protection of the Nation; Provincial Monasteries [*kokubunji* 國分寺]), and Hokke metsuzai no tera (Ch. Fahua miezui si) 法華滅罪寺 (Dharma Flower Destruction of Transgression Monasteries; Provincial Nunneries [*kokubunniji* 國分尼寺]). The Korean tenth-century Goryeo dynasty constructed ‘supplementary monasteries’ (*pibo-sa* 裨補寺) and ‘merit providing monasteries’ (*jabog-sa* 資福寺), both of which are related to this. Directly due to the relationship with provincial monasteries, Japanese scholarship somewhat earlier began to notice this kind of monastic system and its influence. Representative studies include: Tsukamoto, ‘Kokubunji to Zui Tō no bukkyō seisaku narabini kanji’; Michibata, *Tōdai bukkyōshi no kenkyū*, 16–24. There are different terms for this kind of monastic system within scholarship, such as ‘official monasteries’ (*guansi* 官寺), ‘national monasteries’ (*guosi* 國寺), and so forth. For studies that sort out their history, refer to Nie, *Tangdai fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 5–16. This book is also the most recent study concerning this issue, and has a very detailed discussion on the origins, formation, operation, influence, and so forth, of Tang dynasty official monasteries. The present study’s use of the term “national” monasteries’ (‘國’寺) is from the abbreviation of Daxingguo Monastery 大興國寺 and Dingguo Monastery 定國寺, but is not a definition based on the nature of this kind of monastery.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Gantong xia: Shi Daomi zhuan’ 感通下·釋道密傳 [Supernatural Powers, Part Three: Biography of Shi Daomi], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 28.1084. As we shall discuss later, there are clear discrepancies between the way in which Daxingguo Monastery and Dayun Monastery were set up, and the range of ‘the provinces’ (諸州). Therefore, there is some scholarly debate as to whether or not Daxingguo

Furthermore, if we use ‘systematisation’ (體系性) as a line of reflection, we discover that measures for the construction of some other monasteries at the time of Sui Emperor Wen are also strongly correlated. We see this through Emperor Wen constructing monasteries throughout the mountains of Wuyue 五嶽, setting up monasteries at the ‘four places of travel’ (行幸四處, Suizhou 隋州, Xiangzhou 襄州, Jingzhou 荊州, and Bingzhou 并州) of his father Yang Zhong 楊忠 (507–568) when he was still alive, building a monastery at the battle site of Xiangzhou 相州 where Yuchi Jiong 尉遲迥 (516–580) was defeated, as well as distributing relics and erecting stūpas for offerings in various provinces during the Renshou 仁壽 period (601–604).<sup>4</sup> Most of these measures also have strong features of ‘systematisation’. Although the monastery built at the battle site of Xiangzhou was just a single location, it became the source for Tang Emperor Li Shimin 李世民 (Tang Taizong 唐太宗 [599–649, r. 626–649]) to simultaneously erect monasteries at seven battle sites in the early Tang.<sup>5</sup>

‘Systematisation’ in constructing monasteries, however, did not start with Sui Emperor Wen. Following the continual excavation and discovery of stone inscriptions and historical materials in the last few years, numerous ‘Dingguo Monasteries’ 定國寺 (Settling the Nation Monasteries) from the Eastern Wei 東魏 and Northern Qi 北齊 periods have surfaced. There were already measures connected with building monasteries on past battle sites early on, during the period of Gao Huan 高歡 (496–547) and Yuwen Tai 宇文泰 (507–556). This gives us cause to ponder: just what were the origins of monastic systems that had functions of both religious sites and political offices? Were there even earlier origins in institutions, practices, or cultures? Just what kind of relationship between Buddhist religious faith and the imperial state did they display? This present study will attempt to examine these questions.

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Monastery was the source for the institutional regulations of Dayun Monastery. See Nie, *Tangdai Fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 20–44.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Yijing Dasui’ 譯經大隋 [Sūtra Translators of the Great Sui], *Lidai sanbao ji*, T no. 2034, 49: 12.107–08.

<sup>5</sup> Lei, ‘Cong “Jinguan” dao fosi’.

## 1. Daxingguo Monasteries in the Sui Dynasty and Dingguo Monasteries in the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi

The Dayun Monasteries, Zhongxing (Longxing) Monasteries, and Kaiyuan monasteries have three special features: (1) they were constructed at a single time by decree from the imperial court; (2) they have the same monastery names; and (3) they were distributed across the top tier of governmental districts (the provinces 諸州). Wu Zetian took a statement in the apocryphal text *Dayun jing* 大雲經 [Great Cloud Sūtra]—‘It is declared in the matter of the divine empress receiving the mandate of heaven’ (盛言神皇受命之事)<sup>6</sup>—as an opportunity to construct Dayun Monasteries in all the provinces within the land. Dayun Monasteries were the earliest to possess all these three essential features simultaneously which had great significance for their instigation. Later, the Zhongxing (Longxing) Monasteries and Kaiyuan Monasteries all took the Dayun Monasteries as their basic model.

Before building the Dayun Monasteries, Tang Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (628–683, r. 649–683) had once already undertaken a program to construct monasteries in the provinces during the first year of Qianfeng 乾封 (667). After Gaozong made sacrifices to heaven and earth at Mount Tai 泰山, in that very year, ‘a lucky star gave an auspicious sign’ (有景星垂象), and so ‘a regulation was made that monasteries were to be constructed in the provinces, to be named after the auspicious star’ (制諸州置寺, 仍景星爲名).<sup>7</sup> There are discrepancies in the textual sources as to whether this occasion wherein ‘monasteries were to be constructed in the provinces’ (諸州置寺) was a kind of standardised monastic naming. Nie Shunxin 聶順新 thinks that in the construction of these monasteries, each province named their monasteries individually after distinctly different auspicious signs, ‘according to the auspicious sign, different names were applied’ (隨有嘉祥, 用題厥目)—and so this was not a kind of standardised

<sup>6</sup> *Jiu Tangshu* 6.121.

<sup>7</sup> Lu Cangyong 盧藏用 (664?–713?), ‘Rongzhou Jingxing si beiming’ 容州景星寺碑銘 [Rongzhou Jingxing Monastery Stele], *Quan Tangwen* 238.2407.

monastic naming for all monasteries.<sup>8</sup> Whatever the actual case, the reason for these ‘monasteries to be constructed in the provinces’ was connected to auspicious omens. Wu Zetian’s use of the apocryphal *Dayun jing* during her transition to power was also, in fact, a kind of special political omen. The construction of the Dayun Monasteries can be seen as an extension and development of Gaozong’s practice of ‘monasteries to be constructed in the provinces’, during the second year of Qianfeng 乾封 era (668).

Going even further back in time in search of origins, we find the Daxingguo Monasteries of the Sui Dynasty, which were constructed in the ‘forty-five provinces’ (四十五州) that Sui Emperor Wen had toured before he became the emperor. ‘Shi Daomi zhuan’ 釋道密傳 [Biography of Shi Daomi] in the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 [Extended Biographies of Eminent Monastics] states:

Soon, there was a decree to send relics to Daxingguo Monastery in Tongzhou. The monastery is the place where Emperor Wen was born, originally the foundation of Banruo Nunnery. The emperor was born at that monastery on the thirteenth day of the sixth month of the seventh year of Datong (541), during the Northern Wei. ... Later, the emperor came from the east of Mount [Yao] and became the son of heaven, revitalising Buddhism, just as the nun [Zhixian] prophesised. On ascending to the throne, whenever he gathered his ministers in casual conversation he reminisced about his mentor [Zhixian]. ... He ordered the court historian Wang Shao to compose a biography of the nun [Zhixian]. The forty-five provinces he toured before ascension all became Daxingguo Monasteries at that time, and because of this Banruo [Nunnery] was renamed as one of them. 尋下敕召送舍利於同州大興國寺。寺即文帝所生之地，其處本基般若尼寺也。帝以後魏大統七年六月十三日，生於此寺中。.....帝後果自山東入為天子，重興佛法，皆如尼言。及登位後，每顧群臣追念阿闍梨，以為口實。.....乃命史官王劭為尼作傳，其龍潛所經四十五州，皆悉同時為大興國寺，因改般若為其一焉。<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Nie, *Tangdai Fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 45–59.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Gantong xia: Shi Daomi zhuan’, *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 28.1083–84. Similar

Among the forty-five Daxingguo Monasteries, those presently extant for examination include at least the nine sites of Tongzhou 同州, Bingzhou 并州, Jingzhou 荊州, Suizhou 隋州, Xiangzhou 襄州, Dengzhou 鄧州, Shanzhou 陝州, Jingzhou 涇州, and Guozhou 虢州. Some of the monastery steles can be seen in epigraphic sources, such as in three Sui dynasty Daxingguo Monastery steles in fascicle three of Zhao Mingcheng's 趙明誠 (1181–1129) *Jinshi lu* 金石錄 [Epigraphic Records].<sup>10</sup> The first of these is the stele of Daxingguo Monastery in Xiangzhou, with the text composed by Li Delin 李德林 (532–592), and written by Ding Daohu 丁道護 (sixth c.), constructed in the first month of the sixth year of Kaihuang 開皇 (586). The second is the stele at Daxingguo Monastery in Jingzhou 涇州, composed by Li Delin, and erected in the twelfth month of the tenth year of Kaihuang (590). The third is just a fragment with the title 'Sui, Daxingguo si bei' 隋大興國寺碑 [Sui Daxingguo Monastery Stele], but lacking information on the location and date. Apart from these, 'Baoke congbian' 寶刻叢編 [Edited Collection of Treasured Inscriptions], fascicle ten, refers to 'Fangbei lu' 訪碑錄 [Records of Stele Visits], which mentions that at the Sui dynasty Daxingguo Monastery in Tongzhou there was a stele composed by Li Delin and written by Zhang Xiaozheng 張孝徵 (sixth century), erected in the fourth year of Kaihuang (584).<sup>11</sup> That the monastery in Tongzhou was constructed in the fourth year of Kaihuang (584) can also be seen in Falin's 法琳 (572–640) *Bianzheng lun* 辨正論 [Treatise on Distinguishing What is Right], which serves as further evidence along with the stele inscription itself.<sup>12</sup> It is worth noting that all of these Daxingguo Monastery steles were composed by Li Delin, making them obviously the same base text, but just with different inscribers at each location when they were erected. However, it is odd that the years in which each of the steles were put up are not the same, with a differ-

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records are also seen in *Ji gujin Fo Dao lunheng*, T no. 2104, 52: 1.379.

<sup>10</sup> Jin, colla. and annot., *Jinshi lu jiaozheng* 3.43, 44, 47.

<sup>11</sup> *SKSLXB*, Series 1, vol. 24: 18261.

<sup>12</sup> 'Shidai fengfo shangpian disan' 十代奉佛上篇第三 [Ten Generations of Serving the Buddha, Part One, Section Three], *Bianzheng lun*, T no. 2110, 52: 3.508.

ence of six or seven years between them. This makes us suspect that the Daxingguo Monasteries in the forty-five provinces could not have all been built at exactly the same time, but gradually over a period of years. In that time frame, the earliest should have been when Banruo Nunnery in Tongzhou had its name changed to Daxingguo Monastery. This monastery was originally the old residence of Yang Zhong 楊忠 (507–568) and birthplace of Yang Jian 楊堅 (541–604), with the phrase ‘before ascension’ (龍潛, literally, nascent dragon) being of particular significance.

Sui Emperor Wen’s actions concerning Buddhism after he took the throne, such as building monasteries in the Wuyue mountains, at four locations for his father, and at the battle site of Xiangzhou, as well as distributing relics throughout the land (among other monastery constructions), can be seen in decrees preserved in textual sources such as the *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶紀 [Chronological Record of the Three Jewels] and the *Guang Hongming ji* 廣弘明集 [Vast Collection on Propagation and Clarification], making us quite certain about the dates involved. It is only for the matter of constructing Daxingguo Monasteries in ‘the forty-five provinces he toured before ascension’ that we have a complete absence of records of decrees.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, the information provided in the pres-

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<sup>13</sup> Stanley Weinstein fixed the decree for building Daxingguo Monasteries in the forty-five provinces Sui Emperor Wen toured before his ascension to the fifth year of Kaihuang 開皇 era (585) (Weinstein, *Tangdai Fojiao*, 4). Nie Shunxin approved this claim (Nie, *Tangdai Fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 30–32). The main evidence for this is the explanation provided by Falin. It first mentions the construction of a Daxingguo Monastery in the fourth year of Kaihuang era (584): ‘Also, the Founding Emperor previously resided in Suizhou, and constructed Daxingguo Monastery’ (又以太祖往任隋州, 亦造大興國寺). *Bianzheng lun*, T no. 2110, 52: 3.509a1–2. He then continues by detailing events of the fifth year of Kaihuang era (585) and says: ‘From the days before his ascension, in those places where he had toured, the forty-five provinces, all had a Daxingguo Monastery constructed there’ (始龍潛之日, 所經行處, 四十五州, 皆造大興國寺). *Bianzheng lun*, T no. 2110, 52: 3.509a24–25. But in fact, Falin does not state whether Sui Emperor Wen issued a decree ordering the construction of these monasteries at the



ently extant sources is just too sparse, and so this point still requires further confirmation.

The commonality among these Daxingguo Monasteries is the phrase, ‘he toured before ascension’. Some of these Daxingguo Monasteries have a clearer connection to Sui Emperor Wen. For example, the Daxingguo Monastery in Shanzhou is ‘the birthplace of the emperor’s deceased father [Yang Zhong], therefore a monastery was constructed and a pagoda built there in order to show gratitude for the predestined relationship’ (皇考武元本生處也, 故置寺建塔, 仰謝昔緣).<sup>14</sup> Another example is that of Daxingguo Monastery in Xiangzhou, which was formerly Upper Fenglin Monastery 上鳳林寺, first constructed in the Liang dynasty (502–557):

In the time before Emperor Wen’s ascension, he would go [to Shangfenglin Monastery] to worship, praying for support and protection. After ascending to the precious throne, he recalled his past blessings, and went annually to the monastery to make offerings, changing its name to Daxingguo Monastery. 文帝龍潛之日, 因往禮拜, 乞願弘護, 及踐寶位, 追惟往福, 歲常就寺廣設供養, 仍又改爲大興國寺.<sup>15</sup>

Daxingguo Monastery in Jingzhou 荊州 was also considered one of the religious sites that he toured before his ascension:

In the past when the Sui Emperor was prime minister, he had cause to visit this monastery, where he encountered a monk, with whom he developed a deep connection. He was unsophisticated at the

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forty-five provinces where he had toured before his reign. As stated above, there is a great discrepancy in the years in which the steles of each of these Daxingguo Monasteries were erected. If each province was acting on the order of the same decree in constructing these monasteries, it would be reasonable to think that there would not be such a difference in the times of their completion.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Gantong xia: Shi Daolang zhuan’ 感通下·釋法朗傳 [Supernatural Powers, Part Three: Biography of Shi Daolang], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 28.1108.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Gantong xia: Shi Mingdan zhuan’ 感通下·釋明誕傳 [Supernatural Powers, Part Three: Biography of Shi Mingdan], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 28.1088.

time, and could not fathom what [the monk] said to him. When he became emperor, he recalled the encounter and understood its meaning. He gave an order to bring [the monk] to him, but he had already passed away. He issued a decree to restore his monastery and renovate his quarters, and it was for this reason that there were the epithets ‘revitalising the nation’ and ‘nascent dragon’. These came from the edict and intention of the emperor. 昔者隋高作相，因過此寺，遇一沙門，深相結納，當時器重，不測其言。及龍飛之後，追憶舊旨，下詔徵之，其身已逝。敕乃營其住寺，雕其舊房，故有‘興國’‘龍潛’之美號也。並出自綸言，帝之別意。<sup>16</sup>

The Daxingguo Monasteries in Xiangzhou and Jingzhou were the same as that in Tongzhou, in that the monasteries already existed there previously. Sui Emperor Wen had previously visited the monasteries in both of these places, and after ascension he ‘recalled his past blessings’ (追惟往福) and ‘recalled the encounter and understood its meaning’ (追憶舊旨), changing them to become Daxingguo Monasteries. Unfortunately, due to imprecision in monastic biography records, we still cannot be certain exactly when Yang Jian visited these locations. For Daxingguo Monastery in Jingzhou, Yang Jian ‘was prime minister’ (作相) in the second year of Daxiang 大象 (580) after the death of Emperor Xuan 宣帝 (559–580, r. 578–579). After this, the Sui dynasty quickly replaced the Zhou, and Yang would never again leave the city of Chang’an 長安. Therefore, there is clearly a problem here with the records in the monastic biographies. After Zhou Emperor Wu 周武 (543–578, r. 560–678) took the throne, Yang Jian once acted as the Prefect (*cishi* 刺史) of Suizhou. In the Jiande 建德 period (572–577), he led the navy to ‘break the [Northern] Qi army at Heqiao’ (破齊師於河橋), and later followed Zhou Emperor Wu in pacifying the Qi. There, together with Yuwen Xian 宇文憲 (544–578), he ‘defeated the Rencheng Prince, Gao Kai (?–577), in Jizhou, and was bestowed the position of Commander-in-Chief (*zongguan* 總管) of Dingzhou’ (破齊任城王高錯於冀

<sup>16</sup> ‘Yijie liu: Shi Huizui zhuan’ 義解六·釋慧最傳 [Interpreters, Part Six: Biography of Shi Huizui], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 10.363.

州, 除定州總管). Later still, he served as Commander-in-Chief of Bozhou 亳州.<sup>17</sup> In the second year of Daxiang 大象 era (580) he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of Yangzhou 揚州, but never went there to actually take up the role. All of this is to say, from just these historical records, Sui Emperor Wen did not have many positions of responsibility in the provinces and regions. If we take those provinces that he ‘toured’ (途經) in the sense of either taking up positions or on military expeditions, considering those provinces where Daxingguo Monasteries were constructed, we may still be left with Puzhou 蒲州, Jinzhou 晉州, Xiangzhou 相州, Huazhou 滑州, Zhengzhou 鄭州, Luoshou 洛州, and Bianzhou 汴州.

A point that provokes interest is that after Sui Emperor Wen took the throne, it seems he also established a Xingguo xuantan 興國玄壇 (Revitalising the Nation Altar to the Mysteries). The *Da Tang chuanyue qiju zhu* 大唐創業起居注 [Notes to the History of the Founding of the Great Tang], fascicle one, records that in the sixth month of the thirteenth year of Daye 大業 (617):

On the day *bingshen*, the Turkic Pillar of State, Kang Qiaoli, and others, arrived on horse, and resided in the Xingguo xuantan that was constructed to the east of the city. When Qiaoli saw the image of the Venerable Sovereign, he prostrated to it. When the Daoist Master Jia Mao saw this, he said to fellow townsman Wen Yanjian: ‘The Turks have come to visit the Lord of the Tang, but first [they] pay respects to the Venerable Sovereign. It could be said that they are not remiss in observing protocol of in terms of senior and junior ranks. If they have not been sent here by the gods, how would these people know such rules of etiquette?’ 丙申, 突厥柱國康鞘利等并馬而至, 舍之於城東興國玄壇. 鞘利見老君尊容皆拜. 道士賈昂見而謂同郡溫彥將曰: ‘突厥來詣唐公, 而先謁老君, 可謂不失尊卑之次. 非天所遣, 此輩寧知禮乎?’<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> ‘Gaozu ji, shang’ 高祖紀上 [Gaozu Era, Part One], *Suishu* 1.2. *Bianzheng lun*, T no. 2110, 52: 3.509, mentions that Sui Emperor Wen previously constructed Tianju Monastery 天居寺 in Bozhou.

<sup>18</sup> *Da Tang chuanyue qiju zhu* 1.13.

According to this, at the end of the Sui, to the east of Jinyang 晉陽 city was a Xingguo xuantan which enshrined an image of the Venerable Sovereign 老君 deity and had Daoist masters. This was obviously a Daoist establishment. The *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 [Yongle Encyclopaedia] edition of the *Taiyuan zhi* 太原志 [Taiyuan Gazetteer], article on Xingguo xuantan states: ‘It was erected in the second year of Kaihuang in the Sui, at Qianqiu 潛丘 (Secluded Hill). In the Tang it was renamed as a Kaiyuan Temple, located at Shangxin Lane’ (隋開皇二年置, 在潛丘上. 唐爲開元觀, 在尚信坊).<sup>19</sup> This explanation is also seen in the *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記 [Universal Geography of the Taiping Era], which states that three *li* [approximately 1.5 km] to the south-east of Jinyang County 晉陽縣 in Bingzhou, there is a location named Qianqiu, and ‘upon it [Sui Emperor Wen] erected a Daxingguo Xuantan’ (於其上置大興國觀) in the second year of Kaihuang (582).<sup>20</sup> Both of these two local gazetteers state in very clear terms that the Xingguo Xuantan (or Daxingguo guan 大興國觀 [Great Revitalising the Nation Temple]) was built in the second year of Kaihuang, possibly relying on stele inscriptions of the temple that were then extant as their evidence. If both of these gazetteers can be believed, the construction of the Xingguo Xuantan in Jinyang was earlier than the Daxingguo Monastery in Tongzhou. We must make note of this important point.<sup>21</sup>

Some of these temples and monasteries with the name ‘Xingguo’ 興國 (Revitalising the Nation) were located within the cities. One

<sup>19</sup> Ma et al., eds., *Yongle dadian fangzhi jiyi*, vol. 1, 285.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Hedong dao, yi: Bingzhou’ 河東道一·并州 [Hedong Passage, One: Bingzhou], article ‘Qianqiu’ 潛丘, *Taiping huanyu ji* 40.848.

<sup>21</sup> *Lidai chongdao ji* 歷代崇道記 [Chronological Record of the Sublime Way] states that Sui Emperor Wen ‘in the capital city constructed thirty-six Daoist temples, and named them “Altars to the Mysteries”, ordaining two thousand renunciants as Daoist priests’ (都下畿內造觀三十六所, 名曰玄壇, 度道士二千人). *Daozang*, vol. 11, 1. This record also states that Wu Emperor 吳主 Sun Quan 孫權 (182–252, r. 229–252) previously constructed a Xingguo guan 興國觀 [Revitalising the Nation Temple] at Jianye 建業 [modern-day Nanjing]. However, as Daoist temples 道館/道觀 had not even appeared by the time of the Wu empire, this claim can hardly be taken as reliable evidence.

example is Daxingguo Monastery in Bingzhou, which had been used as military barracks during the rebellion of Yang Liang 楊諒 (575–605) and the military campaign of Li Yuan 李淵 (566–635; i.e., Tang Emperor Gaozu 高祖 [r. 618–626]).<sup>22</sup> Some were constructed outside the cities in the mountains, such as Daxingguo Monasteries at Xiangzhou, Jingzhou, Shanzhou, and others, which later became monasteries where Sui Emperor Wen distributed relics for offerings. The Xingguo Xuantan was at Qianqiu east of the city. Whatever the case, the Daxingguo Monasteries constructed at the forty-five provinces should have all been located at places of local Buddhist importance. In particular, this was because of the manner in which the imperial court gave a standardised name for these monasteries.

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<sup>22</sup> According to records in ‘Xichan san: Shi Honglin zhuan’ 習禪三·釋洪林傳 [Meditators, Part Three: Biography of Shi Honglin], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 18.690, there were more than one hundred people in the monastery. Daxingguo Monastery in Bingzhou was still extant in the early Tang. From poems by Tang Emperor Taizong 太宗, Li Shimin 李世民, such as ‘Ye Bingzhou Daxingguo si’ 謁并州大興國寺 [Visiting Daxingguo Monastery in Bingzhou], ‘Yong Xingguo si fodian qian fan’ 詠興國寺佛殿前幡 [Song for the Banner before the Buddha Shrine at Daxingguo Monastery], we can deduce that they were composed in the nineteenth year of Zhenguan (645). This monastery was later renamed Chongfu Monastery 崇福寺. *Daizongchao zeng sikong dabianzheng guangzhi sanzang heshang biaozi ji* (T no. 2120, 52: 2.837c23–24) states: ‘In the city of Taiyuan, during the Great Tang, at Taichongfu Monastery, the Emperor Gaozu Shenyao undertook his military campaign here. The Office of Decrees requested that an image of Bodhisattva Puxian (Samantabhadra) be erected here’. (太原府大唐興國太崇福寺中高祖神堯皇帝起義處，號令堂請安置普賢菩薩像一鋪). When the Japanese monk Ennin 圓仁 (793–864) stayed at Taiyuan, he visited this monastery. *Nittō gubō junreikōki* 3.134 states for the fifteenth day of the seventh month of the fifth year of Kaicheng 開成 era (840):

After that, I entered Chongfu Monastery, making prostrations at the Buddha shrine. All the courtyards there were well arranged and organised, with ample light, with wonderful offerings being made. All the population from the city came to pay respects, only resting at dusk. 次入崇福寺，巡禮佛殿。閣下諸院，皆鋪設張列，光彩映入，供陳珍妙。傾城人盡來巡禮，黃昏自憩。

Furthermore, each location developed an atmosphere with standardised and systematised institutions in which religious and political memorials were brought together, forming a site evincing both political legitimisation for the Sui imperial dynasty and the sacred nature of its emperors.

From the two essential elements of standardisation of monastery names and locations in multiple provinces, it could be said that the Dingguo Monasteries in the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi were already like this. There are a total of seven Eastern Wei and Northern Qi Dingguo Monasteries that are presently extant or suspected to exist, and are spread over Yecheng 鄴城, Jinyang (Bingzhou), Dingzhou, Luozhou, Jianzhou 建州, Yanzhou 兗州, and Jizhou 濟州.<sup>23</sup> A clarification based on all the relevant historical sources is as follows:

Yecheng Dingguo Monastery: This is also known as Dadingguo Monastery. The name is based on the fact that after the Eastern Wei moved the city of Ye[cheng] 鄴, Gao Huan reconstructed it from the South Hathpace 南臺, ‘creating a very tall pagoda from bricks, with an inscription written by Wen Zisheng’ (作磚浮圖極高, 其銘即爲温子昇文).<sup>24</sup> Later, Fashang 釋法上 (sixth c.), who long held the position of Controller in Chief (*datong* 大統) of the Zhaoxuan Monastery 昭玄寺 (Office of Clarification of Buddhist Profundities), entered Yecheng in the third year of Xinghe 興和 (541) in the Eastern Wei. He first served as Chief of the Monastics (*shamen du* 沙門都), and ‘dwelt at Dingguo Monastery and served as Head of the Buddhists’ (居大定國寺而充道首).<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> There has always been less scholarly attention on Dingguo Monasteries in the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi. In my limited view, there is only Nie Shunxin’s basic introduction to six of these, in his *Tangdai Fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 33–35.

<sup>24</sup> ‘Hebei dao: Xiangzhou anyang xian’ 河北道·相州安陽縣 [Hebei Passage: Xiangzhou, Anyang County], article ‘Nantai’ 南臺 [South Hathpace], *Taiping huanyu ji* 55.1136.

<sup>25</sup> In the seventh year of Kaiyuan, ‘Da Tang Yexian Xiuding si zhuanji bei’ 大唐鄴縣修定寺傳記碑 [Stele of Records of Xiuding Monastery, in Ye County, Great Tang]. For an explanation of the text, consult Hao, ‘Anyang Xiuding si liangtong Tang bei de zai faxian’. Also, refer to my own ‘Shanju de zhaoxuan datong’.

Bingzhou Dingguo Monastery: According to *Beiqi shu* 北齊書 [Book of Northern Qi], fascicle thirty-nine, ‘Zu Ting zhuan’ 祖珽傳 [Biography of Zu Ting], after this monastery was ‘newly made’ (新成), Gao Huan had asked Chen Yuankang 陳元康 (507–549) and Wen Zisheng 溫子昇 (495–547), saying: ‘In the past when you composed the text of the “Mangshan Monastery Stele”, it was acclaimed as being most excellent. Now, who shall compose the text for the “Dingguo Monastery Stele”?’ (昔作《芒山寺碑》文，時稱妙絕。今《定國寺碑》當使誰作詞也?) Later we will discuss how Wen Zisheng’s composition of the ‘Mangshan si bei’ 芒山寺碑 [Mangshan Monastery Stele] should have been after the battle of Mangshan 邙山 in the first year of Wuding 武定 (543), as the construction of the Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou was obviously later than that. The *Yongle dadian* edition of the *Taiyuan zhi* states that the Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou later became Tianlong Monastery 天龍寺 on Mount Tianlong 天龍山. The evidence for this is an inscription in a Mount Tianlong grotto: ‘During the Huangjian period of the [Northern] Qi, [this grotto] was constructed by monks from Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou’ (齊皇建中，并州定國寺僧所造).<sup>26</sup> However, the inscription only says monastics from ‘Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou’ 并州定國寺 constructed the grotto, and does not imply ‘Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou’ was itself on Mount Tianlong. The *Yongle dadian* edition of the *Taiyuan zhi* also records in the entry for Daxingguo Monastery:

Originally Xingguo Monastery in the [Northern] Qi, it was expanded in the Sui period. Outside the monastery gate is a stele for a shrine to the Prince of Jin. In the second Buddha shrine are clay statues to Sui Emperor Yang and Empress Xiao. The rear eaves have a stele [composed in the] tenth year of Daye by Li Baiyao. There is also an inscription of the high pavilion by Xie Yan. 本齊興國寺，隋世增大之。寺門外有晉王廟碑，第二佛殿內有隋煬帝及蕭后塑容，後簷有李百藥大業十年碑，又有謝偃高閣銘。<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Ma et al., eds., *Yongle dadian fangzhi jiyi*, vol. 1, 230.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

By the time of the Northern Qi period, we have yet to see a Xingguo Monastery. From reading that ‘it was expanded in the Sui period’ (隋世增大之), we know this should have been Daxingguo Monastery in Bingzhou. This monastery was located inside the city of Jinyang, and I suspect that it was on the ruined site of Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou in the Northern Qi after its destruction in the anti-Buddhist persecution of Zhou Emperor Wu.

Dingzhou Dingguo Monastery: Here we have two forms of inscription of the stele written by the Prince of Zhao Prefecture 趙郡王, Gao Rui 高叡 (534–569), in the eighth year of Tianbao 天保 (556) during the Northern Qi, for the construction of the monastery and pagoda of Youju Monastery 幽居寺 (also known as Qilin Court 祁林院), in Lingshou County 靈壽縣, Hebei. One of the inscriptions has a stele name, and although the name of the monastery has been intentionally scraped off, the text of the stele mentions ‘Chan master Sengbiao of Dingguo Monastery, Dingzhou’ (定州定國寺禪師僧標). At the end of the other inscription is the title ‘Dingguo si zhu Huizhao’ 定國寺主慧照 [Master of Dingguo Monastery, Huizhao].<sup>28</sup> It could be that the monastery in question is Dingguo Monastery in Dingzhou during the Northern Qi and that the abbot was Huizhao. *Baqiong shi jinshi buzheng* 八瓊室金石補正 [Bronze and Stone Inscriptions of the Baqiong Hall, Emended and Supplemented] and other works take these two kinds of stele inscriptions and categorise them as ‘Gao Rui Dingguo si ta mingbei’ 高叡定國寺塔銘碑 [Stele Inscription for Dingguo Monastery and Pagoda by Gao Rui] and ‘Gao Rui xiu Dingguo si song’ 高叡修定國寺頌 [Verses for the Renovation of Dingguo Monastery by Gao Rui].<sup>29</sup> However, there is actually an explanation for the name of the

<sup>28</sup> Mao, colla. and annot., *Han, Wei, Liuchao beike jiaozhu*, vol. 8, 400–01, note 405.

<sup>29</sup> ‘Zhaojun wang Gao Rui Dingguo si ta mingbei’ 趙郡王高叡定國寺塔銘碑 [Stele Inscriptions for Dingguo Monastery and Pagoda by the Prince of Zhao Prefecture Gao Rui] has as its title: ‘Great Qi, the Prince of Zhao Prefecture [...] Stele’ 大齊趙郡王□□□之碑, wherein the missing three characters are the name of the monastery. See *Baqiong shi jinshi buzheng*, *SKSLXB*, series 1, vol. 6, 20.4308–13.



monastery and its background in the text of the stele:

‘[ ] heard that this place of spiritual cultivation, for collecting the mind, dedication of merit, rejoicing in making offerings, is a [ ] field of merit. Therefore, this monastery is named [...]. When Confucius discussed the way, he used this expression. The Yellow emperor recalls the teachings of the divine masters, which is also in accord with this directive’. □聞道場, 攝心回向, 隨喜供設, 爲福田□. 因以其寺, 名粵□□. 宣尼論至道之時, 乃有斯稱; 軒轅念天師之教, 且符令旨.

Here again, the name for the monastery has been intentionally erased,<sup>30</sup> but from the explanation of the text, the monastery name obviously has no connection with ‘Dingguo’ 定國 (Settling the Nation). We can deduce that ‘Master of Dinguo Monastery’ (定國寺主), Huizhao, may be a similar kind of title to ‘monks from Dinguo Monastery in Bingzhou’ (并州定國寺僧), but that it just follows the Prefect of Dingzhou, Gao Rui’s, participation in this occasion relating to the event of erecting the stele for the construction of the monastery.

Luozhou Dinguo Monastery: This is seen in the ‘Luozhou Baoguo si zao yuxiang bei’ 洛州報德寺造玉像碑 [Construction of a Jade Image in Baode Monastery, Luozhou, Stele], written in the third year of Wuding in the Eastern Wei. The title on the side of the stele states: ‘Luozhou Chief of the Monastics, master of Dinguo Monastery, Huizhen’ (洛州沙門都定國寺主慧珍).<sup>31</sup>

Jianzhou Dinguo Monastery: Ming dynasty Zhu Zaiyu 朱載堉 (1536–1611) mentions in his work ‘Yangtoushan xinji’ 羊頭山新記

<sup>30</sup> The records from the end of the Qing were already like this. In the last title mentioned in the ‘Gao Rui xiu Dinguo si song’ 高叡修定國寺頌 [Verses for the Renovation of Dinguo Monastery by Gao Rui], the missing characters could also include the monastery name. In other words, ‘[...] master Sengshi’ (□□□主僧實) might refer to the master abbot of the monastery here. The fact that the name of the monastery on many inscriptions that refer to this monastery have been erased and scraped out indicates that it is clearly an intentional act.

<sup>31</sup> *Taozhai cangshi ji*, *SKSLXB*, series 1, vol. 11, 9.8066.

[New Records from Mount Yangtou] that Qinghua Monastery 清化寺 on Mount Yangtou 羊頭山:

‘was first built in the Northern Wei by Emperor Xiaowen during the Taihe period, and initially named Dingguo Monastery, later changing its name to Hongfu [Monastery] in the Northern Qi. The monastery was abandoned at the end of the Sui. It was rebuilt during the second year of Tianshou during the time of Tang Empress Wu Zetian, and given the present name. There is a stele respectively composed and written by the Tang Prefectural Nominee, Niu Xuanjing’. 建自後魏孝文帝太和之歲，初名定國寺，北齊改名弘福。隋末寺廢。唐武則天天授二年重建，改今額。有碑，乃唐鄉貢明經牛玄敬撰並書。<sup>32</sup>

Zhu Zaiyu points out the stele from the second year of Tianshou 天授 (691) during the reign of Wu Zetian (discovered during an examination of the site of Qinghua Monastery 清化寺 in 2001) has the title ‘Qinghua Monastery on Mount Yangtou, in Gaoping County, Zezhou, Stele’ (澤州高平縣羊頭山清化寺碑). The text of the stele is highly damaged, but we can discern some of the content, which states: ‘In the forested mountains prayers were undertaken [...] built a monastery named Dingguo, signifying the pacification of the state [...] Later [Northern] Qi [...] transformed’ (行禱山林□營寺宇額題定國義取寧邦□□後齊□□□轉).<sup>33</sup> ‘Bringing peace to the state’ (寧邦) corresponds to ‘settling the nation’ (定國), which was the basis for why it was once named Dingguo Monastery. Zhu Zaiyu’s *Yangtoushan xinji* describes the early evolution of Qinghua Monastery, and this stele was his source of information. If this explanation is reliable, we can

<sup>32</sup> ‘Yangtoushan xinji’ 羊頭山新記 [New Records from Mount Yangtou], in *Lüxue xinsbuo*, vol. 2, 42.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Yandi wenhua lei’ 炎帝文化類 [Yan Emperor Culture Types], entry ‘Zezhou Gaoping xian Yangtoushan Qinghua si bei’ 澤州高平縣羊頭山清化寺碑 [Qinghua Monastery on Mount Yangtou, in Gaoping County, Zezhou, Stele], *Gaoping Jinshi zhi bianji weiyuanhui*, *Gaoping jinshi zhi*, 6–8. This stele is now preserved in the Shennong Shrine (originally one of the six famed temples, Qinghua Monastery 清化寺).

deduce that the timeframe for the appearance of Dingguo Monastery was around the time of Northern Wei 北魏 Emperor Xiaowen 孝文帝 (467–499, r. 471–499). However, there are many questions about the historical development of Qinghua Monastery, and whether the Tang dynasty stele is reliable still remains to be seen.

Yanzhou Dingguo Monastery: This is Pule Monastery 普樂寺 in Xiaqiu County 暇丘縣, Yanzhou 兗州. It was a monastery where Sui Emperor Wen built monasteries to make offerings to relics he distributed throughout the land, and was built in the second year of Renshou 仁壽 (602). *Shishi liutie* 釋氏六帖 [Six Essays by a Buddhist Monk] states: ‘Dingguo Monastery of the Gaoyu [Northern Qi], was also called Pule Monastery, with the name changed during the Kai-huang period’ (高禹 [齊] 朝定國寺, 又名普樂寺, 開皇年改).<sup>34</sup>

Jizhou Dingguo Monastery: In 2016, an archaeological excavation discovered the site of a monastery in Daqin Village 大秦村, Dong’e County 東阿縣, in Shandong 山東, during construction work on the North-South Water Transfer Project 南水北調. Numerous kinds of inscriptions and steles were uncovered, among which was a stele inscription from the third year of Yongxi 永熙 (534) during the Northern Wei. It was reported in the news as being a merit stele, and mentioned the ‘Master of Dingguo Monastery and Monastery Controller of the monastery’ (定國寺主, 寺都維那).<sup>35</sup> The location of this monastery site is Que’ao 碯礮 city, governed by Jizhou 濟州 under the Northern Wei (modern-day Gaoyuanqiang Village 高垣牆村, Shiping County 茌平縣), about six kilometres to the northeast. Because an announcement about the excavation has yet to be officially made, we still do not know whether or not this is a Dingguo Monastery.

Of these Dingguo Monasteries located in Yecheng, Jinyang, and five other provinces, some are within the cities, and for others we are uncertain. The positions of the Daxingguo Monasteries in Yecheng and Jinyang are important. From their stele inscriptions, the masters

<sup>34</sup> ‘Si she ta dian bu’ 寺舍塔殿部 [Section on Monasteries, Residences, Pagodas, and Shrines], *Shishi liutie* 21.439.

<sup>35</sup> Li et al., ‘Shandong Dong’e Daqin cun faxian Beichao zhi Wudai simiao he xinggong yizhi’.

of the Dingguo Monasteries in Dingzhou, Luozhou, and so forth, have the status of being samgha officials. It is unfortunate that due to an insufficiency of historical sources, the relationships between these Dingguo Monasteries are not at all clear. From their dates of construction, we know those in Yecheng and Jinyang were built during the Eastern Wei period and that Yecheng was built earlier than Jinyang.

As stated above, the stele from Mount Yangtuo places the origins of Dingguo Monasteries to the even earlier period of Emperor Xiaowen in the Northern Wei, though some issues remain. There is a very interesting claim in Falin's *Bianzheng lun*, that Northern Wei Emperor Daowu 道武 (371–409, r. 398–409) issued a decree in the first year of Tianxing 天興 (398):

In the capital construction was carried out, an image [of the Buddha] made, and the monastery renovated; and Fifteen-storied Buddhist pagodas were built in the areas of Yu and Guo, Kaitai [Monastery] and Dingguo Monastery were built. 於京邑建飾容範, 修整寺舍; 又於虞、虢之地造十五級浮圖, 起開泰、定國二寺。<sup>36</sup>

This is the 'earliest' Dingguo Monastery that we are presently able to see. However, there are obvious questions about this record. At the time of Emperor Daowu, the location of 'the areas of Yu and Guo' (虞、虢之地) in the south of the Zhongtiao Mountains 中條山 was not under the political control of the Northern Wei. In the fifth year of Tianxing, the Northern Wei crushed the army of the Later Qin 後秦 near Mengkeng 蒙坑, but did not proceed to assault Puban 蒲阪 after that victory.<sup>37</sup> As such, saying that Emperor Daowu constructed Buddhist pagodas 'in the areas of Yu and Guo' is incorrect.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, from our presently extant historical sources, it is quite doubtful that there was already a Dingguo Monastery in the Northern Wei period.

Apart from Dingguo Monasteries, Yecheng and Zhaozhou both

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<sup>36</sup> 'Shidai fengfo shangpian disan', *Bianzheng lun*, T no. 2110, 52: 3.506c17, 506c17–18.

<sup>37</sup> 'Taizu ji' 太祖紀 [Era of Taizu], *Weishu* 2.40.

<sup>38</sup> 'Shi Lao zhi' 釋老志 [Records of Buddhism and Daoism], *Weishu*

had Zhuangyan Monasteries 莊嚴寺 during the Northern Qi period. The Zhuangyan Monastery of Yecheng was constructed in the ninth year of Tianbao 天保 (558). This was after Gao Yang ordered the Prince of Qinghe 清河王, Gao Yue 高岳 (512–555), to commit suicide, and the residence of Gao Yue to the south of Yecheng city was remodelled as the monastery.<sup>39</sup> The text of the stele at Zhuangyan Monastery in Zhaozhou was composed by Wei Shou 魏收 (507–572), and the date should be between the end of Heqing 河清 (562–565) and the early years of Tiantong 天統 era (565–569).<sup>40</sup> The use of ‘Zhuangyan’ 莊嚴 (Adornment) as a name for monasteries is quite

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114.3030, mentions the decree raised by Falin in the first year of Tianxing, but only mentions:

In the capital construction was carried out, an image [of the Buddha] made, and the temple renovated, allowing the devotees a place to reside. 於京城建飾容範, 修整宮舍, 令信向之徒, 有所居止。

And:

That year, construction of a five-storied Buddhist pagoda began, along with shrines for Mount Qidujue (Skt. *Gṛdakūṭa*) and Mount Xumi (Sumeru), complete with frescoes. A lecture hall, meditation hall, and monastics' seating were built, all of which were of fine quality. 是歲, 始作五級佛圖, 耆闍崛山及須彌山殿, 加以續飾。別構講堂, 禪堂及沙門座, 莫不嚴具焉。

There is no mention of constructing a pagoda or monastery ‘in the regions of Yu and Guo’ (虞、虢之地).

<sup>39</sup> ‘Wenxuan di ji’ 文宣帝紀 [Era of Emperor Wenxuan], *Beiqi shu* 4.66; ‘Qinghe wang yue zhuan’ 清河王岳傳 [Biography of King Yue of Qinghe], *Beishi* 51.1848. Concerning the situation of monasteries in Yecheng during the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi, refer to Suwa, ‘Yedu butsuji kō’.

<sup>40</sup> ‘Shuzheng’ 書證 [Documents], Wang, *Yanshi jiaxun jijie* 6.498. The composition of the stele text by Wei Shou was after Yan Zhitui 顏之推 (531–597?) retired from his position as Zhaozhou Assistant (*Zhaozhou zuo* 趙州佐; *Zhaozhou gongcao canjun* 趙州功曹參軍 [Zhaozhou Meritorious Inspector]) at Yecheng. Yan Zhitui was *Zhaozhou zuo* during the last year of Heqing 河清 era (565), only having a short-lived position in Zhaozhou. See ‘Yan Zhitui zhuan’ 顏之推傳 [Biography of Yan Zhitui], *Beiqi shu* 45.617. This entry was pointed out to me by my friend You Ziyong 游自勇, to whom I am very grateful.

prevalent. Jiankang 建康 also had a Zhuangyan Monastery. Whether the Zhuangyan Monasteries of the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi periods comprise a kind of standardised monastery system spread throughout multiple provinces is difficult to conclude, given the lack of historical sources. From the presently extant material, we can for now at least trace the origins of this form of standardised monastery that existed in several provinces to Dingguo Monasteries from the Eastern Wei to Northern Qi periods.<sup>41</sup> Considering the similarities between the names of the Dingguo and Xingguo monasteries, I think that there is some kind of relationship in terms of their origins, however, I do not wish to overstate this claim as if it were a certainty.

## 2. Monasteries and Political Regions

After the Dayun Monasteries were constructed, each monastery 'kept a copy of the *Dayun jing*, allowing the monastics to ascend to the high seat to lecture on it' (藏《大雲經》，使僧升高座講解)，<sup>42</sup> and took on responsibilities for dissemination and lecturing on the *Dayun jing* in addition to ensuring conformity to the laws of the Wu Zhou 武周 political regime. Zhongxing (Longxing) Monasteries

<sup>41</sup> *Lidai chongdao ji* states:

A decree was issued commanding the construction of two hundred and seventy-five Taiping Temples throughout the land, and the ordination of one thousand three hundred Daoist priests. The emperor received the mandate scroll, changed the era to the first year of Taiping Zhenjun, and had the senior and junior ministers of the court use the title Taiping Zhenjun Emperor for him' 敕令天下造太平觀共二百七十五所，度道士一千三百人。帝受策，改太平真君元年，仍令四方内外上書言太平真君皇帝陛下。  
*Daozang*, vol. 11, 1.

This system of Taiping Temples is not seen in any other records. As stated previously, *Lidai chongdao ji* exaggerates when describing Daoist temples constructed before the Tang, and is not trustworthy.

<sup>42</sup> *Zizhi tongjian* 204.6469 (for tenth month of the first year of Wu Zetian's Tianshou period).

and Temples were connected with the restoration of Tang Emperor Zhongzong. In the third year of Tianbao (744), Xuanzong decreed that: 'Kaiyuan Temples and Kaiyuan Monasteries in the two capitals and all of the prefectures throughout the land will make gold-copper cast images of both the Buddha and the Heavenly Lord in the likeness of [Emperor] Xuanzong' (兩京及天下諸郡於開元觀、開元寺, 以金銅鑄玄宗等身天尊及佛各一軀).<sup>43</sup> From this, Kaiyuan Monasteries and Temples took a step toward becoming important sites where local government officials could pay their respects to a likeness of the emperor, and for displaying the sacredness of Emperor Xuanzong himself. All told, during the Tang dynasty, this system of monasteries had already fully become a part of imperial political culture.

Most representative are the regulations for incense processions on national memorial days carried out at monasteries and temples in the provinces during the Tang. *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 [Institutional History of the Tang], fascicle fifty, 'Zaji' 雜記 [Various Records], for the twenty-eighth day of the fifth month of the twenty-seventh year of Kaiyuan (739), states:

Ministry of Sacrifice memorandum: 'Temples and monasteries will hold pure mourning *zhai* services in the provinces and counties. By standard form, the monks, nuns, priests, and priestesses in Tongzhou, Huazhou, and so forth, eighty-one provinces and cities, will on national memorial days proceed to their local Longxing Temple or Monastery and hold pure *zhai* mourning services'. 祠部奏: '諸州縣行道散齋觀寺, 准式以同、華等八十一州郭下僧尼道士女冠等, 國忌日各就龍興寺、觀行道散齋, 復請改就開元觀、寺'.

Imperial decree: 'The officials in the capital and Henan should, according to past practice, go to the old temples and monasteries. Only on the thousand autumns day [emperor's birthday] and three prime days should they set up *zhai* at Kaiyuan Temples and Monasteries. The remainder as above'. 敕旨: '京兆河南府宜依舊觀、寺爲定, 唯千秋節及三元行道設齋宜就開元觀、寺, 餘依'.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> 'Za ji' 雜記 [Various Records], *Tang huiyao* 50.880.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.879.

On the set dates of national memorial days (國忌), thousand autumns day (千秋節), and the three prime days (三元節), the provinces must all hold ritual *zhai* 齋 activities and sacrifices at official monasteries. The decree deals with the problem of how to choose between the locations for these events—the ‘old temples and monasteries’ (舊觀寺, Longxing Monasteries and Temples) and ‘new temples and monasteries’ (新觀寺, Kaiyuan Temples and Monasteries).<sup>45</sup> These ritual activities were practices of religious faith but also practices regulated by local government.

The system of Daxingguo Monasteries in the Sui period is connected with Sui Emperor Wen as a ‘nascent dragon’ before ascension, which is obviously a kind of political memorial. According to the previously cited, ‘Shi Mingdan zhuan’ 釋明誕傳 [Biography of Shi Mingdan] in *Xu Gaoseng zhuan*, Sui Emperor Wen had previously visited Shangfenglin Monastery (Daxingguo Monastery) in Xiangzhou, where ‘he recalled his past blessings, and went annually to the monastery to make offerings’ (追惟往福, 歲常就寺廣設供養). Although it states that he went ‘annually’ 歲常, this appears to be more like the act of an individual making offerings.<sup>46</sup> Some comparison could be made with Sui Emperor Wen erecting monasteries in the Wuyue mountains.<sup>47</sup> Sacrifices at Wuyue became emblematic of imperial political culture, and sacrificial shrines were already present there. When Sui Emperor Wen built monasteries in the Wuyue mountains, he created a situation in which both sacrificial shrines and monasteries existed together. This was a case of monasteries becoming integrated into the national sacrificial system.<sup>48</sup> These

<sup>45</sup> Nie, *Tangdai fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 178–82.

<sup>46</sup> *Jinshi lu* briefly mentions the back of the stele of Daxingguo Monastery in Xiangzhou, stating: ‘Now, on the back of the stele, after the name of the City Assistant Commander-in-Chief of Xiangzhou, Liu Zhige, there are the family and given names of eighteen people. The characters are of fine quality, such that Master Ou-Yang [Xiu] has never seen before’ (碑陰又有襄州鎮副總管柳止戈以下十八人姓名, 字畫尤完好, 歐陽公所未見也). *Jinshi lu* 22.384.

<sup>47</sup> ‘Yijing Dasui’, *Lidai sanbao ji*, T no. 2034, 49: 12.107.

<sup>48</sup> During the time of Tang Emperor Xuanzong, by the suggestion of Daoist



monasteries on Wuyue may have been responsible for institutionalising official Buddhist religious services.

The several types of standardised monastery systems in the Tang dynasty were constructed universally throughout the ‘provinces’.<sup>49</sup> This point is very different from the situation with Daxingguo Monasteries in the Sui dynasty. The latter set up sites in the forty-five provinces that ‘[the emperor] toured before ascension’, based on the actual deeds of the emperor himself as a kind of ‘selective’ construction (選擇性) approach, emphasising those locations that had a particular connection with the emperor or those that served as a form of memorial. Forms of ‘selective’ construction also include setting up monasteries in the Wuyue mountains and building monasteries in four locations for his father, Yang Zhong.

In the first year of Kaihuang (581), Li Delin also wrote the decree issued when Sui Emperor Wen built monasteries in four locations on behalf of his father. Fortunately, it is preserved in textual sources such as the *Guang hongming ji*, *Lidai sanbao ji*, and others. The decree first describes the honours of Yang Zhong’s military campaigns in Xiangyang 襄陽, Suijun 隋郡, Jiangling 江陵, and Jinyang. Following this, it then states:

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master Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (640–735), a separate Zhenjun Shrine 真君祠 [True Lord Shrine] was constructed in the Wuyue mountains, taking matters a step further in which shrines, monasteries, and Zhenjun shrines all existed within a structure of sacrifice and religious faith. Refer to Lei, *Jiaomiao zhiwai*, 166–200.

<sup>49</sup> Here, ‘universally’ (普遍), refers to the ‘provinces’ mentioned in the decrees. However, in reality, the circumstances in each province were different, and it is possible that some provinces were not included. During the reign of Tang Emperor Dezong 德宗 (742–805, r. 779–805), on the thirteenth day of the eighth month of the fifth year of Zhenyuan 貞元 era (789), a memorandum for Chuzhou 處州 states: ‘This province is not included in those for incense processions’ (當州不在行香之數), and so the imperial court issued a decree, expanding the range of ‘the major provinces throughout the land’ (天下諸上州). *Tang huiyao* 50.879–80.

They amassed virtue and honours, with blessings passing to the next generation. In my humble unworthiness I have become emperor of this land. Following the divine way, I serve true peace. Being born into this world, many changing circumstances must be dealt with. With the soldiers of the wheel-turning king, the intention of the accomplished one is put forth. With one hundred victories in one hundred battles, one practices the ten wholesome deeds. Therefore, weapons such as spears and swords are made to be incense and flowers. The darkened wilderness has long become a pure world. I wish to respectfully develop precious monasteries and construct monastic parks, to increase the causes of merit and draw near to the profound truths. In the ancient time of Xia, in order to channel the waters, inscriptions were made upon the mountains, just as the tours of the Zhou dynasty have been passed on in stone. Memorials for the deeds of the emperors are an old tradition. One monastery will be constructed in each of Xiangyang, Suizhou, Jiangling, and Jinyang, with verses engraved on steles pronouncing virtuous deeds. 積德累功, 福流後嗣. 俾朕虛薄, 君臨區有. 追仰神猷, 事冥真寂. 降生下土, 權變不常. 用輪王之兵, 申至人之意. 百戰百勝, 爲行十善. 故以干戈之器, 已類香華; 玄黃之野, 久同淨國. 思欲崇樹寶刹, 經始伽藍, 增長福因, 微副幽旨. 昔夏因導水, 尚且銘山; 周曰巡遊, 有聞勒石. 帝王紀事, 由來尚矣. 其襄陽、隨州、江陵、晉陽, 並宜立寺一所, 建碑頌德.<sup>50</sup>

The decree expresses two levels of intention. The first, ‘Memorials for the deeds of the emperors are an old tradition’ represent political intentions. That is, it takes the construction of the monastery and stele as an extension of the tradition of steles for the honour of the emperors. The decree considers that: ‘The rise of the [Northern] Zhou was aided and assisted [by Yang Zhong]. The struggle of two generations laid the foundation for my emperor’ (周室勃興, 同心匡

<sup>50</sup> ‘Sui Wendi wei Taizu Wuyuan huangdi xingxing sichu lisi jianbei zhao’ 隋文帝爲太祖武元皇帝行幸四處立寺建碑詔 [Decree for the Erecting of Monasteries and Construction of Steles by Sui Emperor Wen at the Four Sites Toured by Taizu Emperor Wuyuan], *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.328. See also *Lidai sanbao ji*, T no. 2034, 49: 12.107, though this has some missing sections.

贊. 間關二代, 造我帝基).<sup>51</sup> This was the political foundation established by the Sui dynasty. The second, ‘to increase the causes of merit and draw near to the profound truths’, demonstrates a level of Buddhist religious faith. That is, by the merit from construction of the monasteries, blessings were achieved for his father. To put it another way, building monasteries in the ‘selected’ four sites of Xiangyang, Suijun, Jiangling, and Jinyang, indicates intentions of both memorialising honours and praying for merit.

Connected with all of this, there is still Wude Monastery 武德寺 (Military Honours Monastery) in Bingzhou. ‘Shi Huijue zhuan’ 釋慧覺傳 [Biography of Huijue] in *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* states:

The Great Sui received the imperial line and promoted the Dharma. As during the Zhou Emperor Wen was a military commander, personally entering into combat but losing the battle, he took refuge in the southern marshes of Bing[zhou]. Later, when the dragon flew [he became emperor], he recalled this old site. In the first year of Kaihuang, he built Wude Monastery on the site of this tragedy. The ground was sodden earth, which was filled in with rock, upon which the foundation was laid, completing the monastery, with one thousand entrances and nine-storied terraces, the pagoda spread like a cloud, and hathpases spread like the stars. 大隋受禪, 闡隆像法. 以文皇在周, 既摠元戎, 躬履鋒刃, 兵機失捷, 逃難於并城南澤. 後飛龍之日, 追惟舊壤. 開皇元年, 乃於幽憂之所置武德寺焉. 地惟泥濕, 遍以石鋪, 然始增基, 通於寺院, 周閭千計, 廊廡九重, 靈塔雲張, 景臺星布.<sup>52</sup>

Bingzhou Wude Monastery was built at the location where Sui Emperor Wen took shelter the year his armies were defeated. This should refer to the battle when Northern Zhou Emperor Wu attacked the Qi at Jinyang. At that time, the Qi army fought back

<sup>51</sup> ‘Sui Wendi wei Taizu Wuyuan huangdi xingxing sichu lisi jianbei zhao’, *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.328.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Yijie, ba: Shi huijue zhuan’ 義解八.釋慧覺傳 [Interpreters, Part Eight: Biography of Shi Huijue], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 12.423.

under the leadership of the Prince of Ande 安德王, Gao Yanzong 高延宗 (544–577). At first, he heavily defeated the Zhou armies, and Zhou Emperor Wu ‘had most of his company killed’ (左右略盡), ‘only narrowly managing to escape’ (崎嶇僅得出).<sup>53</sup> Yang Jian, ‘as a military commander’ (既摠元戎), was then among the defeated army. It was only later that he was able to turn this defeat into a victory. It could be said that such an experience would be hard to forget, and that was why after he gained the throne ‘he recalled this old site’ (追惟舊壤), and built Wude Monastery there. In the Sui dynasty, this monastery is mentioned together with Daxingguo Monastery, a famous monastery of Jinyang. Later, during the Rebellion of Yang Liang 楊諒叛亂, ‘he rallied his troops and mended his armour, making Xingguo Monastery his armoury and Wude Monastery his mess hall’ (招募軍兵, 繕造傘甲, 以興國寺爲甲坊, 以武德寺爲食坊).<sup>54</sup> In summary, Sui Emperor Wen gave considerable importance to sites connected with his father’s and his own early years. Of these monastery sites, one aspect is that ‘he recalled his past blessings’ (追惟往福), and another aspect is, as Li Delin’s decree states, ‘memorials for the deeds of the emperors are an old tradition’ (帝王紀事, 由來尚矣), emphasising the significance of memorialising places that the emperor had visited and toured in the past.

Well worth noting are the measures related to memorials at the locations visited by the emperor before his ascension to the throne. This kind of practice can be traced back to at least the Western Han 西漢 (202 BCE–9 CE). ‘Wei Xuancheng zhuan’ 韋玄成傳 [Biography of Wei Xuancheng] in *Han shu* 漢書 [Book of Han] states:

At first, during the time of [Han Emperor] Gaozu, he ordered the feudal princes to all establish shrines to the Taishang Emperor. By the time of [Han Emperor] Hui, shrines to Emperor Gao were revered as shrines to Taizu, and under Emperor Jing shrines to

<sup>53</sup> ‘Ande wang Yanzong zhuan’ 安德王延宗傳 [Biography of the Ande King, Yanzong], *Beiqi shu* 11.150.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Hufa xia: Shi Tanxuan zhuan’ 護法下·釋曇選傳 [Dharma Protectors, Part Two: Biography of Shi Tanxuan], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 25.931.

Emperor Wen were revered as shrines to Taizong, at prefectures and states that the emperor had visited each erected a shrine to Taizu and Taizong. By the time of [Han Emperor] Xuan, in the second year of Benshi, shrines to Xiaowu were revered as shrines to Shizong, with one erected in each of the places he toured. There were sixty-eight shrines to imperial ancestors in the prefectures and states, a total of one hundred and sixty-seven. 初, 高祖時, 令諸侯王都皆立太上皇廟. 至惠帝尊高帝廟爲太祖廟, 景帝尊孝文廟爲太宗廟, 行所嘗幸郡國各立太祖、太宗廟. 至宣帝本始二年, 復尊孝武廟爲世宗廟, 行所巡狩亦立焉. 凡祖宗廟在郡國六十八, 合百六十七所.<sup>55</sup>

Already by the start of the Western Han there was the practice of setting up shrines to the Taishang 太上 emperor, though more important were the vassal states and the family shrines for the rulers of each of those vassal states. Later, this expanded such that ‘the prefectures and states that had been personally visited’ (行所嘗幸郡國) by the emperor would construct shrines to Taizu 太祖 and Taizong, forming a system of sacrificial shrines to the emperors spread throughout the prefectures and states. Probably due to the complexity and expense of such sacrifices, Wei Xuancheng 韋玄成 (?–36 BCE) would later recommend abolishing these shrines to the emperors even though they were re-established for a short period of time. Apart from these, during the Han period, due to Emperor Guangwu 光武 (Liu Xiu 劉秀 [5–57, r. 25–57]), having taken the throne in Hebei 河北, Emperor Ming 明 was born in Yuanshi County 元氏縣, and so construction there of a thousand autumns altar and birth hall was carried out in memorial.<sup>56</sup> In terms of the nature of these measures for memorialising emperors in the two Han periods, in particular, we find strong similarities between building memorial-type shrines in ‘the prefectures and states that had been personally visited’ by the emperor, the construction of monasteries by Sui Emperor Wen at the four sites of his father’s

<sup>55</sup> ‘Wei Xuancheng zhuan’ 韋玄成傳 [Biography of Wei Xuancheng], *Hanshu* 73.3115.

<sup>56</sup> ‘Zhangdi ji’ 章帝紀 [Era of Emperor Zhang], *Houhan shu* 3.155.

military campaigns, as well as building Daxingguo Monasteries in ‘the forty-five provinces he toured before ascension’ (龍潛所經四十五州). However, the former were for traditional sacrifices to ancestors and the emperor, whereas the latter were for Buddhist religious faith.

At the end of Sui Emperor Wen’s rule, he distributed Buddhist relics in the provinces throughout the land. This in turn formed a system of ‘relic’ 舍利 monasteries even more extensive in scope than the Daxingguo Monastery system. Wang Shao’s 王劭 (ca. sixth c.) ‘Sheli ganying ji’ 舍利感應記 [Records of Spiritual Responses from Relics], states:

On the thirteenth day of the sixth month of the first year of Renshou, the emperor went to Renshou Shrine in the Renshou Palace, it being the day of his birth. Annually on this day, he recalled [his parents] in deep sincerity, cultivating merit and goodness, to repay the grace of his father and mother. He therefore received monastics of great virtue to discuss the [Buddhist] path. Throughout the provinces of the land, thirty locations of lofty purity were chosen, to each have a relic pagoda erected. 皇帝以仁壽元年六月十三日，御仁壽宮之仁壽殿，本降生之日也。歲歲於此日，深心永念，修營福善，追報父母之恩。故迎諸大德沙門，與論至道。將於海內諸州，選高爽清淨三十處，各起舍利塔。<sup>57</sup>

Among these thirty monasteries, the monasteries of seventeen provinces were personally chosen by Sui Emperor Wen, whereas those in the other thirteen provinces, ‘were monasteries in the mountains by bodies of water that had already constructed pagodas’ (就有山水寺所前起塔), and ‘in provinces with mountainous areas that never had monasteries, pagodas were built at pure monasteries’ (山舊無寺者，於當州內清淨寺處起塔).<sup>58</sup> The vast majority of these monasteries

<sup>57</sup> *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 17.213c11–15.

<sup>58</sup> ‘Suiguo li foshelita zhao’ 隋國立佛舍利塔詔 [Sui Decree for Establishing Buddhist Relic Pagodas], *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 17.213a21–b23. The monasteries ‘personally noted’ by Sui Emperor Wen were: Qizhou 岐州 Fengquan Monastery 鳳泉寺, Yongzhou 雍州 Xianyou Monastery 仙遊寺, Song-

were mountain monasteries (apart from a minority in provinces without mountains), and Wuyue monasteries were all selected. Some provinces chose Daxingguo Monasteries, although there were only a few of them.<sup>59</sup> From the perspective of their distribution, the remote provinces were also given consideration.

Subsequent to this, the distribution of relics to the provinces was further expanded twice by Sui Emperor Wen. On the twenty-third day of the first month of the second year of Renshou, ‘a further distribution of fifty-one provinces built funerary pagodas’ (復分布五十一州建立靈塔).<sup>60</sup> Again, in the fourth year of Renshou, pagodas for offerings in another thirty-plus provinces were erected, and ‘funerary pagodas in over one hundred great provinces were then built’ (遂使宇內大州一百餘所皆起靈塔).<sup>61</sup> There were over three hundred provinces

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zhou 嵩州 Songyue Monastery 嵩岳寺, Taizhou 泰州 Daiyue Monastery 岱岳寺, Huazhou 華州 Sijue Monastery 思覺寺, Hengzhou 衡州 Hengyue Monastery 衡岳寺, Dingzhou 定州 Hengyue Monastery 恒岳寺, Kuozhou 廓州 Lianyanyue Monastery 連雲岳寺, Mozhou 牟州 Jushenshan Monastery 巨神山寺, Wuzhou 吳州 Kuaijishan Monastery 會稽山寺, Tongzhou 同州 Daxingguo Monastery 大興國寺, Puzhou 蒲州 Qiyan Monastery 棲岩寺, Suzhou 蘇州 Huqiushan Monastery 虎丘山寺, Jingzhou 涇州 Daxingguo Monastery 大興國寺, Bingzhou 并州 Wuliangshou Monastery 無量壽寺, Xiangzhou 相州 Daci Monastery 大慈寺, and Xiangzhou 襄州 Daxingguo Monastery 大興國寺. In addition, those monasteries selected by the provinces themselves were: Suizhou 隋州 Zhimen Monastery 智門寺, Yizhou 益州 Faju Monastery 法聚寺, Qinzhou 秦州 Jingnian Monastery 靜念寺, Yangzhou 揚州 Xi Monastery 西寺, Zhengzhou 鄭州 Dingjue Monastery 定覺寺, Qingzhou 青州 Shengfu Monastery 勝福寺, Bozhou 亳州 Kaiji Monastery 開寂寺, Ruzhou 汝州 Xingshi Monastery 興世寺, Guazhou 瓜州 Songjiao Monastery 崇教寺, Fanzhou 番州 Lingjiushan Monastery 靈鷲山寺, Guizhou 桂州 Yuanhua Monastery 緣化寺, Jiaozhou 交州 Chanzhong Monastery 禪衆寺, and Jiangzhou 蔣州 Qixia Monastery 棲霞寺.

<sup>59</sup> For a related discussion of this, refer to Nie, *Tangdai Fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 178–82.

<sup>60</sup> ‘Sheli ganying ji’ 舍利感應記 [Records of Spiritual Responses from Relics], *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 17.227.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Xi chan, san: Shi Tanqian zhuan’ 習禪三·釋曇遷傳 [Meditators, Part

in the time of Sui Emperor Wen, and during three successive occasions of distributing relics, pagodas spread throughout one hundred provinces, covering about one third of all provinces.<sup>62</sup> We can see that throughout all three rounds of distribution, the location was always selective.

Building monasteries and pagodas as a form of personal offering is a form of religious activity often seen after the transmission of Buddhism to China. In the Later Zhao period, this was influenced by the monk Fotucheng 佛圖澄 (232–248) with supranormal powers who was revered by Shi Le 石勒 (274–333, r. 319–333) and Shi Hu 石虎 (295–349, r. 334–349), of whom ‘in all, his disciples numbered nearly ten thousand, and in the provinces and prefectures he visited, he constructed Buddhist monasteries, eight hundred and ninety-three of them’ (前後門徒, 幾且一萬, 所歷州郡, 興立佛寺八百九十三所).<sup>63</sup> During the Northern Wei period, Feng Xi 馮熙 (438–495)

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Three: Biography of Shi Tanqian], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 18.666. ‘Minglü shang: Shi Hongzun zhuan’ 明律上·釋洪遵傳 [Vinaya Scholars, Part One: Biography of Shi Hongzun], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 22.840, records that a decree was issued in the fourth year of Renshou, saying: ‘I have already distributed [relics] near and far, for which funerary pagodas have been built. There are still some locations throughout the provinces that are yet to receive them. I now further invite the venerable ones to bring relics and travel to those provinces, to build pagodas as before.’ (朕已分布遠近, 皆起靈塔. 其間諸州, 猶有未遍. 今更請大德, 奉送舍利, 各往諸州, 依前造塔.)

<sup>62</sup> For detailed sources, refer to You, ‘Sui wendi renshou ban tianxia sheli kao’.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Shenyi, shang: Fotucheng zhuan’ 神異上·佛圖澄傳 [Psychic Powers, Part One: Biography of Fotucheng], *Gaoseng zhuan*, 9.356. *T* no. 2059, 50: 9.387a13–14. ‘Heshui’ 河水 [Waters of the Yellow River], *Shuijing zhu* 水經注 [Commentary on the Water Classic], Yang and Xiong annot., *Shuijing zhu shu* 5.436, records a five-storied pagoda in Pingjin 平晉 city, for which the inscription on the dew basin states: ‘In the eighth year of Jianwu during the Zhao, the monk Daolong and the Indian Master Fotucheng planted virtue and propagated the teachings, erecting this sacred shrine’ (趙建武八年, 比丘道龍, 和上竺浮圖澄, 樹德勸化, 興立神廟). The monastery here was constructed due to Daolong and Fotucheng ‘planting virtue and propagating the teachings’ (樹德勸化). Concern-



had ‘constructed Buddhist monastic residences in the provinces and boroughs, totalling seventy-two locations, and had sixteen volumes of the canonical scriptures transcribed’ (諸州鎮建佛圖精舍, 合七十二處, 寫一十六部一切經).<sup>64</sup> These monasteries and Buddhist pagodas that were spread throughout ‘the provinces and prefectures he visited’ or ‘in the provinces and boroughs’ (諸州鎮) were all influenced by individual people.<sup>65</sup> In terms of their basic nature, the measures taken by Sui Emperor Wen in ‘selective’ construction of monasteries and distribution of relics can be said to be an extension of his personal religious activity.

These examples of Fotucheng and Feng Xi all mention passing through ‘provinces and prefectures’ (州郡) or ‘provinces and boroughs’ (州鎮). Each province had one Daxingguo Monastery and one monastery by Sui Emperor Wen for the distribution of relics throughout the land, which highlights the element of local government. In reality, this displays the dual importance given by the emperor: the personal act of involvement in Buddhist activities, and the role of an emperor who visits ‘the provinces’ as their sovereign. This relationship in which monasteries and political regions are joined together, as stated earlier, exists within two forms of manifestation. The first form is principally the ‘selection’ for a particular reason,

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ing Fotucheng’s various Buddhist activities during the Later Zhao period, please refer to Tsukamoto, *Chūgoku bukkyō tsūshi*, vol. 1, 248–84.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Wai qi: Feng Xi zhuan’ 外戚馮熙傳 [Maternal Relatives: Biography of Feng Xi], *Weishu* 83.1819. These monasteries built by Feng Xi, ‘were mostly upon the peaks of high mountains’ (多在高山秀阜), apparently mainly mountain monasteries outside of the suburbs in the wilderness. The most famous of these was Fengwang Monastery 馮王寺 on Mount Mang 邙山, near Luoyang 洛陽.

<sup>65</sup> A more specific example of this kind of situation is illustrated in the case of the lively foreign monk Song Toutuo 嵩頭陀 (sixth c.) who was active in the Jin Qu Basin 金衢盆地 during the Liang dynasty (502–557). Utilising the offerings of great clans and the general public, over a period of time he built seven monasteries in the foothills surrounding the basin, forming a kind of monastic ‘system’ 體系. Refer to Wei, *Shanzhong’ de liuchao shi*, 236–41.

and the second form has elements of both institutionalisation and universalism.

Northern Qi Emperor Wenxuan 文宣, a.k.a. Gao Yang 高洋 (526–559, r. 550–559), issued a decree during the Tianbao era to establish ‘Chan monasteries’ 禪肆 in the provinces. This was an earlier example of building monasteries in a universal manner at all locations. ‘Shi Sengchou zhuan’ 釋僧稠傳 [Biography of Shi Sengchou] in *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* states:

[Sengchou] was also the master of a large cave grotto monastery, and served two terms as Buddhist Registrar. He had nearly one thousand followers, and those people who helped him in various matters filled the mountains and valleys. A decree was issued that the provinces within the nation would each set up a Chan monastery, and it ordered the intelligent and wise to teach therein. He regularly propounded and lectured on the sūtras, receiving bounteous offerings. 兼爲石窟大寺主，兩任綱位，練衆將千，供事繁委，充諸山谷。並敕國內諸州，別置禪肆，令達解念慧者就爲教授，時揚講誦，事事豐厚。<sup>66</sup>

This measure may have been enacted not long after the third year of Tianbao (552), prompted by Gao Yang’s respect for Chan Master Sengchou 僧稠 (470–560). It is even claimed that Gao Yang once thought to eliminate Buddhist doctrinal studies and promote solely meditation practice, and only refrained from this due to Sengchou’s protests. Whether the phrase ‘A decree was issued that the provinces within the nation would each set up a Chan monastery’ (敕國內諸州，別置禪肆) really meant setting them up in all provinces is still a matter of debate. However, at the very least, the textual sources do reveal that they were set up in ‘the provinces’. The question is: was this act of Gao Yang his own idea, or was there an even earlier precedent?

As is widely known, when Buddhism first entered China, it did not have an intimate connection with the state. After the Disaster of Yongjia 永嘉之亂 (311), wars and battles were frequent. Buddhist

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<sup>66</sup> ‘Xi chan chu: Shi Sengchou zhuan’ 習禪初釋僧稠傳 [Meditators, Part One: Biography of Shi Sengchou], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 16.576.

monastics were conscious that ‘without relying upon the head of state, it [was] difficult to establish the Dharma’ (不依國主，則法事難立)，<sup>67</sup> and began seeking state power for support. Due to this, Buddhist faith grew and expanded at a rapid pace, but it also brought about tension with state political power. If we take Northern Wei Emperor Taiwu’s persecution of Buddhism as a turning point, we see that state control of monastics and monasteries gradually became institutionalised. ‘Shi Lao zhi’ 釋老志 [Chronicles of Buddhism and Daoism] in *Wei shu* 魏書 [Book of Wei] records an edict given by Northern Wei Emperor Wencheng 文成帝 (440–465, r. 452–465) after he took the throne:

It is ordered that in the provinces, prefectures, and boroughs, in the places where the people dwell, it is permitted that they each construct an image of the Buddha, made of material of their choice, without restriction. For those who enjoy the Dharma of the path, who wish to become monastics, irrespective of their age or youth, if they are from good families, of good character, without taint of questionable actions, the wise of the towns and villages may permit them to leave the lay life. The quota is fifty [people] from the great provinces, forty people from the minor provinces, and ten people from the distant prefectures. 制諸州郡縣，於衆居之所，各聽建佛圖一區，任其財用，不制會限。其好樂道法，欲爲沙門，不問長幼，出於良家，性行素篤，無諸嫌穢，鄉里所明者，聽其出家。率大州五十、小州四十人，其郡遙遠臺者十人。<sup>68</sup>

That ‘it is permitted that they each construct an image of the Buddha’ (各聽建佛圖一區) in the provinces, prefectures, and boroughs is not due to the state directing the construction of monasteries in these locations, but means ‘allowing’ (允許) the common folk to restore monasteries destroyed under Taiwu’s persecution of Buddhism. On the other hand, that numbers were given for ‘each region’ (一區) for

<sup>67</sup> ‘Yijie er: Shi Daoan zhuan’ 義解二釋道安傳 [Interpreters, Part Two: Biography of Daoan], *Gaoseng zhuan* 5.178.

<sup>68</sup> ‘Shi Lao zhi’, *Weishu* 114.3036.

these monasteries under construction demonstrates state control. Sui Emperor Wen attained the throne after the Northern Zhou Buddhist persecution and issued decrees in the Kaihuang era for the provinces and boroughs ‘to each construct’ (各立) a monastery and a nunnery, an act of the same basic nature as that discussed here.<sup>69</sup> Construction of monasteries and numbers of monastics they could house required permission from the nation state and were required to abide by the relevant institutional regulations. This shows the character of the state’s control of Buddhism from the middle of the Northern Wei period onwards.

Relevant institutional regulations and laws are often seen in textual records after the middle of the Northern Wei. For example, an edict from Emperor Xiaowen 孝文 from the second year of Yanxing 延興 (472) prohibits ‘officials and common folk developing merit by constructing Buddhist monasteries’ (內外之人, 興建福業, 造立圖寺), on the grounds that it would lead to ‘ignorant people mutually extolling one another, the poor and the rich competing against each other in spending all their wealth, by seeking ever taller and larger [constructions], and harming and killing many small creatures in the process’ (無知之徒, 各相高尚, 貧富相競, 費竭財產, 務存高廣, 傷殺昆蟲含生之類). In the second year of Yongping 永平 (509) during the reign of Emperor Xuanwu 宣武, another decree was issued: ‘Monasteries that are permitted to be built are limited to those with fifty or more monastics. Those who build them outside of this

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<sup>69</sup> ‘Zhao li sengni ersi ji’ 詔立僧尼二寺記 [Record of Edicts for the Establishment of Both Monasteries and Nunneries], *Jinshi cuibian*, SKSLXB, series 1, vol. 1, 38.658–60. For related studies, refer Nie, *Tangdai fojiao guansi zhidu yanjiu*, 21–29. After Sui Emperor Wen was crowned, he was faced with the monastery ruins left behind by the Northern Zhou Buddhist persecution. In the fourth month of the first year of Daxiang 大象 era (579) in the Northern Zhou, the edict stated: ‘The common folk should be able to practice Chan meditation and recite the scriptures without obstruction. Only the capital and Luoyang may each build one monastery. The other provinces and prefectures are not yet permitted to do so’ (其民間禪誦, 一無有礙, 唯京師及洛陽, 各立一寺, 自餘州郡, 猶未通許). *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 10.157a8–10.

will be punished as transgressors of an edict, and monastics will be expelled by the monastery to another province' (其有造寺者, 限僧五十以上, 啓聞聽造. 若有輒營置者, 處以違敕之罪, 其寺僧衆擯出外州). In the first year of Shen'gui 神龜 (518), during the time of Emperor Xiaoming 孝明, the Prince of Rencheng 任城王, Yuan Cheng 元澄 (468–520), made a petition, stating:

From now forth, if the other provinces wish to construct monasteries, they must have at least fifty monastics, and apply to this province for approval, upon which the Sangha Official will make an assessment, only after which may approval be given. Any transgression of this will be punished as in the past. Any provinces or prefectures that allow this [construction] without prohibition will be punished equally as transgressors. 自今外州, 若欲造寺, 僧滿五十已上, 先令本州表列, 昭玄量審, 奏聽乃立. 若有違犯, 悉依前科. 州郡已下, 容而不禁, 罪同違旨.<sup>70</sup>

From these examples it can be seen that from this time forth, it was permitted to construct monasteries for those with 'more than fifty monastics' (僧五十以上), but approval had to be requested from provincial government. This became a standard official process for the Zhaoxuan Monastery, requiring hearings and assessments before the work could be carried out. These measures and their relevant decrees were not always strictly followed in their execution, but at least in principle, the imperial court did not permit the construction of monasteries that had not gone through the official documented channels.

With these circumstances in mind, if we take another look at Gao Yang's efforts to build Chan monasteries in the provinces, and Sui Emperor Wen's various construction measures, we discover that there is a vein of 'state control' (國家管控) ideology running through them all. Because the construction of monasteries required state approval under regulatory requirements, one could not just build as one pleased. Emperors' decrees to build monasteries therefore became a kind of 'bestowing grace' (恩賜), which on one hand

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<sup>70</sup> 'Shi Lao zhi', *Weishu* 114.3038, 3041, and 3047.

showed the emperor's respect for the Buddha Dharma, and on the other hand demonstrated of state power and institutional reach into the Buddhist sphere.

Related to all of this is the question of ordaining monastics into the renunciant life. Since the middle of the Northern Wei there was a series of regulations that limited and managed the number of people who could ordain.<sup>71</sup> Sui Emperor Yang 煬 (569–618, r. 604–618) issued a decree on the twenty-eighth day of the first month of the third year of Daye 大業 era (605), which stated: 'Within the bounds of the nation, special causes should be made. Each of the provinces should invite monastics to practice the path for seven days, ordaining a total of one thousand people into the monastic life'.

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<sup>71</sup> For example, 'Shi Lao zhi', Weishu (114.3039 and 3042–43) record an edict from the sixth year of Taihe 太和 era (492) by Emperor Xiaowen 孝文:

On the eighth day of the fourth month and fifteenth day of the seventh month, the great provinces are permitted to ordain one hundred people as monks and nuns; fifty people in the middle provinces; and twenty people in the minor provinces. This shall be the standard rule to be recorded as such'. 四月八日, 七月十五日, 聽大州度一百人爲僧尼, 中州五十人, 下州二十人, 以爲常準, 著於令。

During the time of Emperor Xiaoming 孝明, on the second year of Xiping 熙平 era (517), Empress Dowager Hu 胡太后 (?–528) issued a decree:

Monastics will be ordained annually, based on the limits of one hundred people for the great provinces. The provinces and prefectures will present three hundred people ten days before, with two hundred people from the middle provinces, and one hundred people from the minor provinces. The Provincial Controller, Monastery Controller, and officials will carefully select the required number of people. Any who are not dedicated should not be considered for selection. If bad people are chosen, with the Prefect in charge, they will be considered as transgressing this order. The Governor, District Magistrate, and related officials will be punished. The Controller and Monastery Controller will be moved to another province five hundred miles away to be monks. 年常度僧, 依限大州應百人者, 州郡於前十日解送三百人, 其中州二百人, 小州一百人. 州統, 維那與官及精練簡取充數. 若無精行, 不得濫採. 若取非人, 刺史爲首, 以違旨論, 太守, 縣令, 綱僚節級連坐, 統及維那移五百里外異州爲僧.

(謹於率土之內，建立勝緣，州別請僧七日行道，仍總度一千人出家).<sup>72</sup> The occasion of ordaining monastics into the path takes a province as its basic geographical unit, being universally enacted ('each of the provinces should invite' 州別請). In the first year of Zhenguan 貞觀 era (626), Tang Emperor Taizong also enacted a similar measure: 'All places with monasteries in the provinces throughout the land should ordain people as monks and nuns. The total number is limited to three thousand. Provinces are major and minor, and lands are Han and foreign. The actual number [to be ordained] in a given place is to be considered by the relevant authorities' (其天下諸州有寺之處宜令度人爲僧尼。總數以三千爲限。其州有大小。地有華夷。當處所度少多。委有司量定).<sup>73</sup> This not only regulated the total number of monks and nuns to be ordained, but also emphasised that the provinces were not of identical size, and the numbers for each province to ordain '[was] to be considered by the relevant authorities' (委有司量定). Although these two measures by Sui Emperor Yang and Tang Emperor Taizong were not about constructing monasteries, they still include a similar ideology to the universal construction of monasteries in 'the provinces'.

Monasteries did not exist independently in the nation state, but were a form of religious establishment under state approval. There is a certain connecting thread between this kind of idea and the attitude of the imperial states during the Han and Jin periods towards shrines. Commonplace local shrines during the Han and Jin periods can be divided into two types. The first type was those listed for 'sacrificial ceremonies' 祀典, which made sacrifices during the four seasons with the approval of the imperial state. The second type was for 'immoral sacrifices' 淫祠, which were not recognised by officialdom. We often see the prohibition and destruction of the latter by officials in textual

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<sup>72</sup> 'Sui Yangdi xingdao du tianxia ren chi' 隋煬帝行道度天下人勅 [Sui Emperor Yang Decree to Ordain People Throughout the Land], *Guang hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.328.

<sup>73</sup> 'Tang Taizong duseng yu tianxia zhao' 唐太宗度僧於天下詔 [Tang Emperor Taizong Decree to Ordain Monastics Throughout the Land], *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.329b1-3.

sources from the Han to Tang periods.<sup>74</sup> The state would at times ‘selectively’ set up sacrificial shrines at some fixed locations, such as at Wuyue, Sidu 四瀆, and at shrines to memorialise the emperors (and sages of the past) mentioned above. Apart from these, prefecture and county officials also had some regulated sacrificial activities, such as in the first year of the Western Han, when Emperor Gaozu (256/247–195 BCE, r. 202–195 BCE) ‘had shrines to the star of divine [agriculture] established throughout the land’ (令天下立靈星祠).<sup>75</sup> This was not just done for the ‘star of divine agriculture’ (靈星), but also for the ‘altar of soil and grain’ (社稷), the ‘god of agriculture’ (先農), ‘uncle wind’ (風伯), and ‘master of rain’ (雨師).<sup>76</sup> From all of these examples, from the Han and Jin periods to the Northern Dynasties, and further still to the Sui and Tang, and from deity shrines to monasteries, we see a strong and ongoing presence of political cultural practice and regulation, all of which demonstrates the nation state’s ‘predominance’ (優勢) over religious practices.

At this point in our study, a question arises: if we understand this from the perspective of such a historical line of thought, were the many Dingguo Monasteries from the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi periods ultimately built in all the ‘provinces’ selectively or universally as a religious practice? As we have already described, the historical materials for Dingguo Monasteries present us with some problems, but at least we can say confidently that they were not all built at the same time. Among the locations where they were constructed, Yecheng and Jinyang were capitals and political centres during the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi periods, giving them a special status.

<sup>74</sup> See Cai, ‘Yinsi, yinci, yu sidian’; Lei, *Jiaomiao zhiwai*, 220–92.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Jisi zhi xia’ 祭祀志下 [Sacrificial Volume, Part Two], *Houhan shu* 9.3204.

<sup>76</sup> For example, as recorded in ‘Liyi zhi, er’ 禮儀志二 [Etiquette Volume, Part Two], *Sui shu* 7.141:

Every year at the spring and autumn equinoxes, the prefectures and counties will make sacrifices to the altar of soil and grain, and god of agriculture; and the counties will also make sacrifices to the divine star [of agriculture], uncle wind, and master of rain. 每以仲春仲秋, 並令郡國縣祠社稷, 先農, 縣又兼祀靈星, 風伯, 雨師之屬。



From the Northern Wei onwards, Dingzhou was an important military site, and was a place where people took refuge after the Rebellion of the Six Boroughs 六鎮之亂. Luozhou, Jianzhou, Jizhou, and Yanzhou were all important military towns for the defensive lines of the Western Wei and Liang. Building monasteries for the military defence of the nation state at these particular sites clearly had political significance. Combining this with arguments from evolving institutional systems, it is more reasonable to say that the Dingguo Monasteries during the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi were selectively constructed in the capital and these provinces.<sup>77</sup>

### 3. Origins and Ideology of Constructing Monasteries at Battle Sites

In the fourth year of Zhenguan (629), Tang Emperor Taizong ‘recommended that in locations where soldiers clashed in combat’ (建義以來交兵之處), ‘each should build a Buddhist monastery for those righteous and wicked soldiers who had lost their lives in battle’ (義士

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<sup>77</sup> The ‘institutional’ phenomenon of a standardised system of monasteries must by necessity have its own process of evolution. Wen Zisheng’s composition of the ‘Dingguo si bei’ 定國寺碑 [Dingguo Monastery Stele] is a historical source that originally understood this problem. Unfortunately, presently extant stele texts are largely collections of fragmented text, wherein we only see ideas about preserving the Buddhist Dharma, with a complete absence of any mention of the origins of the monasteries. See ‘Neidian xia: sibe’ 內典下·寺碑 [Internal Documents, Part Two: Monastery Steles], *Yiwen leiju* 77.1313; *Bianzheng lun*, T no. 2110, 52: 3.509, summarises the monasteries of the Northern Wei period, dividing them into ‘forty-seven large national monasteries’ (國家大寺四十七所) and ‘eight hundred and thirty-nine monasteries of the vassal states of the kings, lords, and nobles of the five classes’ (王公貴室五等諸侯寺八百三十九所). Summarising the monasteries of the Northern Qi, he mentions ‘forty-three monasteries constructed by the imperial family’ (皇家立寺四十三所). But in the Northern Zhou, Sui and Tang, there is no particular mention of ‘nation state’ (國家) or ‘imperial family’ (皇家), just total numbers of monasteries.

凶徒殞身戎陣者,各建寺刹), ‘setting up a field of merits, to save their lost souls’ (樹立福田,濟其營魄).<sup>78</sup> This referred to seven battle sites, namely, Binzhou 邠州 (defeating Xue Ju 薛舉 [?-618]), Lüzhou 呂州 (defeating Huo Laosheng 霍老生 [ca. sixth c.]), Jinzhou 晉州 (defeating Song Jinggang 宋金剛 [?-620]), Fenzhou 汾州 (defeating Liu Wuzhou 劉武周 [?-620]), Mount Mang 邙山 in Luozhou 洛州 (defeating Wang Shichong 王世充 [?-621]), Zhengzhou 鄭州 (defeating Dou Jiande 竇建德 [573-621]), and Mingzhou 洺州 (defeating Liu Heitai 劉黑泰 [?-623]). The construction of monasteries at these sites was an important event in the history of medieval Chinese Buddhist history. These measures were influenced by Sui Emperor Wen’s construction of a monastery at the battlefield of Xiangzhou, but expanded upon to form a system of seven battle ground monasteries, although they did not have a standardised name.

The stele texts of these seven monasteries were individually composed by seven different scholars, namely: Grand Master of Remonstrance (*jianyi dafu* 諫議大夫) Zhu Zishe 朱子奢 (?-641, who wrote the Zhaoren Monastery 昭仁寺 stele in Binzhou); Editorial Director (*zhuzuo lang* 著作郎) Xu Jingzong 許敬宗 (592-672, for the Puji Monastery 普濟寺 stele in Lüzhou 呂州); Imperial Diarist (*qiju lang* 起居郎) Chu Liang 褚亮 (560-647, author of Jinzhou’s Ciyun Monastery 慈雲寺 stele); Chief Minister for the Court of the Imperial Clan (*zongzheng qing* 宗正卿) Li Baiyao 李百藥 (564-648, for Hongji Monastery 弘濟寺 stele in Jinzhou); Editorial Director Yu Shinan 虞世南 (558-638, composer of the Zhaojue Monastery 昭覺寺 stele in Mount Mang, Luozhou); Director of the Palace Library (*mishu jian* 秘書監) Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581-645, who wrote the Dengci Monastery 等慈寺 stele in Zhengzhou); and Attendant Gentleman (*zhongshu shiliang* 中書侍郎) Cen Wenben 岑文本 (595-645,

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<sup>78</sup> ‘Tang Taizong yu xingzhensuo li qisi zhao’ 唐太宗於行陣所立七寺詔 [Decree of Tang Emperor Taizong for the Construction of Seven Monasteries at Places of Conflict], *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.328c12-329a6. In the same fascicle is the ‘Tang Taizong wei zhanwangren shezhai xingdao zhao’ 唐太宗為戰亡人設齋行道詔 [Decree of Tang Emperor Taizong to Set Up Zhai and Cultivate the Path for Those Killed in War].

for Mingzhou's Zhaofu Monastery 昭福寺 stele). Among these steles, the 'Zhaoren si bei' 昭仁寺碑 [Zhaoren Monastery Stele] and 'Dengci si bei' 等慈寺碑 [Dengci Monastery Stele] have fortunately survived to the present day. When we look at their content, we find two aspects: the compassionate salvation of Buddhism and praises for honour and virtue. For example, the lengthy text of the 'Zhaoren si bei' describes the process from the chaotic demise of the Sui to the ascension of the Tang, in particular the personal honours of Li Shimin. It mentions that 'the Han dynasty created the map of the empire, the Wei began the works of the kings, erecting great monuments at the Si River, writing on the hard stone of Fanchang, their resplendent names remain everywhere' (漢廓帝圖, 魏開王業, 樹豐碑於泗水, 撰貞石於繁昌, 莫不垂鴻名, 騰顯號). It also asks: 'as for the virtue of engraving, is it not vast?' (刊勒之美, 不其懋歟). At the end, the text prays that 'even if the high heavens are burned to ashes, and the great seas become fields, the works of my emperor and this pure monastery will last forever to posterity' (雖夫高天已燼, 大海成田, 我皇基與淨刹, 終永永而長傳).<sup>79</sup> The 'Dengci si bei' begins by stating: 'If there is a great work, vast deeds are like light resplendent in the four directions. A friendly heart lasts long, and deep virtue gives itself to myriad things. Saving from disaster and avoiding calamity, show great power through divine principle. Establish love and propound kindness, emphasise humaneness and succour the world'. (若夫有功可大, 盛業光於四表; 有親可久, 厚德加於萬類. 救災撥亂, 闡宏威以則天; 立愛宣慈, 重至仁而濟物). The inscribed praises state: 'The holy emperor follows the divine mandate, with sympathy for the world's confusion. He supports the pillars of heaven, making the earth stable. With the myriad calamities averted, the many evils are completely vanquished. Within the vast and broad land, all are blessed and nurtured' (聖帝膺期, 愍彼顛覆. 始建天柱, 初安地軸. 萬難畢夷, 群凶盡戮. 芒芒率土, 俱荷亭育).<sup>80</sup> In other words, these monastery steles are in

<sup>79</sup> Zhu Zishe 朱子奢, 'Zhaoren si bei' 昭仁寺碑 [Zhaoren Monastery Stele], *Quan Tangwen* 135.1362–66. The original stele is in Changwu 長武, Shaanxi 陝西 province.

<sup>80</sup> Yan Shigu, 'Dengci si bei' 等慈寺碑 [Dengci Monastery Stele], *Quan*

actual fact steles intended to show the emperor's honours, glories, and works, expressed through the mode of Buddhist love and compassion.

Earlier, in the first year of Kaihuang (581), Sui Emperor Wen built a monastery at the battlefield of Xiangzhou and inscribed a 'record of deeds' (紀事) on a stele there, which is unfortunately no longer extant. We are lucky, though, that preserved decrees and similar material have content describing the end of the Yuchi Jiong Rebellion 尉遲迥之亂, which also state:

May my ministers who have died for my works grow in bodhi (wisdom). May those who defied me go from the darkness to light, realise suffering and emptiness, and escape from the cycle of rebirth. May the leviathan funeral mounds of [my enemies], be transformed into wondrous hathpases. May the [battlefield] wild with dragons and snakes, forever become landscapes of crystals and gems. May all creatures with [Buddha] nature, completely enter the gate of the Dharma. 庶望死事之臣, 菩提增長, 悖逆之侶, 從暗入明, 並究苦空, 咸拔生死. 鯨鯢之觀, 化爲微妙之臺; 龍蛇之野, 永作頗梨之境. 無邊有性, 盡入法門.<sup>81</sup>

This is just as Lei Wen has stated, this manner of constructing monasteries at battle grounds to liberate deceased soldiers needs to be distinguished from the tradition where the victorious build a 'barrow mound' 京觀 of the skulls of the vanquished. This is therefore a new phenomenon within the sphere of political culture.<sup>82</sup>

The name of this monastery build by Sui Emperor Wen at the Xiangzhou battle site is not mentioned in the decree, but it is quite possible that it is Daci Monastery 大慈寺 located to the west of Yecheng.

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*Tangwen* 148.1497–99. The original stele is in Xinyang 滎陽, Henan province. In the 1950s it was damaged. Photos can be seen in Tokiwa and Sekino, *Zhongguo wenhua shiji*, vol. 5 73–74.

<sup>81</sup> 'Sui Gaozu yu Xiangzhou zhanchang lisi zhao' 隋高祖於相州戰場立寺詔 [Decree by Sui Emperor Gaozu for the Construction of a Monastery at the Battle Field of Xiangzhou], *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.328b18–21.

<sup>82</sup> Lei, 'Cong "Jingguan" dao Fosi'.

Daoxuan's 道宣 (596–667) *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄 [Collected Records of the Spiritual Efficacy of the Three Jewels within Shenzhou], fascicle one, mentions that the pagoda of this monastery 'is just that personally erected by decree by Sui Emperor Gaozu' (即隋高祖手敕所置). Yuchi Jiong also raised his army at Ye-cheng in rebellion against the Sui, and after his defeat it was said that 'one million people under his command' (將百萬人) were captured:

[The Sui army] gathered the prisoners in the Youyu Garden at the south of the monastery and beheaded them at dawn the next morning. There were holes in the garden walls, and those who escaped were let go, but this stopped at first light. There were still 600,000 prisoners who were executed on the banks of the Zhang River. The bodies were thrown in the river until the waters themselves ceased to flow. The river water flowed with blood for a month, and every night there was the crying of ghosts in sorrow and anger that cut to the heart. This matter was reported to the emperor. The emperor said: 'In this massacre, there were many innocents. Yuchi Jiong was the only criminal, as the others were coerced by him. At the time, those mourning knew this matter, but as it was the start of the nation there was no opportunity, and so they were not released. Daci Monastery is to be built on Mount Geju to the south of the Youyu Garden. It is to be built by removing the three noble hathpaxes [i.e., copper noble hathpace, gold phoenix hathpace, and ice well hathpace]. Services to the Buddha should be made six times per day, adding one service for the deceased of the garden'. After the monastery was finished and monastics dwelt there, services and chanting were carried out according to the decree. The sounds of cries and sorrow quickly ceased forever. 總集寺北遊豫園中, 明旦斬決。園牆有孔, 出者縱之, 至曉便斷, 猶有六十萬人, 並於漳河岸斬之。流尸水中, 水爲不流, 血河一月, 夜夜鬼哭, 哀怨切人。以事聞帝。帝曰: '此段一誅, 深有枉濫, 賊止蔚迴, 餘並被驅。當時惻隱, 咸知此事, 國初機候, 不獲縱之。可於遊豫園南葛履山上立大慈寺, 坼三爵臺以營之, 六時禮佛, 加一拜爲園中枉死者。' 寺成僧住, 依敕禮唱, 怨哭之聲, 一期頓絕矣。<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu*, T no. 2106, 52: 1.410. This monastery was

Here, the description of the background for the construction of Daci Monastery comes from Daoxuan's visit to the ruins of Yecheng where he personally heard this story from a monk at the monastery there. Youyu Garden 遊豫園 is just Hualin Park 華林苑, a park made during the period of the Later Zhao (319–351) and later named the Youyu Garden in the time of the Northern Qi,<sup>84</sup> located to the west of the three hatpaces of Yecheng. To the south of the park is Mount Geju 葛屨, upon which Daci Monastery was built. During the rebellion of Yuchi Jiong, the punitive military force led by Wei Xiaokuan 韋孝寬 (509–580) encamped near the West Gate 西門 Bao Shrine 豹祠 to the west of Yecheng. When Yuchi Jiong sallied forth to attack from Yecheng, the final battle between the two opposing armies took place right next to the Youyu Garden. This large-scale massacre of captives from Yuchi Jiong's army at the Youyu Garden is also recorded

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one of the first monasteries for relic distribution under Sui Emperor Wen in the first year of Renshou 仁壽 era. Wang Shao's 'Sheli ganying ji', states: 'A pagoda was erected at Daci Monastery in Xiangzhou. On that day it snowed. Just when the relics were to be interred, the sun suddenly blazed forth. When the [relics] entered the casket, the clouds covered the sky again' (相州於大慈寺起塔。天時陰雪。舍利將下，日便朗照，始入函，雲復合) (*Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 17.215b3–4). This pagoda was destroyed during the wars at the end of the Sui. According to Daoxuan's *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* (T no. 2106, 52: 1.410a2–4), at that time, 'Bandit clans fought against each other. The monastery was located on Mount Geju to the west of the three noble hatpaces, and the people from four villages came for shelter there, fortifying and protecting it' (群盜互陣，寺在三爵臺西葛屨山上，四鄉來投，築城固守), T no. 2106, 52: 1.410a2–4. Finally, 'a fire suddenly flared up, burning it all down. Only the shrine with the image of the contemplating prince in the south-east corner remained' (忽然火起，焚蕩都盡，唯東南角太子思惟像殿得存), T no. 2106, 52: 1.410a6–7. According to 'Dili zhi, er' 地理志二 [Geography Volume, Part Two], *Jiu Tangshu* 39.1492, in the first year of Sui Emperor Yang's reign, 'Daci Monastery was established in Ye County at the ancient capital Ye[cheng]' (於鄴故都大慈寺置鄴縣).

<sup>84</sup> 'Hebei dao si: Xiangzhou Yexian' 河北道四·相州鄴縣 [Hebei Passage, Four: Xiangzhou, Ye County], article for 'Hualin yuan' 華林苑 [Hualin Park], *Taiping huanyu ji* 55.656.

in the *Zhou shu* 周書 [Book of Zhou] and *Sui shu* 隋書 [Book of Sui],<sup>85</sup> so we can be sure of the facts here. From the description given by the monks of Daci Monastery, the main intention behind Sui Emperor Wen's construction of the monastery on this particular site was to absolve the terrible effects of this massacre of prisoners. This is the specific historical context of the passage 'may the leviathan funeral mounds of [my enemies], be transformed into wondrous hathpases' (鯨鯢之觀, 化爲微妙之臺).

We can deduce that that monastery stele erected at the Xiangzhou battlefield in the first year of Kaihuang must be the same as the steles for the seven monasteries such as the 'Zhaoren si bei' and 'Dengci si bei' from the fourth year of Zhenguan. They first emphasise the legitimacy of the establishment of the Sui dynasty nation state and justification for crushing Yuchi Jiong's rebellion, and then give a detailed description of the conditions for the construction of the monastery. These monastery and stele landscapes, presented in the form of Buddhist compassion, became memorial vectors for displaying the military honours and compassion of Sui Emperor Wen and Li Shimin (Tang Emperor Taizong).<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> 'Wei Xiaokuan zhuan' 韋孝寬傳 [Biography of Wei Xiaokuan], *Zhoushu* 31.544: 'Jiong was forced to commit suicide in defeat. His soldiers that remained in the city were all destroyed in the Youyu Garden' (迺窮迫自殺。兵士在小城中者, 盡坑於遊豫園). 'Wuxing zhi, xia' 五行志下 [Chronicles of Five Deeds, Two], *Suishu* 23.656: 'His forces and tens of thousands of his men were destroyed at Youyu Garden' (坑其黨與數萬人於遊豫園).

<sup>86</sup> As described above, Sui Emperor Wen also erected a memorial monastery for himself at the battle site of Bingzhou. For his father, he also personally built monasteries at Xiangzhou, Jingzhou, Suizhou, Jinyang, and elsewhere—sites where his father had led his armies in the past. It was only because the way in which the Sui dynasty's ascension to power was somewhat unique that there were no large-scale military campaigns, as the suppression of Yuchi Jiong at Xiangzhou was not the same as a great heroic battle for justice to start a new nation state. Therefore, from the perspective of memorialising honours and glory, building the monastery at the Xiangzhou battlefield was nowhere near as significant as Li Shimin's construction of monasteries at seven battle sites.

Sui Emperor Wen was not the first to construct monasteries at battlefields. This kind of measure was already occurring during the Eastern Wei and Western Wei. *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 [Categorised Arts and Texts], fascicle seventy-seven, includes monastery stele texts of Wen Zisheng's 'Hanling shansi bei' 寒陵山寺碑 [Hanlingshan Monastery Stele] and 'Yinshan si bei' 印山寺碑 [Yinshan Monastery Stele], both of which were constructed at battle sites. This point has received less attention in the past.

Hanlingshan Monastery 寒陵山寺 (or 韓陵山寺) was built to the south of Yecheng by Gao Huan as a memorial to the Battle of Hanling 韓陵之戰 fought against the Erzhu clan 爾朱氏. The text from the stele recorded in the *Yiwen leiju* can basically be divided into four sections. The first part section states:

In the past, [Duke] Wen of Jin honoured Zhou [practices], and his contributions passed down to Jiantu. When [Duke] Huan of Qi ruled the land, his glory continued to Shaoling. Their way was the crown of the vassal states, their honour highest throughout the land. The places they ruled, the sites where they battled, are now desolate and barren wastelands. Those who speak of them know only their names, but nothing more. Those who travel there from afar do not know these places. Would not erecting a copper plaque as a sign, and engraving a stone record of these honours, be appropriate to preserve such things? 昔晉文尊周，績宣於踐土；齊桓霸世，威著於邵陵。並道冠諸侯，勛高天下。衣裳會同之所，兵車交合之處，寂寞銷沉，荒涼磨滅，言談者空知其名，遙遇者不識其地。然則樹銅表迹，刊石記功，有道存焉，可不尚與？<sup>87</sup>

The stele text mentions 'erecting a copper plaque as a sign, and engraving a stone record of these honours' (樹銅表迹，刊石記功), explaining the construction of the monastery and stele inscription, though the most important point is continuing the traditional practice of memorialising honours and contributions. This level of intention is also seen in the early Tang 'Zhaoren si bei'. Next, the

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<sup>87</sup> 'Neidian xia: sibe', *Yiwen leiju* 77.1311-12.



second section talks about the chaotic situation at the end of the Northern Wei: ‘the Erzhu clan ended the net of the heavens and broke the levers of the earth. Income was not given to the imperial household, and officials worked for their personal ends’ (爾朱氏既絕彼天網，斷茲地紐，祿去王室，政出私門). This then leads to the third section, which explains how the ‘Great Minister, the Prince of Bohai’ (大丞相渤海王, Gao Huan), fought to save the world, and the circumstances of the Battle of Hanlingshan. The last section of the stele text concerns the construction of the mountain monastery: ‘on inspecting the fertile territory, this monastery was built, shaped in stone and metal, carved with jewels and jade. This work is for the virtuous deeds of the Buddha. This creation is a blessing’ (既考茲沃壤，建此精廬，砥石礪金，瑩珠琢玉。經始等於佛功，製作同於造化). Also, ‘even if the high heavens are destroyed by fire, and the great earth is engulfed in a flood, this strong tradition will not wither, a memorial that will never be forgotten’ (雖復高天銷於猛炭，大地淪於積水，固以傳之不朽，終亦記此無忘). Although the four sections of the stele text mention ‘the virtuous deeds of the Buddha’ (佛功), its main purpose, however, is to be a memorial to events at the battle ground and extol the glorious military contributions of Gao Huan.

‘Yinshan si bei’ should be Wen Zisheng’s ‘Mangshan si bei’ in the ‘Zu Ting zhuan’ in *Beiqi shu*.<sup>88</sup> Here, the character *yin* 印 is a scribal error for *mang* 𠂔 (*mang* 芒). The extant stele text is also full of praise for ‘Great Minister, the Prince of Bohai’, (i.e., Gao Huan). For example: ‘enthused with the spirit of mountain and water, imbued with the vital force of the firmament’ (膺岳瀆之靈，感辰象之氣); ‘his physique endowed with one hundred qualities, his insight encompassing myriad facets, his manner of humility and quietude, his thought reached the pinnacle of the gods’ (體備百行，智周萬象，道兼語嘿，思極天人); ‘he was known to the people as a sleeping dragon, and he was the true protecting instrument of the sovereign’ (世稱卧龍，實在王佐之器); ‘his path was to save all throughout the land, his course was to reach the very gods’ (道足以濟天下，行足以通神明). These verses in praise are even more pronounced than those of the

<sup>88</sup> ‘Zu Ting zhuan’, *Beiqi shu* 39.515.

‘Hanlingshan si bei’. What follows in the stele text is also an emphasis on the significance of the chaotic political situation at the end of the Northern Wei and Gao Huan as a saviour therefrom.

At the end of the [Northern Wei] Yong’an period, many conspiracies arose. Bees and scorpions were venomous, jackals and wolves attacked one another. Bows and crossbows filled the moat, spears were drawn on the emperor’s retinue. The world’s morals decayed, and seas and rivers rose. The azure dragon hid as the white tiger emerged. The time of those with the divine mandate arrived, as they became ministers in due course. He extended his hand to those mired down, muddied his boots in the raging waves. With a bright blazing sun in his heart, he bore the strong wind on his sleeve. He moved with kindness and acted with loyalty, with his followers as close as a shadow, with his supporters near like an echo. 永安之末，時各異謀，蜂蠆有毒，豺狼反噬，彀弩臨城，抽戈犯蹕，世道交喪，海水群飛。既而蒼龍入隱，白虎出見，命世有期，匡時作宰。拯沉溺以援手，涉波瀾而濡足，懸暉日於胸懷，起大風於衿袖。動之以仁義，行之以忠貞，附之者影從，應之者響起。<sup>89</sup>

The erecting of these steles can be connected with the Battle of Mangshan 邙山之戰 between the Eastern and Western Wei, in the third month of the first year of Wuding 武定. This was Gao Huan’s one great victory, ‘seizing the Commanding General of the Western Wei and over four hundred in his retinue, captives and fatalities numbered about 60,000’ (擒西魏督將以下四百餘人，俘斬六萬計).<sup>90</sup> Yuwen Tai’s 宇文泰 armed forces suffered great damage to their strength at this major battle. Not long after, ‘he rallied the powerful clans of the Guanlong region to augment his armies’ (廣募關隴豪右，以增軍旅),<sup>91</sup> which became the first use of the later historically important militia reserve system (府兵制). This military campaign was one of the most significant political memories concerning the

<sup>89</sup> ‘Neidian xia: sibeī’, *Yiwen leiju* 77.1312.

<sup>90</sup> ‘Shenwu ji: xia’ 神武紀下 [Era of Shenwu, Part Two], *Beiqi shu* 2.21.

<sup>91</sup> ‘Wendi ji: xia’ 文帝紀下 [Era of Emperor Wen, Part Two], *Zhoushu* 2.28.

formation of the nation state for the Northern Qi empire. Of the twenty songs promoted during the Northern Qi period, the seventh song was ‘Zhan Mangshan’ 戰芒山 [Battle for Mount Mang]: ‘it is said that [Emperor] Shenwu slew 100,000 of the Zhou, and only the general escaped with his life’ (言神武斬周十萬之衆，其軍將脫身走免也).<sup>92</sup> The records contained in the *Yiwen leiju* should just be the first half of the stele text, and after ‘with his supporters near like an echo’ (應之者響起), I think that there should also be a description of the background conditions for building the monastery and the events of the Battle of Mount Mang.<sup>93</sup>

Yuwen Tai likewise also took measures to build a monastery at a battle ground. In the third year of Datong 大統 (535) during the Western Wei, after Yuwen Tai defeated Gao Huan at Shayuan 沙苑, he constructed Zhongwu Monastery 忠武寺 at the Shayuan battle site.

At that time, Taizu had few soldiers, so they hid in the sedges, to surprise in ambush and win victory. Later, where the soldiers stood,

<sup>92</sup> ‘Yiyue zhi: zhong’ 音樂志中 [Volume on Music, Part Two], *Suishu* 14.330.

<sup>93</sup> ‘Chengbei’ 城北 [North of the City], *Luoyang qielan ji* 5.349–50, records two monasteries in Mount Mang, i.e., Fengwang Monastery and Qi Xianwu Wang Monastery 齊獻武王寺. Fengwang Monastery was constructed before the Northern Wei moved to Luoyang. It was built by Feng Xi 馮熙, and the stele text was composed by the Attendant Gentleman 中書侍郎 Jia Yuanshou 賈元壽 (fifth c.) (‘Wai qi: Feng Xi zhuan’, *Weishu* 83.1819.) Qi Xianwu Wang Monastery is obviously connected with Gao Huan. ‘Neidian xia: sibe’, *Yiwen leiju* 77.1320–21, includes Xing Zicai’s 邢子才 (496–561) ‘Xianwu huangdi si ming’ 獻武皇帝寺銘 [Inscriptions for Xianwu Huangdi Monastery], which states: ‘His piercing wisdom was sagely, his ability bestowed by the gods, saving the nation and protecting the people, he recreated the age of Huaxia, with meritorious service higher than Yi [Yin] and Lü [Shang], and virtue beyond [Lord] Huan and [Lord] Wen’ (惟睿作聖，有縱自天，匡國庇民，再造區夏，功高伊呂，道邁桓文). It seems reasonable that ‘Mangshan si bei’ composed by Wen Zisheng should have been made in the latter. We can thus deduce that the monastery here may have originally been named Mangshan Monastery 芒山寺, which was changed to Xianwu Huangdi Monastery 獻武皇帝寺 after Gao Huan passed away.

each man planted a tree in memorial to their meritorious deeds, and those trees are still there to this day. Zhongwu Monastery was built at the battle site. 其時太祖兵少, 隱伏於沙草之中, 以奇勝之. 後於兵立之處, 人栽一樹, 以表其功, 今樹往往猶存. 仍於戰處立忠武寺.<sup>94</sup>

Planting trees and building Zhongwu Monastery at the Shayuan battle site was to create a ‘memorial to their meritorious deeds’ (表其功), a similar intention to Gao Huan’s construction of Hanlingshan Monastery and Mangshan Monastery at the two battle grounds. The meaning of the monastery name, ‘Zhongwu’ 忠武 (Loyal Military), also refers to the brave loyalty and military honours of his soldiers. The battle at Shayuan had great significance for the political power of the Western Wei, as seen in the sixth of fifteen battle songs from the period of Northern Zhou Emperor Xuan, ‘Ke Shayuan’ 克沙苑 [Conquering Shayuan]: ‘it is said that Taizu slew 100,000 captives of the Qi at Shayuan, and only [Emperor] Shenwu escaped with his life to the river, fleeing his fate on a single skiff’ (言太祖俘斬齊十萬衆於沙苑, 神武脫身至河, 單舟走免也).<sup>95</sup>

Erecting monasteries at battle sites during the Eastern Wei and Western Wei periods combined Buddhism together with battle memorials, the meritorious deeds of the monarchs, and liberation of soldiers killed in battle. This practice formed a new kind of religious and political cultural landscape. Fei Zhangfang 費長房 (?–598+) considered that:

When there are nation states, there are wars. So it has been since ancient times. But there has never been construction of monasteries at battle sites, where prayers of blessings are made for those who died in combat. ... If it were not for great masters being reborn here, adamantine warriors descending to the world, protecting those lives killed and injured in battle, assuaging the souls of those in these troubled times, who would be capable of this? 夫有國有征, 肇自上古, 未

<sup>94</sup> ‘Guannei dao, er: Tongzhou’ 關內道二·同州 [Central Plains, Part Two: Tongzhou], *Yuanhe jun xian tu zhi* 2.27.

<sup>95</sup> ‘Yinyue zhi, zhong’ 音樂誌 [Part Two (of Three)], *Suishu* 14.342.

見戰場之所起立僧坊，死事之臣追爲建福。……其非大士應生，金輪托降，祐含識於死傷之際，安庶類於擾攘之間，孰能若是？<sup>96</sup>

He considered the measures for building monasteries at battlefields to ultimately stem from Sui Emperor Wen. Although this is not accurate, noting the cultural significance of these acts was a very sharp observation. Coming from the armies of the six boroughs, Gao Huan and Yuwen Tai originally had lower status within the political system of the Northern Wei court, and so military glory and Buddhism became the critical means by which they formed their political power. Ultimately, these two means merged together, and erecting steles to memorialise their honours at battle site monasteries became a new mode within the tradition of merit inscriptions that had existed since the Han and Jin. It is well worth pointing out that the Hanlingshan Monastery stele to the south of Yecheng is said to have received the attention of the southern scholar Yu Xin 庾信 (513–581, one account says Xu Ling 徐陵 [507–583]) who was sent from Yecheng, and ‘read it and made a transcription of the text’ (讀而寫其本).<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> *Lidai sanbao ji*, T no. 2034, 49: 12.108.

<sup>97</sup> *Chaoye jian zai* 6.140. Xu Ling 徐陵 (507–583) saw that the *Xu Xiangtai zhi* 續相臺志 [Extended Gazetteer of Xiangtai] referenced an inscription by Liang Su 梁肅 (?–1188) of the Jin 金 dynasty, stating: ‘Sent as an emissary to Yecheng, [Xu Ling] passed through Hanling, where he saw this text. His heart was overjoyed with its style and form, and so he personally made a copy. It is seen in the histories written in the past’ (奉使至鄴，道過韓陵，因覽斯文，心愛其才，麗手自錄之，事見前史). See Xu, colla. and annot., *Yedu yizhi ji jiaozhu*, 301. There are still some issues with this notion of ‘only speaking with the stone cairn of Mount Hanling’ (唯有韓陵山一片石堪共語), that was broadly disseminated in later literary histories. Mount Hanling is situated not far to the south of Yecheng. Someone sent from the south to Yecheng would first pass by Hanlingshan Monastery, giving them the possibility of reading the stele text. But Yu Xin and Xu Ling were sent from the Eastern Wei in the eleventh year of Datong (545) and second year of Taiqing 太清 era (548) respectively. Not long after Xu Ling had been sent forth, the city of Jiankang was faced with the Rebellion of Hou Jing 侯景之亂, and so he remained in the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi for several years during that time.

Which is to say, the stele text may possibly have been transmitted down south to Jiankang.

Since the Han and Jin periods, memorials at battle grounds were primarily high earthen tumuli over the piled corpses of defeated enemies, which were known as barrow mounds.<sup>98</sup> At the same time that Gao Huan was building Hanlingshan Monastery and the stele inscription, it appears that he also made a barrow mound at the Mount Hanling battle site. A record in the *Yedu gushi* 鄴都故事 [Stories from the Capital Yecheng] states: ‘Just as Gao Huan defeated Erzhu Zhao at Hanling, he made a barrow mound. The locals called it the “Kulou Tai” (Tower of Bones). Up to the present day, the name has changed [due to similar pronunciations] to the “Dule Tai” (Solitary Joy Tower Village)’. (高歡既敗爾朱兆於韓陵，於此作京觀，俗曰‘骷髏臺’。今俗又訛曰‘獨樂臺村’云).<sup>99</sup> If this record is reliable, constructing a monastery and erecting a stele on a battle site during the Eastern Wei signifies something quite different to that of Sui Emperor Wen and Tang Emperor Taizong: ‘[We will] forever remember the pain of those who suffered the weapons of war, and harbour sentiment for those deeds for the path of goodness and liberation. We together mutually encounter the same experiences. It is seen that those of wisdom have sympathy and wish to make a field of merit to receive the protection of the gods’ (永念群生蹈兵刃之苦，有懷至道興度脫之業，物我同遇，觀智俱愍，思建福田，神功祐助).<sup>100</sup> Hanlingshan Monastery and its stele, in addition to expressing the meritorious contributions of the ‘Prince Gao’ 高王 (Gao Huan), was most likely primarily concerned with the liberation and prayers for blessings of his own armies.

There are already examples from before the Northern Dynasties of constructing shrines for sacrifice and holding memorials for military fatalities at battle grounds. In the first year of Yongning 永寧 (301) during the Western Jin 西晉, the armies of (Sima) Jiong 冏 (?–302), Prince of Qi 齊王, and (Sima) Ying 穎 (279–306), Prince of

<sup>98</sup> Lei, ‘Cong “Jingguan” dao fosi’.

<sup>99</sup> Xu, *Yedu yizhi ji jiaozhu*, 158.

<sup>100</sup> ‘Sui Gaozu yu Xiangzhou zhanchang lisi zhao’, *Guang Hongming ji*, T no. 2103, 52: 28.328b16–18.

Chengdu 成都王, entered into battle against (Sima) Lun 倫 (?–301), Prince of Zhao 趙王, at Chaoge 朝歌, near Huangqiao 黃橋, and were defeated by the forces of the Prince of Zhao: ‘Over eight thousand died, to the shock of gentlemen and commoners’ (死者八千餘人, 士衆震駭).<sup>101</sup> Later, Lu Zhi 盧志 (?–312) considered that those who died at Huangqiao, ‘Passed through the heat of summer with their bones exposed in the wilderness, most pitifully’ (既經夏暑, 露骨中野, 可爲傷惻). He recommended that the skeletal remains be gathered and interred in a communal grave. Ying, Prince of Chengdu, who was ultimately victorious, took up this suggestion:

Then, [Sima] Ying had over eight thousand coffins made, and clothing made according to the ranks of Chengdu. Performing rites for the deceased, they were buried to the north of Huangqiao, with a thorny hedge surrounding the graves. He also had a general hall for sacrificial rites with inscriptions and stele, commemorating their meritorious contributions for justice, where the families of the deceased could perform rites throughout all four seasons. Also, the families of the deceased were honoured, with ranks above that of the standard for those who died in war. He also buried the over fourteen thousand dead [soldiers] of [Sima] Lun, [Prince of] Zhao, at Wen County, in He’nei. 穎乃造棺八千餘枚, 以成都國秩爲衣服, 斂祭, 葬於黃橋北, 樹柵籬爲之塋域. 又立都祭堂, 刊石立碑, 紀其赴義之功, 使亡者之家四時祭祀有所. 仍表其門閭, 加常戰亡二等. 又命河內溫縣埋藏趙倫戰死士卒萬四千餘人.<sup>102</sup>

The way in which the war dead were dealt with at the battle of Huangqiao also has the two aspects of rites for the deceased and inscriptions of their meritorious deeds. Apart from burial and demarcation of the tomb site, the most important element is the construction of a ‘general hall for sacrificial rites’ (都祭堂), ‘with inscriptions and steles, commemorating their meritorious contribu-

<sup>101</sup> ‘Chengdu wang Ying zhuan’ 成都王穎傳 [Biography of Ying, Prince of Chengdu], *Jinsbu* 59.1615–16.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

tions for justice' (刊石立碑, 紀其赴義之功). This site with a ritual hall and inscribed stele was open to 'perform rites throughout all four seasons' (四時祭祀), obviously indicating a permanent location for memorialising the military's dead.<sup>103</sup> His intentions for the battle site monastery here were therefore very similar to those of Gao Huan and Yuwen Tai, although this was a hall for sacrificial rites whereas theirs was the construction of a monastery.

The sacrificial hall and stele at Huangqiao were only for the war dead of the victor's armies. Those deceased soldiers from the armies of (Sima) Lun, Prince of Zhao, were instead 'buried' (埋藏) at another location, though there was no barrow mound made in the manner of Gao Huan. There would be later examples of such measures undertaken for the enemy's dead. For instance, Liang Emperor Wu 梁武 (464–549, r. 502–549) issued a decree in the fourth month of the eleventh year of Tianjian 天監 era (512), which states:

Last year, at Mount Ju, there was a massive destruction of enemies for which a barrow mound is to be built as a banner to the glory of our armed forces. In the defeat of forces inimical to the common folk the emperor is a great exemplar. Their remains are to be buried as an act of kindness. Qing Province is to collect all their remains which

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<sup>103</sup> Setting up battle memorials for one's own deceased soldiers is commonly seen, for example, during the Liu Song 劉宋 period, Wang Hongfan 王洪範 (fifth c.) 'attacked the Wei' 侵魏 but was defeated. 'Wang Hongfan zhuan' 王洪範傳 [Biography of Wang Hongfan], *Nanshi* 70.1712:

The ground was littered with the dead and wounded, for which he greatly blamed himself. Therefore, on land to the south of Mount Xielu, he spread out grass matting, and sacrificed three animals [i.e., an ox, a goat, and a pig] to call the souls of the dead to offer to them. Calling out the names of each of the deceased, he personally made libations of wine. Unable to control his own grief, in malaise he died. 死傷塗地, 深自咎責。乃於謝祿山南除地, 廣設茵席, 殺三牲, 招戰亡者魂祭之, 人人呼名, 躬自沃爵, 仍慟哭不自勝, 因發病而亡。

Usually, the measures taken for ritual sacrifice at the battlefield were ad hoc, and it is very seldom that we see a permanent sacrificial hall and stele erected like here at Huangqiao.



are to be buried. 去歲胸山, 大殲醜類, 宜爲京觀, 用旌武功. 但伐罪  
 帛民, 皇王盛軌, 掩骼埋胔, 仁者用心, 其下青州, 悉使收藏.<sup>104</sup>

The decree expresses two levels of intention. First of all, according to the usual practices, after a military victory one should build a barrow mound, ‘as a banner to the glory of our armed forces’ (用旌武功). Next, due to the grace of the emperor, ‘as an act of kindness’ (仁者用心), there was a special instruction to bury the remains of the vanquished enemy forces. Some scholars consider these measures enacted by Liang Emperor Wu to have been influenced by the compassionate sentiment expressed in Buddhism.<sup>105</sup> However, when considering this together with the measures undertaken after the Western Jin battle at Huangqiao, collecting and burying the remains of the defeated army was not something first practiced by Liang Emperor Wu. To put it another way, even if this notion that ‘the humane love the people’ (仁者愛人) compassionate response was strengthened after the transmission of Buddhism into China, we cannot completely explain this as being due to the influence of Buddhist views on mercy and compassion. During the medieval period, there were many new cultural phenomena that appeared under the name of Buddhism, but before this there already were such traditional concepts and standard practices. This is a point that many researchers need to pay close attention to.

From Gao Huan and Yuwen Tai to Sui Emperor Wen and Tang Emperor Taizong, their practice of building monasteries at battle sites out of compassionate liberation of the dead and to honour military glory implies and declarations of legitimacy for new imperial political regimes and the need for this legitimacy. This point naturally makes us think of the Dingguo Monasteries of the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi, and the Daxingguo Monasteries of the Sui dynasty. After Gao Yang’s ascension to rulership at the formation of

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<sup>104</sup> ‘Wudi ji, zhong’ 武帝紀中 [Chronicles of Emperor Wu, Part Two], *Liang-shu* 2.52. There is no shortage of similar cases, so we shall not document them here.

<sup>105</sup> Lei, ‘Cong “Jinguan” dao Fosi’.

the Northern Qi, he abandoned Gao Huan's old shrine at Yecheng to construct Dingkou Monastery 定寇寺 (Settling Foes Monastery). We can see this kind of idea in the name he chose for the monastery.<sup>106</sup>

Earlier we made mention that when Buddhism first arrived in China, the original relationship between monasteries and the nation state was not very close, which was also reflected in the rather ad hoc nature of naming practices at the time. The most common form of naming was to take the place name, and the next most common practices were taking the names of those who constructed the monastery, the benefactors or other related things, names of Buddhist scriptures, or doctrinal principles.<sup>107</sup> Of the monastery names that express implicit blessings for the political regime, some earlier examples we can raise are those constructed in Jiankang during the Song Qi period, i.e., Zhongxing Monastery 中興寺, Qixing Monastery 齊興寺, and Qilong Monastery 齊隆寺, and Yongning Monasteries 永寧寺 in the Northern Wei cities of Pingcheng 平城 and Luoyang 洛陽. Luoyang had another Weichang Monastery 魏昌寺, and so forth. Zhongxing Monastery in Jiankang was built by Liu Song Emperor Xiaowu 孝武 and was connected with his raising an army in Xiangyang and

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<sup>106</sup> 'Xi chan chu: Shi Sengda zhuan' 習禪初·釋僧達傳 [Meditators, Part One: Biography of Shi Sengda], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 16.571.

<sup>107</sup> Of those named after places, we have Cangyuan 倉垣 Shuinan Monastery 水南寺, Lushan 廬山 Donglin Monastery 東林寺 and Xilin Monastery 西林寺, Huqiu 虎丘 Dongshan Monastery 東山寺, and Jiankang 建康 Wagan Monastery 瓦官寺 and Changgan Monastery 長干寺. Those named after the constructors or related items include Shouchun 壽春 Daogong Monastery 導公寺, Luoyang 洛陽 Mangshan Fengwang Monastery 邙山馮王寺, Luoyang Qin Taishangjun Monastery 秦太上君寺, Chang'an 長安 Caotang Monastery 草堂寺, Pingcheng 平城 Bajiao Monastery 八角寺, and Luoyang Baima Monastery 白馬寺. Concerning Buddhist monasteries and their distribution in the early period, refer to Yan, 'Houhan sanguo xijin shidai fojiao siyuan zhi fenbu'; and *idem*, *Wei Jin Nanbei chao Fojiao dili gao*, chapter three, 'Dongjin Nanbei chao Fojiao chengshi yu shanlin' 東晉南北朝佛教城市與山林 [Buddhist Cities and Mountains in the Eastern Jin, Northern and Southern Dynasties], 83–193.

seizing the throne.<sup>108</sup> The name of this monastery makes us think of the Zhongxing Monasteries and Temples built after Tang Emperor Zhongzong was restored to power. Qixing, Qilong, Weichang, and other such monasteries all have names with the form of ‘character of the nation state’ plus a ‘character of auspicious blessing’, a form that can also be seen in the names of Daoist temples in the Qi and Liang periods.<sup>109</sup> The name of Yongning Monastery is a blessing for the peace of the Northern Wei imperial court. All of these demonstrate that by the middle of the fifth century, at the very latest, monasteries, temples, and other religious installations already displayed their use as blessings for the imperial state in their naming methods.

This is the background for the appearance of ‘Dingguo’ and ‘Xingguo’ as monastery names. These names also have connotations of guarding and protecting the nation state. It is said that the name of the Xingguo Monasteries was also connected with the prophecy of the mystic nun Zhixian 智仙 (sixth c.), who said: ‘the son will be highly venerated and come from a state in the east. The Buddha Dharma will be destroyed, but will be revitalised by the son’ (兒當大貴，從東國來，佛法當滅，由兒興之). Later, Sui Emperor Wen, ‘often used the words of the mystic nun, saying my success is due to Buddh[ism]’ (每以神尼爲言，云‘我興由佛’).<sup>110</sup> In comparison with this, from the meaning of the characters, the name of the Dingguo Monasteries seems to emphasise *ding* 定 (settling), signifying peace and stability. Dingguo Monasteries were the earliest monasteries in Chinese history to use *guo* 國 (nation state) in their names.<sup>111</sup> The

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<sup>108</sup> ‘Yijing xia: Qunabatuoluo zhuan’ 譯經下求那跋陀羅傳 [Sūtra Translators, Part Two: Biography of Guṇabhadra], *Gaoseng zhuan* 3.133.

<sup>109</sup> For example, Xingqi Temple 興齊館 in Mount Mao 茅山, see ‘Caizhen you’ 採真遊 [Travels of Gathering Perfection], *Maoshan zhi* 茅山志 [Mount Mao Gazetteer], *Daozang*, vol. 5, 15.618–19. Apart from this, during the Luoyang period of the Northern Wei there were monasteries named after the regnal period, such as Jingming Monastery 景明寺 and Zhengshi Monastery 正始寺.

<sup>110</sup> ‘Gantong xia: Shi Daomi zhuan’, *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 28.1083–84. Wang Shao’s ‘Sheli ganying ji’, *Guang Hongming ji* 17.213.

<sup>111</sup> Apart from Dingguo Monastery, during the period of Gao Qi, Yecheng also

connotations of these monastery names make us think of the chaotic situation after the Rebellion of the Six Boroughs. Gao Huan moved his capital to Yecheng under the circumstances of Wei Emperor Xiaowu's repositioning to the west, and at that time the 'legitimate political system' (政治正統) was with the Western Wei, whereas Gao Huan's move was forced. From Gao Huan's discussion with Chen Yuankang, Wen Zisheng and others about who to select to compose the stele text for Dingguo Monastery in Bingzhou, we can see that he gave considerable importance to the writing of this kind of monastery stele. This reveals what may be his underlying psychology: how to use such a stele text to shape his own political legitimacy.<sup>112</sup> How-

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had Guangguo Monastery 廣國寺, and in the Huanghua Valley 黃花谷 of Mount Linlü 林慮山 there was Jingguo Monastery 淨國寺. See 'Yijie, ba: Shi Huihai zhuan' 義解八·釋慧海傳 [Interpreters, Part Eight: Biography of Shi Huihai], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 12.402; and 'Xi chan san: Shi Tanqian zhuan', *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 18.661. At the same time, in the Southern Dynasties, although Buddhism was also very prosperous, we do not seem to see the use of 'guo' 國 (nation) in monastery names. Of those we can examine, there is only An'guo Monastery 安國寺 built by Chen Emperor Wu 陳武帝 (503–559; r. 557–559) in his hometown Yixing 義興. The time period for this is later than the early Eastern Wei in which Dingguo Monasteries appeared. See 'Yijie wu: Shi Huibi zhuan' 義解五·釋慧弼傳 [Interpreters, Part Five: Biography of Shi Huibi], *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 9.308–09.

<sup>112</sup> Apart from Gao Huan's construction of Dingguo Monastery at the South Hathpace of Yecheng, he also built a shrine to the gods at the North Hathpace. See 'Fangshu bu, shiwu: wu, shang' 方術部十五巫上 [Section on Astrology, Part Fifteen: Magic, Part One], *Taiping yulan* 734.3256, citing *San'guo dianlüe* 三國典略 [On Three Kingdoms Classics] (cf. Du and Zhao, *San'guo dianlüe jijiao*, 224):

[It was where] he worshipped when he wore the clothes of a civilian. Every day at the shrine, he worshipped alone with the old witch Pan and a few other people, personally engaging in the rites to call the gods for animal sacrifices. Nobody else saw him' 蓋布衣時所事也。每祠之日，唯與巫潘媪及數人行事，親自神宰割，外無見者。

Having a monastery in the South Hathpace and a temple in the North Hathpace was indicative of Gao Huan's intentions when he first moved the capital Yecheng.

ever, it is most unfortunate that due to a paucity of historical sources we are presently unable to come to a firm conclusion on whether Dingguo Monastery really appeared under the circumstances of Gao Huan moving his political capital, or whether it appeared as measures combining religious and political culture when Emperor Xiaowu moved westwards with an impending risk to political legitimacy.

Whatever the case, whether it is monastery names using terms to bless the nation such as ‘Dingguo’ or ‘Xingguo’, or monastery names to promote the virtues of the emperor such as ‘Daci’, ‘Dengci’, or ‘Zhaoren’, they are all still obviously new modes within the landscape of political culture and were formed during the later stages of the northern dynasties. In his preface, Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007–1072) critiques Yan Shigu’s ‘Dengci si bei’ rubbing, saying:

Most of the sites where the army defeated enemies at the start of the Tang had monasteries built there. Of those sovereigns who founded [nation states] since ancient times, their heroic wisdom and strategies went far beyond those of normal people. They had fully realised the path and knew its meaning, something that those without great learning and sincerity are unable to attain. [Emperor] Taizong was a hero with wisdom, a leader beyond the mundane, but he was still caught in faults of delusion and cultural custom, and still worshipped Buddhism. How could it not be that it was the breadth and depth of Buddhist teachings, which delight in fathoming the principles of the world, that made [Taizong] admire it so? 唐初用兵破賊處，大抵皆造寺。自古創業之君，其英雄智略，有非常人可及者矣。至其卓然通道而知義，則非積學誠明之士不能到也。太宗英雄智識，不世之主，而牽惑習俗之弊，猶崇信浮圖。豈以其言浩博無窮，而好盡物理為可喜邪？<sup>113</sup>

This critique, however, does not touch upon one aspect. From the perspective of historical evolution between the Han and Tang periods, there is still some definite significance in the phenomena

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<sup>113</sup> ‘Tang Yan Shigu Dengci si bei’ 唐顏師古等慈寺碑 [Tang Dengci Monastery Stele of Yan Shigu], *Jigu lu bawei* 5.225–26.

of constructing monasteries on battle ground sites as a new form of political culture.

## Conclusion

After Buddhism was transmitted into China, it encountered a mature system of concentrated political power. Monasteries as sites for monastics' daily living activities and religious faith began without any close relationship to the political systems of imperial courts. From the perspective of the imperial courts, these monasteries that worshipped a 'foreign god' (胡神) were not very different from the shrines to deities that were distributed far and wide.

After the Disaster of Yongjia, the relationship between Buddhism and the nation states of the five barbarian ethnicities grew ever closer. At the same time that political power of the Northern Dynasties within the sixteen states continued the systems of government of the Han and Jin states, they also took Buddhism—the 'foreign god' they worshipped—and turned it into a new form of national religion for their dynasties. After Northern Wei Emperor Taiwu's persecution of Buddhism, on one hand the emperor and nation state attempted to use Buddhism as a force of political influence for their own purposes.<sup>114</sup> On the other hand they strictly controlled Buddhism, bringing it within the purview of the imperial court for regulation and management, with the construction of monasteries and ordination of monastics all requiring state approval within their institutional regulations. This is the background for the appearance of monastic systems with standardised names.

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<sup>114</sup> Refer to Sagawa, 'Kan teikokuigo no tagenteki sekai', 220–24. The most representative measure undertaken during the Pingcheng period was within Wuji (five-storied) Great Monastery 五級大寺 in Pingcheng, in the first year of Xingguang 興光 era (454): 'For the five emperors after Taizu, five cast images of a standing Śākya[muni Buddha] were made, each one zhang and six chi tall, made with a total of 205,000 catties of copper' (爲太祖已下五帝, 鑄釋迦立像五, 各長一丈六尺, 都用赤金二十萬五斤). 'Shi Lao zhi', *Weishu* 114.3036.

Within this process, the chaos and disruption following the Rebellion of the Six Boroughs (*Liuzhen zhi luan* 六鎮之亂) was a period of transition that deserves our attention. The political confrontation between east and west had a ‘competitive’ rivalry with a need for guarding and protecting functions within Buddhism, and also a need for political legitimacy. These elements brought about Dingguo Monasteries as a monastic system that carried features of imperial worship. These then entered the historical stage (or at least received attention), and monasteries built on battle grounds also became a form of political memorial beyond the traditional ‘barrow mounds’. After passing through Northern Zhou Emperor Wu’s persecution of Buddhism, these cultural artifacts of Buddhist political culture that had prospered during the Eastern Wei and Western Wei periods were then further continued and developed during the Sui and Tang dynasties.

Within this, the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi dynasties, being the main heirs continuing the legacy of Northern Wei Luoyang Buddhism, occupied an even more prominent position. ‘Official monasteries’ 官寺 were at the heart of Buddhist activities during the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi dynasties, as ‘Shi sengda zhuan’ in the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* states: ‘The Buddha Dharma in the latter age worships the glory of [state] officials’ (季世佛法, 崇尚官榮).<sup>115</sup> This kind of ‘worshipping the glory of [state] officials’ (崇尚官榮) not only referred to the offerings made to the monastics and monastics by the emperor and state, but also expressed the fact that the monasteries as religious sites also had features of officialdom. Although Gao Qi was defeated by the Northern Zhou, his measures for monasteries further influenced later rulers such as Sui Emperor Wen and the imperial Li family of the Tang dynasty after the revival of Buddhism. In a certain way, these systematised ‘official monasteries’ can be seen as an ‘institutional’ (制度) artifact left to posterity by the dynasties of the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi.

In other words, if we speak simply from the perspective of Bud-

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<sup>115</sup> ‘Xichan chu: Shi Sengda zhuan’, *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 16.572–73. Concerning this matter, one can also refer my own ‘Shanju de zhaoxuan datong’.

dhist monasteries, those which appeared in the Sui and Tang periods most certainly had a tendency toward northeastern culture or, we could say, toward Eastern Wei and Northern Qi culture. There are to a certain degree some internal conceptual similarities between monastic systems that strongly feature elements of the imperial state, and the well-organised city and neighbourhood spaces of the Northern Wei city of Luoyang and the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi southern city of Ye—that is, the prominence of imperial political power and institutional power. Just like the source for the spatial layout of the city of Daxing 大興 (later Chang'an 長安) during the Sui and Tang, from Dingguo Monasteries in the Eastern Wei and Northern Qi, and Daxingguo Monasteries in the Sui, to Dayun Monasteries, Longxing Monasteries, and Kaiyuan Monasteries in the Tang, they also continued and developed the ideologies of imperial power and institutionalisation in their organisation. It is important to note that during the Eastern Jin and Southern Dynasties periods, the southern political regimes had not yet formed any such official monastery systems. This shows the differences in the historical evolution of the Southern and Northern Dynasties, giving us pause for repeated reflection.

## Bibliography

### Abbreviations

- SKSLXB* *Shike shiliao xinbian* 石刻史料新編. See Bibliography, Secondary Sources, Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, comp.
- T* *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*. See Secondary Source, Takakusu and Watanabe, eds.

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