

A Construction Study of the Qianfo Hall (Hall of a Thousand Buddhas) at Lingyan Temple, Jinan

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Abstract: The Qianfo Hall (Hall of a Thousand Buddhas) at Lingyan Temple in Jinan is an important surviving Buddhist building in northern China. Its construction and repair history spans the Tang, Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties, embodying a layered fusion of building techniques from multiple eras. This paper takes the Qianfo Hall of Lingyan Temple in Jinan as its research subject and conducts a construction analysis, examining successive rebuildings and repairs, the exterior appearance, the floor plan, the column grid, and the roof-frame system, among other aspects. The hall's main body is seven bays wide and four bays deep, employing the “gold-box dou-di-cai” (jinxiang doudicao) plan recorded in the Song-dynasty Yingzao Fashi (Treatise on Architectural Methods), combined with the “column-reduction” (jianzhuzao) technique to enlarge the space for worship. The surviving primary timber frame dates from the Ming-dynasty reconstruction of the sixteenth year of the Jiajing reign (1537). The roof form is a single-eave hipped roof (wudian) covered with green glazed tiles. The bracket-set (dougong) arrangement is sparse, with only one intercolumnar bracket set per bay; the timber module conforms to the fifth grade of material specified in the Yingzao Fashi, with a member depth of 0.21 m and thickness of 0.14 m, reflecting the profound influence of the Song-dynasty modular system. The roof frame is of the tailiang (raised-beam) type, using four-purlin beams joined end to end with two-purlin beams, and applies the “tuishan” (hip-ridge extension) technique to shape the curve of the roof ridge. The rise-to-span ratio is approximately 1:3.3, close to the Song-dynasty standard for palace-hall (dian'ge) buildings. The hall houses a lacquered rattan-core Vairocana Buddha from the second year of the Zhiping reign of the Northern Song (1065) and forty painted clay arhat (luohan) statues from the Song and Ming periods, all of exceptional artistic and religious value. In its building form, structural methods, and sculptural art, the Qianfo Hall integrates features from multiple historical periods, making it an important physical case for studying the evolution of ancient Chinese building technology, the local application of the Yingzao Fashi in the Ming dynasty, and the development of Buddhist art.

Keywords: Lingyan Temple, Ancient Architecture, Qianfo Hall.

1. The Successive Reconstructions of the Qianfo Hall

Lingyan Temple is located in Changqing District, Jinan City, Shandong Province, and is one of the important Buddhist monasteries in northern China. Its history can be traced back to the Northern and Southern Dynasties period, and the origin of Lingyan Temple is closely tied to the political and religious background of that era. In 420 CE, Liu Yu replaced the Jin dynasty and founded the (Liu) Song dynasty, and the region south of the Yellow River in Shandong came under Southern-dynasty rule. Around the early years of the Liu Song (c. 420), Chan Master Fading founded the Lingyan monastic site at the northern foot of Mount Tai. During the Northern Qi period (550–577), Lingyan Temple entered its first period of flourishing, with an expanding monastic complex and increasingly complete building functions. The anti-Buddhist persecution during the sixth year of the Jiande reign of Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou (577) caused serious damage to the temple. After the unification under the Sui dynasty, Buddhism revived and Lingyan Temple gained an important opportunity for development. In the fourteenth year of the Kaihuang reign (594), Emperor Wen of Sui made an eastern inspection tour to Mount Tai and issued an edict protecting monasteries throughout the empire, designating three major monasteries as imperial establishments: Shentong Temple (formerly Langgong Temple), patronized by the Prince of Henan; Shenbao Temple (formerly Jingmo Temple), patronized by the Prince of Qi; and Lingyan Temple, renamed “Baoshan Temple,” patronized

by the Prince of Huayang. The Tang dynasty was the golden age of Lingyan Temple's development. After Emperor Gaozong of Tang “presided in person” in the second year of the Linde reign (665), the court vigorously supported temple construction, and Lingyan Temple entered a period of peak prosperity. According to the Stele Eulogy and Preface for Lingyan Temple, during Gaozong's reign the temple built the Hall (Pavilion) of the Great Compassion Guanyin Bodhisattva, the Pratyekabuddha Tooth-Relic Pagoda (during the Yifeng era, 676–679), the Great Hall of Locana Buddha, and the Patriarchs' Hall; it also cast six iron images and three vajra images, and installed perpetual lamps. By the Tianbao era under Emperor Xuanzong, Chan Master Huichong served as abbot and, with state support, founded the Qianfo Hall, which became the core building of the temple complex. The construction of the Qianfo Hall marked the temple's arrival at its zenith, and its architectural form and sculptural art both reflected the superb craftsmanship of the Tang dynasty[9].

The history of the Qianfo Hall at Lingyan Temple in Jinan began in the Tang dynasty and underwent multiple reconstructions and repairs through the Song, Ming, and Qing dynasties, integrating building techniques from multiple periods and possessing considerable historical and architectural value.

According to the “Eminent Monks” chapter of the Qing-dynasty Lingyan Zhi (Gazetteer of Lingyan), Chan Master Huichong relocated Lingyan Temple from Ganlu Spring to its present site during the Zhenguan era of the Tang (627–649) and founded the Qianfo Hall. However, according to research by Wang Jing in the book *A Study of the Qianfo Hall at*

Lingyan Temple, Huichong served as abbot from the second year of the Tianbao era (743) to the fifteenth year of Tianbao (756)[1]. Accordingly, the Qianfo Hall was first built during the Tianbao era of Emperor Xuanzong of Tang (c. 742–756), under the direction of Chan Master Huichong. Benefiting from court patronage and the flourishing of Buddhism at the time, the Tang-dynasty Qianfo Hall, in its original construction, was grand in scale, employing the “jinxiang doudicao” column-grid layout; its eave columns were sixteen-sided, slightly concave in profile, and the column bases were carved with tall lotus-petal decoration, reflecting a typically Tang style. However, during the anti-Buddhist persecution of the fifth year of the Huichang reign of Emperor Wuzong of Tang (845), the Qianfo Hall suffered severe damage, and only some eave columns and column bases survived. In the fifth year of the Dazhong reign (851), under the direction of the temple abbot Congxin, the Qianfo Hall was rebuilt on its original site; this reconstruction was smaller in scale than the previous one, and some building components reflect the localized craft characteristics of the late Tang period.

During the Northern Song, the Qianfo Hall underwent several rounds of repair. During the Jingde era (1004–1007), the elder monk Qionghuan directed a repair project on the Qianfo Hall, replacing the column bases on either side of the central bay and carving them with dragon, phoenix, and scrolling-vine motifs[11], reflecting the aesthetic shift of the Song dynasty. The greatest change was made to the eaves. According to Wang Jing's inference in her book, based on the Record of the Qianfo Hall of Lingyan Temple, Qizhou by Wang Kui, which describes the hall as having gilded images, jade-green tiles rising into the sky, and encircling galleries around a great hall, luminous beyond the dust of the world, with tiered ridges and towering pagodas reaching to the clouds - the Qianfo Hall built at this time had a surrounding gallery and was covered with green glazed tiles. Based on the “jinxiang doudicao” column-grid structure and the textual description, it can be inferred that the roof of the Qianfo Hall was changed at this time to a double-eave xieshan (hip-and-gable) roof covered with green glazed tiles, with a surrounding gallery added - evidence of a marked rise in the building's status as well as a change in Song-dynasty aesthetic taste.

The Ming dynasty was the period in which the Qianfo Hall's architectural form underwent the most significant change. During the reconstruction of the sixteenth year of the Jiajing reign (1537), all the interior columns and the roof frame were replaced, and the roof was changed from the Song-dynasty double-eave xieshan form to a single-eave hipped (wudian) roof, while the Tang-dynasty eave columns and the Song-dynasty rise-and-fold (jufeshe) system were retained. In the fifteenth year of the Wanli reign (1587), a prince of the De fiefdom funded a repair that involved lifting the roof, replacing some purlins, two-rafter beams, and tie-beams, and applying painted decoration to enhance both the members' resistance to decay and their ornamentation. Although the Ming-dynasty reconstruction was carried out mainly in the official (guanshi) manner, because the craftsmen consulted surviving Song-dynasty structures, the Qianfo Hall still retains Song-style features in matters such as eave projection and bracket-set timber module, forming a distinctive appearance of “a Ming-built structure with a Song-style character.”

During the Qing dynasty, repairs were carried out multiple times in the Kangxi, Qianlong, Daoguang, and Guangxu

reigns, mainly concerning the roof surface, tile work, and doors and windows, without altering the main structure. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, state-funded projects in 1957, 1966, and 1994 respectively lifted the roof for repair, replaced rafters and flying rafters, and touched up painted decoration, strictly following the principle of “repairing the old as old” so as to preserve historical information to the greatest extent possible.

2. Construction Analysis of the Qianfo Hall

(1) Exterior Appearance and Floor Plan of the Qianfo Hall

The Qianfo Hall is the core building of Lingyan Temple, facing south with its back to the north. It is seven bays wide and four bays deep, with an overall façade width of 28 meters and an overall depth of 16 meters. Directly opposite the entrance stands a Sumeru-throne pedestal enshrining three gilded images of Sakyamuni in his emanation bodies: the Song-dynasty lacquered rattan-core Vairocana Buddha occupies the tall lotus throne in the center, with Locana Buddha to the east and Sakyamuni Buddha to the west. Forty polychrome clay arhat statues from the Song and Ming dynasties, executed with exquisite technique and each with a distinct expression, stand on platforms along the four walls, earning the hall the reputation of “the foremost sculptural masterpiece within the realm.” The walls originally held over a thousand small Ming-dynasty bronze and wooden Buddha images - hence the name “Hall of a Thousand Buddhas” - though only 293 survive today.

The platform base is tall and imposing, 32.23 meters long overall and 19.88 meters wide overall; it was built making use of the mountainous terrain, so that the south elevation stands 2 meters high while the north elevation stands only 0.5 meters high[2]. A staircase is set at the front of the platform, matching the width of the central bay, with eleven steps. The roof of the Qianfo Hall is a single-eave hipped (wudian) roof; the main ridge terminates at both ends in glazed owl-tail finials (chiwen), with a young dragon in yellow glaze at the center. Six ridge-beasts are placed on the hip ridges, and the roof is covered with grey tube tiles and green glazed tiles above red walls below. On the front façade, the central and adjoining bays have lattice-panel folding doors, while the flanking and end bays have straight-mullion lattice windows. On the rear façade, only the central bay has a straight-mullion lattice folding door, and there are no windows.

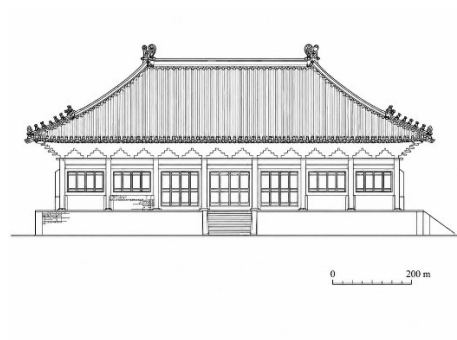


Figure 1. South Elevation of the Qianfo Hall

(2) Columns and Column Bases of the Qianfo Hall

The column grid of the Qianfo Hall employs the “jinxiang doudicao” (gold-box dou-di-cai) layout recorded in the Song-dynasty Yingzao Fashi. This is an advanced palace-hall floor-

plan type consisting of two concentric rings of columns: the inner ring (interior columns, or *jinzhu*) encloses the core space known as the “inner bay” (*neicao*), while the outer ring (eave columns, or *yanzhu*) forms the surrounding space known as the “outer bay” (*waicao*). In the Qianfo Hall, however, the “column-reduction” (*jianzhuzao*) technique was adopted, removing the two central columns within the hall in order to greatly expand the core space used for worship and religious activity. This column-reduction technique originated in the Liao and Song dynasties and became especially prevalent during the Jin and Yuan dynasties; its purpose was to maximize interior space without increasing the building's external volume. The Qianfo Hall follows this method, both continuing the tradition of great Buddhist halls from the Tang and Song periods and meeting its functional need as the temple's core space for worship. Hanging on the interior columns on either side of the central bay is a couplet composed by the Qianlong Emperor of the Qing dynasty: “The strange pine bows daily in homage; what feeling moves the wondrous rock to suddenly nod its head.”

The surviving visible eave columns on all four sides are of stone, worked into a sixteen-sided cross-section. These columns taper slightly from bottom to top, with column heads cut at a right angle (90 degrees) without any curved shaping (*juansha*), making them straight columns; their style is close to that of the Northern Qi rock-cut caves at Tianlong Mountain in Taiyuan, Shanxi, and the early Tang porch columns at Maiji Mountain in Tianshui, Gansu, showing a pronounced Tang-dynasty (or even earlier) character.

The eave columns generally lean inward, corresponding to what the *Yingzao Fashi* terms “*cejiao*” (column lean). According to Chapter 5 of the *Yingzao Fashi*: for erecting columns, the column head should be made to lean slightly inward and the column foot to project slightly outward - this is called *cejiao*. For every *chi* of column height on the front façade, the lean is one *fen*; on the side façade, every *chi* of height gives a lean of eight *li*. At the corner columns, the column heads correspondingly lean toward each other on both sides [6]. The eccentricity between the projection of the column-head center and the geometric center of the column base is 0.008 meters. In addition, the columns rise slightly in height from the central-bay columns toward the corner columns (*shengqi*): the western central-bay column on the west side measures 3.898 meters in height, while the western corner column measures 3.934 meters, a difference of 0.036 meters[2]. This combination of “column lean” and “column rise” is a system explicitly prescribed in the *Yingzao Fashi*; it draws the overall weight of the building toward its center, increasing the cohesive strength of the timber frame and enhancing structural stability and seismic resistance, while visually correcting perspective distortion so that the profile of the eaves forms a graceful curve.

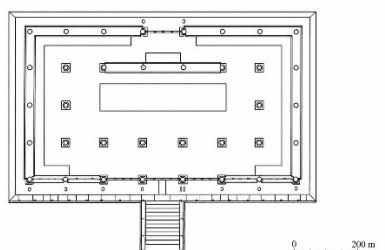


Figure 2. Plan of the Qianfo Hall

(3) Bracket Sets (*Pu'zuo/Dougong*) of the Qianfo Hall

The bracket-set arrangement of the Qianfo Hall places one intercolumnar bracket set (*bujian puzuo*) per bay - regardless of whether it is the central bay, the secondary bay, or the end bay. This differs from the rule stated in the *Yingzao Fashi*[7]: “Wherever a bracket set is placed atop a *lu-dou* on the lintel, it is called an intercolumnar bracket set. The central bay must use two intercolumnar bracket sets, while the secondary and end bays each use one; their spacing should be distributed evenly, whether far or near.” Instead, it more closely resembles the practice seen in early northern-China buildings such as the East Hall of Foguang Temple and the Shengmu Hall of Jinci Temple. The bracket-set arrangement of the Qianfo Hall indicates that, although its overall structure is of Ming-dynasty type as rebuilt during the Jiajing era, its bracket-set layout still follows an earlier tradition rather than strictly adhering to the Song-dynasty official standard.

The form of the Qianfo Hall's bracket sets shows a clear mixture of periods: the main body dates from the Ming Jiajing-era reconstruction, yet the timber module, the projection of the tiers (*chudiao*), and the form of the *ang* (cantilever arms) still retain many features of Song- and Jin-dynasty practice. The single-material dimensions of the Qianfo Hall's bracket sets are 0.21 meters in height and 0.14 meters in width, which, converted using the Song-dynasty *chi* (approximately 0.319 meters per *chi*), equal 6.58 *cun* in height and 4.39 *cun* in width[3]. Compared with the eight grades of material (*cai*) specified in the *Yingzao Fashi*, this is close to the fifth grade (6.6 *cun* in width and 4.4 *cun* in thickness). According to the *Yingzao Fashi*'s own description of the material grades[8]: “The fifth grade: 6.6 *cun* wide and 4.4 *cun* thick, used for small three-bay halls or large three-bay reception halls.” In the traditional Chinese timber-frame construction system this is a relatively small grade, classified in the *Yingzao Fashi* under the building rank for small halls; it appears that the fifth-grade material module was used as the standard for fabricating the corresponding members, which were then assembled to form the great hall.

The bracket sets of the Qianfo Hall are of the six-tier, three-false-*ang*, concealed-joint (*jixin*), double-arm type; all the *ang* are false *ang*, with cantilever tips shaped like a *qin-face* (*qinmian*), the *ang* bodies projecting outward horizontally in a form of considerable strength. On the interior side, the bracket sets are of six-tier, three-projection, concealed-joint type; the arm heads show slight trimming yet still display noticeable strength, differing from the more slender arm-head style typical of the mid-to-late Ming period and instead resembling Song- and Jin-dynasty practice more closely.

The *ang* of the Qianfo Hall are false *ang* - meaning the *ang* body extends outward from the *huagong* (cross bracket-arm) rather than forming the sloping cantilever structure of a true *ang*. This method was extremely common in northern Ming-dynasty buildings, preserving the sculptural form of the *ang* while simplifying the actual structural construction. The *ang* tips are of the *qin-face* type, with soft, flowing lines that differ from the sharper Song-dynasty *ang-tip* form, reflecting the evolution of *ang* design in the Ming dynasty. In addition, the rear tail of the *ang* carries a single *dou* that supports the lower purlin (*xiajinzhuan*) - a method consistent with the *Yingzao Fashi*'s provision that “where the interior of a building is left exposed to view from below (*che shang ming zao*), an eave-support (*tiaoyan*) is used, or only a single *dou* is supported,” indicating that the Qianfo Hall, in its Ming-dynasty reconstruction, still partly preserved Song-dynasty structural

conventions. Between each pair of bracket sets, a bracket-eye wall panel (gongyan bi) serves as a divider; these panels are painted with images of three fire dragons, a surviving example of Wanli-era Ming painted decoration that is both decorative and symbolically protective against fire.

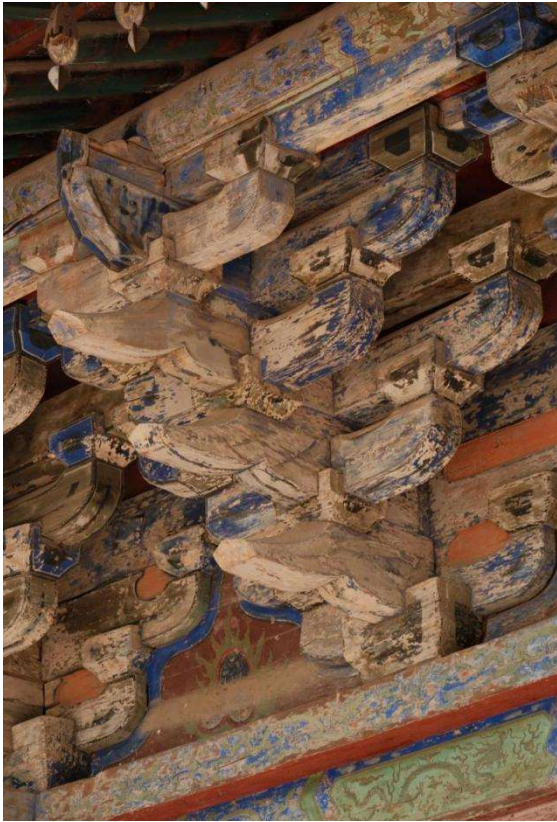


Figure 3. Bracket Set Detail Image

The visible trimming of the arm heads, while still retaining a certain degree of arm strength, differs from the slender, highly decorative arm-head style of the late Ming period and instead more closely resembles Song- and Jin-dynasty practice. This suggests that, in the Ming-dynasty reconstruction, the craftsmen may have consulted surviving Song-dynasty members or drawings, so that the bracket sets retain earlier stylistic features overall.

(4) The Roof Frame of the Qianfo Hall

The roof frame of the Qianfo Hall is of the *tailiang* (raised-beam) type. The main roof frame within the hall uses four-purlin beams (*si chuan fu*), above which sit the flat beams (*pingliang*); the two ends of the four-purlin beams connect with two-purlin beams (*er chuan ru fu*) to form the main structure- corresponding, in the terminology of the *Yingzao Fashi*, to the form “an eight-purlin-bay building divided at the center, using *ru fu*, with five columns.” The outer ends rest directly on the bracket sets atop the columns and are carved into a hemp-leaf (*mayetou*) profile, combining structural function with ornamentation and reflecting the maturity of Ming-dynasty large-timber (*damuzuo*) technique. Major timber members including the four-purlin beams, flat beams, king posts (*shuzhu*), and camel-hump blocks (*tuofeng*) have been identified as surviving fabric from the Ming Jiajing-era reconstruction of 1537. Their construction method, robust material dimensions, and fine workmanship display a clearly recognizable Ming-dynasty official architectural style.

As a hipped-roof (*wudian*) building, the Qianfo Hall employs the “*tuishan*” (hip-ridge extension) technique -

extending the ridges on the gable ends of a hipped roof outward so as to lengthen the main ridge and curve the hip ridges; this is generally called the *wudian tuishan* method, referred to in the Song dynasty as the “*si'e dian*” (four-slope hall) form. The *Yingzao Fashi* states: “In constructing a *si'e dian*, if it has four, six purlins over five bays, eight purlins over seven bays, or ten purlins over nine bays or more, the corner rafters may be extended in succession all the way to the ridge, each following the diagonal length of its own bay. For buildings from eight purlins over five bays up to ten purlins over seven bays, the ridge purlin should be extended outward three *chi* at both ends, and where the added length of the ridge ends, an additional corner rafter should be installed.” That is, buildings of four or six purlins over five bays, eight purlins over seven bays, or ten purlins over nine bays or more may extend the corner rafters diagonally to meet the ridge; but for buildings from eight purlins over five bays to ten purlins over seven bays, the ridge purlin should be extended outward three *chi* at each end, with an additional corner rafter added for the extended portion, as illustrated in Figure 1 below[5]. The upper roof of the Qianfo Hall employs the advanced “*tuishan*” technique: at both ends of the ridge, where the middle purlins meet, level “peace beams” (*taipingliang*) are placed, extending the ridge purlin outward, with a “thunder-lord post” (*leigongzhu*) erected beneath the projecting end of the ridge purlin to support it. This treatment lengthens the main ridge at both ends, with the purpose of changing the projection of the four hip ridges of the *wudian* roof from straight lines into curves, elongating the visual line of the main ridge and giving the roofline a flowing, graceful curvature. The scale of the *tuishan* structure in the Qianfo Hall is comparatively modest, reflecting craft characteristics typical of the Wanli era of the Ming dynasty.

The horizontal distance between the centers of the north and south eave purlins (above the *linggong*) of the Qianfo Hall is 17.85 meters, and the vertical height (rise) from the ridge-purlin center to this horizontal line is 5.41 meters [4]. The rise-to-span ratio (rise divided by purlin span) is therefore 1/3.3 ($5.41/17.85 \approx 0.303$). Compared with the *Yingzao Fashi*, which prescribes a rise ratio of 1/3 for palace-hall (*dian'ge*) buildings and 1/4 for reception halls (*tingtang*), the Qianfo Hall's ratio of 1/3.3 is very close to the palace-hall standard of 1/3, though slightly gentler.

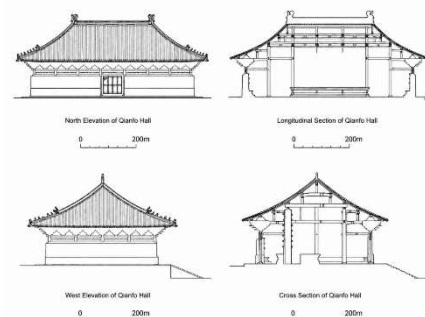


Figure 4. Elevations and Sections

3. The Painted Clay Sculptures within the Qianfo Hall

Facing the entrance at the center of the Qianfo Hall, seated on a high lotus throne, are three fully gilded great Buddha images known as “Three Buddhas in One Hall,” also called the “*Trikaya*” (Three Bodies). The three gilded images sit in

the full lotus position on the high lotus throne, dignified in bearing, with flowing drapery and simple yet rhythmic garments. Their forms are full and upright, their faces gentle and approachable, preserving the solemn sanctity of the Buddha while conveying a compassionate spirit of universal salvation, allowing worshippers to experience a sense of great compassion and the granting of blessings and the warding off of calamity. Among them, the image of Vairocana Buddha is especially precious, seated on a lotus throne symbolizing the “three-thousandfold great chiliocosm,” each lotus petal representing a Buddha-world. This image was made in the second year of the Zhiping reign of the Northern Song (1065), fashioned in Qiantang using a rattan-core lacquer technique before being transported to Lingyan Temple for enshrinement. This lacquerware technique is extraordinarily complex, requiring numerous rounds of lacquering, polishing, and gilding.

The forty painted clay arhat statues within the hall are likewise a treasure of Chinese sculptural art. Created during the Song and Ming dynasties, these statues display a strong sense of everyday life and human individuality. The sculptors boldly employed a highly realistic approach: not only are the figures' proportions comparable to those of real people, but even the veins and bone structure are clearly discernible, consistent with the principles of human anatomy. The drapery clings naturally to the bodies, with lines that curve and straighten appropriately and folds that turn smoothly and fluidly; through the interplay of firmness and softness, and of solid form and implied space, one can even sense the bone and muscle structure of the body beneath the folds of cloth. In the details, the path of the sashes and the knotting of the ties are rendered with total clarity, reflecting the sculptors' rigorous approach to their craft. The fabrication technique behind these painted clay arhats is exceptionally intricate and refined. The armatures are mainly built of iron and wood, and the process involves rough clay modeling, fine clay carving, clay-paste finishing, and finally shaping, priming, and coloring in careful stages[10]. Notably, the sculptors applied oil wax or egg white to the skin areas such as the hands, feet, and face to achieve a soft, lustrous texture. This elaborate and meticulous process not only produced lifelike forms but has also allowed the statues to survive centuries in excellent condition - to this day, the silk-like texture of the arhats' robes, the veins raised on their foreheads, and the blood vessels standing out on the backs of their hands remain clearly visible, giving an impression almost indistinguishable from living figures.

The Buddha images and painted sculptures of the Qianfo Hall at Lingyan Temple hold an important place in the history of Chinese sculpture and have received high praise from scholars and literati throughout the ages. In 1912, after visiting Lingyan Temple, Liang Qichao personally inscribed a stele with the words “the foremost sculptural masterpiece within the realm.”

4. Conclusion

The Qianfo Hall of Lingyan Temple in Jinan is an

outstanding example of the fusion of Ming- and Qing-dynasty building craftsmanship, grand and imposing in overall scale. Mr. Chen Congzhou once remarked of the Qianfo Hall: “The bracket sets are grand, the eaves project deep and far - at a glance one might almost take it for a Tang or Song structure, yet in fact the timber frame is a Ming construction, with major Qing-dynasty repairs.” The great hall of the Qianfo Hall retains Tang-dynasty eave columns and column bases and a Tang-and-Song-period column-grid structure; it inherits the Song-dynasty roof rise-and-fold system, the modular timber standard for its bracket sets, and the bracket-set layout style; and it employs the roof-frame construction methods of the Jiajing and Wanli eras of the Ming dynasty. Wang Jing, in Qianfo Hall of Lingyan Temple, infers that, based on a comprehensive analysis of the three fundamental elements used for dating ancient timber buildings - the roof frame, the column grid, and the bracket sets - the surviving fabric of the Qianfo Hall is a Ming Jiajing-era work. It is not a purely Ming-dynasty building but rather one that, on the foundation of Ming official craftsmanship, inherited the modular system and structural concepts of the Song dynasty while still preserving certain physical components from the Tang dynasty. It stands not only as physical testimony to the evolution of ancient Chinese building technology, but also as a valuable case study for research into the application and development of the Yingzao Fashi in the Jinan region.

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