

# An Analysis of the Landscape Art Style of Manjusri Temple in Yan Shan Temple

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## Abstract:

As the important corridor of Buddhism from the western region to the central plains, Shanxi has a profound history. Shanxi Province is covered with numerous temple mural paintings. The murals of the Manjusri temple of Yanshan temple in the north of Shanxi are the representative murals of the Jin dynasty. In the study of the mural, the Predecessor fails to pay attention to the aesthetic value of the landscape, and its role in the construction of plot and scene. The landscape of the temple is closely combined with Buddhist figures and palace buildings. The scene is magnificent and detailed, showing the picture of "the unity of heaven and man". The comprehensive study found that the landscape of the mural painting is not only comprehensive in drawing techniques, but also in the pursuit of the objective realism of the "courtyard painting" in the northern song dynasty. At the same time, the scenery of the landscape is very decorative and reflects the revival of the green and green mountains and rivers in the Jin dynasty in the middle of the northern song dynasty. Therefore, it shows the important historical position of Jin dynasty in the history of Chinese landscape painting.

## Keywords:

Manjusri Murals, Entourage of Landscape, Green Landscape, Artistic Features

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## 1. Introduction

Yanshan temple is near Wutai Mountain and is the site of pilgrimage. These constitute the religious foundation and political factors for the construction of Yanshan temple. Therefore, previous studies on Yanshan temple mainly focus on Buddhist art, and rarely analyze the relationship between Jin dynasty landscape painting. It was vividly demonstrated the royal style of Song dynasty painting from the perspective of temple murals. However, the landscape part of the Manjusri hall and mural painting not only has a distinct style of northern Song dynasty painting, but also integrates with the attic boundary painting, which reflects the artist's comprehensive artistic accomplishment and has multiple academic values.

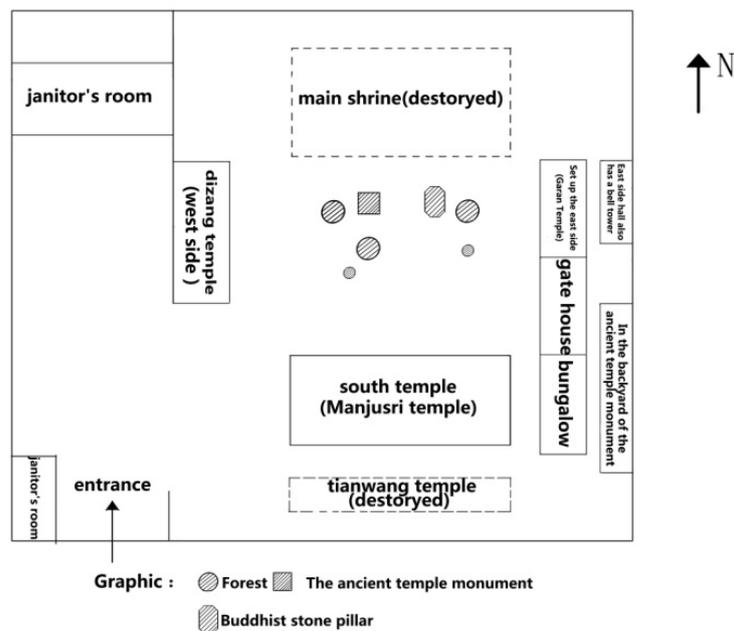
The purpose of this study is to summarize the artistic features of landscape paintings with mural paintings by combining image analogy with art history literature

on the basis of previous studies. Specifically, the visual of landscape is sorted out from the aspects of landscape modeling, composition, color setting and so on.

Therefore, it further explores the relationship between the artistic causes of the mural style of the Manjusri hall of Yanshan temple and the political, economic, religious and other social aspects.

## 2. The Development History of Yanshan Temple and the Content Overview of Murals

Yanshan temple belongs to Tianyan village, Dongshan Township, Fanzhi County, Shanxi Province. Yanshan temple is a typical temple layout direction facing south. With the gate Tianwang temple as the central axis, they are Tianwang temple -- south temple (also known as the temple) Manjusri temple -- water and land main hall (the Maitreya temple). Set up the east side - Kaolan temple, west side - Dizang temple. East side hall also has a bell tower and drum tower, remote echo. Only the Manjusri hall is left as a relic of the Jin dynasty, while the east and west side halls and the bell tower were rebuilt in the Qing Dynasty. (Figure 1 temple layout)



**Figure 1.** Temple layout.

*Picture source: self-drawing by author*

In 1973, the staffs of China Cultural relic department came here again and studied the list of painted sculptures and frescoes in the temple in detail. In 1982, the temple was approved as the second batch of state key cultural protection units. At present, only the Manjusri temple retains its original appearance. (Figure 2 Manjusri temple)



*Figure 2. Manjusri temple.*

*Photo source: taken by author*

The murals of Yanshan temple are generally based on Buddhist stories. At the same time, the painter also draws lessons from many scenes in real life. For example, the buildings in the west wall are modeled after the palace buildings in palaces of jin dynasty. The content of the mural covers a variety of scenes such as the colorful urban life of citizens, the worship of civil and military officials and the life in the palace. According to the statistics of scholars, the overall identifiable area of murals is "97.98 square meters".

The western wall frescoes are well preserved and the pictures are comprehensive and detailed, showing the urban scenery in the song and Jin dynasties. The story narration of the western wall Buddha follows the chronological order, and the development process is divided into the womb -- birth -- study -- art test -- leaving the palace -- becoming a Buddha. The concept of cause and effect, the concept of virtue accumulation and asceticism in the teachings of Buddhist sutras are more easily understood and widely spread through the display of specific and vivid plots. Part of the eastern wall mainly describes the mother of the devil and Suchi mention prince Buddha story.

### **3. Landscape Modeling Features of the Murals in the Manjusri Hall of Yanshan Temple**

#### ***3.1. Artist Identity Prediction***

In the active period of Wang Kui, the main creator of the murals in Yanshan temple, according to the title of the western wall list recorded by Fu Xi Nian (2004). It is believed that Wang Kui may be a painter who entered the Jin dynasty in the northern song dynasty, so he was deeply influenced by the courtyard paintings of the northern song dynasty.

#### ***3.2. Specific Landscape Modeling Elements***

Specifically, the modeling is classified into mountain and river situation, trend, mountain and stone structure and tree painting. In terms of the situation and trend of mountains and rivers, the landscape within the palace reflects the characteristics of the northern landscape.

### 3.2.1. Mountain Situation

The landscape on the right side of the western wall is mainly located next to the prince. The peak topography is higher than the Miyagi in front of it, highlighting the high elevation of the mountainside and the depth of the mountain. On both sides of the main peak, there is a group of smoke rising in a circle. The shape is drawn by double-hook method, which echoes the smoke around the secondary mountain on the east side. The smoke extends as far as outside the wall. (Figure 3 landscape on the right side of the western wall) (Figure 4 the deep mountain of the east wall meets Xian (source: Shanxi ancient building protection research institute). Murals of the Jin dynasty in Yanshan temple [M]. Beijing: cultural relics publishing house, 1983, 28 pages.)



**Figure 3.** Landscape on the right side of the western wall.

Photo source: taken by author



**Figure 4.** The deep mountain of the east wall meets Xian.

Source: Shan xi ancient building protection research institute) (1983). Murals of the Jin dynasty in Yanshan temple (28.) Beijing: cultural relics publishing house.

In the panorama of the east wall, the image damage on the west side is relatively serious, and only the landscape part with good retention on the east side is analyzed. In the story of the mother of the devils in the east, there are many green mountains and rivers in the plot of meeting the immortals in the mountains. This part of the

landscape revolves around the main character. There are low trees in the mountains nearby, and the mountain lines close to the character are detailed to the painting. Slope stone chapped gravel has hemp. Central mountain shape is also a "concave" shape.

### ***3.2.2. Mountain and Stone Structure Modeling***

Rock structure in the temple, mural, mainly hook, brush method is rare. The specific shape, system and posture of the rocks are different. According to the data the author has at present, the structure of the rocks in the murals of Yanshan temple can be roughly divided into two forms: thin and narrow rocks and broad and flat rocks at the foot of the slope, as shown in the figure of farmers sweeping the road in the west wall (see Figure 5 farmers are cleaning) and donkey driving in the east wall (see Figure 6 (A man is driving a donkey on the eastern wall)).



***Figure 5. Farmers are cleaning.***

*Photo source: taken by author*



***Figure 6. A man is driving a donkey on the eastern wall.***

*Source: Shanxi institute of ancient building protection. (1983 Murals of the Jin dynasty in Yanshan temple (24). Beijing: cultural relics publishing house.)*

The thin, narrow, and elongated mountains and stones are distributed along the east wall of the donkey driving map. They are located beside the bridge and at the back of the palace on the east wall. This kind of mountain stone angular, stone face and side turn obvious, highlighting the hard material of the rock. The outer contour lines are drawn out with thick ink lines, and there are traces of double check. There is no brush inside the rock. The east wall of the mill before the figure also has strange stone distribution, the outline of the semicircle to curl short line stroke system, mountain stone shape thin and long, the same part of the same empty chapped without chapping. Another kind of broad and flat stone is distributed at the foot of the slope of the west wall and the east wall.

### **3.2.3. Tree Modeling**

In the painting method of trees, it inherits the neat and meticulous realistic style of courtyard painters in the northern song dynasty. On the whole, forest, branches and branches of the description and leaves of the description of law and law, and the form of expression is rich and varied. Above all, on the modeling of branch, basically have erect type, inclined type, spiral type, twine these 4 kinds. (Figure 7 main branch shapes of east and west walls)

The first is the vertical, widely distributed, usually used around the two-walled palace as a courtyard landscape. Upright trees have straight trunk, luxuriant branches, clumps of leaves, and are mostly unknown miscellaneous trees.

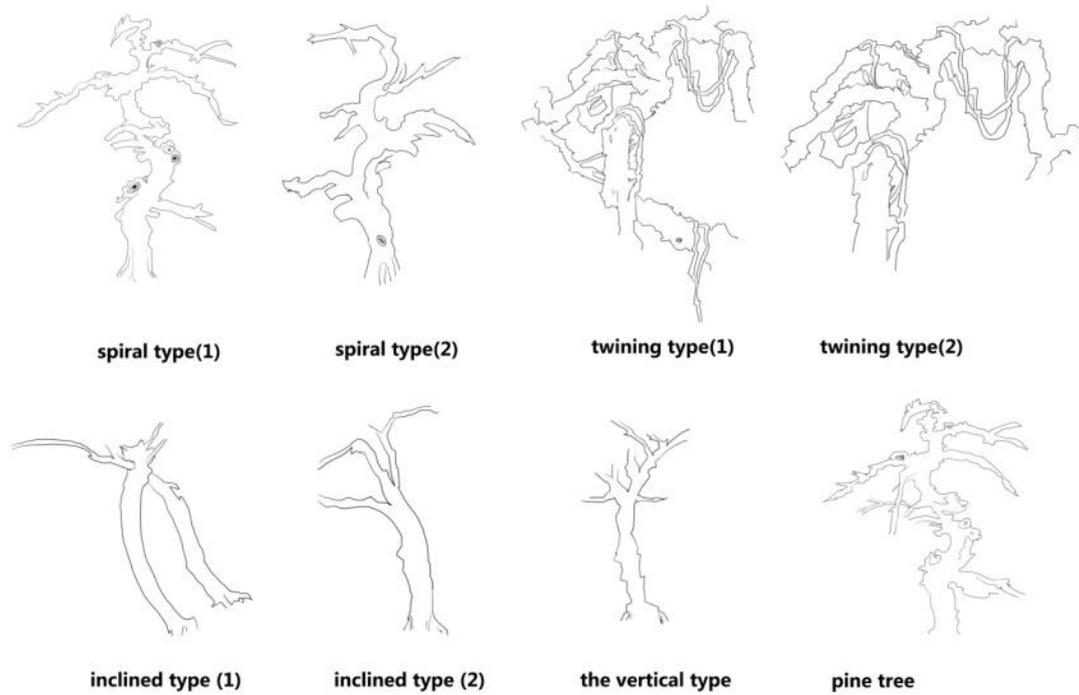
The second is inclined. These kinds of trees are mostly used for architectural landscape decoration, and the trunk of the trees is mostly part of the incomplete. In the picture of market, the trees are mainly distributed in the courtyard outside the market and the lower part of the picture, which adds a natural flavor to the street view. Near the pool of water, there are branches overflowing from the side, the branches interspersed with the relationship of density and order, it can be seen that the painter has received special training in tree modeling, solid foundation of realism. There are three kinds of leaves in the picture of the restaurant. Density alternate with density, which is haunted by clouds.

The third is the spiral tree. This is especially true of a cypress tree on the eastern wall next to the dragon king's palace. The branch trunk presents a spiral upward trend, resembling an "S" shape. In order to show the strong, trunk twists and turns, tree cocoon turning point more, the ring back. Leaves are less distributed and stained with black. Most of the tree values are antlers.

The fourth type is twining, mainly old trees with withered vines. Distributed in the west wall of the prince out of the palace to see injuries. The pine tree looks like a dragon in the picture. The trees are hard in vertical and horizontal strokes, and their branches are freely stretched together, full of ancient flavor. The treetops are mostly shaped like crab claws, and the buds are attracted by short or dotted signals. The branches of trees are of precise structure, and the painter observes them carefully. In the painting method of the trees inside the palace, the branches are sharp and sharp with antlers and crab claws at the top.

There are many kinds of paintings of leaves in the temple. According to Zhang Yan (2010), She thought there are about 18 kinds of painting methods of trees on the east

and west walls. All kinds of miscellaneous tree leave point shape, including not only triangle, circle shape, but also meson points and character points. (Figure 7 main branches of the east and west walls. Source: self-drawing, Figure 8 main leaf shapes of east and west walls.



**Figure 7.** Main branches of the east and west walls.

*Photo source: taken by author*



**Figure 8.** Main leaf shapes of east and west walls.

*Photo source: taken by author*

#### **4. Metaphor of the Fusion of Jin and Han Cultures**

The draw time of mural of temple of Wen Shu of rock hill temple of Fanzhi County (1158-1167 years) cross Jin Hai Ling Yang king to Jin Shizong just two ruling periods, but also should date back to Jin Xizong to rule period, its politics economy solid foundation produced effect for Jin Han culture conflation.

The murals of Yanshan temple are carefully delineated with landscape and ink lines. The precision and neatness of the paintings suggest that the painter may have seen the scenes of the former palaces of Jin Shangjing. In addition, most of the clothes worn by the characters in the murals were Song costumes, and women's headdresses were also worn by Han people. The clothing of street vendors in the picture of restaurant market is also the clothing of Han nationality. (Figure 9 restaurant on the west street (source: self-shot))The citizens listening to the opera in the restaurant also showed the infiltration of Han opera culture, and the numerous merchants in the street market, to some extent, reflected the revitalization of commerce.



**Figure 9.** Restaurant on the west street.

*Photo source: taken by author*

The fusion of Jin and Han cultures is closely related to many aspects of social life. In addition, in terms of social customs, the Jin dynasty not only adopted the official clothes of Han people, but also changed some customs. The fifteenth day of the first month is also known as the Lantern Festival. The tradition of hanging lanterns was introduced into Jin by the Song dynasty. "Big Jin Guozhi volume xiii" records that the first year of the Zhenyuan is 1153 years: "the first month of spring, Yuan Xi Zhang Deng banquet phase by phase in the new palace of Yan.....".

It proved that the Jurchen people imitated the Han people to celebrate the festival and was highly valued by the upper rulers. In terms of clothing, the Jurchen people often dress like Han people. In the early stage of the Jin dynasty, the court forced all ethnic groups to wear the Jurchen dress as the left front short scarf, and then after the consolidation of the rule, the upper nobility of the Jin dynasty admired the Han dress, and then gradually changed into the Han. In the picture of the market restaurant in the west wall of the Manjusri exhibition of Yanshan temple, the clothing of the common people is all the cloth clothing of Song people, and it is the stubborn traditional right front style. The clothing of the Jurchen nationality was introduced into the southern Song dynasty after the commodity circulation in Song dynasties and Han dynasties. "... In the southern Song dynasty, officials and officials called the clothes of the people of Linan government "disorderly".

It shows that the clothing and daily necessities of the people of all ethnic groups have filled the streets of both sides and influenced each other. It can be seen that the landscape style, pavilions, temples and costumes reflected in the murals of Yanshan temple reflect the fusion of Jin and Han cultures.

In terms of administrative system, quality education, social customs and other aspects, we have witnessed the mutual influence between Jin and Han nationalities.

## 5. Conclusion and Future Direction

Accordingly, this temple mural whole continued the one side of natural reality in courtyard of northern song dynasty body painting, the Jin dynasty regime that reflects from a flank at that time place tall county borrows ability to the courtyard of northern song dynasty painting.

Moreover, the typical example of this kind of borrowing talent is: inside the palace pavilion boundary painting and characters skilled brushwork and accurate modeling.

In addition, the green landscape style in the existing murals of Yanshan temple also forms a sharp contrast with the landscape of ink painting gradually prevailing in the southern song dynasty, which was at the same time a confrontation between the north and the south. It can be said that, to some extent, the landscape inside the palace is the continuation of the northern landscape in the early northern song dynasty and the great green landscape in the middle northern Song dynasty.

Besides, the painting time of the murals in the Manjusri hall of Yanshan temple has gone through the king of Yan hong liang and Yan hong harmony. During this period, with the stabilization of the Jin regime in the central plains and the further integration of the Jin dynasty, Han and other nationalities, the rulers of the Jin dynasty also had a deeper understanding of the Han culture. He also supported the art of painting and calligraphy of the Han nationality.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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