

Research on the Development Process of Diverse Religious Architecture in Shandong Province of China

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Abstract: *Based on the emergence and development of the three major religious architectural arts in Shandong Province, this paper provides a detailed explanation of their architectural forms, architectural styles, and the religious essence embodied in the buildings, and analyzes the localization process and development characteristics of religious architecture in Shandong Province.*

Keywords: *Religious Architecture. Development Process. Shandong Province*

1. Introduction

Shandong has been an important place of Chinese religious culture since ancient times, Buddhism began to spread widely in Shandong in the late Eastern Han Dynasty. Shandong is one of the cradles of Taoism, which originated in the pre-Qin period. Islam mainly developed since the 13th century when Hui Muslims migrated to Shandong. With the development of all kinds of religions in Shandong, architectural culture has become an important part of promoting their own beliefs and expressing their religious will. Different religious sects have obvious differences in their architectural culture, especially in Shandong Province.

2. Shandong Buddhism and its architecture

Buddhism was introduced into China during the Han Dynasty. Buddhism developed rapidly during the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, and entered its heyday in Sui and Tang Dynasties. The development of Buddhism declined gradually in Song and Yuan Dynasties. As one of the three major religions, its development has a long history and spread widely, followed by the prosperity of Buddhist architecture. In Shandong, which once became the center of Buddhist development, Buddhist architecture spread all over towns and villages, which is closely related to the wide spread of Chinese Buddhism. At the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, Buddhism began to spread in Shandong Province. In this historical period, the residents of eastern Shandong have already made initial contact with Buddhism. In the Wei and Jin Dynasties, with the increasing number of foreign monks, various activities of Buddhism became more and more, and temple buildings became increasingly prosperous. According to the records, by the Western Jin Dynasty, there were more than 180 temples in Chang'an and Luoyang city. However, this period is still in the initial stage of Buddhism spreading. In the Eastern Jin Dynasty, due to the rulers' advocacy, there were frequent wars for a long time, and the turbulent political situation caused the overwhelming majority of the people to be displaced and live in extreme pain, which made Buddhism spread in China rapidly. In the Northern and Southern Dynasties, it ushered in the heyday of Buddhism development in Shandong Province. In this period, the rulers actively advocated and respected Buddhism for political purposes, and the number of monks and nuns soared in this stage. Buddhism reached its heyday in China due to the development of politics, economy and culture and the support of rulers, which is also reflected in Shandong. Its concrete manifestation is that monks' activities, temple building and statues are developing everywhere, and the activities of translating and lecturing the scriptures are constantly flowing. Due to the positive attitude of Tang rulers towards Buddhism, many monasteries in this period were quite large. It is in this social background that many monasteries in Shandong have made considerable progress. Specifically, in the early Tang Dynasty, there were many monasteries and monks in Shandong, and some major Buddhist sects emerged and spread widely in Shandong. Mount Tai area has become the center of Buddhist culture in Shandong and even in the whole country. It can be said that Shandong area in Sui and Tang Dynasties has become a famous Buddhist center in China. Later, in Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties,

Buddhism took on a different unique appearance. Due to the needs of the ruling class, the state power has a certain connection with the development of Buddhism in Shandong. From beginning to end, the rulers of this long historical period adopted the policy of fostering and utilizing Buddhism and restricting it to some extent, which made the relationship between the state power and Buddhism in a balanced and benign development trend. At the end of the Northern Song Dynasty, the Army of Jin Dynasty began to move south, and the monasteries in Shandong suffered a great impact. Due to the war, many monasteries no longer flourished, and even began to decline or turned into ruins, it didn't develop slowly until Jin Dynasty won in the north and ruled firmly. Because of its historical particularity, Tibetan Buddhism was the state religion in Yuan Dynasty, but Han Buddhism was not excluded, which made the Buddhist belief in Shandong still show a good development trend. In the Ming Dynasty, the government began to support it, it once had a gradual revival during this Dynasty. After the Qing Dynasty, the development of Buddhism in Shandong was very slow, and there was no improvement. For example, in Mount Tai area, Buddhism was left out for a long time, and even no temple was built in the end of Qing Dynasty. [1]

The distribution of Buddhist architecture in Shandong shows the characteristics of regional distribution. To sum up, it is mainly concentrated in the northwest plain area of Shandong and the hilly area in the south of central Shandong, which is consistent with the regional division of Shandong's natural terrain. Moreover, in different historical stages, the distribution of Buddhist architecture in Shandong has its own different characteristics. During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties, Buddhism developed to some extent due to historical reasons in the northwest plain area of Shandong Province and the hilly area in the south-central mountain area of Shandong Province. In terms of Buddhist architecture, there were more Buddhist temples distributed in these areas, However, the distribution of Buddhist architecture was relatively scattered, and there was a certain distance between monasteries in this period. This feature is completely consistent with the historical development and dissemination of Buddhism in Shandong Province. In Sui and Tang Dynasties, it was the heyday of Buddhism development, and the construction of Buddhist monasteries in central and southern Shandong and Jiaodong area had shown a stable trend and increased in number. In the northwest of Shandong Province, the number of Buddhist buildings began to increase rapidly. The distribution of Buddhist monasteries in Shandong during Sui and Tang Dynasties fully reflected the spectacular scene of the flourishing age of Buddhism at that time. In this historical period, the distribution of Buddhist architecture has a prominent feature, that is, the Buddhist temples in Shandong area are mainly distributed densely along the water system. According to the statistical data, the Buddhist temples are most densely distributed in Jinan area along the Yellow River, which is closely related to the canal excavation in Sui and Tang Dynasties and the smoothness of the Yellow River Water Conservancy Project. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the development of Buddhist architecture in Shandong showed a certain decline compared with the previous dynasties, when wars were frequent, the construction and repair of Buddhist monasteries began to stagnate, and the number of monasteries began to decline significantly. Buddhism in Shandong has developed to modern times, and after war and man-made damage, the surviving Buddhist buildings are still mostly in central and southern Shandong. To sum up, the distribution of Buddhist architecture in Shandong is characterized by unbalanced development, and the central and southern areas of Shandong have always been the most densely distributed areas of Buddhist architecture. [2]

3. Shandong Taoism and its architecture

Taoism is a religion that grew up by itself in the long history of China. It was formed later than Buddhism, but its origins are very early. During the Warring States Period, Shandong was the flourishing place of immortal alchemists, and in this respect, it was also the important origin of Taoism. From the Eastern Han Dynasty to the Jin Dynasty, Taoism has formed a relatively complete religious system, which was closely related to the worship of heaven and earth, mountains and rivers, ancestors and ghosts and gods in ancient China, and also became the direct source of Taoist etiquette. In the Eastern Han Dynasty, inspired by foreign Buddhism, fairy magic began to develop towards religion. At the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, folk Taoist organizations, which means that Taoism began to transform from an ideological belief into a social system with both beliefs and organizations. In this historical period, Shandong did not become the center of the above two Taoist organizations, but it had a very important historical significance in the origin and dissemination of these two Taoist organizations. During the Wei and Jin Dynasties, metaphysics began to flourish, and Taoist theory began to have a more mature development, and its own doctrine and system have made great progress compared with before. Taoism developed by leaps and bounds in the Southern and Northern Dynasties,

and reached its peak in the Sui and Tang Dynasties. For political purposes, the rulers of Sui Dynasty adopted a policy of paying equal attention to Buddhism and Taoism for religion, while the rulers of Tang Dynasty continued the same policy for common purpose, and their worship of Taoism was even more than that of previous dynasties. During the Tang Dynasty, many emperors advocated Taoism and regarded Laozi as their distant ancestor, which made Taoism a royal religion. At this time, Taoism and Buddhism had a continuous struggle, and in the struggle, with the support of rulers, they took the opportunity of rapid development and prosperity, with Taoist temples and numerous believers all over the country. At this time, the development of Taoism in Shandong also ushered in its heyday in history. In the Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties, another peak of Taoist development was ushered in. With the strong support of the rulers, Shandong Taoism rose rapidly, and Shandong became one of the center areas of Taoism communication in northern China. In the Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties, China began to split between the north and the south, and the political situation was constantly changing, which led to the colorful development of Taoism. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Taoism began to decline gradually and developed in the direction of folk secularization. Due to the loss of the strong support of rulers in this historical period, the political status of Taoism ceased to exist and began to decline gradually. [3]

The distribution of Taoist buildings in Shandong is mainly concentrated in the hilly areas in the south of central Shandong and the hilly areas in Jiaodong area, and also shows the characteristics of regional distribution. During Sui and Tang Dynasties, Taoist buildings in Shandong were mainly distributed in Mount Tai and Mount Lao. Mount Tai, has been regarded as the symbol of supreme power since ancient times. Due to the above historical reasons, these two areas have become famous holy places for spreading Taoism, and the number of Taoist temples is very large. In Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties, Mount Tai and Mount Lao were still the most widely distributed areas of Taoist architecture in Shandong Province. At this time, traces of Taoist architecture distribution began to appear in Yantai area in eastern Shandong Province, which was inseparable from the distribution and development of Quanzhen religion in this historical period. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Taoism began to decline, and the development of Taoist architecture began to stagnate. [4]

4. Islam and its architecture in Shandong

Islam was founded by the Prophet Muhammad, which arose at the beginning of the 7th century. In the process of historical development, Shandong, has a wide spread of Islam, which is constantly merging with Chinese culture at the same time. This makes the Islamic religious etiquette, religious culture and religious architecture in Shandong have certain Chinese characteristics. According to historical research, in the early Tang Dynasty, a large number of Persian merchants emerged, who frequently traveled to and from the Silk Road, and conducted extensive cultural exchanges between China and the West while doing business, thus promoting the connection between the vast northwest region and the southeast coast and the inland areas of China. Specifically, in Shandong, Jinan is the city where Islam was introduced earlier. But when Islam was introduced into Shandong, so far, there is no exact historical record. We can only infer from the architectural age and distribution of mosques in Shandong, and analyze from the writings of individual scholars. According to various materials, this paper temporarily sets the time when Islam was introduced into Jinan city in the late Song Dynasty. Yuan Dynasty can also be said to be the historical period of the initial development of Islam in Shandong, with the gradual increase of Muslim believers who believe in Islam, and they began to settle in large numbers in various parts of Shandong, and the mosques also showed an increasing trend. During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Islam had made great progress in China, and Muslims and religious sites were widely distributed during this period. The Ming and Qing Dynasties had become the climax of the rapid development of Islam. The development of Islam in modern Shandong also showed a slightly prosperous trend. This is because Islam has strict religious rules, which makes its followers not change their beliefs. Therefore, the development of Islam is relatively stable, so Islam in Shandong presents a prosperous situation instead. [5]

According to the data, the distribution of Islamic buildings in Shandong is mainly concentrated near the canal, and there are few Islamic buildings in Jiaodong area, which is consistent with the route of Islam spreading in Shandong and the records of Muslim resettlement. Islam began to spread in Shandong Province in Yuan Dynasty. According to the distribution statistics of major mosques in Yuan Dynasty, we can see that mosques have already distributed in Shandong Province in a certain amount, which indicates that Muslims and Persian businessmen began to flood into Shandong Province. From the distribution of major Islamic mosques in Yuan Dynasty, we can see that the scope of their distribution is not as large as we thought. At this time, no mosque has been found in Jiaodong area.

From the distribution location of mosques, most of them are located in cities, because a large number of Muslim businessmen first entered the city through Luzhong Avenue, and began to gather continuously, forming an Islamic community, thus establishing various mosques. Later, mosques began to spread to surrounding villages, thus forming a new Muslim community around the city. In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Islamic architecture in this period mainly concentrated on the banks of the canal and the Yellow River. After the Opium War, mosques began to show a state of scattered distribution, and the distribution of mosques in eastern coastal areas was obviously less than that in western areas. [6]

5. Conclusion

Through analysis, we can sum up the following characteristics: First, the distribution of religious buildings in Shandong is consistent with the spread and development of Buddhism, Taoism and Islam in Shandong. Second, the distribution of religious buildings in Shandong is consistent with the regional division of natural forms in Shandong. Third, the central and southern areas of Shandong Province are densely distributed religious buildings in Shandong Province.

The distribution of religious buildings in Shandong also presents different characteristics. First, the distribution of Buddhist buildings presents a situation of more in the west and less in the east, with unbalanced development. Second, Taoist buildings are mainly distributed in mountainous and hilly areas, which is inseparable from Taoism's worship of heaven, earth and mountains. Third, most Islamic buildings are concentrated in the canal, which is closely related to the areas where Muslim businessmen live.

The factors affecting the distribution of religious buildings can be summarized. First, the level of economic development in Shandong affects the distribution and development of religious buildings. Second, the development of traffic conditions in Shandong also restricts the distribution of religious buildings. Third, the traditional cultural heritage in Shandong also affects the distribution of religious buildings.

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