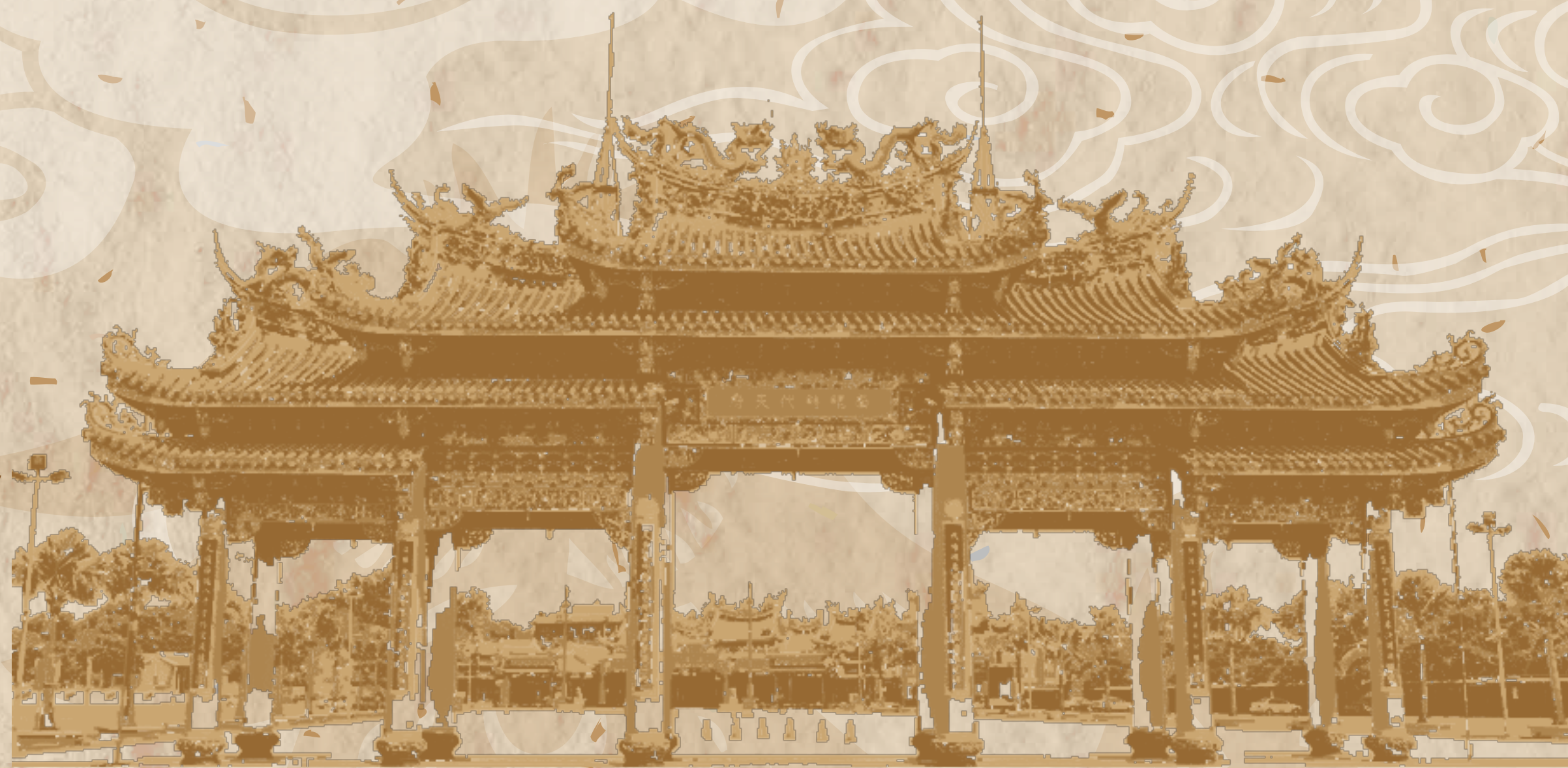


Nankunshen Daitian Temple

南鯤鯓代天府



Nankunshen Daitian Temple is one of the oldest and most important temples in Taiwan. The temple was first built in the 1660s during the Ming Dynasty. It is the first temple in Taiwan dedicated to the worship of the Wangye, or Five Royal Lords.

南鯤鯓代天府為臺灣歷史最悠久的廟宇之一。建於明末清初的南鯤鯓代天府是臺灣第一間供奉王爺信仰（五府千歲）的廟宇。

The history of Nankunshen Daitian Temple | 歷史沿革

The First Temple 初次建廟

Nankunshen Temple dates from the Ming Dynasty, and its beginnings are shrouded in mystery. One explanation states that fishermen found a boat washed ashore in Tainan's old lagoon. When they went to check the contents, all they found on board were wooden effigies of the Wangye, the trunk of a tree, and a banner with the names of the Gods written on it. The locals then built a thatched enclosure as an altar and placed the effigies there for worship and offerings. Afterwards, the people of the area began pulling in record catches of fish; they also found that their prayers to the gods to cure illness and disease were answered.

In appreciation for the good fortune the gods brought to their worshippers, the people decided to build a temple, which was completed in 1662. Shortly after the completion of the temple, renowned Chinese sculptor Ma Fu was instructed in a dream to come to Taiwan and carve figures of the Five Royal Lords from the wood of the tree that had washed up with the boat. These effigies are the temple's oldest and most venerable artifacts.

南鯤鯓代天府的起源充滿了神秘的色彩。舉據傳有一晚，漁民在南鯤鯓灣發現了一艘小船，而船上只有六尊神像、一支神木，還有寫著「代天巡狩的旌旗」。當地居民替神像搭建了草寮以便供奉，從此當地漁民漁獲量大增，且疫病不再。為了表達對神明的謝意，居民將草寮改建為一座廟宇，於1662年落成。落成不久後，泉州名雕刻師「媽福師」受五王托夢，將當初在船上發現的神木雕刻成五王金身，五王神像至今仍是南鯤鯓代天府年代最久遠且最具指標性的文物。

The Second Temple 二次建廟

Unfortunately, the area around the lagoon was vulnerable to flooding and tsunamis, and the decision was made to move the temple to higher ground. The choice of location was to be determined by the gods themselves. The location they chose—the land where the temple stands today—has excellent Feng Shui properties, and it is said that the five Wangye battled over this choice spot with the deity Wanshan Ye, a shepherd boy who had attained Buddhahood due to his piety. In the end, through the intervention of the Guanyin Buddha, they were convinced to lay aside their differences and share the land, with the result that this area has become a large complex with multiple temples. Construction on the second Nankunshen Temple was completed in 1817.

Since that time, the temple has continued to grow, undergoing multiple renovations and additions over the years, with the latest, Lingsiao Hall, completed in 2012. Besides the Five Lords, the temple houses altars to the City God, the Guanyin Buddha, and the Jade Emperor.

由於初次建廟的地點易受洪災影響，居民決定易廟。經五王指示，選定了南鯤鯓代天府風水絕佳的現址。但是建廟的地點是「囡仔公」萬善爺的地盤，萬善爺在世時就是因為發現這一塊靈地而得道成神。五王與囡仔公打得你死我活，直到觀音佛祖出面調停為止。從此，五王與囡仔公同意有福同享，光大南鯤鯓香火，多間廟宇便在靈地共生共榮。二次建廟於1817年完成。此後，南鯤鯓代天府逐漸擴建，最近的一次擴建為凌霄寶殿，於2012年落成。除了五王，南鯤鯓代天府亦侍奉城隍、觀音菩薩，與玉皇上帝。

Nankunshen Temple and Wangye Worship in Taiwan | 南鯤鯓代天府與王爺信仰

The Wangye, or Five Royal Lords, are among the most important deities in the Taoist pantheon. They are thought to have mortal origins, with some stories claiming they were five scholars deified because they sacrificed themselves by throwing themselves into wells to drown in an effort to save the local populace from drinking the water, which had been poisoned. The Five Royal Lords, Lords Li, Chih, Wu, Jhu, and Fan, now represent the Divine Realm on Earth (Thus the term Daitianfu, the Palace of Heaven's Representatives), where they act in their role as ghost hunters, intercede for the gods to dispel illness, and are known as bringers of good fortune.

As Taiwan's first Wangye temple, Nankunshen Temple has played a major role in the spread of Wangye worship throughout the island. When worshippers wish to build a new temple to the deities, the god effigies of the new temple must first be consecrated in an established temple, where the spirit and power of the god are imparted to the new effigy. At present, there are over 21,000 Wangye altars in Taiwan; most trace their line of descent back to Nankunshen Temple.

五王為在道教信仰中備受敬重。據傳五王原是五名聯袂赴考的讀書人，為防止居民飲用有毒的井水，分投五井而亡。五王分別為李王、池王、吳王、朱王，與范王，在凡間代天巡狩，為百姓驅鬼除魅、滅瘟除疫，保佑人民安居樂業。南鯤鯓代天府為臺灣第一座王爺廟。每當信眾欲打造一座新的廟宇時，新造的神像皆需經過大廟的坐鎮神明開光。目前臺灣兩萬多個侍奉王爺的神壇，其神像大多由南鯤鯓代天府開光。