

Abstract
The Wind Lion Gods of Kinmen Island
By
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I had visited Kinmen Island in 2005 and stumbled across a couple of the Wind Lion God (風獅爺) statues, but had no idea what they were. I went back to Kinmen in 2007 for a research project with Callum Sawatzky. The difference in the local governmental attitude towards the statues between 2005 and 2007 was startling, yet there was still an extremely limited amount of information available on the wind lion gods, and nothing in English. This thesis topic therefore grew naturally out of curiosity, a striking change, and an obvious need for better research in the field.

On-site research was done of all 69 village statues to examine place, use, changes, offerings, new statues and other data that can only be gathered by visiting the statues in situ. Supplementing this is information gathered from the few written sources available.

The paper starts with an introduction to stone sculpture, monoliths and Kinmen Island. Chapter one introduces various stone monoliths from around the world and also others found on the island itself. Chapter two examines the wind lion god statues on Kinmen. These descriptive chapters are followed by chapter three that draws various comparisons, both among the statues themselves and also between the wind lion gods and three other monolithic sculptures of the world. This chapter seeks to identify trends within the statues of the island also to place the statues within their global context. The conclusions of this paper, that the wind lion gods are valuable on the world-wide stage and that they are evolving over time to meet needs of the villagers and thus are still important in village life, are presented in the fourth chapter. After the references, the appendix provides a photograph and written description of each statue.