

The Origin and Localization Development of Mazu Belief in Taiwan

Hsiao-Ming, Chang¹, Yen-Chen, Huang^{2*}

¹Putian University, China

²National Penghu University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

***Corresponding Author:** Yen-Chen, Huang, National Penghu University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to explore the localization of Mazu belief and analyze the current situation of major Mazu temples in Taiwan. This study adopts a qualitative method, use literature analysis and on-site interviews for analysis and investigation. After analysis, it was found that: (1) The Mazu faith was mainly introduced to Taiwan through immigration, monks, officials, and merchant. (2) After more than 400 years of development, various ancestral temples in Taiwan have not only become localized, but also begun to establish brands. (3) There are over 1000 Mazu temples in Taiwan, and the Mazu faith is the primary belief of Taiwanese people and one of the social forces in Taiwan.

Keywords: Mazu belief, localization, Meizhou Mazu, Tianhou Temple

1. INTRODUCTION

According to statistics, there are approximately 1000 Mazu temples in Taiwan, which do not include private temples and altars. The spread of Mazu incense to Taiwan began with the establishment of the Penghu Tianhou Temple during the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty. Its backbenches, including the Nanyan Water Protection Temple (1623), the Jiayi Bagtai Holy Temple (1644), the Lugang Tianhou Temple (1647), and the Hsinchu Tianhou Temple (1661), were successively established in the late Ming Dynasty. Later in the early Qing Dynasty, temples such as Tainan Big Tianhou Temple (1683), Dongshigang Port Temple, Puzi Peitian Temple (1684), Mailiao Peitian Temple (1685), Xinzhuang Ciyou Temple (1686), Qijin Tianhou Temple (1691), and Bengang Tianhou Temple (1694), which were originally built to worship Mazu Tianhou, were successively established. Today, they are regarded as regional Mazu belief centers, such as Beitou Guandu Temple, Changhua Nanyao Temple, Dajia Town Lan Temple, Miaoli Gongtian Temple, etc (National Religious Network, 2023). In fact, the Mazu faith has been spreading to this day, as most temples are named in a localized way to strengthen their position as the center of local faith. Some temples have developed into Taiwan wide Mazu temples through spiritual separation, spiritual realm, and praise activities. This article mainly explains the background and reasons for the development of Mazu's belief in Taiwan, as well as the localization of its development. Finally, it analyzes the famous Mazu Temple in Taiwan.

2. THE BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAZU BELIEF IN TAIWAN

The Mazu faith originated from the Meizhou Island in Putian, China. After more than 400 years of development in Taiwan, it is currently a common folk belief in the region. According to scholars' research, the path of Mazu belief spreading from mainland China to southern Taiwan mainly includes: (1) immigration; (2) monks; (3) officials; (4) merchant, (Pan, 2021). The explanation is as follows:

2.1. Immigration

This is the main reason why Mazu came to Taiwan. Since the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the Mazu faith has been prevalent in various coastal ports, inland shipping areas, and Fujian and Guangdong provinces, especially in Fujian province. The Mazu faith has become even more intense, and the Heavenly Consort has become an important local deity and a famous guardian of navigation (Wang & Li, 2000). Later, as the ancestors crossed the sea to Taiwan during the Ming and Qing dynasties, they

had to pass through the Taiwan Strait known as the "Black Water Gully", making it difficult to predict the risks at sea. In order to pray for safe navigation, the ancestors enshrined the statue of Mazu on ships, or used Mazu's incense bags or talismans as a substitute for "dividing incense", while also spreading the Mazu faith to Taiwan (Chen, 2007). There are many Mazu temples of this type, which were originally small temples, but later developed into large temples, such as Baishatun Gongtian Temple in Tongxiao Town, Miaoli County, Chaotian Temple in Chiayi City, Hanxi Lecheng Temple in Taichung City, Lan Temple in Dajia Town, and Maiqian Gongfan Temple in Yunlin County.

2.2. Monks

In addition to being brought by ancestors, early Mazu also had monks crossing the sea to Taiwan and bringing them with them to ensure safety. These Mazu temples, such as the well-known Beigang Chaotian Temple, are the tree wall monks of the Buddhist Linji sect. In the 23rd year of the Kangxi reign (1684), they respectfully invited the statue of Mazu from the Chaotian Pavilion of the Meizhou Mazu Temple and landed in Bengang. Upon instructions from Mazu, a temple was built at its current location (Beigang Chaotian Temple, 2023). There is also the Taipei Songshan Ciyou Temple, an important center of Mazu faith in northern Taiwan. The founder of this temple, Mazu, is a wandering monk from Quanzhou, commonly known as Lin Shouyi and known as Hengzhen Monk. He brought Mazu's deity statue with him from the Meizhou Mazu Temple and used the spirit of Mazu to persuade people to do good deeds. In the late years of the Yongzheng reign of the Qing Dynasty, he crossed the sea and came to Taiwan. After landing at Huwei (now Danshui), he begged for alms along the way. In the second year of the Qianlong reign, he arrived at Xikou to establish Chongfeng. At that time, many local scholars and commoners were fellow villagers of Quanzhou, and they raised funds to establish temples for worship. It was officially built in the 18th year of the Qianlong reign, and building materials were purchased and transported from Fujian to Taiwan. It took four years and was finally completed in the 22nd year of the Qianlong reign. From then on, it was determined that Mazu Temple was the spiritual refuge of the residents of Xikou Thirteen Street Village (Songshan Ciyou Temple, 2023).

2.3. Officials

In fact, the officials respectfully invited Mazu to Taiwan to bless peace and even achieve great military victories. For example, Anping Kaitai Tianhou Temple was founded in 1668, and the Mazu enshrined in the temple is the Meizhou Mazu Temple Mazu who came to Taiwan with the ship to protect Zheng Chenggong in 1661. During the Kangxi period, General Shi Lang, who had crossed the sea to reclaim Taiwan, invited Mazu from the Meizhou Mazu Temple, but did not return to the Meizhou Mazu Temple. Instead, he left and built a temple in Lugang, commonly known as the Old Ancestral Temple, which is now known as the famous Tianhou Temple. Later during the Qianlong period, General Fu Kang'an brought the statue of Mazu in the Meizhou Mazu Temple to Taiwan after pacifying the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion. It was also left in Lugang and built as the current New Ancestral Temple.

However, there is also a special place where the establishment of the Mazu Temple did not come directly from the mainland. For example, the Tianhou Temple in eastern Taiwan was the only official temple in eastern Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty. In June of the 14th year of the Guangxu reign of the Qing Dynasty (1888), due to the excessive collection of land and abbot fees from various regions, there was an uprising between the Han and Pingpu ethnic groups in Taitung. They burned down the Beinan Office and besieged the Zhenhai Rear Army under the leadership of Zhang Zhaolian. Due to the lack of water wells in the fortress, the officers and soldiers could no longer tolerate thirst. Zhang Tong ordered the officers and soldiers to dig wells and burn incense to worship and pray to Mazu. Afterwards, a spring welled up to relieve the suffering of waterless water. After half a month of hard defense, Taiwan Governor Liu Mingchuan sent reinforcements by ship, and the incident was brought to an end. In the fifteenth year of the Guangxu reign, Governor Zhang Zhaolian thanked Mazu for his assistance and began building the Tianhou Temple in the local area one year later. In the seventeenth year of the Guangxu reign (1891), Emperor Guangxu awarded the honor of "Lingzhao Chengyou" plaque (Taitung Tianhou Temple, 2023).

2.4. Merchant

Due to the Qing Dynasty, merchants from mainland China conducted business everywhere and established guildhall in the area, where the gods of their hometown were enshrined to bless the safety of the merchants. The main purpose of the guildhall is not only to handle business, but also to connect with fellow villagers. It also promotes the spread of the faith by offering sacrifices to the gods of the hometown. Due to Taiwan's location in the Southeast Sea region, merchants traveling to and from the mainland require the use of shipping. Most people worship the sea god Mazu and pray for maritime safety. Tainan Fucheng, Taipei San Jiao, Lugang Quan Jiao, and others all use Mazu's birthday as a day for member gatherings (Huang Dunhou, 2011). In addition, the economic source of the Mazu Temple in Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty mostly came from the support of merchants. In addition to their beliefs, they also cooperated with the government's official duties to offer sacrifices, providing both money and effort. More importantly, merchants believe that investing in the construction of Mazu Temple can bring blessings to them, and therefore, the establishment of Mazu Temple is often seen in the location of ports and transportation arteries. For example, the Cisheng Temple in Dadaocheng, Taipei City is said to be a merchant from Tong'an County, Quanzhou during the Jiaqing period. In order to ensure safe navigation, a Mazu was distributed from the mainland to accompany the ship, and finally a temple was built in Taiwan.

The above are the reasons for the spread of Mazu belief, and of course, there are other factors. For example, Xie (2021)'s study pointed out that during the Qing Dynasty, some Mazu temples began to appear in Taiwan, and the appearance of these Mazu temples is related to their geographical location, mainly including two: (1) Located in the starting point of Taiwan's development - Tainan Prefecture area: such as Tainan Datou Temple, Tainan Kaiji Tianhou Temple, Anping Tianhou Temple, Lu'ermen Mazu Temple (Lu'ermen Holy Mother Temple or Lu'ermen Tianhou Temple), Yanshui Shelter Temple, etc; (2) Although the location deviates from Tainan Prefecture, it is still located in a port fortress or county seat, such as Beigang Chaotian Temple, Chiayi Chaotian Temple, Changhua Tianhou Temple, Beidou Dian'an Temple, Hsinchu Tianhou Temple, Beitou Guandu Temple, etc.

The Mazu faith has spread to this day in Taiwan and has now penetrated into various social classes and regions. There are Mazu temples in various regions, and in addition, most temples in Taiwan are multi deity worship temples. Some temples that do not primarily worship Mazu also have accompanying worship of Mazu, such as the Nantian Temple in Taichung City, which mainly worships Guansheng Emperor, and also has accompanying worship of Mazu in temples; The Citian Temple in Hakka Village, Beipu, Hsinchu County is mainly worshipped by Guanyin Buddha, but the secondary worshipper is Mazu. Interestingly, Mazu is also related to the military, such as the Su'ao Logistics Command of the Taiwan Navy managing the Beifang'ao Jinan Temple (Mazu Temple) (Xu and Tan, 2020). In short, due to the fact that Mazu is a sea god, coupled with Taiwan's development and maritime customs, Mazu has always been deeply rooted in the hearts of Taiwanese people, helping people and saving lives, as well as the image of the compassionate a female deity.

3. THE LOCALIZATION OF MAZU BELIEF IN TAIWAN

Due to the widespread development of the Mazu faith in Taiwan, there have been not only orthodox disputes but also situations of so-called localization in recent years. Taiwan has not only become the center of Mazu faith, but also has a phenomenon of localization in its shape, name, and position (Lin, 2007). Moreover, the localization of the Mazu faith in Taiwan can be divided into three aspects: (1) the localization of the salvation myth; (2) Localization of incense authority; (3) Localization of deity modeling (Lin, 2017). When I visited major or famous Mazu temples in Taiwan, I also found these phenomena. In addition to the localization characteristics mentioned by the scholars mentioned above, there is also a debate on whether the root of incense comes from the Meizhou Mazu Temple.

3.1. The Orthodoxy of the Origin of Incense and Fire

Is it true that the worship of the orthodox Meizhou Mazu in temples in Taiwan, as well as the Mazu brought by early ancestors to Taiwan, was originally self sacrificial. But as more and more people cross the sea to come to Taiwan, due to their background of leaving their hometown, they need more spiritual support. Therefore, Mazu, who was originally worshipped by individuals or families, began to build simple Mazu temples, allowing everyone to have the opportunity to worship. In addition, some of the reasons why Mazu crossed the sea mentioned above were due to the military carrying Mazu across the sea to ensure safety. Due to the developed waterways on the island at that time, Mazu

temples were mostly built by river channels. Due to the flood that destroyed Mazu temples, several Mazu temples today are facing competition and comparison over whether they are orthodox or not. For example, the "Bengang Tianhou Temple Orthodox Dispute" between Beigang Chaotian Temple and Xingang Fengtian Temple.



Fig1. *Lu'ermen Mazu Temple*

Photo: Hsiao-Ming, Chang



Fig2. *Legitimate Mazu Temple in Lu'ermen*

Photo: Hsiao-Ming, Chang

There are also the Tianhou Temple in Lu'ermen, Tainan City, and the Legitimate Mazu Temple in Lu'ermen. Zheng Chenggong landed at Lu'ermen and expelled the Dutch. In gratitude for Mazu's assistance, Mazu Temple was built near Lu'ermen Creek at that time. However, it was also due to the flood that the Mazu Temple was destroyed. After subsequent reconstruction, it was not done in one place, but on the north and south banks that separated the stream, resulting in issues of orthodoxy disputes in the future.

In fact, the reason for this problem is not from Mazu, but from a human issue.

3.2. Localization of Mazu Temple

In terms of geography, it is usually named after local names, such as Dajia Mazu (Jenn Lann Temple in Dajia Town, Taichung City), Hanxi Mazu (Lecheng Temple in Hanxi, Taichung City), Lugang Mazu (Tianhou Temple in Lugang, Changhua), Danshui Mazu (Danshui Fuyou Temple), Sanxia Mazu (Xinglong Temple in Sanxia), etc. These titles not only indicate the localization of Mazu faith, but also become spiritual symbols of the region (Lin, 2020). This distinction has also led to the phenomenon of "imitating relatives", which makes Mazu in a certain two places who have a close relationship known as "sisters", and the ritual of communication with each other is also known as "sister's association" (Lin, 2020). Of course, the main reason for the localization of Mazu Temple is to strengthen local people's recognition of the temple and establish a brand. In addition, there are more interesting local names, such as Mazu from Douliu Town, Yunlin County, commonly known as Banjiu (ringdove) Mazu. Temple officials informed that the origin of the name is because on the day of the completion ceremony of Changhe Temple, in the procession of welcoming Mazu, a ringdove flew onto a divine sedan chair and did not leave. Later, it disappeared into the arms of Mazu Temple. The people in the region believed that this situation was very magical, so after discussing this strange news, over time, they called the Mazu of the temple "Bandu(ringdove) Mazu". In addition, there are also temples named after their own location, such as the Cihou Temple in Dashu Jiutang, Kaohsiung City. Due to the location, they call themselves "Xiangzi Mazu". Not only are there female shaman temple owners, but they have also developed their own Facebook and YouTube channels. Located in the eastern part of Taiwan, the Donghai Heavenly Holy Temple in Taitung calls itself "Donghai Mazu" and also has its own theme song MV.

3.3. Mazu Miracle

In addition, there are many miracles named after them, but it is difficult to comment on whether they are true, as they are mostly said by temple officials and local officials. For example, in Hexing Temple (Bomb Mazu) in Pitou Township, Changhua County, it is said that at the end of World War II, American military planes bombed central Taiwan, and Mazu appeared to receive bombs to save the villagers. The Dazhuang Haotian Palace (also known as Dazhuang Mazu) in Wuqi, Taichung. The temple authorities said that during the Qing Dynasty, they went to Chaotian Palace to offer incense. Once, while crossing the turbid water stream to offer incense, the bamboo raft industry raised the price. When the believers were busy raising funds, Mazu suddenly issued a decree by seizing a living

shaman, requiring one of the believers belonging to the dragon and one of the believers belonging to the tiger to stick a talisman to cross the river on their own, and the stream water immediately subsided. From then on, the Mazu of the temple, in addition to "Dazhuang Mazu", added the name "Diving Mazu". The reason why the Donggang Chaolong Temple Mazu in Pingtung, southern Taiwan, is known as the "Shrimp Mazu" is that after the temple was built, the sea area was rich in cherry blossom shrimp, making fishermen wealthy. Another theory is that some merchants became rich by buying and selling cherry blossom shrimp, so they donated money to build the Mazu Temple, which is why they are commonly known as "Shrimp Mazu".

4. FAMOUS MAZU TEMPLES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF TAIWAN

Due to the navigation on all sides of Taiwan, early ancestors introduced the Mazu faith, thereby achieving social stability, stabilizing people's hearts, and even governing the region. After Mazu became the main religion in Taiwan, the importance and influence of Mazu Temple became very important (Cai, 2018). Due to the religious sanctity of the Mazu Temple itself and the fact that its directors are all intellectuals and leaders from various industries, it has naturally become the center of gravity of Taiwanese society. The author refers to relevant research works, as well as being a follower of Mazu and frequently visiting Mazu temples in various parts of Taiwan. Based on the five regions of North Central South, Huadong, and outlying islands in Taiwan, the following is an explanation.

4.1. Famous Mazu Temple in Northern Taiwan

Table1. Famous Mazu Temple in Northern Taiwan

Location	Name	Introduction/Features
Keelung City	Qing'an Temple	The temple was built around 1780, offering sacrifices to Mazu from Meizhou, Quanzhou, and Zhangzhou. The Zhongyuan Festival is the bustling Mazu Temple in Taiwan.
Yilan County	Qingyuan Temple	The earliest Mazu Temple in Yilan, built around 1796, worships Mazu of Meizhou and is known as the "First Mazu of Kailan", serving as the local center of faith.
	Nantian Temple	The temple was built in 1956 and serves as the belief center for fishermen in Su'ao Town. Currently, there are statues of Mazu worshipped in gold, platinum, and black jade.
	Zhaoying Temple	Built in 1808 and renamed as a cultural movement in Yilan area in 1834, the temple was relocated to its current location (opposite the original temple site). There are statues of three officials who were meritorious to the local area during the Qing Dynasty enshrined in the temple, which is relatively rare in temples in Taiwan.
Taipei City	Ciyou Temple	Built in the 22nd year of the Qianlong reign of the Qing Dynasty, it is located in the urban area of Taipei and worships the Mazu of Meizhou in the temple. It is an important Mazu belief center in northern Taiwan.
	Guandu Temple	The largest Mazu Temple in the northern region, founded in the 51st year of the Kangxi reign of the Qing Dynasty (1712), is on par with the Tianhou Temple in Lugang and the Chaotian Temple in Beigang.
	Cisheng Temple	It was founded in the reign of Emperor Qianlong in the Qing Dynasty, and was called the three major temples in the Dadaocheng area together with Taoist Priest Zhang Ciguan and Chenghuang Temple of Xiahai.
	Cicheng Temple	In the first year of the Jiaqing reign of the Qing Dynasty (1796), there was a statue called the world's tallest camphor wood carved statue of Mazu, which is also one of the few golden faced Mazu statues in Taiwan.
	Tianhou Temple	The main worship is the Heavenly Virgin Mazu, which was donated and built by suburban merchants in 1746. Along with the Mengjia Longshan Temple and the Zushi Temple, it is known as the three major temples of Mengjia during the Qing Dynasty in Taiwan.
New Taipei City	Fuyou Temple	The history of building a temple dates back to the 47th year of the Qianlong reign of the Qing Dynasty (1782), and it is the earliest temple in Tamsui to be established.
	Ciyou Temple	It was founded by Emperor Kangxi or Emperor Yongzheng of the Qing Dynasty, but the exact time cannot be determined. It was rebuilt in the 18th year of the Qianlong reign (1753) and became the center of Mazu faith in the Xin Zhuang region.

Hsinchu City	Changhe Temple	Hsinchu referred to it as the "Outside Mazu Temple", located outside the north gate of Zhuqian. It was founded in the seventh year of the Qianlong reign (1742) on its current site and worships the Meizhou Soft Body Mazu Statue, which has a history of 200 years.
	Hsinchu Inside Mazu Temple	Established as early as 1748, this temple is an official temple with mainly Hakka followers. Due to its location in the Zhuqian area, it is called Inside Mazu and is separated from Changhe Palace.

In Table 1, the Nantian temple in Su'ao Town is not a temple that has been around for over a hundred years. Apart from the unique Mazu enshrined in the temple, the main reason for its fame in Taiwan is that it has done two things. One is that in 1987, the fishing boat Jinfeng No.3 in Yilan Toucheng smuggled five Mazus who were invited by the Meizhou Mazu Temple. According to the law, they were supposed to be destroyed, but after local people rushed to express their gratitude and the people of Toucheng compromised. As it was the Nantian Temple that coordinated this matter, the five Mazus who came from the Meizhou Mazu Temple stayed at the Nantian Temple to worship. This matter has been reported by the media, and in addition, it is Mazu from Mazu Temple in Meizhou, which is of great significance to the entire Taiwanese believers. Therefore, the number of believers visiting this temple has greatly increased.

Another thing was that in 1989, temple officials believed that the Taiwan government had opened up visits to mainland China, and with the addition of folk customs, the daughter would return home to visit her family at least once after three years of marriage. Therefore, they planned to divide into two groups of people. One group led five Mazu temples in Meizhou, and sailed directly by sea by fishing boat to visit Mazu Temple in Putian, Fujian. The other group of people, on the other hand, took a plane to Fujian, and the two groups later met to visit the Mazu Temple in Meizhou. In fact, at that time, Taiwan's laws did not open direct shipping, so Su Ao Nantian Temple was the first temple in Taiwan to directly sail by boat to visit Mazu Temple on Meizhou Island in Putian, Fujian.

4.2. Famous Mazu Temple in Central Taiwan

Table2. Famous Mazu Temple in Central Taiwan

Location	Name	Introduction/Features
Miaoli County	Dragon and Phoenix Temple	The temple was established in 1836 and is said to be a fisherman from Hui'an, Quanzhou. He carried the incense from the Meizhou Mazu Temple to build a small temple for worship. Currently, there is the highest 12 story statue of Mazu in the world.
	Ciyu Temple	Built in 1783, during the Dragon Boat Festival, a large-scale ceremony called "Sacrificing the River and Washing the Port" is held at the mouth of Zhonggang Creek every year, surpassing the solitary spirits and wild ghosts crossing Zhonggang Creek and Shuliu Gully.
	Gongtian Temple	Built around 1863, the most distinctive feature of this temple is that it has a history of over a hundred years. It is a pilgrimage to the Chaotian Temple in Beigang on foot, with a round-trip distance of over 300 kilometers and no fixed route or date.
	Cihe Temple	Built in 1772, it worships Mazu of Meizhou and preserves various Qing Dynasty cultural relics in the palace, making it the center of local beliefs.
	Shuntian Temple	Built in 1723, this temple serves as the center of faith in Fangli, Xinfu, and Xishi, commonly known as the Mazu within the city. The Cihe Palace mentioned above is the Mazu outside the city.
Taichung County	Jenn Lann Temple	It is said to have been built in 1730 and is dedicated to the worship of Mazu of Meizhou. Every year, it takes a nine day and eight night pilgrimage to the Fengtian Temple in Xingang, making it the largest religious celebration in the world.
	Chaoyuan Temple	Built in 1856, it is mainly dedicated to the worship of Mazu in Meizhou. The temple houses the soft body statue of the second mother of Meizhou. It was opened in 1908 at the Meizhou Mazu Temple and is commonly known as the Wuqi Waima Mazu Temple.
	Haotian Temple	Dazhuang Haotian Temple was founded in 1723 and built in 1856. It is commonly known as Wuqi Neimazu Temple and is one of the belief centers of the 53rd Zhuang people in areas such as Dadu Castle.

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	Lecheng Temple	Built in 1753, the architectural style of the temple originated from craftsmen in Zhangzhou and influenced the later forms of temple architecture in Taiwan. The activity of the Eighteen Villages in Jingjing has lasted for 202 years until 2023.
	Wanhe Temple	Built in 1864, it currently houses many cultural relics from the Qing Dynasty and has cultural value. In addition, there is a 200 year old "character surnamed drama" that replaces pilgrimage activities with entertaining gods.
Changhua County	Nanyao Temple	The temple was built in the third year of the Qing Dynasty (1738 AD), and since the Jiaqing period of the Qing Dynasty, there has been an annual pilgrimage tradition to the birthplace of Bengang (about Beigang Town in Yunlin County and Xingang Township in Jiayi County).
	Qiande Temple	Commonly known as Tianzhong Mazu, it was built around 1697 and was relocated to its current location due to ethnic conflicts and the flooding of the Chushui River.
	Lugang Tianhou Temple	Founded in 1591, commonly known as the Old Ancestral Palace, it is the only temple in Taiwan that worships the original Mazu deity of the Meizhou Mazu Temple. The temple architecture, one beam and one column, wood carvings, stone carvings, and colored paintings are all made by famous craftsmen, with cultural and historical value. Currently, believers are scattered around the world and it is one of the representative Mazu temples in Taiwan.
	Xinzu Temple	Built in 1788, it was a Mazu Temple built by Emperor Qianlong of the Qing Dynasty. It originated from the pacification of the Lin Shuangwen Rebellion at that time. As an official temple, the Qianli Eye and Shunfeng Ear next to Mazu in the temple are rare deities wearing official uniforms, hats, and shoes.
	Xing'an Temple	Built in 1684, the oldest Mazu Temple in Lugang was built with funds raised by immigrants from Xinghua at that time. The soft body Mazu of Meizhou Mazu Temple is enshrined inside, without beams, columns, and wing rooms, which is the characteristic of the temple.
	Tianmen Temple	Built in 1755, mainly during the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty, there were constant armed conflicts in Zhangzhou, Quanzhou, and Guangdong. In order to protect families in the Shetou area of Changhua (72 villages), they went to the Tianhou Palace in Lugang to welcome incense and protect the local area, which is an important center of faith.
	Putian Temple	Built in 1697, it is the second largest Mazu Temple in Taiwan, dedicated to Mazu in the Meizhou Mazu Temple. There is the largest oyster farm along the southwest coast of Changhua, serving as the center of local fishermen's faith.
	Fuhai Temple	Founded in 1812, it is a center of faith for the people of Wanggong area and was built in the early days by suburban merchants who operated bow boats. Due to its proximity to Wanggong Sightseeing Fishing Port, incense is thriving.
	Dian'an Temple	Formerly known as Dongluotian Hougong, the temple claimed to have been built in 1718. However, due to floods and wars, the residents sought the protection of Mazu and stabilized the hearts of the people. After reconstruction, it was renamed Dian'an. There are currently five hundred year old soft bodied Mazu, the largest in Taiwan.
	Hexing Temple	Built in 1779, it is known as the "Bomb Mother". The Qianli Eye and Shunfeng Ear enshrined inside are wearing belly pockets, and the temple has a Dacheng Hall dedicated to Confucius and other five saints.
Nantou County	Lianxing Temple	Built around 1756, it is located in Nantou County, the only county in Taiwan that is not near the sea. The temple worships the Yin'an Mother, who has a history of over 350 years. Currently, it is the main belief center of the people of Zhushan and Lugu.
Yunlin County	Gongfan Temple	Worshiping Kaishan Mazu (Meizhou Mazu Temple Chaotian Pavilion Six Mamas), it has a history of over 300 years since its establishment during the Kangxi period of the Qing Dynasty and is the center of Mazu faith along the Yunlin Sea Line.
	Shuntian Temple	Built in 1834, due to the influence of imperial rule during the Japanese colonial period, in order to prevent the temple from being destroyed, the

		Japanese statue of Avalokitesvara was enshrined. And the most popular among locals is that the divination and divination signs of the temple are effective in poetry, hence the proverb "Beigang Saint, not worthy of the earth's treasury".
	Fuxing Temple	Established in 1723 and stationed in Xiluo in 1786, the Qing army officers, soldiers, and people prayed for the protection of Mazu in Fuxing Temple to quickly quell the rebellion in Linshuangwen. Eventually, the chaos was resolved and the world was at peace. Therefore, the followers of Mazu in Fuxing Temple changed their title to "Taiping Mazu".
	Guangfu Temple	It was built around 1809, but the temple's directors believe it was in 1644, and in 1871, it welcomed Mazu from Meizhou for worship. The palace preserves a variety of cultural relics and unique buildings, commonly known as the "old lady" by the people.
	Beigang Chaotian Temple	Beigang Chaotian Temple is one of the three major Mazu temples in the world. It is a tree walled monk of the Buddhist sect of Linji. In 1684, he brought a Mazu from Chaotian Pavilion of the Mazu Temple in Meizhou and landed at Benggang. Upon instructions from Mazu, he built a temple at the current site.
Chiyai County	Peitian Temple	Built in 1687, the first Mazu statue was created by Lin Ma, a resident of Bu Bag Town at that time. He came to Taiwan from the Mazu Temple in Meizhou and built it locally. The biggest feature of this temple is that the town hall Mazu is carved from a thousand year old oak tree in the center of the temple, and there is an immovable Mazu title.
	Fengtian Temple	Built in 1811 (the temple claims to have originated from 1622, and the deity was originally the fifth Mazu in the Meizhou Mazu Temple, also known as Taiwan's first Mazu), it is now a destination for pilgrimage to the Lan Palace in Dajia Town. The temple preserves cultural relics from various dynasties and has a global distribution, making it one of the representative Mazu temples in Taiwan.
	Liuxing Temple	Built in 1826, it was discovered in 1799 that the bustling Bengang Creek separated the streets of Bengang City and also destroyed the Temple of Empress Dowager in Bengang. The three Mazu statues in the temple, one dedicated to Fengtian Temple, Beigang Chaotian Temple, and the other dedicated to Liuxing, commonly known as the Black Face Three Mazu.
	Taisheng Temple	Formerly known as Wanggang, it is an important port in Dutch nautical charts. It is now located in Meimei Village, Bubao Town. Currently, this temple has the first Ming Dynasty Mazu statue in Taiwan, making it the oldest Mazu statue in Taiwan.
	Port Temple	Founded in 1684, it is located in Dongshi Township, Jiayi County. It was built by the ancestor Lin Kai who brought the statue of Mazu from the Mazu Temple in Meizhou to Taiwan and landed at Hanziliao from Benggang Port. The temple was built at its current site.

4.3. The famous Mazu Temple in Southern Taiwan

Table3. Famous Mazu Temple in Southern Taiwan

Location	Name	Introduction/Features
Tainan County	Anping Tianhou Temple	Founded in 1668, the Mazu worshipped in the temple is the Mazu Temple in Meizhou, which came to Taiwan with the ship to protect Zheng Chenggong in 1661. The temple, formerly known as Tianfei Palace, was considered a "pseudo temple" after the Qing army attacked Taiwan and declined due to Japanese occupation. After reconstruction in 1966, it once again became a center of faith.
	Da Tian Hou Temple	Built in 1664, it was originally the Ming Dynasty Prince Ningjing's Mansion. After Shi Lang attacked Taiwan, it was renamed as the Mazu Temple to win the hearts of the people. Due to Mazu's contributions in helping to recover Taiwan, Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty issued an order to elevate Mazu to the rank of Tianhou, thus becoming the world's first official temple of Tianhou Temple.
	Lakjemuyse Tianhou Temple	According to literature records, the Mazu Temple was built at the location of Zheng Chenggong's landing in 1661 and was destroyed by floods in 1871. However, due to rescue efforts, Kaiji Mama was not destroyed by the

		flood and has since been worshipped annually in various households. In 1946, the local villagers decided to rebuild the temple, and after 31 years, it was completed in 1977 with the present-day appearance of the temple.
	Legitimacy Lakjemuyse Holy Mother Temple	At present, it is the largest Mazu Temple in Taiwan, built in 1918 and named Bao'an Palace at that time. After World War II, the construction of the Tianhou Temple in Lu'ermen sparked a dispute between the two temples over whether they were orthodox Lu'ermen Mazu. Therefore, the temple was renamed as the "Lu'ermen Holy Mother Temple". In addition to continuously expanding to the present-day appearance of the temple, it also emphasized its own legitimacy.
	Basic Tianhou Temple	The origin of this temple was Zheng Chenggong's renovation of the "Mazu Temple" at the intersection of Dexi Street after capturing the city of Prominzha in 1662, and it was called the Basic Mazu Temple at that time. The 1640 statue of Mazu enshrined in the temple was brought to Taiwan with Zheng Chenggong, hence it is commonly known as "Ship Mazu".
	Qing'an Temple	Built in 1712, the temple has been rebuilt and renovated several times, and still retains various cultural relics. The temple's once every three years "Westport Pilgrimage" mainly has two main activity axes, namely "Wang Jiao" and "Invite Mazu", which have a history of over 200 years without interruption.
	Shelter Temple	Built around 1623 or 1716, it was originally a land temple. However, in 1623, local merchants welcomed a Mazu temple from Meizhou to worship it, so it was renamed as the "Mazu Temple". During the Japanese colonial period, the temple once again welcomed the Meizhou Second Mother, and "Nian Mi Gua" was a special activity of the temple.
	Shanhua Qing'an Temple	It was built around 1636 and was used by the Dutch to civilize the Silaya people. The church was built with this bamboo, and there are still relics and ancient land deeds from that time. After Zheng Chenggong expelled the Dutch, the place became a medical teaching center and was renamed Wenchang Temple during the Kangxi period of the Qing Dynasty. It was also dedicated to the worship of Emperor Wenchang and established a school. After the 1862 earthquake and the destruction and reconstruction of the temple, the Tainan Tianhou Temple received incense and worshipped Mazu instead.
Kaohsiung City	Qijin Tianhou Temple	Originally named Qihou Tianhou Temple, it is the first Mazu Temple in Kaohsiung City. It was founded in 1673 and was developed by seven households from Fujian, including fishermen Xu Ahua, who crossed the sea to Taiwan. The Mazu they brought with them was worshipped at the current site as Mazu Temple, which has since grown to its current scale.
	Jiaoxiu Tianhou Temple	Built around 1773, formerly known as Longjiao Temple, also known as "Nanlu Mazu", it has many sub temples in the south and is one of the important Mazu temples in southern Taiwan.
	Nanzi Tianhou Temple	The correct time for building the temple cannot be verified. It has been around 200 years and was renamed as Nanzi Tianhou Temple in 1992. It is said that the dama in this temple was carved from the same piece of incense by the same teacher as the matsu in Tainan Tianhou Temple and Beigang Chaotian Temple, and the three temples are called "sisters gods".
	Qishan Tianhou Temple	Built in 1824, it is dedicated to the worship of Mazu in Meizhou and serves as the center of faith in the area of Qishan. Due to being the center of markets, beliefs, and spiritual activities in Kaizhuang, as well as the hub for consolidating community awareness and settlement development, it has also become a model for studying the formation of settlements in Taiwan.
	Blessing Temple	Built in 1785, it is the center of faith for the Top Chiadin. In this temple, Qing Dynasty officials came to Taiwan for their duties and were in distress at sea. After praying to Mazu, they were safely rescued. Therefore, the plaque on the book reads "Return Wind from the Sea", highlighting Mazu's grace. The temple also offers "Wang Jiao" activities to pray for local blessings.
	Jinluan Temple	Built in 1777 and relocated to its current location in 1783, it is the center of faith in Lower Chiadin. The temple has a magnificent architecture and also offers "Wang Jiao" activities, with a grand and grand scene.

Pingtung County	Cifeng Temple	Built in 1737 and rebuilt in 1995 due to a large fire, the building is magnificent and rich in traditional palace and temple culture characteristics. This temple is the Pingtung Mazu Faith Center and handles multiple incense and spiritual activities.
	Chaolong Temple	Built in 1724, it was rebuilt in 1973 due to the impact of US military bombing during World War II. Its Mazu is known as the "Xiami Mazu" or "Port Suburb Mazu" and is one of the seven point temples in Donggang.
	Neipu Tianhou Temple	Built in 1805, this temple is adjacent to the only Changli Temple in Taiwan that worships Han Yu. It is the oldest Mazu Temple in the Hakka area of Pingtung County, and currently houses many ancient plaques and stone tablets with cultural value.
	Hengchun Tianhou Temple	Built in 1877, the main feature of this temple is the soft body foundation of Mazu, which was one of the five Mazu statues brought by Shi Lang during his attack on Taiwan in the 22nd year of the Kangxi reign of the Qing Dynasty. Every year, the pilgrimage to Beigang Chaotian Temple is not a pilgrimage, but a gathering of sisters, because one of the Mazu worshipped by Chaotian Temple is also one of the five Mazu.

4.4. The Famous Mazu Temple in Eastern Taiwan and Outlying Islands

From Table 4, it can be found that there are fewer famous Mazu temples in eastern Taiwan and outlying islands, mainly due to the fact that in the early years, eastern Taiwan was the residence of ethnic minorities, and the number of Han people who went to develop was not large. What is more unique is the Gangtian Palace in Hualien, which, although not a century old temple, also provides a center of faith and psychological comfort for the local Han people. In terms of outlying islands, although the Tianhou Temple in Penghu is the earliest Mazu Temple in Taiwan, and the islands are surrounded by the sea, the local faith is mainly based on the worship of princes. The main reason is that according to local people, in the early days, it was common for royal boats to drift to the ground, with paper gods placed on them. This boat drifted to the seaside of a village in Penghu, and when villagers found it, they would pick it up and worship it on the shore, and then burn it. However, some villages have passed through spiritual mediums such as shamans and pointed out that a certain king's boat has taken the prince ashore, and the prince will solve the disaster for the village. Therefore, the main temple or deputy temple is built for worship. However, this custom is relatively rare, and after building a royal ship to send the gods to the temple, the ship is often cremated on the seaside. This custom is also common in some royal temples in Taiwan, while in Table 3, the Xigang Qing'an Temple is relatively unique and related to the Mazu Temple.

4.5. The Famous Mazu Temple in Eastern Taiwan and Outlying Islands

Location	Name	Introduction/Features
Taitung County	Taitung Tianhou Temple	During the local riots in the Qing Dynasty, the Qing commander built a temple in 1891 with the assistance of Mazu, the Great Heavenly Queen Temple in Tainan, to quell the rebellion. It was the center of religious beliefs in East Taiwan and the only Mazu official temple in East Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty.
Hualien County	Hualien Gangtian Temple	In 1951, due to a major earthquake in Hualien, it is said that countless residents were rescued by Mazu. Therefore, residents initiated the construction of Mazu Temple in 1977, which is currently the largest temple in the Huadong region.
Penghu County	Penghu Tianhou Temple	The earliest Mazu Temple in Taiwan is estimated to have been established around 1604 based on the stone tablet unearthed in the temple, which reads "Shen Yourong Yu repelled the Red Hair Fan Wei Malang". There are various cultural relics preserved in the temple, which have cultural value.

5. CONCLUSION

After more than 400 years of development and cultural accumulation, Mazu has gradually been shaped into a god with multiple functions, such as relieving drought, praying for rain, harvesting, and relieving the epidemic. Mazu's faith has gradually penetrated into Taiwan and become the main worship god of the majority of the people.

Moreover, with the development of modern times, Mazu's business volume has also greatly increased, such as exams for students and civil servants, seeking performance for business personnel, seeking marriage, seeking children, marriage relationships, elections, blessings for peace, and physical health,

which are all things that bless people's lives. Due to the development of the Mazu faith, it is not only a history of immigration, but also a story of the life of Han people who settled and took root after arduous immigration. In addition, it is also a history of navigation, indicating the development and changes of navigation since the establishment of Mazu belief culture. Due to the in-depth analysis by many scholars on the life of Mazu and the historical development of Mazu in Taiwan. This study is only a brief explanation of the development and current situation of Mazu in Taiwan, which is beneficial for readers to have an understanding of the origin of the belief psychology and behavior of Mazu believers in Taiwan. The main reason for the issue of Mazu's localization and diversity mentioned in this article is actually the issue of "people", and it will also affect the contribution of "believers". Therefore, the debate over orthodoxy is crucial. However, for Taiwan's Mazu believers, their belief in Mazu will not change, and the temples they worship will be fixed. In terms of famous mother temples in Taiwan, it is difficult to have accurate statistics on how many mother ancestral temples there are. And after localization, various temples began to establish their own brands and strengthen their brand image. The local focus is to attract believers and also increase the economic income of the temple. Due to some ancestral temples in Taiwan being private temples, they have not been registered with the competent religious units in Taiwan. The author has read a lot of materials, some claiming 1047 rooms, some claiming 998 rooms, and some writing about 1100-1200 rooms. In fact, regardless of the total number, the Mazu faith is still the primary belief of Taiwanese people and one of the social forces in Taiwan.

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