

Article

Weituo Statue in Temple Space: Worshipping Weituo as a Patron Deity of the Chinese Saṅgha

Tianshu Zhu

Department of History, University of Macau, Macau, China; tszhu@umac.mo

Abstract: Weituo 韦驮 is one of the most frequently represented protective deities in Chinese Buddhist temples. The statue of Weituo is enshrined virtually in every standard Buddhist temple in China today, and at a unique location—in the entrance hall for the four Heavenly Kings and facing inward. Why is the Weituo statue placed at this place and looking inward? The Chinese Weituo can be traced back to the Hindu god Skanda. However, his iconography and functions in China were completely reshaped by master Daoxuan's 道宣 (596–667) account of this deity. Actually, Weituo is just one of the many Buddhist protective deities for general protection and prosperity. In China, as I demonstrate in this study, Weituo has been known as the most diligent Dharma-protector and is associated in particular with the saṅgha, as a patron guardian and inspector of monks and nuns. Thus, Weituo's images are shrined in Buddhist temples. The locations of these images reflect the importance of Weituo and his special role in Chinese Buddhism. In the past, there have been a few studies, but they mainly focus on his origin. The functions of Weituo and the worship of Weituo in the Chinese saṅgha have not been well examined. Going beyond his identities, iconography, and style, this study aims to contextualize Weituo images in temple space and religious practice.

Keywords: Weituo; Daoxuan; saṅgha-protector



Citation: Zhu, Tianshu. 2024. Weituo Statue in Temple Space: Worshipping Weituo as a Patron Deity of the Chinese Saṅgha. *Religions* 15: 1195. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15101195>

Academic Editor: David Efurd

Received: 7 July 2024

Revised: 15 September 2024

Accepted: 26 September 2024

Published: 30 September 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Weituo 韦驮 is one of the most frequently represented protective deities in Chinese Buddhist temples. The statue of Weituo is enshrined in virtually every standard Buddhist temple in China today, and at a unique location—in the entrance hall for the four Heavenly Kings and facing inward. Why is the Weituo statue placed at this place and why is he looking inward? The Chinese Weituo can be traced back to the Hindu god Skanda. In the past, the few studies on Weituo have focused mainly on his origin (Péri 1916, pp. 41–56; Y. Shi 1992, pp. 248–49; S. Shi 1979, pp. 165–86; F. Shi 2012; Rösch 2007, pp. 102–11; Nobumi 2002, pp. 33–152; Yu 2022, pp. 85–93). The placement of Weituo's image in the temple complex, however, has not drawn much attention from art historians. There were a few early scholars who were aware of the special functions of Weituo in Chinese Buddhism, but they only recognized Weituo as the “guardian of the sanctuary” (Reichelt 1927, p. 245) or “protector of monasteries” (Welch 1967, pp. 49, 79), in addition to his role as a protector of the Dharma. If Weituo protects the monastery, what is the difference between Weituo and Guan Yu 關羽 in Chinese Buddhism? Guan Yu, who is known as Qielan Pusa 伽藍菩薩 or the “Bodhisattva of the Temple”, is actually a territory deity associated with the sanctuary.¹ In a more precise description, I propose that in China, Weituo was transformed into the patron deity of the saṅgha or monastic community, the role of which results in the various locations of his images in Chinese Buddhist temple complexes, whereas Guan Yu is the protector of the sanctuary. Going beyond Weituo's identities, and the iconography and style of his images, in this paper, I attempt to interpret Weituo images in Chinese Buddhist temple space through the transformation of Weituo in China and the worship of Weituo in the Chinese monastic community.

1. From Skanda to Weituo: The Identities in China

It is a common perception among modern scholars that, from a very early time, Skanda in Indian mythology was the origin of Weituo (Péri 1916, pp. 41–56). Skanda (“to leap or

to attack”), who is also called Kumāra (“youthful”), Kārttikeya (“from six Kṛttikā”?), Mu-rugan (“handsome”), Shanmukha (“six faced”), and various other names, is an old Vedic god and later became an important member of the Hindu pantheon. In Vedic literature, he is a son of Agni (fire god), and was born to bring forth more fierce power than his father to fight Asuras (semi-gods). In Hindu mythology, he is a son of Śiva. Among all his qualifications, he is best known as the General of the Army of the Devas (gods), and he eventually defeated the Asuras,² thereby replacing Indra and Agni and becoming the “god of war”. He also came to be associated with children (Rana 1995, p. 41). In addition, he is also known as a malevolent god, e.g., he can spread disease;³ and he came to be a patron deity of thieves (Rana 1995, pp. 62–88).

Scholars usually trace the cult of Skanda in India back to the Maurya period (322–185 BCE), based on Patañjali’s commentary of the *Pāṇini’s Sūtra*.⁴ With different names, Skanda was worshipped in different regions throughout India from early times. The Skanda cult became popular first in south India and then spread to the north, as well as other parts of south Asia and southeast Asia (Rana 1995, pp. 89–124; Thakur 1981, pp. 85–90; Mann 2007, pp. 447–70). In standard Hindu iconography, Skanda appears as child and his vehicle is a peacock, the most recognizable attribute in his iconography. His form with one head and one pair of arms emerged first. The form of six heads did not appear until the Gupta period (320–550 CE).⁵ In China, several images of Skanda of the pre-Tang period have survived, in Yungang Cave 8 (the second half of the fifth century) (Shanxi Yungang Shiku Wenwu Baoguangsuo 山西雲岡石窟文物保管所 1981, p. 17), Dunhuang Cave 285 (538–539) (Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan 敦煌研究院 1982, pl. 119), and on a Dharmadhātu (Dharma-field) Buddha sculpture, which is also called “cosmological Buddha” in English, in the Freer Gallery (Sixth Century) (Figure 1). In Yungang Cave 8, the Skanda image is carved on the door jamb with Maheśvara, a form of his father Śiva, on the opposite side. In Dunhuang Cave 285, Skanda is included in the Buddha’s assembly of a number of Hindu deities around the main shrine. On the cosmological Buddha sculpture, Skanda is carved on the surface of the Buddha sculpture located in the middle area between the heaven and hell as part of the cosmological world system. Again, the Skanda image is paired with Maheśvara here. All these Skanda images follow the Indian iconography of Skanda: a child riding on a peacock, with multiple arms or even with multiple heads.

Like other non-Buddhist deities in India, Skanda was subsumed into Buddhism. In the textual tradition, Skanda appears in a number of texts translated into Chinese in the early fifth century, especially those by Dhārmakṣema (385–433). For instance, in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* and *Mahāmegha-sūtra*, Skanda is mentioned as a non-Buddhist deity along with other popular Brahmanic gods; whereas in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra*, or the *Golden Light Sūtra*, as Weituo, he becomes an important Dharma-protector in Buddhism (T 16:663.350a; Dawatrans 2006, p. 68). The *Golden Light Sūtra* is an important Mahāyāna text and became extremely popular in East Asia because the text is all protections of the gods.

However, in China, Weituo, who became popular later, has little to do with the original functions and legends of the Indian Skanda. Daoxuan’s account redefined the nature of this deity. Daoxuan’s tale resulted in the special worship of Weituo in China. The new identity of Weituo was firmly established from the Daoxuan’s time on. Later accounts about this deity in the Buddhist tradition basically repeat Daoxuan’s description, with only some minor elements added.



Figure 1. *The Cosmological Buddha the Detail of Two Deities.* N. Qi dynasty, Sixth Century. Stone sculpture. Freer Gallery. Author's image.

Master Daoxuan was the founder of the Chinese Vinaya School (Lüzong), a school that emphasizes monastic rules (*vinaya*). Daoxuan dedicated his life to promoting the *Dharmagupta-vinaya* and wrote extensively on the vinaya. It is said that since Daoxuan was so keen to establish the right vinaya for the Chinese that gods in the heaven came to assist him and show him the Buddha's original intention.⁶ In such miraculous encounters with

messengers from the heaven, Daoxuan heard about a god called Wei Jiangjun 韦将军, or General Wei, an alternative appellation of Weituo.⁷ According to Daoxuan's *Daoxuan lishi gantong lu* 道宣律師感通錄 (*Records of Miraculous Responses of the Vinaya Master Daoxuan*) (664) (T 52:2107.435a–442b) and Daoshi's *Lüxiang gantong zhuan* 律相感通傳 (*Records of the Miraculous Responses to the Manifestations of the Vinaya*) (667) (T 45:1989.874a–882a):

“General Wei is a general under the South Heavenly King. He is very busy. General (Wei) protects the Buddhist Dharma in three continents. If there is any dispute or peril, he will go in person and solve it”. (T 45:1989.874c)

“General Wei kept the purity of children and practiced *brahmacharya* (chastity). He is freed from gods' desire. There are eight generals under each Heavenly King. In total there are four Heavenly Kings and thirty-two generals in the four directions of the world. They patrol the world and protect monks and nuns. Among the four directions, Buddhist Dharma in the northern continent is scarce; and on the other three continents, Buddhist Dharma thrives. Nevertheless, monks and nuns often break their vows. Not many of them follow the *vinaya*. People in the East and West lack wisdom and are vexatious. It is difficult to convert them. Though in the southern continent many commit crimes, their minds can be easily tamed. Right before the *nirvāṇa*, the Buddha entrusted General Wei in person to protect the *saṅgha* from demons. “If no one protects monks and nuns, and they violate the precepts like such, who else will practice my Dharma teachings?” ...among the thirty-two generals, General Wei exerts the greatest protection. Sons and daughters of demons often disturb monks who have less strength, and confuse them with delusions. General Wei will rush there and eliminate the danger accordingly”. (T 45:1989.874c28–875a16)

By means of all these descriptions, the Indian god Skanda, who must have been very alien to the Chinese, now obtained a new name and identity.

First, the god was a general under the Southern Heavenly King. For human beings on the southern continent in the Buddhist cosmological world system, he would therefore be the first god directly in charge. Accordingly, Weituo also obtained a new appearance, different from that of Skanda: the outfit of a Tang general similar to that of the Heavenly Kings.

Second, entrusted directly by the Buddha, General Wei or Weituo is described as being in charge of protecting the Dharma of all the three continents, and he “exerts the greatest protection”. As a result, surpassing all protective deities, he became the most important Dharma-protector in China.

Third, General Wei committed himself to the practice of chastity (*brahmacharya*). He specifically guards the monks to make sure they do not violate *vinaya* or break their monkhood in this regard. General Wei's concerns, as described by Daoxuan, clearly reflect Daoxuan's interests as a *vinaya* master with the ambition to establish monastic rules for Chinese monks. Furthermore, Daoxuan also specifically mentioned that Weituo protects monks from being disturbed by demons. These characteristics of Weituo established him as a guardian deity for the Chinese monastic community. This special identity and function of Weituo has so far not been fully acknowledged.

It is from the late seventh century that the Chinese started to set up the image of Weituo in Buddhist temples. According to Xingting's 行霆 *Chong bian zhutian zhuan* 重编诸天传 (1173) of the Southern Song dynasty, “since the time of Emperor Gaozong (628–683) from the Tang dynasty, everywhere when Buddhist temples were constructed or reconstructed, images [of Weituo] were set up for veneration” (X 88:1658.430b).

The earliest extant image of Weituo (857), which can be dated to the Tang dynasty, has survived in the Eastern Hall in the Foguang Si 佛光寺, the second oldest extant wooden architecture in China, near Wutai Mountain in Shanxi Province (Figure 2, no. 25 in the ground plan).⁸ This statue typifies the iconography of the deity in China: a youthful Chinese-looking face, wearing helmet and armor, and holding a long *vajra*-mallet.⁹ This

iconography of Weituo has been quite consistent since the Tang dynasty. As mentioned by Daoxuan, Weituo is said to have the purity of a child. Accordingly, the Chinese created him with a youthful image, often without mustache. This feature is coherent with his precursor, the image of Skanda in India. Being a son of Agni/Siva, Skanda in Indian art appears like a child. Weituo's armor aligns with his title of general and also the original nature of Skanda as a god of war.



Figure 2. Weituo and the Ground Plan of the Eastern Hall with Locations of the Statues. Foguangsi, Shanxi Province. Tang Dynasty (857). The grand plan modified from (Zhongguo Fojiao Yanjiusuo and Shanxisheng Wenwuju 1991, *Shanxi fojiao caisu*, p. 314). Note: 1, 8, 15 Buddha Śākyamuni, Maitreya, and Amitābha; 2, 3 Kāśapa and Ānanda; 4, 5, 9–12, 16–19, 23, 24, 32, 33 Attendants; 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21 Offering Bodhisattvas; 22, 31 Samantabhadra and Mañjuśrī; 25 Weituo; 26, 30, 34 Liaoman, Monk Yuancheng, and Fulin; 27, 35 Child-attendants; 28 Female Deity; 29, 36 Heavenly Kings.

2. The Worship of Weituo as the Protector of the Saṅgha

Weituo has been popular among monks and nuns since the Tang dynasty, and the worship of Weituo was incorporated into ritual practice that was written into the monastic rules of Buddhist temples during the Song dynasty. As the monastic rules of various schools and temples became increasingly comprehensive during the Ming and Qing dynasties, greater numbers of Weituo-related rituals were enlisted in those monastic regulations.

In Chinese Buddhist monastic communities, Weituo's name is chanted in the daily recitation rite. Special rituals are dedicated to him monthly and annually. Additionally, Weituo is also evoked in a number of other rites related to monastic life, especially the summer meditation retreat.

Chanting Buddhist texts daily in the morning and evening is an old Buddhist practice that was first introduced into China during the Three Kingdoms (220–265). In the Tang dynasty, the Chinese Buddhist community developed its own daily chanting ritual, which was practiced in some monasteries during the Tang and Song periods. This practice was standardized and widely spread by the end of the Ming dynasty (Chen 1999, pp. 79–80). The contemporary liturgy of the daily recitation rite is known as the *Fomen risong* 佛门日诵 (*The Buddhist Daily Recitation*), or *Zhaomu kesong* 朝暮课诵 (*The Morning and Evening Recitation*). It consists of a variety of Buddhist practices, the most important of which is the recitation of a group of carefully selected Buddhist texts and *dhāraṇī* to evoke the Buddhist teachings and protections. These daily recitations are conspicuous mental and physical exercises designed as being fundamental to the training and activities for the *saṅgha* and their aim is to stabilize the mind and obtain tranquility. In these daily practices, Weituo is invoked in the morning service,¹⁰ whereas the Qielan Pusa Guan Yu, the protector of the monastery, is invoked in the evening service. In the morning recitation, Weituo is first invoked by chanting his name three times,¹¹ then monks recite the *Praise for Weituo*—

Weituo, the heavenly general, a Bodhisattva in transformation
To support Buddha Dharma, his vows are grand and profound.
With the precious *chu* (vajra-mallet) he subdues the demonic army
His merits hardly matched
Now we pray to you to guard our minds
Pay homage to the Pervasive-eye Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva
Mahāprajñāpāramitā.

(Sūtra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada 1993, p. 62; Chen 2010, p. 85)

As explicated in this praise, the purpose of invoking Weituo is to guard the monks' minds. It is interesting to note that before the *Praise for Weituo*, monks chant thrice the *Shannu Tian* 善女天 (*Benevolent Goddess*) *Dhāraṇī*. Shannu Tian is an alternative name of Haritī, who was enshrined in virtually all Buddhist temples and to some extent served as a protector of the monk community in India.

The earliest extant version of the contemporary liturgy of the daily service is Zhuhong's 祿宏 revision of the anonymous *Zhujing risong* 诸经日诵 (*Various Sūtras for Daily Recitation*) printed in 1600 in the Ming dynasty. The chant for Weituo was present in Zhuhong's version of the text (J19:B044.177c–178a). Examining the authorship of the individual liturgical contents, Chen Pi-yen has argued that the liturgy should have been completed by the twelfth century or at least by the Song dynasty (Chen 1999, pp. 10–14).

Besides mornings and evenings, Chan monasteries also have other types of sutra-chanting rituals, called *Fengjing* 讽经 (or “chanting text”), for different times and occasions. Although the date of its origin is unclear, it is common practice that from the first day to the seventh and from the sixteenth to the twenty-first day of a month, there are six *fengjing* rites dedicated to the earth god, linear masters, Huode Xingjun 火德星君, Weituo, Puan 普庵, and Zhenshou 镇守 respectively to appreciate their protection. These are the Six *Fengjing* (*liu fengjing* 六讽经) (Ding 1984, 326b, 1356d). Weituo *fengjing* is one of the six. That is, on two fixed days every month, the fifth and nineteenth, monks practice Weituo-tian *Fengjing* 韦驮天讽经, or the texts-reciting ritual to Weituo. The Chan school in medieval China is more representative of the diffusion of Chinese religious practices than an exclusive sect. The monastic rules established by the Chan school were widely accepted among Chinese Buddhist communities during the Song and Yuan dynasties, when Chan was the most popular form of Buddhism and received approval of the state (Johnston 2013, p. 269).

Such practice was even transmitted to Japan. For instance, in *Keizan's Rules of Purity* (*Keizan shingi* 莹山清规) written by Keizan Jōkin 莹山绍瑾 in 1324, Weituo-tian *Fengjing* is mentioned as being performed on the third day every month after the morning recitation rite—in front of the image of Weituo, chanting the *Hear Sutra* and *dhāraṇīs* to eliminate all

disasters.¹² It is likely that Keizan modeled his text on similar works imported from Yuan dynasty China. The date of this Japanese text indicates that the practice of the Weituoian Fengjing was probably already quite common in China by the Yuan.

Celebrating the birthday of Weituo annually is still among the basic birthday celebration rites of Buddhist temples in China to the present day. In the *Baizhang qinggui zhengyi ji* 百丈清规证义记 (*Baizhang's Pure Rules for Large Chan Monasteries with Orthodox Commentary*) published by Yirun in 1823, Weituo's birthday is listed as one of the important days for regular annual ceremony (X63:1244.391c). On the birthday of Weituo, the third of June of the lunar calendar, special offerings are made to the image or tablet of Weituo, unless it is a small temple in which such celebrations are ignored. There are a number of various annual birthday celebration rituals in Chinese Buddhist temple practice and laymen usually actively participate in them. However, Weituo's birth is only celebrated within the *saṅgha* (Welch 1967, p. 109).

In addition to the routine of daily, monthly, and annual rites, Weituo is specially worshipped in the rituals associated with meditation retreat, *xiaanju* 夏安居, because Weituo, according to Daoxuan, protects monks from demons during meditation. The summer meditation retreat, *xiaanju*, called *varsā* in Sanskrit, can be traced back to Śākyamuni's time—a three-month meditation retreat during the monsoon season. Chinese monastic rules made from the Yuan dynasty (1206–1368) and beyond began to include liturgical programs in which Weituo became increasingly important. Since the Yuan dynasty, invoking Weituo in the beginning and ending ceremony of the summer meditation retreat has become common in monastic rules such as in the *Zengxiu jiaoyuan qinggui* 增修教苑清规 (*Extended Pure Rules for Teaching Cloisters*) (1347) of the Tiantai 天台 School edited by Ziqing 自庆 (X57:968.327ab. 338a). This tradition was followed in temple rules written in the Ming and Qing periods, e.g., in the *Chanlin shu yu kaozheng* 禪林疏語考證 (X63:1251.672c) written by Yuanxian (1578–1657) of the Chan School and the *Jiemo yishi* 羯磨儀式 “Karma-*vācānā* Rite” (X60:1135.757c) written by Shuyu (1699) of the Pure-land school.

In fact, worshipping Weituo was extensively involved in various aspects of monastic life in China in the past, way beyond these most basic regular rites discussed above. Temple rules written in the Ming and Qing dynasties include more liturgical content than earlier eras, and more Weituo-related rites are recorded. As part of the wave of reviving Buddhism in the late Ming and early Qing period, a number of monastic regulations were published to rejuvenate the *saṅgha* and reestablish order. In the texts of this time, it is common that Weituo is called upon in various monastic ritual ceremonies. In the *Jingtu ziliang quanji* 淨土資糧全集, the practitioner is required to make veneration to Weituo and call upon him for his compassion and witness a number of times (X61:n1162.576ab, 579c, 580a, 581c, 582a, 583a, 585ab, 586b, and 587ab). The *Baizhang qinggui zhengyi ji* 百丈清规證義記 (*Baizhang's Pure Rules for Large Chan Monasteries with Orthodox Commentary*) of the late Qing dynasty represents a summit of the compilation of monastic rules in China. This most detailed and comprehensive *vinaya* reflects the Chinese Buddhist practice in general instead of the Chan sect, as the title suggests. This text proclaims that Weituo will never fail to answer a prayer to eliminate any catastrophe of the Buddhist monastery.¹³ Whenever the *saṅgha* is running out of food and encounters famine, or there is a plan for temple construction or reconstruction, a special date is to be chosen to perform the rite of praying to Weituo.¹⁴

Weituo's functions in China were well expressed in these liturgies as early as the Yuan dynasty. The aforementioned *Zengxiu jiaoyuan qinggui* includes a passage called *Weituo qian huixiang* 韦天前回向, the standard dedication in front of the Weituo image. The prayer in this dedication demonstrates everything that the Chinese monks expect from Weituo—“consolidating and pacifying the Mountain Gate”, “making the warehouse abundant”, “ensuring the monks have the right thoughts and eliminating their obstacles”, and “beautifying the Buddhist temple”.¹⁵ These expressions primarily cover three aspects. First, keep all kinds of disturbance outside the temple gate to safeguard the peaceful life inside. Second, at the material level, ensure that the monastic community receives abundant supplies for both the monks' daily use and temple construction and decoration. Third, at the spiritual

level, help the monks to fix their minds on the right thoughts and protect them in their spiritual practice.

Various rites on Weituo in Chinese Buddhist temples recorded in the temple regulations from the Yuan period in the above discussions mainly concern these three aspects. For example, in the monthly texts-reciting ritual to Weituo described in the Japanese *Keizan's Rules of Purity*, Weituo was also worshipped as a guardian of the warehouse and kitchen (T 82:2589.423). In the *Huanzhu An qinggui* 幻住庵清規 (*Pure Rules for Huanzhu An*) (1317) of the Yuan dynasty, Weituo is also addressed as *kusi* 库司, or storage keeper. The *Huanzhu an qinggui* was designed solely for a private temple called Huanzhu An 幻住庵, or “Mirage Hermitage”, by Zhongfeng Mingben 中峰明本 (1263–1323), who belonged to the Yangqi sect of the Linji 临济 School, a dominant Chan sect of that time. Weituo, as well as many other protective deities related to the temple, is invited for the New Year ritual for protection and prosperity (X63:1248.578bc). Since Weituo can ensure the supply of members of the *saṅgha*, entitling him as the storage keeper of supplies sounds logical.

These three functions of Weituo are also reflected in the numerous efficacious stories about Weituo. In fact, most of these stories are associated with *saṅgha*.¹⁶ Such stories were already present as early as the Tang dynasty. Huaixin's 怀信 (ninth century) *Shimen zi jing lu* 释门自镜录 recorded quite a number of efficacious stories about Weituo of the Tang dynasty (T51: 2083.818a). Those stories, in turn, reinforced the worship of Weituo.

An example of the first function, keeping all kinds of disturbance outside the temple gates, can be seen in the *Dianshizhai Pictorial* 點石齋畫報, China's earliest popular news pictorial published in Shanghai in 1884–1898, during the later days of the Qing dynasty, as an illustrated supplement of the *Shen Bao* newspaper.¹⁷ Figure 3 shows the event, “Weituo Saving a Person”: A merchant called Li Jiu stayed in a temple in Huoshan Mountain overnight. He dreamt that Weituo urged him to wake up because a calamity was coming and instructed him to hide behind him. Li woke up and saw a zombie chasing him. He ran to hide behind the Weituo statue. The noise woke up the monks who came and chased the zombie away. *To thank and honor Weituo, Li had the Weituo statue gilded. Such legends of Weituo are abundant. Presented as news in a modern medium, the report in the Dianshizhai Pictorial demonstrates the continued presence of belief in Weituo in contemporary times.*

As to the second function, ensuring that the monastic community receives abundant supplies, Weituo is often worshipped in the *saṅgha* as a provider of various things. In one type of miracle story, Weituo provides food or other help to monks in desperate situations. There is a saying—“Weituo can urge people to make offerings”, called Weituo *gan gong* 韦驮赶供. For example, according to the *Miyun canshi yulu* 密云禅师语录 [*Quotations from Can Master Miyun*] (1645) compiled by Tongqi 通奇, when Chan master Miyun 密云 (1566–1642) and his temple ran out of food, local devotees brought them offerings just in time because Weituo sent them messages through dreams (J10:A158.81b).

For the third function, helping the monks to fix their minds on the right thoughts and protecting them in their spiritual practice, there is a well-known story from Mt. Tianmu which became a sacred mountain of Weituo in the Song dynasty, because Weituo manifested there. In China, there are four sacred mountains, or the *bodhimandā*, “a place used as a seat, where the essence of enlightenment is present”, dedicated to the four most popular Bodhisattvas, respectively. This is the only one for a protective deity with an Indian precursor. Efficacious stories of Weituo in the area are especially copious. A story about Chan master Gaofeng Yuanmiao 高峰原妙 (1238–1295) of the Southern Song dynasty became quite popular through Xuanhua Shangren 宣化上人 (1918–1995). Gaofeng Yuanmiao belonged to the Yangqi 杨岐 sect of the Linji 临济 School of the Chan tradition. He used to fall asleep during meditation. To solve this problem, he decided to meditate on an overhanging rock on the western peak of the Tianmu Mountain so that he would fall off the cliff if he dozed off. He fell off the mountain twice, and twice he was saved by Weituo. In his persistent effort, Gaofeng made tremendous progress in the end (*Xuanhua Shangren* 宣化上人 1968). Helping monks with their safety and with overcoming obstacles in their spiritual journey, especially during meditation, are the primary duties of Weituo.

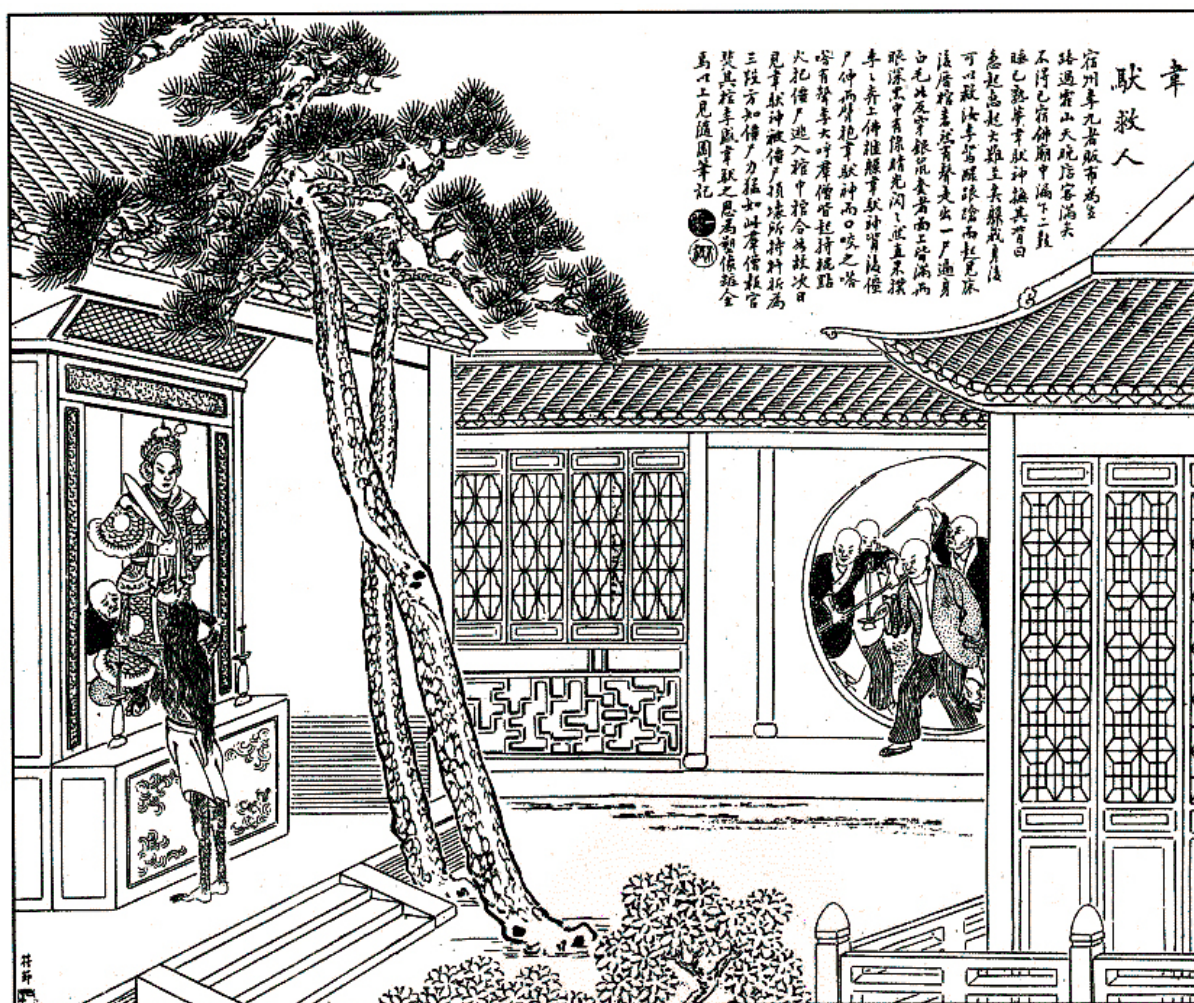


Figure 3. Wu Youru, *Weituo Saving a Person*. Print of *Dianshizhai Pictorial*. 1884–1898. From (Zhang 2001, vol. 11, p. 295).

In sum, the worship of Weituo in the *saṅgha* became increasingly institutionalized in China until the end of the dynastic periods. With the functions of Weituo given by the Chinese monks and the proliferation of Weituo's legends, it is not surprising that images of Weituo were set up for worship in Buddhist temples in China, and that they were placed in specific locations in the iconographic plan of a temple.

3. The Independent Weituo Statue in the Temple Complex

In Chinese Buddhist temples, a Weituo image can be an independent statue on an altar for worship, or just an attendant to another main figure. This paper is concerned with the former, when a Weituo image is an independent statue on an altar to receive worship. The most common location of this independent Weituo statue in a standard Chinese Buddhist temple complex is the entrance hall of the Heavenly Kings. Although, his statue can also be enshrined in a number of other places, such as the Weituo Hall, the meditation cloister, and in the kitchen. These images and their locations in the temple space materialize the expression of Weituo worship in the *saṅgha*.

The hall of the Heavenly Kings is the main place for Weituo images in a temple. This hall, which also serves as the entrance hall, came into existence in the iconographic plan of a Chinese Buddhist temple in the Song dynasty (Ho 1998, pp. 127–37). Before the Song dynasty, the Heavenly King images were placed on the main altar with the Buddha or at the doorway. It is believed that the Weituo image was also set up in the hall of the Heavenly Kings during the Song dynasty (Zhou [1991] 2007, p. 3). For instance, the Weituo image

(Figure 4) in the Heavenly Kings Hall in Lingyin Si is said to be dated from the Southern Song period (1127–1279) (Xingen n.d., chp. 6; Lin 2003, p. 31). In the iconographic program of this Heavenly Kings Hall, the four kings are placed on the two sides; the future Buddha Maitreya is enshrined in the center; and the statue of Weituo is always set at the back of Maitreya facing inward to the temple compound. In the identity of Weituo as established in China, he is a general under the Southern Heavenly King and the head of all the thirty-two generals under the four Heavenly Kings. Thus, the Heavenly Kings Hall is actually his logical and proper location. Facing inward is also significant. It indicates his duties of overseeing the community inside while guarding the gateway. This placement manifests Weituo's role as the protector of the *saṅgha*.¹⁸



Figure 4. Weituo in the Heavenly Kings Hall. Lingyinsi, Zhejiang Province. Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279). Author's photo.

In hall of the Heavenly Kings, Weituo is normally represented as standing in two postures, holding the *vajra* mallet horizontally on his two arms with the two hands in the *añjali mudra* (Figure 5), or letting the *vajra* mallet stand on the ground with one hand pressing on top of the mallet (Figure 4). The former is said to indicate that the monastery provides accommodation to monks from other temples, while the latter indicates the opposite (Z. Liang 1983, p. 128). To what extent the Weituo image was used to show the visitors a monastery policy in the past is not clear. However, the fact that it is the Weituo statue, not other statues, that is used to display whether a temple accepts visiting monks is quite meaningful because of Weituo's close ties to the Chinese *saṅgha*. Occasionally, the posture of holding the weapon in one arm also appears, e.g., the Weituo statue in the Heavenly Kings Hall in the White Horse Temple (Baimasi Hanwei Gucheng Wenwu Guanlisuo 白馬寺漢魏故城文物管理所 1980, p. 7).



Figure 5. Weituo. Baimasi (White Horse Temple), Henan Province. Ming Dynasty, painted clay sculpture. Author's photo.

Before placing the Weituo statue in the Heavenly Kings' Hall became standard, the statue of Weituo would have been set up in front of the Buddha image in the main hall

or enshrined in an independent Weituo Hall. These traditions were continued in some temples later on. For instance, the earliest extant Weituo statue in Foguang Si was placed in the central platform in the main Buddha hall. Here, Weituo is a seated image placed in the front-left of the Buddha.

The Weituo image on an altar can be a seated sculpture. The *Jiemo yishi* 羯磨仪式 (1699) written by Shuyu 书玉, a ritual text of the Qing dynasty, describes how to arrange the altar for the rite of the summer meditation retreat. It is the same arrangement; the Śākyamuni image should be placed in the center and the Weituo image to the front-left of the Buddha (X60: 1135.757c). In the main Buddha hall in the Linshan Si 灵山寺 in Xinyang County, the Kaiyuan Si 开元寺 in Zhengzhou, and the Baima Si 白马寺 (Figure 5) in Luoyang, Weituo is a life-sized statue (of the Ming dynasty) standing in the front-left of the Buddha statues (Lu 2003, p. 546; Zhengzhou Shi Difangzhi Bianchuan Weiyuanhui 郑州市地方志编纂委员会 1986, p. 73; Meng 2004, p. 175).

Examples of an independent Weituo Hall in a Buddhist temple are not uncommon. Figure 6 shows the ground plan of the Guangsheng Xiasi 广胜下寺 (Lower Temple of Guangsheng) of the Yuan dynasty (ca.1264 and 1294). In this temple, the Weituo Hall, no. 6 in the ground plan, is a side hall in the front-right of the main Buddha hall. The *Jinling fancha zhi* 金陵梵刹志 (*Record of Buddhist Temples at Jinling*) records all the Buddhist temples in Nanjing of the Ming dynasty. For all the temples listed, eleven monasteries have a Weituo Hall, among which, six are small temples with the Weituo Hall as the entrance hall¹⁹ and five of them have a Weituo Hall in addition to the Heavenly Kings Hall. In Faqing Yuan 法庆院, the Weituo Hall is the side hall on the left (Ge 1936, p. 719). In four temples, the Weituo Hall is located in the Chan Cloister (Chantang 禅堂).²⁰ In the Linggu Si 灵谷寺, besides the Chan cloister, there is another Weituo Hall built in the Vinaya Cloister (Lütang 律堂) (Ge 1936, p. 303). The Chan Cloister and Vinaya Cloister are related to the Chan meditation practice and *vinaya*. Both of them are attached to the function of Weituo. Locations either in the Chan Cloister or Vinaya Cloister speak of Weituo's duty as a patron deity of the *saṅgha*.

The Weituo Hall or the space in front of the main Weituo image of a temple also serves for the rituals related to Weituo. In the aforementioned *Baizhang qinggui zhengyi ji ji* of the late Qing period, the rites, which should be performed when a temple is running out of food or there is a need for temple construction/reconstruction, are clearly specified to be held in either the main hall or the Weituo Hall.²¹

Indeed, the altar of the Weitu constitutes an organic part of monastic life. Based on mainly oral information from abbots of major monasteries in China, Holmes Welch presented a detailed description of the modern practice in Chinese Buddhist monasteries of the first half of the twentieth century before the practice was discontinued in the PRC period. In the experience of one monk, who, according to Holmes Welch, seems to have been exposed to a different system of novitiate altogether, he, with about twenty novices from nearby small temples, had his head shaved before the image of Weituo in a large hereditary temple in a collective ceremony, with *each master shaving his own disciples* (Welch 1967, p. 284). Today, monks in the well-known temple Guiyuan Si 归元寺 in Wuhan had a unique tradition. The selection of the abbot of this temple was decided by drawing lots in front of the Weituo statue. As described by Welch, this is in fact a tradition of the Hunan province, with its roots conceivably lying in India (Welch 1967, pp. 166–70).

Furthermore, in Chan temples in the past, the administrative notices were announced through hanging a tablet, called *painshi* 牌示. The tablet would be hung up in different locations according to the nature of the announcement. Shown in the *Gaominsi siliiao guiyue* 高旻寺四寮规约, for rituals, the tablet should be hung in front of the main hall, whereas for the promotion of monks such as *shengzuo* 升座 and *mianli* 免礼, the tablet is to be hung in front of the Weituo Hall (Ciyi 1989, p. 5818). Located in Yangzhou, the Gaomin Si 高旻寺 temple is one of the four most important Chan temples in China. The monastic rules of this temple, written by master Laiguolao 来果老 in the early modern time, are a synthesis and modification of the long tradition of Buddhist practice in China.

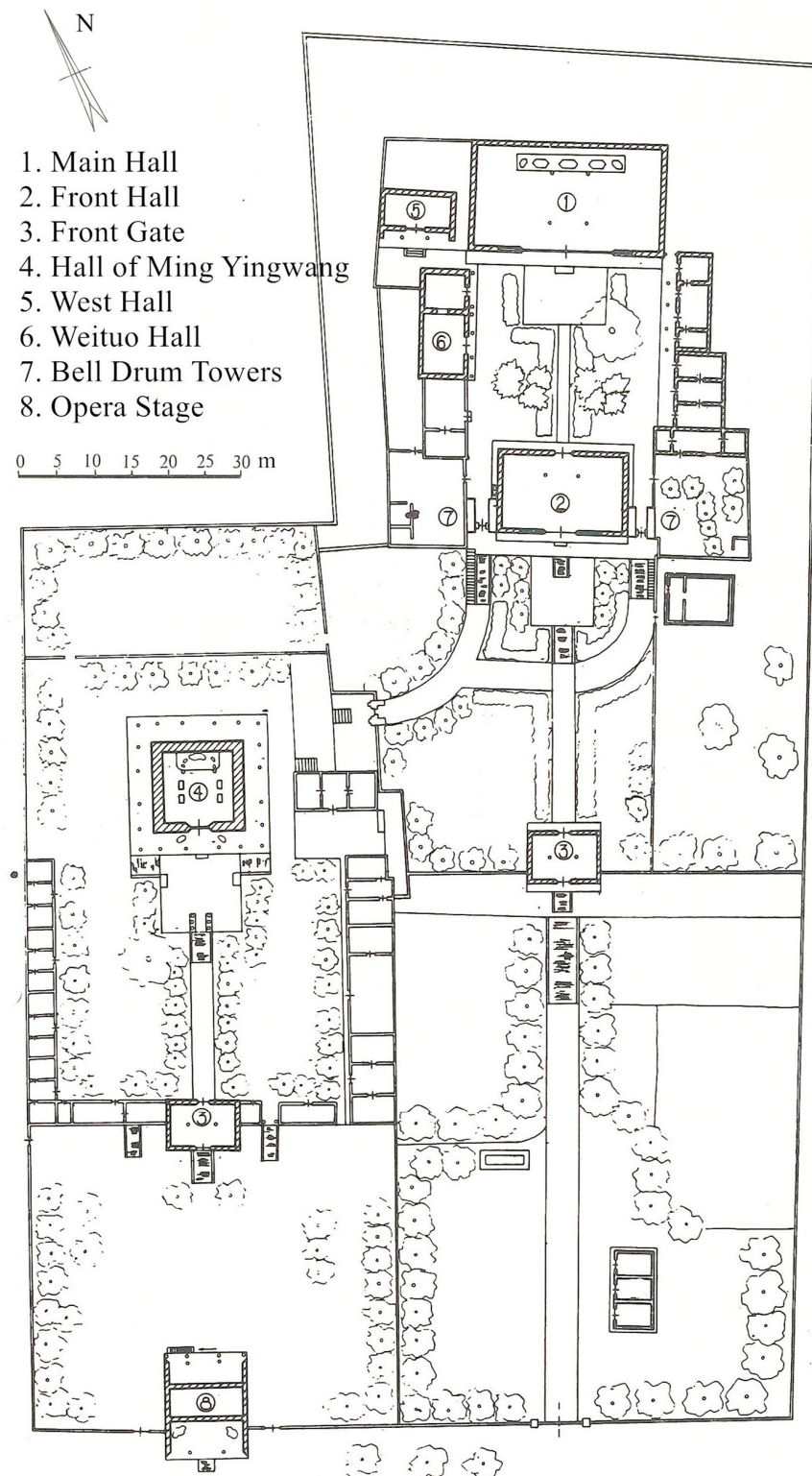


Figure 6. The Plan of Guangsheng Xiasi. Modified from *Zhongguo gudai jianzhu—Hongdong Guangsheng si*, drawing 31.

Head shaving marks one's monkhood, and the other examples all concern important personnel issues of the *saṅgha*. In addition, Welch also observed another use of the Weituo Hall that is rarely known. During the meditation period, when a monk has a minor illness, the preceptor would excuse him from a certain number of meditation sections and let him spend the day resting in the hall of Weituo (Welch 1967, p. 79). What would a better place than the Weituo Hall when a monk is seeking protection?

Weituo images can also be enshrined in the kitchens of Chan monasteries (Ciyi 1989, p. 2701). Jiexian 戒显 (1644–1672), in his *Xianguo suilu* 现果随录, mentioned a Weituo image in the kitchen of the Anguo Si 安国寺 which was built in the Southern Tang dynasty (937–976). This was a seated statue.²² Placing a Weituo shrine in the kitchen reflects his role of ensuring the food supply for the *saṅgha*. This tradition of enshrining Weituo in the kitchen was also transmitted into Japan.

4. Conclusions

Among all the deities transmitted into China with Buddhism, Weituo is among the most successful ones. He underwent a transformation from a minor Hindu god in India to the principal Dharma-protector of Chinese Buddhism. In his identity transformation, he became a patron deity of the Chinese *saṅgha*. Much of this success is due to this transformation. The widespread worship of Weituo is inside the *saṅgha* and has been institutionalized and ritualized by the *saṅgha*. It is because of the monastic regulations and the power of the Chinese *saṅgha* that Weituo's name was chanted in various rites and his image was erected in Chinese Buddhist temples. Worshipping Weituo is done by the monks in the expectation that he will keep demons away from disturbing the monks, especially during meditation, and will ensure the ample supply of food and all other material supplies necessary to the temple. Weituo did not appear on private altars and was not worshipped among laity.

Mirroring the worship of Weituo in the Chinese *saṅgha*, the image of Weituo has been consistently incorporated in the iconographic scheme of Chinese temple planning. A Weituo statue is placed in specific locations in a Buddhist temple—mainly in the hall of the Four Heavenly Kings, and occasionally in an independent Weituo Hall or even in the kitchen. These contexts of Weituo images in Chinese Buddhist temples manifest Weituo's function in the Chinese *saṅgha*. They embody the materialized ritual space of Weituo worship in the temple.

In the transmission to and transformation within China, Weituo has also had other roles: as one of the Indian deities in the *Golden Light Sūtra*, as a protector of the Buddha's relic, and as the principal Dharma protector in Chinese Buddhism. For these roles, the image of Weituo has other corresponding contexts, which are beyond the scope of this paper.

Funding: This study is supported by the research grant of the University of Macau MYRG2022-00227-FAH.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Notes

¹ For discussion on the function of different types of deities in Buddhist temples, please see (Zhu 2019a, pp. 303–40).

² *Mahābhārata*, see (Bhattacharya 1956, v. 23; Sørensen 1963, pp. 642–43).

³ *Pāraskara Gr̥hyasūtra* ed. by Haridatta Śāstrī (Śāstrī 1973, pp. 1, 16, 20).

⁴ Patañjali (second century BCE) mentioned the worship of the image of Skanda along with images of Śiva and Viśākha in his commentary of Pāṇini's *Sūtra* (V.3.99). (Chatterjee 1970, p. 29).

⁵ For the iconography of Skanda in India, see (Rana 1995, pp. 25–147; Gupta 1988, pp. 57–63; Chatterjee 1970, pp. 112–38; Thakur 1981, pp. 59–84).

- ⁶ See Huili 慧立 and Yanzong 彦惊, *Da Tang Da Cien Si sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法师传 (Biography of the Tripitaka Master of the Daci'en Temple), 688. (T 50:2053.277b).
- ⁷ In the Chinese tradition, Wei 韦 in the name Weituo 韦驮 can be regarded as the last name. Therefore, to the Chinese, Weituo can be called General Wei. The textual account of the conflation of Weituo and General Wei can be found in Zongxiao's (1151–1214) *Jingguangming jing zhaojie*, the commentary of the *Golden Light Sūtra* (X 20:361.521c).
- ⁸ All the statues on the altar in this hall are original Tang sculptures of the late Tang style, although the current painting was done in the 1930s. Attending the Buddhas, a seated statue of Weituo was placed to the Buddhas' front left on the altar. (S. Liang 1953, pp. 76–89, 91, 93–121; Li 2006, pp. 357–460). Zhang Yingxia suspected that the Weituo statue is not a Tang work but was moved from the old entrance hall called Weituo Hall. The Weituo statue is painted with a golden face which is different from all other statues on the altar. And in the whole composition, Weituo appears alone, not paired with anyone. However, all the paints are not Tang original and should not be relied on in the dating of the sculpture. According to the staff working in the temple, the original Weituo statue in the entrance hall was moved to the Shanxi Provincial Museum. (Zhang 2010, p. 92).
- ⁹ For the study of the iconography of Weituo, see (Zhu 2019b, pp. 121–35).
- ¹⁰ For certain temples, this section can be optional in general days but is required of the first and fifteenth days of a month. For example, in the *Conglin liangxu xuzhi* (Necessary Acquaintance of the Two Orders), the monastic rule of the Chan School written by Tongrong (1639), the warden (*jiansi*, the superintendent of a monastery for internal affairs) leads the *saṅgha* paying homage to the Buddha and to Weituo in the morning service every first and fifteenth day of each month. (X63:1251.672c; Chen 1999, p. 114).
- ¹¹ Pay homage (*nāmah*) to the Bodhisattva Mahasattva under the incense-cloud canopy. Pay homage (*nāmah*) to the Dharma Protecting Weituo, the honored god Bodhisattva. (Sūtra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada 1993, p. 59).
- ¹² “韦驮天讽经（三日）：上来讽诵大悲圆满无碍神咒，消灾妙吉祥神咒。所集殊勋，祝献韦驮尊天、厨司、监斋使者、主汤火神明。所冀，山门镇静，中外咸安，火盗双除，檀信归崇。诸缘吉利者，十方三世云云。” (T 82:2589.423; Ciyi 1989, p. 3991).
- ¹³ “今丛林中，凡遇灾难等事，祈祷韦陀，无不灵应。” X63:1244.384ab.
- ¹⁴ “遇荒歉，常住将绝粮，或为建造，或修理等事”时，就会专门“预定日期……齐诣大殿或韦驮殿，持善天女呪，并祈祷韦驮” X63:1244.391a.
- ¹⁵ “山门镇静”，“仓库丰盈”，“法侣正念三障消除”，“梵宇美奐美轮” X63:1244.338a.
- ¹⁶ For instance, *Shimen zijing lu* 释门自镜录. T 51:2083.824c–825a, by Huaixin 怀信, 843; *Fahuajing xianying lu* 法华经显应录 [The Record of The Lotus Sūtra's Efficacy], X78:1540.48 by Zongxiao 宗晓 (1151–1214), 1198; *Huangming jingang xin yi lu* 皇明金刚新异录 [New Record of The Diamond Sūtra's Efficacy], X87:1633.497a, by Wang Qilong 王起隆, 1652. *Xianguo suilu* 现果随录 [Records of Retribution of This Lifetime], X88:1642.44c, by Jiexian 戒显 (1644–1672); *Tianranshi chanshi yulu* 天然是禅师语录 [Quotations from Chan Master Tianranshi], chap 3, J38:B406.139b, by Jinbian 今辩 (?–1697), 1670; *Qianshan shengren lao heshang yulu* 千山剩人和尚语录 [Quotations from Monk Qianshan Shenren], chp. 4, J38:B407.233, by Hanke 函可 (1612–1660); *Xueqiao chanshi yulu* 雪峤禅师语录 [Quotations from Chan Master Xueqiao] chp. 9, L154:1638.41b. Ed. Hongzhu 弘珠, 1652; *Miyun canshi yulu*, J10:A158.81b, by Tongqi, 1645; “Yuanrong” 圆融 in *Jingtu shengxian lu xubian* 净土圣贤录续编 [The Continue Records of the Pure-land Sages], X78:1550.0323b, by. Huting 胡珽 (1822–1861). *Xiuxi jianwen lu* 修西闻见录·亳州护国义明今禅师, X78:1552.564, by. Ji Yuan'ou 鸡园偶, Qing dynasty; and *Eryinmi chanshi yulu* 二隐谥禅师语录 [Quotations from Chan Master Eryin], chp. 1, J28:B212.474b, by Chaoju 超巨 et al. early Qing.
- ¹⁷ There are two stories about Weituo images in the *Dianshizai Huabao*: “Damaging a Weituo Image 韋駄被毆” and “Weituo Saving a Person 韋駄救人”. (Zhang 2001, vol. 14, p. 188; vol. 11, p. 295).
- ¹⁸ One may explain the orientation of Weituo statue, facing inward of the temple or to the Buddha image, as protecting the Dharma or the temple. However, all the protective deities protect the Dharma or Buddhist temples, and their images do not have to face inward. For example the author of the *Lingyinsi zhi* thus explained, “[setting up the image of the] inward-facing god Wei is to honor him for cleaning up the three continents, and protecting the Buddhist Dharma” (Sun 1663, p. 13).
- ¹⁹ The six small temples are Shifang Lüyuan 十方律院, Qianfo An 千佛庵, Qielan An 伽蓝庵, Yiwei An—苇庵, Guanyin An 观音庵, and Jishan An 积善庵. (Ge 1936, pp. 626, 842, 880, 964, 965, 999).
- ²⁰ Qixia Si 栖霞寺, Linggu Si 灵谷寺, Tianjie Si 天界寺, and Bao'en Si 报恩寺. (Ge 1936, pp. 303, 485, 741, 1072).
- ²¹ “遇荒歉，常住将绝粮，或为建造，或修理等事……齐诣大殿或韦驮殿，持善天女呪，并祈祷韦驮” X 63:1244.391a.
- ²² A Weituo image in the kitchen of Anguo Si manifested in the dream of Zhang Longyu and asked him to rebuild the temple. *Xianguo suilu* X88: 1642:42a, by Jiexian (1644–1672).

References

- Baimasi Hanwei Gucheng Wenwu Guanlisuo 白馬寺漢魏故城文物管理所. 1980. *Baima Si* 白馬寺 [White Horse Temple]. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe.
- Bhattacharya, H. Swat, ed. 1956. *Mahābhārata*. In *Vanaparvan*. chp. 191, v. 23. Dheli: V&S Publishers.
- Chatterjee, Asim Kumar. 1970. *The Cult of Skanda-Kārttikeya in Ancient India*. Calcutta: Punthi Pustak.
- Chen, Pi-Yen. 1999. Morning and Evening Service: The Practice of Ritual, Music, and Doctrine in the Chinese Buddhist Monastic Community. Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA.

- Chen, Pi-Yen. 2010. *Chinese Buddhist Monastic Chants*. Middleton: A-R Editions, Inc.
- Ciyi 慈怡, ed. 1989. *Foguang Dacidian* 佛光大辭典. Gaoxiong: Foguang chubanshe.
- Dawatrans, Losang. 2006. Chapter on Protection called Refuge of the Yakshas. In *The King of Glorious Sūtras Called the Exalted Sublime Golden Light: A Mahayana Sūtra*. Portland: Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, p. 68.
- Ding, Fubao 丁福保. 1984. Liu Fengjing 六諷經. In *Foxue Dacidian* 佛學大辭典. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe.
- Dunhuang Yanjiuyuan 敦煌研究院. 1982. *Zhongguo Shiku: Dunhuang Mogaoku I* 中國石窟: 敦煌莫高窟 I. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshi.
- Ge, Yinliang 葛寅亮. 1936. *Jinling Fancha Zhi* 金陵梵刹志 [Record of Buddhist Temples at Jinling]. Zhenjiang: Jinshan jiangtian si.
- Gupta, Shakti M. 1988. *Karttikeya, the Son of Shiva*. Bombay: Somaiya Publications.
- Ho, Puay-peng. 1998. Setting for the Faith: Icons in Space in Early Chinese Monasteries. In *In the Footsteps of the Buddha*. Hong Kong: Xianggang Daxue Meishu Bowuguan, pp. 127–37.
- Johnston, William M. 2013. *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*. London: Routledge.
- Li, Song. 2006. From the Northern Song to the Qing. In *Chinese Sculpture*. Edited by Angela Falco Howard, Song Li, Hung Wu and Hong Yang. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 357–460.
- Liang, Sicheng 梁思成. 1953. Ji Wutaishan Foguangsi de jianzhu 記五臺山佛光寺的建築 [The Architecture of Foguangsi at Mount Wutai]. *Wenwu* 5: 76–89, 91, 93–121.
- Liang, Zhangju 梁章鉅. 1983. *Langji Xutan* 浪跡續談. Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe.
- Lin, Zhengqiu 林正秋. 2003. *Gucha Lingyin* 古剎靈隱 [The Ancient temple Lingyin]. Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe.
- Lu, Shifan 呂世范, ed. 2003. *Zhongzhou Lansheng* 中州覽勝. Zhengzhou: Zhengzhou guji chubanshe.
- Mann, Richard D. 2007. The Splitting of Skanda: Distancing and Assimilation Narratives in the ‘Mahābhārata’ and Ayurvedic Sources. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 127: 447–70.
- Meng, Xianming 孟憲明, ed. 2004. *Tuwen Lao Zhengshou: Lao Shi Pian* 圖文老鄭州: 老詩篇. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou Guji Chubanshe.
- Nobumi, Iyanaga 彌永信美. 2002. *Kannon hen'yōtan* 觀音變容譚 [Transformation of Avalokiteśvara's Image]. Kyoto: Hōzōkan.
- Péri, Noël. 1916. Le Dieu Wei-t'o. *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 16: 41–56. [CrossRef]
- Rana, S. S. 1995. *A Study of Skanda Cult*. Delhi: Nag Publishers.
- Reichelt, Karl Ludvig Reichelt. 1927. *Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism: A Study of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism*. Shanghai: The Commercial Press, Limited.
- Röscher, Petra. 2007. *Chinese Wood Sculptures of the 11th to 13th Centuries: Images of Water-Moon Guanyin in Northern Chinese Temples and Western Collections*. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag.
- Shanxi Yungang Shiku Wenwu Baoguangsuo 山西雲岡石窟文物保管所. 1981. *Yungang Shiku* 雲岡石窟. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshi.
- Shi, Fayuan 釋法緣. 2012. “Yinshun Fashi ‘Fojiao Shidi Kaolun’ Zhong ‘Hufa Weituo Kao’ Zhi Zhankai” 印順法師《佛教史地考論》中《護法韋駄考》之展開 [Extended Study of Yinshun's A Study of the Dharma-Protector Weituo' in the 'Fojiao Wenshi Zakao']. Paper presented at Diyijie Renben Fojiao Xueshu Luntan 第一屆人本佛教學術論壇, Taichung, Taiwan, April 13–14.
- Shi, Shanhuai 釋善慧. 1979. Hufa Weituo kao 護法韋駄考 [A Study of the Dharma-protector Weituo]. In *Fojiao Wenshi Zakao* 佛教文史雜考. Taipei: Dacheng wenhua chubanshe, pp. 165–86.
- Shi, Yinshun 釋印順. 1992. Hufa Weituo kao 護法韋駄考 [A Study of the Dharma-protector Weituo]. In *Fojiao Shidi Kaolun* 佛教史地考論. Taipei: Zhongwen chubanshe 中文出版社, pp. 248–49.
- Sun, Zhi 孫治. 1663. *Lingyinsi zhi* 靈隱寺志 [Gazetteer of Lingyin Temple]. Hangzhou: Hangzhou chubanshe, reprint 2006.
- Sørensen, S. 1963. *An Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata*. Delhi: M. Banarsidass.
- Sūtra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada, trans. 1993. *The Buddhist Liturgy*. New York, San Francisco and Toronto: Sūtra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada.
- Śāstrī, Haridatta, ed. 1973. *Pāraskara Gr̥hyasūtra*. Vārāṇasī: Bhāratīya Vidyā Prakāśana.
- Thakur, Upendra. 1981. *On Kartikeya*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia.
- Welch, Holmes. 1967. *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900–1950*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Xingen 性恩. n.d. Guji 古迹 [Historical Sites]. In *Lingyin Xinzhi* 靈隱新志 [New Gazetteer of Lingyin]. Available online: https://www.lingyinsi.com/detail_46_783.html (accessed on 29 September 2024).
- Xuanhua Shangren 宣化上人. 1968. *Dacheng Miaofa Lianhua Jing Qianshi* 大乘妙法蓮華經淺釋, Lecture in San Francisco, Published by Fajie Fojiao Zhonghui 法界佛教總會 at: 大乘妙法蓮華經淺釋 從地涌出品第十五 上宣下化老和尚講述. Available online: <https://www.drbachinese.org> (accessed on 31 December 2023).
- Yu, Huaijin 于懷瑾. 2022. “Hufa Weituo tanyuan—Yindu zhanshen ‘Saijiantuo’ de Zhongguohua licheng 護法韋駄探源—印度戰神‘塞建陀’的中國化歷程”. *Shijie Zhongjiao Wenhua* 6: 85–93.
- Zhang, Yingying 張映瑩. 2010. *Wutaishan Foguangsi* 五臺山佛光寺 [The Foguangsi in Wutai mountain]. Beijing: Wenwu Chubanshe.
- Zhang, Qiming 張奇明, ed. 2001. *Dianshizhai Pictorial*, Daketong edition. 15 vols, Shanghai: Shanghai Huabao Chubanshe.
- Zhengzhoushi Difangzhi Bianchuan Weiyuanhui 鄭州市地方誌編纂會, ed. 1986. *Lidai Yong Zheng Shi Xuan* 歷代詠鄭詩選. Zhengzhou: Zhengzhoushi Difangzhi Bianchuan Weiyuanhui.
- Zhongguo Fojiao Yanjiusuo, and Shanxisheng Wenwuju, eds. 1991. *Shanxi fojiao caisu* 山西佛教彩塑. Beijing: Zhongguo Fojiao Wenhua Chubanshe Youxian Gongsi.
- Zhou, Shujia 周叔迦. 2007. *Fojiao Jiben Zhishi* 佛教基本知識. Beijing: Beijing chubanshe. First published 1991.

- Zhu, Tianshu. 2019a. Placing Images of Deities in Buddhist Temples—A Comparison of India and China. In *Buddhist Monasteries of South Asia and China*. Edited by Sanjay Garg. New Delhi: Society for Buddhist Art and Archaeology & Manohar, pp. 303–40.
- Zhu, Tianshu. 2019b. The Image of Weituo: Creating a New Iconography of a Chinese Buddhist Deity. In *Buddhist Art: Traditions and Innovations—Diversity in Harmony of Buddhist Art in Eurasian Cultural Space*. Ekaterinburg: Ural Federal University Press, pp. 121–35.

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.