

A Thousand Indigenous Winds

blowing through
the leaves of Alishan

●
CCU,
an indigenous base of creative learning







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President's Foreword

23.5°N

Cultivating a Resilient Indigenous Homeland

A Thousand Indigenous Winds



National Chung Cheng University was founded during the period when the Taiwan Economic Miracle was taking place. After 30 years of development, it has grown into one of the leading comprehensive universities in central and southern Taiwan, integrating research with teaching and offering both technology and humanities programs. As the president, I'm deeply honored to be able to work with a team of outstanding colleagues who have found time in their extremely busy daily commitment to teaching, research, and counselling to devote themselves to the Ministry of Education's Higher Education Sprout Project. Due to its location in rural Minxiong County (known in the past as "Dovoha," an Indigenous community) and in proximity to Mt. Ali (Dabang, an Indigenous tribe, is only two hours' drive away), the University campus sits right within an Indigenous homeland, and is the closest academic institution to a mountain Indig-

enous community in western Taiwan. Such geographical factors make promoting the national policy of Indigenous community development an indispensable part of the university's mandate.



Interestingly, Chiayi is located at 23.5°N, on the 23rd parallel that runs across regions with weaker economic development around the globe. Our team therefore hopes to invigorate Chiayi and similar regions through projects centered around the concept of "The Bamboo Ecology in Indigenous Homelands," which

builds upon past USR projects. This book, though small in size, contains vivid visual and textual evidence of the results of the project. It is a testimony to the University's mission of bridging rural and international communities to build a resilient and progressive future for all. I would like to express my gratitude to the Ministry of Education for the opportunity provided by the SPROUT project, and to my dedicated colleagues, especially those in the Office of Student Affairs, the SPROUT 3-2 team, and the editorial team of this book.

National Chung Cheng University President 馮展華





Foreword

In the Chinese language, the pictogram signifying the word “wind” refers to the movement of hibernating insects in their caves anticipating the coming spring. This scenario evokes the original meaning of wind. The endless gusts of wind are, of course, uncountable, and the expression “a thousand winds” originally came from the Japanese language. Here it is used to refer to the cultural diversity of Taiwan where winds of a thousand cultures blow through our history, bringing life to all things. This is a reification of the classical ideal of “bringing culture to all humanity” which is also the goal of our university.”



Chiayi

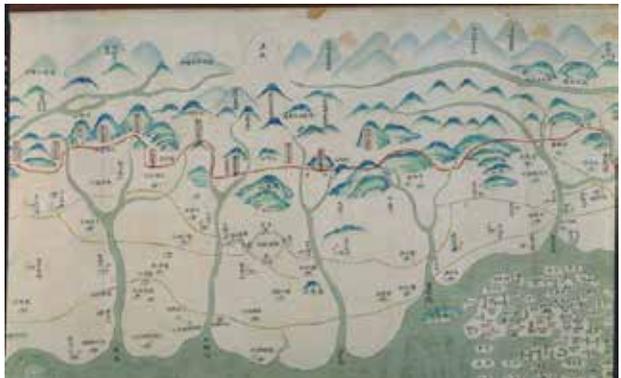
Chiayi, located in western Taiwan, was the home of the Lloa, a group of plains Indigenous people. Its former Chinese name was Tsu-lo-san, a representation of the original Formosan-language name Tirozen. During the Dutch Formosa period, the place was known by the names Tirasen, Tilaossen, or Tiraocen, which were tribe names of the Hoanya, a Plains indigenous people. In *A Record of Taiwan*, it is referred to by the name “Tsulo.”

The place names of the earliest settlements in Chiayi City are almost all related to the Plains indigenous peoples. Fan-se-ne (lit. inside the indigenous tribe), Fan-se-kou (lit. the head of the tribe) are to the north of the Central Fountain; Fan-zi-gou (lit. indigenous ditch) lies to the southeast of the Chiayi Station; and Fan-po-chuang (lit. indigenous women community) sits to the west of Trans-Chiayi Railway. Plains Indigenous people occupied the plains, whereas the Tsou people resided in the mountain areas in the region.

In 1624, the Dutch established trading posts in Taiwan. In 1627, the Dutch hired Han labor to cultivate rice and sugar and attempted to convert Indigenous people to Christianity. In 1636, Dutch missionaries set up schools to teach native inhabitants Christianity and other skills such as reading and writing. The missionaries created a number of Romanization schemes for the various Formosan languages and translated various Dutch texts into Indigenous languages as teaching materials. To better accomplish their mission, some missionaries, such as George Candidius (1597 – 1647), who was one of the first missionaries to be stationed on the island, even learned Formosan languages themselves. He acquired the Formosan language called Soraya in order to preach in Sinckan, an Indigenous tribe. As a result, Formosan languages became very influential in the derivation of modern-day place names in Taiwan.

In 1683, Shi Lang defeated Zheng Keshuang; the next year Taiwan was officially annexed by the Qing dynasty and became part of the province of Fujian. After the annexation, Taiwan was made a prefecture under the administration of Fujian Province consisting of three counties, namely Zhuluo, Taiwan, and Fengshan counties. The county seat of Zhuluo at the time was Tiroso. In 1786, in the Lin Shuangwen rebellion, the citizens of Zhuluo helped Qing troops fight the rebels. In the next year, in commemoration of the righteous citizens, Emperor Qianlong gave Zhuluo the name “Chiayi” (lit. commendable righteous).

As a result, Zhuluo County was renamed Chiayi County, and Tiroso changed to Chiayi as well, sealing the place name thereafter.



Indigenous Boundary Map of Qing Taiwan under Emperor Qianlong (Zhuluo)



Chung Cheng University

Chung Cheng University is located in Minxiong Township, Chiayi County, Taiwan. The University comprises 7 Colleges (Education, Engineering, Humanities, Law, Management, Sciences, and Social Sciences) and 29 departments, offering 44 MA and 29 PhD programs. The founding president, Lin Ching-jiang, espoused the philosophy of lifelong learning, which has been one of the University mottos.

CCU is dedicated to cultivating distinguished π -type talents versed in cross-disciplinary expertise and committed to lifelong learning and diverse prospects. Through cross-disciplinary course designs that involve on-site practice, the University encourages students to participate in community projects in order to gain real-life experience and develop necessary analytic skills and abilities to address social issues. Students enrolled in community projects will learn to take advantage of campus resources and are supported by the collaborative efforts between the University and nearby institutions such as the industrial district, hospital and community organizations. This will include mini-courses or master lectures, as well as financial, hardware, and network assistance, all of which is aimed to create a competitive knowledge-based economy in the Yun-Chia-Nan Region.

Veoveoana, an Indigenous village, is a half-hour drive from CCU; Maezo, another tribe, is a two-hour drive away. Because of its proximity to Indigenous communities,

the university's teachers and students not only pay attention to Han Chinese society, but to Indigenous culture as well. As part of a congenial learning community, Alishan plays an important role as the center for facilitating local cultural identification, community development, and the co-prosperity of Indigenous and Han Chinese groups.

Making Chiayi our communal home

In response to the Ministry of Education's Higher Education Deep Cultivation Project (HEDCP), CCU has implemented a series of policies including support for underprivileged groups, a friendly campus, an open university, sustainable development centered around bamboo cultural industry, "Indigenous Clothing Day" (Communization of Higher Education, Indigenous Student Resource Center), "Bamboo of the Tsou" (USR), "Plants of Alishan" (Tribal Archive; Indigenous Language and Cultural Creative Course).

This book showcases the ways to build a creative learning environment in Chiayi and the substantial achievements the University has earned along the way.



“We each live in your own clothing.” Eileen Chang





Indigenous Clothing Day

The Democratization of Higher Education
Indigenous Student Resource Center

Located in the Pacific Ocean, Taiwan is an island of abundant natural resources and ethnic diversity, including an Indigenous population of 575,000.

Taiwan's Indigenous communities are largely distributed along the foothills of the Central Mountain Range and Eastern Taiwan. Across the island, there are a total of 55 Indigenous counties, a majority of which are located in Pingtung, Taitung and Hualien. Currently, the government recognizes sixteen Indigenous nations: Amis, Atayal, Paiwan, Bunun, Puyumna, Rukai, Tsou, Saisiyat, Yami, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya, Seediq, Hla'alua, and Kanakanavu.

Although each Indigenous nation has its own language, culture, rituals, and customs, the one thing that most distinguishes the nations is their respective traditional clothing, which is not only worn for protection against the elements but for community identification as well. For instance, the traditional clothing of the Paiwan features regional variance that can be used to tell apart the different communities and inform each other of who the wearer is.

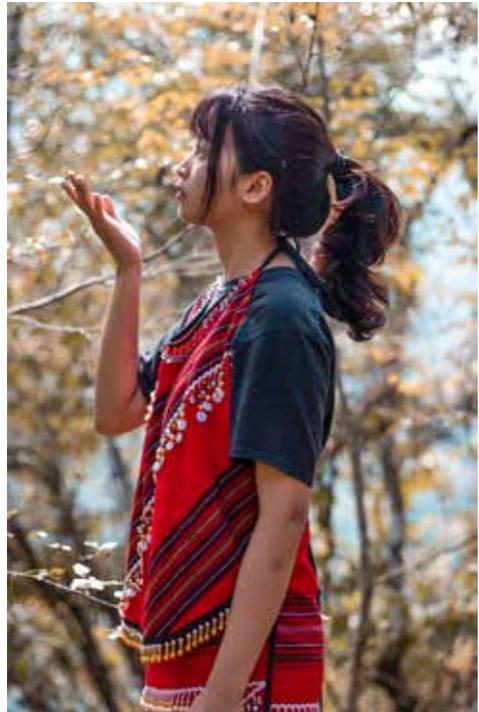
National Chung Cheng University is located in an Indigenous county, near the foothills of Alishan. The university has Indigenous students from ten different tribes: Atayal, Truku, Seediq, Tsou, Amis, Hla'alua, Bunun, Puyuma, Rukai, and Paiwan.

Every year on Indigenous Clothing Day, the Indigenous students attending CCU wear their traditional clothing on campus and participate in cultural exchange activities.



The Indigenous Clothing Day at CCU is not only an important result of HEDCP but also a tangible expression of the university's commitment to local community.

The students of CCU are proud of their cultural backgrounds and deeply interested in the local Indigenous community. In 2020, ten Indigenous students wore their traditional garb on campus and on Alishan as an expression of the implicit cultural coding of their dress.



// Region: Mountains in northern and central Taiwan //

The Atayal believe that ancestral spirits can influence one's fortune and refer to the teachings and laws passed down by the ancestors as gaga. It is believed that good health and abundant harvests will result if gaga is obeyed. Violating gaga, on the other hand, will lead to disasters. Therefore, the Atayal worship ancestral spirits and value the teachings of gaga, performing rituals dedicated to ancestral spirits during Pat-aza (Seeding Festival) and Maho (Ancestral Festival).

Eileen Chang once remarked that clothing is a tight-fitting environment, "We each live in our own clothing." From this remark, we can sense the importance of clothing. The clothing of the Atayal reflects their ancestral worship. It contains diamond-shaped patterns that symbolize the eyes of the ancestral spirits guarding the safety of the wearer.

The clothing of the Atayal is made of a fabric called malatsa, which is hand-woven entirely from ramie. Atayal clothing can be categorized into everyday wear, work clothes, and ritual attire. Red is the primary color used in Atayal clothing, symbolizing the enthusiasm, active attitude and vigor of the Atayal people. In particular, dark red is thought to expel evil spirits. The complex patterns found on the back of Atayal clothing are intended to ward off utux (evil spirits).



Truku

// Region: Xiulin Township, Wanrong Township, and Zhuoxi Township, Hualien County //

The Truku believe that ancestral spirits lead a life similar to living people, and the relationship between the two worlds is reciprocal and complementary. In hunting rituals, they offer livestock as a sacrifice to ancestral spirits in order to demonstrate the diligence of the tribesmen and to pray for success in future wild boar hunts. The clothing of the Truku features a white background with diamond-shape patterns in pink, blue and green. The diamond shapes symbolize the eyes of ancestral spirits watching over tribesmen.

Truku women wear white sleeveless shirts with white over sleeves and a skirt made with two pieces of cloth tied together, along with a belt and white puttees. Truku long skirts usually feature small diamond-shaped patterns.





Sediq

// Region: Central and eastern Taiwan //

The Sediq practice Utux, a natural religion, characterized by ancestral worship. Naturally, ancestral rituals play a most important role in the lives of the Sediq, performed by individual tribesmen or collectively.

The clothing of the Sediq features red predominantly and is made from ramie. Men's clothing often features long sleeve white shirts with red stripes; women's clothing often features red long sleeve shirts with multiple stripes and one-piece long skirts.

In 1895, beginning in the Japanese colonial period, cotton gradually became prevalent, affecting indigenous clothing. The long sleeve shirt made from ramie was replaced by cotton shirts in red with blue patches and small bronze bells as decoration. A vertical collar is a significant distinguishing feature of Sediq clothing, as are the floral patterns that vary according to region.



Kanakanavu

// Region: Around Nanzixian River in Namaxia District, Kaohsiung City. Currently, the majority of the Kanakanavu live in Takanua and Maya villages, Namasia District.//

The Kanakanavu are excellent hunters and are adept at tanning. They have developed the art of leathercraft and can produce a variety of leather goods. The men's clothing consists of a leather jacket and hat. For serious occasions, the men would wear a red long sleeve shirt, bib, black short skirt and a goat hat.

The women's clothing, depending on the community, consists of a black skirt with blue or white long sleeve shirt. The blue-shirt tribes are mostly located in Hlihlala, in Taoyuan District; the white-shirt ones, on the other hand, include Paiciana, Tali-cia, and Vilanganü.



// Region: Alishan Township, Chiayi County and Xinyi Township, Nantou County //

Tsou people dress differently according to their age and social status.

The traditional Tsou clothing for adult men usually includes an animal fur hat, vest, long sleeve shirt, fur jacket, etc. The hat is decorated with the feathers of eagles, Swinhoe's pheasant (*Lophura swinhoii*), and Mikado pheasant (*Syrmaticus mikado*) to denote valor.



The hats of tribal chieftans and warriors are further decorated with a red striped sash, jade beads and shells. Those who have hunted wild boars before can even wear arm rings made with tusks. Women's clothing includes a black headband, bib, long sleeve shirt, long skirt and puttees.



Amis

// Region: Coastal plains and hills in Hualien, Taitung, and Pingtung Counties //

The clothing of the Amis is called Riko or Foday, and is made primarily of hemp and leather, with some use of bark, grass and vine.

As they are distributed widely, the clothing of the Amis can be categorized into three major groups with discernible differences: northern, central and southern styles. The clothing in each region has distinct features. In the northern region, red, black and white are the three primary colors; in the southern region the colors of black, purple, yellow, green, red, or orange are more popular.

Men's clothing varies depending on the wearer's age and social status and usually consists of ornaments worn on the hat, forehead, ears, neck and wrist. In the winter, men wore leather jackets with linen overcoats; in the summer, they wear only loin clothes and leave their upper bodies naked.

Women's accessories include headbands, earrings, neckbands, and waistbands decorated with shells and agate. The accessories come in many varieties, including hats with feathers, elaborate bamboo hats, and tobacco pouches etc. In the winter, women wear long sleeve shirts and skirts; in the summer, they put on short sleeve shirts combined with bib and skirt.



Bunun

// Region: along the foothills of the central mountain range //

In the early days, Bunun women's clothing was made from ramie, which was gradually replaced by cotton over time. Blue and black are the two primary colors.

Women's clothing consists of a long sleeve shirt, skirt, puttees, headgear and necklace, etc. Women's tops, influenced by Chinese clothing, opens on the right and features narrow cuffs and colorful decoration around cuffs, collars and lapels. The skirts are either made of two pieces stitched together or one piece.

Bunun men wear linen shirts fashioned from long rectangular pieces of cloth and decorated with deli-



cate weaving patterns largely on the back. The elaborate back patterns are likely due to the fact that during festivals Bunun men dance in circles facing each other, revealing their backs to the audience.

Puyuma

// Region: Taitung Plain located between Beinan River and Jihben River. //

In the modern period, Puyuma men's clothing consists of blue, black or white shirts and puttees with embroidery on them. In addition, young Puyuma men not only wear the most elaborate clothing coupled with all sorts of accessories including lazurite beads and silver chest decorations but also carry knives around their waists. Traditionally, women wear headbands, embroidered skirts and puttees.

The women's clothing consists of white or black blouses with delicately embroidered bib and long skirt. Puyuma women wear less accessories than men. Teenage girls don floral wreaths, necklaces and long belts. The floral wreath is the most representative feature of Puyuma dress. They are made of flowers. A man wearing several floral wreaths on his head is a man well-respected and loved by his tribesmen. Floral wreaths are not restricted to a particular sex. However, underage boys are allowed to wear a wreath made of ferns only. Only adult men can put on floral wreaths.



Rukai

// Region: along the southern foothills of the central mountain range. (south of Alishan, north of Mt. Taimu) //

The clothing of the Rukai features a type of square shirt made of linen. The shirt is black with embroidery in bright colors such as the primary colors of red, yellow and green.

Men's clothing consists mainly of leather, including hat, head band, shirt, sash, waistband, deerskin jacket and pants, and additional headgear for ceremonies.

The weaving patterns of the Rukai vary according to the wearer's social status. Patterns like the hundred pacer viper, sun, human head, teapot, etc. are reserved for the chief; human figures and snake patterns are restricted to noblemen; commoners can acquire the right to use more patterns by offering tribute.



Paiwan

// Region: Pingtung and Taitung Counties.//

The Paiwan live in southern Taiwan, in an area that borders Mt. Taimu to the north; Hengchun to the south; Ailiao to the west; and Taimali to the east. The Paiwan can be divided into two major subtribes: Raval and Vutsul, the latter can be further divided into a series of communities—Paumaumaq (Northern Paiwan), Chaoboobo and Parilario (Southern Paiwan), and Paqaroqaro (Eastern Paiwan).

The short sleeve shirt worn by Paiwan men, called an ipuk in the Paiwan language, is made of cotton. The shirt is based upon Chinese clothing, characterized by its short length which reveals the wearer's abdomen. Paiwan men, regardless of their social ranks, all wear ipuk. However, only those with higher social status are allowed to wear ipuk featuring human heads, human figures or flower patterns around the lapels or under armpits.



Paiwan men wear undecorated narrow-cuffed pants for work to protect their knees or legs and only wear pants with elaborate embroidery for ceremonies.

Traditional Paiwan clothing was made from ramie and is white in color. Later, the Paiwan people learned to dye their clothing with natural plants to produce various colors such as black, saffron, light yellow and blue. The weaving patterns and accessories of women's clothing come in red, orange, yellow and green. In addition, the colors of Paiwan clothing reflect regional differences. (I do not find this in the Chinese original.)





ohela teai no nia maameoi ho peemoengua ci macucuma. isi fitheni to kaapana ho teai.

The tools of our ancestors were made from bamboo.

Bamboo of the Tsou

Sustainable Development Goals USR

Located at latitude 23.5, Taiwan is rich in bamboo resources both in terms of species and area (18 hectares). Bamboos are shallow-rooted plants with a unique rhizome-dependent system that forms a vast underground network which helps hold water and soil in position. The resilient nature and amazing growth rate of bamboos makes them ideal for harsh environments and areas that suffer from serious water and soil loss.

As environmental awareness continues to rise in the face of forest resource depletion; bamboo can be used to replace timber, improve agricultural land, conserve forest resources, and promote the green economy and sustainable development.





Taiwanese Indigenous Peoples and Bamboo Culture

In traditional Indigenous society, there was already a close bond between people and bamboo.

For instance, the origin story of the Paiwan goes like this: Once upon a time, in Taimali, there appeared a goddess holding bamboo and stone in her hands. She threw the stone to the ground, from which sprang the ancestor of the Amis; and then stuck the bamboo into the soil, from which sprang the ancestor of the Paiwan.

And the elders of the Atayal recall the teachings of the ancestors this way: “Wherever you go, always remember to plant bamboos along the way so your life will remain plentiful.” Bamboo forests abound in traditional Atayal territory. As a result, the Atayal have learnt to use bamboo for home construction. They cut bamboo stalks in half and crisscross them in layers to create a waterproof roof with good drainage capacity.

The Tsou also use bamboo for construction by placing bamboo stalks vertically against the wall and tying them together with rope to create a simple structure that can reduce noise and wind. The Puyuma use bamboo for frames to be covered with mud to create solid walls.



“Bamboo” in Indigenous Languages

Let's learn how to pronounce the word “bamboo” in various indigenous languages and to experience their eco-friendly culture.

Pangcah (Amis): aul

Seediq: btakan

Payuan (Paiwan): qau

Hla'alua (Saaroa): racu'u

Tayal (Atayal): ruma'

Kanakanavu: to'omaang

Bunun: qaul

Pinuyumayan (Puyuma): vasikaw

Drekay (Rukai): balrebalre

SaiSiyat: raromaeh

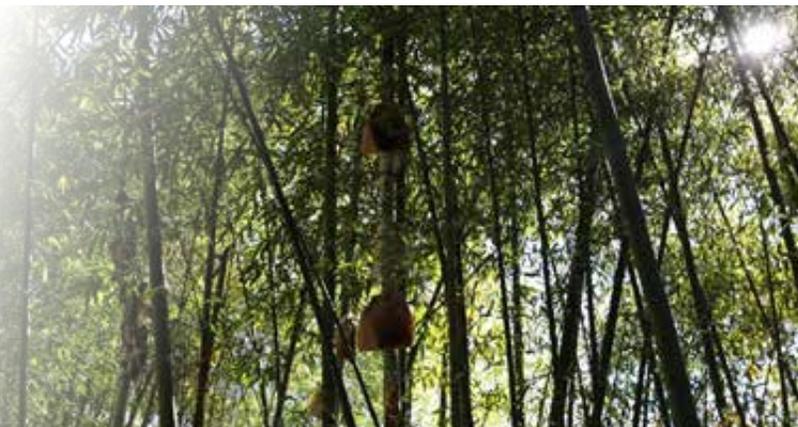
Tsou: kaapana

Tao: kawala

Thao: qaulh

Truku (Taroko): djima

Sakizaya: aok





Legend has it that the ancestors of Tsou people originally lived near Yushan (Mount Jade) but were forced to move west due to floods and only gradually settled down after the establishment of a Kuba.

Alishan is home to the Tsou people, just two hours' drive from Chung Cheng University. According to some scholars the Tsou tribe can be divided into Southern Tsou, consisting of the Kakanavu of Sanmin Township, Kaohsiung County and the Saaroa of Laonong River, Taoyuan District; and the Northern Tsou who live around the upstream area of Zengwen River in the Alishan region which borders on Bunun territory to the East, and the Han Chinese settlements on the plain to the West.

KUBA

A kuba is also called a men's meeting hall. The only remaining kubas can be seen in two villages in the Alishan region—Tapan and Tfuya. The names of the two villages first appear in the 1650 Taiwan Indigenous Household Survey by the Dutch. The kuba is where hunting and dance training take place, as well as important festivals and rituals such as the Mayasvi, headhunting ritual, or rites of passage. It is also where the history of the tribe is passed down to younger generations, serving the social function of preserving culture and creating emotional bonds. In a patriarchal society such as the Tsou, only adult men can enter a kuba from the front door and no women are allowed inside.





Hufu

A “Hufu ” made mainly with bamboo, is similar to a pavilion in Chinese culture. Traditionally, Tsou people bury the dead indoors and reserve celebrations, dancing, singing and other festive activities for the hufu. To this day, the hufu still serves as a gathering place for social events.

In the above picture: a Tsou “hufu” built on the mountain campus.

Bamboo-Copter

The everyday life of Tso people is intimately connected with bamboo. Hand-made toys like bamboo-copters, piggy banks and bow and arrow are a part of the precious childhood memories for many tribesmen.

Hollow bamboo stalks are ideal for making piggy banks. A delightful coin container can be easily made with a sliced bamboo stalk with holes for inserting coins.



Fishing Tools

Alishan is rich in bamboo resources which are utilized by Tsou people to make hunting and fishing tools. A Seohmova is an animal trap consisting of sharp arrows attached to the end of a string. The trap is placed on the trails frequented by wild boars. When the trap is set off, the wild boars are startled by the sound and jump into sharp bamboo sticks placed in the surrounding area.

In order to catch all sorts of fish, shrimps and eels, Tsou people use a bamboo trap called yungu which is usually placed in narrow rivers in the fall when the river level is lower. Tufngi (spearing) is a traditional Tsou fishing activity in which people catch fish or shrimps by piercing their bodies with bamboo spears and collect them in a basket.



Rueili and Taihe in a sea of clouds,

Pass through Duolin and Shanlin to arrive at the crossroads.

Uyongu Yata'uyungana



The Flora of Alishan

Tribal Archive

Indigenous Language and Cultural Creative Course

Alishan, known for its natural beauty, amazing sea of clouds, and forest railways, does not actually refer to any single mountain, but to a mountain range. Its official name should therefore be the Alishan Range. It borders the Yushan Range to the east and Xueshan Range to the north.

In the time of Dutch Formosa and the Qing dynasty, Alishan had already seen logging activities. However, substantial development of the industry did not take place till 1903 when Kawai Shitarō, a forestry professor, drew up a development plan for the Alishan Forest Railway, which was completed in 1912 and greatly facilitated the development of local forestry and tourism. In 1927, a reader poll conducted by Taiwan Nichi Nichi Shimpo listed Alishan's sea of clouds as one of the "Eight Views of Taiwan." In 1937, Alishan was officially designated as a National Park by the Japanese colonial government.

After the war, the Forestry Bureau took over the administration of Alishan and in 1974 put an end to logging, allowing the forests to regenerate. In 2001, the Alishan National Forest Recreation Area was established and became known for its "Five Wonders," including the sunrise, sea of clouds, sunset, sacred tree, and the railway. The Alishan Forest Railway was also transformed into a tourist railway which transported visitors through a century of memories.

Plants play an important role in the everyday lives of humans, their cultural heritage, ethnic memory, tribal customs and identity, as well as in environmental ethics.

The lives and cultures of traditional Indigenous peoples in Taiwan are closely connected with plants, which serve as an important source of food and medicine, a material for construction and craft, and an important cultural symbol. The wisdom of Indigenous peoples is embodied in the different ways they utilize the plants found in their

environments, be it mountains, plains or islands. The mountains Indigenous peoples in Taiwan have developed hunting and agricultural cultures, whereas seafaring tribes have relied upon fishing and gathering wild vegetables. They also developed different cultures according to their respective lifestyles. For instance, *Miscanthus floridulus*, also called Pacific Island silvergrass, is a perennial grass that is widely utilized by the Tsou people for various purposes. As a result, the Tsou have different names for the plant during different stages of its life. Another example can be seen in the word *co-cohu*, meaning “where *Alocasia odora* (Asian taro) abounds.” This has come to refer to the eastern mountainous area of the Tufuya tribe. From this we see that the names of plants have been deeply woven into the culture of the Tsou.

However, with the passing of colonial regimes and time, the botanical knowledge and wisdom of Indigenous peoples has been lost to history. The passing of the elders only accelerates the loss of such culture.

Therefore, conducting ethno-botanic inquiries into the ways that Indigenous peoples make use of surrounding plants is a priority. Through such research the valuable cultural heritage of Indigenous tribes will be able to live on in the pages of this and many other related books.



Davallia formosana Hayata

Davallia formosana Hayata, “h’oi-fatu” in the Tsou language, is used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat bone diseases such as bone fractures, earning it the name “broken bone remedy.” The plant is also used by Indigenous people to cast love spells. They believe that by chopping the plant up and mixing it in water or rice wine and making someone drink it unknowingly, you can make that person fall in love with you.



Foxtail millet

Foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*), “ton’u” in the Tsou language, is an annual grass that produces small round yellow seeds. Also known as dwarf setaria, foxtail bristle-grass, giant setaria, and most commonly as green foxtail, the plant has been grown for human food since the Neolithic period. The species grown by the Tsou include ton’u-hohu’euca and ton’u-svoyu. The former is more widely grown and has a better flavor. The cultivation of foxtail millet affects many aspects of Indigenous society, including land use, environmental ethics, ethnobotany, kinship, tribal structure, even religious beliefs. As the various rituals and taboos related to foxtail millet attest, the plant not only serves as food for the Tsou but also has mysterious and religious connotations.



Hibiscus taiwanensis

Hibiscus taiwanensis is a native plant in Taiwan, distributed across low and mid-altitude mountains. Also known as Taiwan cotton rose or dog-head rose, it is known among the Tsou as the ghost flower, deemed to have spiritual powers. During Mayasvi, warriors would wear amulets made with fibres extracted from *Hibiscus taiwanensis* dyed brownish red. On ordinary days, the Tsou use the plant to make straps or ropes for tying objects.



Cajanus cajan

Cajanus cajan (L.) Millsp. is one of the main staples of the Tsou, called by them by the name of "ecngi." It is cooked with wild boar meat to make a delicious dish. The plant is rich in protein and is often consumed with wild boar meat.



Eutrema japonica

Eutrema japonica (Miq.) Koidz., called “vasavi” in Tsou, also known as “wasabi,” is a plant with a poignant taste different from chili. While chili stimulates the tongue, *Eutrema japonica* works on paranasal sinuses. An imported species, it is a new and competitive cash crop for modern Tsou communities, cultivated in specific high-altitude regions, restricted to old-growth forests. The rhizomes of the plants are often sold as an item and need to be finely grated before use. The grated substance needs to be carefully wrapped for keeping.



Manihot esculenta

Manihot esculenta, distributed across south Taichung and Hualien, is a famous plant rich in starch with edible starchy tuberous roots. Called “of uevi” in Tsou, its edible roots are a common source of food and can be made into mochi or as a bait for luring squirrels.



Oryza sativa

Oryza sativa L., also called “land rice” and “pai-aulu” in Tsou, meaning “true rice,” is a plant species growing in dry lands as well as on slopes. As early Tsou communities were located mainly on slopes, it became a major agricultural crop for the Tsou. The Tsou harvest land rice to make rice cakes as an offering to gods.



Pacific Island silvergrass

Pacific Island silvergrass (*Miscanthus floridulus*), “haengu” in the Tsou language, is a perennial grass that grows in areas under 2,000 meters. The Tsou have different names for the plant during different phases of its life. In each stage, the plant is closely connected with the lives of Tsou people. Its leaves have sharp edges that can be used to cut the internal organs of animals. Pacific island silvergrass is also essential in the shamanic rituals of the Tsou. It has applications construction as well, its stalks being used for walls and its leaves for the roof. The Tsou also tie silvergrass to poles to serve as markers to inform other tribesmen. Its flowers can also be used to make brooms.



Asparagus cochinchinensis

Asparagus cochinchinensis (Lour.) Merr., called “seepi” in Tsou, is a common folk medicinal plant and was a cash crop for early Tsou communities. Different from other cash crops, it grows in mountainous areas above 2000 m. After being harvested, the plant needs to be properly prepared by removing fibrous roots and cooked thoroughly in boiling water to remove the skin. After which, it needs to be washed for drying and later can be used as a medicine. A representative plant symbolizing the transition from traditional gathering to growing cash crops. However, today, the plant is no longer a valuable crop.



Mirabilis jalapa L.

Mirabilis jalapa L., called “ta’moza” in Tsou, is a plant growing in low and mid-altitude mountains or shady grasslands. Hairless and with swollen roots, the edge of its leaves is serrated. The fruits are flat berries. The seeds are oval-shaped. The flowers are white. Due to its sour-sweet taste, the fruits are enjoyed by the Tsou regardless of age, having medicinal effects including nourishing the lungs, relieving cough and easing pains. It can also be used to treat skin injuries and intestinal colic. Due to its particular fruit shape, it can be used for ornamental purposes such as flower arrangement.



Viburnum luzonicum Rolfe

Viburnum luzonicum Rolfe, “tafiseong” in the Tsou language, is a shrub commonly seen in Tfuya and Dabang. It is more commonly seen in areas of high altitude. Its fruits are juicy and have a sweet flavor, and are often consumed as a snack by children. The bark is very pliant and can be used to make bows. It is one of the shrubs utilized by the Tsou for hunting.



Malus doumeri

Malus doumeri (Bois.) Chev. C. R. Sc. Sc., called “heesi” in Tsou, is a species in the family Rosaceae that grows in low and mid-altitude broad-leaved forests. Commonly known as Taiwan crabapple, its fruits can be made into candied fruits or used for making wines. It can also be used for making tools and is commonly seen around the hunting grounds of Tsou people. The fruits resemble ordinary apples with a sour taste, often consumed as snacks by children and wild animals, often attracting birds as well. Hunters therefore use it as bait to lure birds.

There is a place called “heesiyana” in the Tsou community, located in Erwanping, Alishan County, that means “Taiwan crabapple.”



Chenopodium formosanum Koidz

Chenopodium formosanum Koidz, “voyu” in the Tsou language, is a native plant of Taiwan. The leaves of the plant can be fried or boiled to be eaten; the seeds are the size of millet and are not consumed by the Tsou. The plant is also used in Indigenous sorcery. After ritual transformation by a shaman, the plant turns into a *soskuskunu*, a spirit that assists the shaman in various tasks.



Taiwanese rain tree

Taiwanese rain tree (*Koelreuteria henryi* Dummer), “koape h” in the Tsou language, is a deciduous tree endemic to Taiwan. When it blooms, the plant’s crown is covered in flowers, earning itself the name of “Taiwan golden rain tree.” Its bark and roots can be used to treat coughs, parasites, dysentery, and urethritis. The Tsou tell seasons and arrange hunting and agricultural activities according to the color of the plant’s flowers and its life cycle. Although the plant is not cultivated by the Tsou, in practice it serves as a natural clock for them.



Shell singer

Shell singer (*Alpinia zerumbet*), “kitposa” in the Tsou language, is a perennial species of ginger growing on the plains and in mountains. The plant can grow up to 2.5 or 3 meters tall and can be used for decorative purposes or to make flower bouquets. Commonly seen in the territories of the Tsou, its roots and new shoots can be used to treat headaches. For injuries, the Tsou pulverize the plant and mix the pulp with tea seed oil to cover wounds. The leaves are used to wrap meat and rice cakes such as a-bai similar to zongzi. The stems are cut down and skinned and used as a fabric material for mats, bags, and baskets, etc.



Alocasia odora

Alocasia odora, called “cohu” in Tsou, is a flowering plant distributed across Taiwan that is used in landscaping or packaging and is poisonous. The leaves are often used for wrapping meat. It can be used for hunting as some birds prefer the red fruits of *Alocasia odora*, making it an ideal bait for hunters who makes traps on the plant’s stems to trap birds.



Broussonetia papyrifera

Broussonetia papyrifera, called “tapangeosu-no-ta’cu” in Tsou, is a flowering plant growing in mountains under the altitude of 1000 m. A common plant, its branches and leaves are consumed by deers; its bark is used for making paper money, with common names such as deer tree and paper money tree. The infructescence contains many fruits enjoyed by the Tsou. The bark is resilient in nature, often made into ropes or straps by the Tsou.



Cogon grass

Cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*), “veiyo” in the Tsou language, is a perennial grass growing in sunny riverbeds or on the plains. Its roots are used by the Tsou to treat fever. Before the arrival of Western medicine, the plant was widely used in medicinal practices among Tsou people. It is also used in rituals such as emoo-no-peisia and a’asvu (oneiromancy) where a bundle of the grass is used as a symbol of the dream. In cases of bad dreams the bundle is cast away and the dream ritual is reenacted. In cases of good dreams, the bundle is tied to the eastern pillar of a newly erected building where it symbolizes ancestral protection.



Mahonia oiwakensis Hayata

Mahonia oiwakensis Hayata, “mayumu” in the Tsou language means “bitter.” The whole plant tastes bitter, hence the name. It is native to the traditional habitat of the Tsou, growing in forests at an elevation of 2000 meters. Its roots are used by the Tsou to treat diarrhea. Nowadays, the Tsou grow the plant in gardens for decorative or medicinal purposes.



Dendrocnide meyeniana

Dendrocnide meyeniana, “feisi” in the Tsou language, is a species of tree in the family Urticaceae seen in Saviki, Sinvi, and Cayamavana, but not in Dabang. The protective bristles of the plant can cause pain and a burning sensation.



Ramie

Ramie (*Boehmeria nivea*), “ngei” in the Tsou language, is a herbaceous perennial. For the Tsou, the plant is the main weaving material for textiles which are called smoi in the Tsou language. The traditional weaving method of the Tsou was almost lost to history. However, recently, many tribes have picked up the traditional practice again. The Tsou use the plant’s fiber to make yarn and then turn the yarn into hunting bags or ropes for everyday use. Before plastic products became prevalent, the plant was widely utilized by the Tsou, and learning to make ropes from ramie was a necessary skill for hunters.



Ehretia dicksonii Hance

Ehretia dicksonii Hance, called “peos” in Tsou, is a tree that can grow to 15 meters tall. The leaves have a long petiole and are oval shaped; the flowers are white; the fruits are spherical drupes. Distributed in areas under 1100 m, its roots and bark have medicinal properties such as subduing swelling and resolving toxins. It can also be used to treat toothache and common injuries. A folk treatment once popular among the Tsou—catching tooth bugs—involves making the patient inhale the steam made with *Ehretia dicksonii* Hance and *Peristrophe baphica* put in boiling water. It is said that the treatment must be performed in well-hidden locations.



Calamus quiquesetinervius Burret

Calamus quiquesetinervius Burret, “ue” in the Tsou language, is a woody vine that produces wing-like compound leaves. The plant, which used to grow only in the wild, with spikes on its stems. This made it necessary to prepare it in several steps, such as cutting and soaking, before use. The plant plays a particular role in the society of Tsou people. It is used for important buildings, tools and in funerals when the dead will be wrapped in the vine before burial. According to Tsou customs and beliefs, the plant is believed to have supernatural properties, being able to bind spirits to their places of dwelling.



Pueraria lobata

Pueraria lobata (Willd.) Ohwi subsp. *thomsonii* (Benth.) Ohashi & Tatei, called “fsoi” in Tsou, is a light-blue or purple vine that was once an important snack for the Tsou.

The distinct difference between the leaves of *Pueraria lobata* and ordinary vines is used to tell the species apart. The plant is edible, can be cooked, or roasted for consumption. In the past, Tsou children would learn to dig up the roots of *Pueraria lobata* to eat as snacks and as a way to learn practical survival skills including how to tell different plant species apart and how to find food in the wild.



Rhus javanica

Rhus javanica L. var. *roxburghiana* (DC.) Rehd. & Wilson, called “yabku” in Tsou, is a deciduous shrub or tree that produces salty fruits enjoyed by Tsou children.

The Tsou use the plant firewood but not for camping as the fire made with it tends to burn too fast, making it necessary to keep watch over the fire by adding new fuel. The Tsou considers the plant’s bloom in the fall as a sign of the advent of the dry season, indicating that there will be no typhoons in the coming months.



Lablab purpureus

Lablab purpureus (L.) Sweet, called “fo’na” in Tsou, is a perennial species of bean that prefers warm and dry climates and can tolerate drought. It produces fruits between February and April.

Traditionally, the Tsou grow *Lablab purpureus* not in farmlands but in rugged areas as the plant can thrive in poor conditions. Its resilient nature also gives rise to the common name “life bean” that symbolizes the characteristic of remaining “strong and resilient in life.”

A grain for the Tsou, it is often cooked with wild boar meat for treating important guests or elders.



Bramble

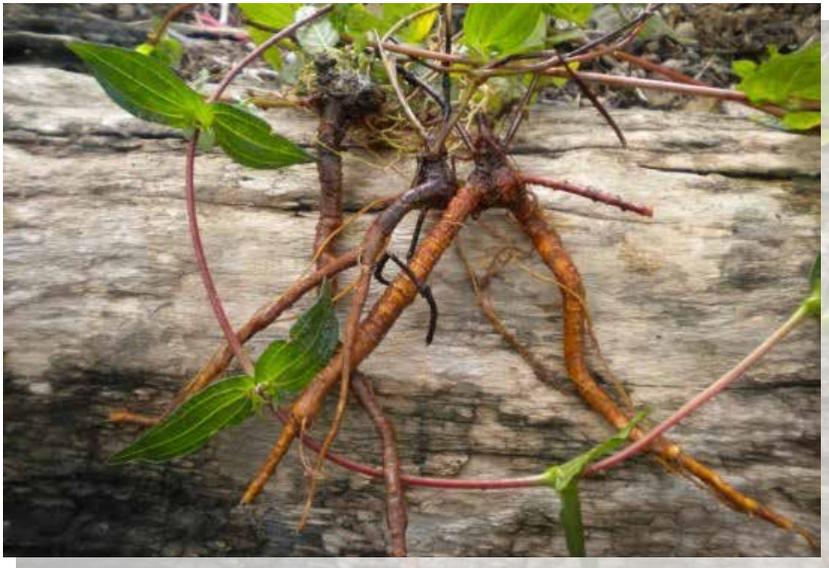
Bramble (*Rubus*), “taumu” in the Tsou language, is a flowering plant growing in the mountains, forests, of middle to high altitudes or on the plains. The plant does not have any prickles; its leaves are heart-shaped and have jagged edges. It is a common plant in the habitat of the Tsou and a favorite of children. When its fruits become ripe, children collect them in bamboo tubes and suck the juice with straw. This is called zo-kozokoa in the Tsou language.



Gonostegia hirta

Gonostegia hirta (Bl.) Miq., called “oanu-yoi” in Tsou, is a plant mainly seen in waste lands or farmlands, by roadsides or on slopes, under the altitude of 2000 m.

A fairly common folk plant, apart from being consumed as food, it is also used to treat sores. Tsou people would dig up its roots and ground them into a past to be used on parts of the skin of wounds or sores.



Sonchus oleraceus

Sonchus oleraceus, also called common sowthistle and samaka in the Tsou language, is an annual plant. The plant can be used to treat dysentery, mastitis and burns.

It is also a wild vegetable that can be consumed as food, and used as a livestock feed. In the past, when chickens mated, the Tsou would whip the cock's tail and solemnly chant "coekesu!," meaning "be more licentious," five times.



Arundinaria kunishii Hayata



Arundinaria kunishii Hayata, “pasu-aulu” in the Tsou language, is an important plant in the habitat of the Tsou, growing in areas of middle and high altitudes. The shoots of the plant are a favorite dish among Tsou people, being consumed raw, roasted, boiled or fried. The Tsou often pepper it with ma’fu (mountain pepper). The shoots are likewise favored by monkeys, squirrels, and wild boars. Hunters place traps in places where the plant grows to catch prey. In addition, it is widely used by the Tsou to make hunting and agricultural tools, such as arrows, sikotva, fishing rods, and long poles.

The Nine Tribes of Alishan

|| T f u y a ||

The oldest Cou tribe, located in the plateau upstream of the Zengwen River. Legend has it that Hamo, the Great God of Cou people, descended upon Mount Jade one day and created the ancestors of the Cou, who gradually formed various clans and tribes over time. Later, a terrible flood came to pass, forcing people to run towards Mount Jade. After the flood, Hamo left his footprints in a forest, around which a Cou settlement began to form and became what is known today as Tfuya, which is Hamo's first footprint. Important landmarks: Tfuya Historic Trail, Lalakasih Waterfall, Mystery Valley, and Alishan Sacred Tree Clusters, etc.





|| T a p a n g u ||

Hamo's second footprint after the flood. Currently, it is the biggest Cou tribe, serving as the political, economic, cultural, and administrative center of Alishan Township. Tapang preserves traditional rituals, festivals and cultural artifacts of the Cou, including Kuba—a structure built with the Pacific Island silvergrass, old-growth forests, unpolluted streams and waterfalls. Important landmarks: Rainbow Waterfall, Taptuana Waterfall, Bat Cave, kuba, etc.





|| L a l a u y a ||

“Lalauya” means maple forest in Cou. It is a tribe located around Shihjhuo, about 2 miles away from the highway, near the central section of Alishan Township with good public transport. It is one of the earliest tribes to come into contact with Han Chinese and had attracted the Dutch settlers who were defeated by Zheng Cheng-gong. It was also involved in the 228 incident. According to legend, Hamo once shook the maple trees here, causing their fruits to land on the ground and give birth to the Cou people. Important landmarks: Fushan Historic Trail, Cou Language Studio, and Wang Qi-Sheng Studio.



|| Saviki ||

Legend has it that the elder of the tosku family once had a dream where he was given by the God the name “Savik” which became the name of the tribe to this day. Saviki, Sinvi and Cayamavana are known as the “Three South Tribes” in Tapang settlement. Danaiku Nature Ecological Park, known for preserving the Taiwan ku fish is located in Saviki, leading it to be known as a “Ku Fish Sanctuary.” Important landmarks: Danaiku Nature Ecological Park, Bamboo Forest Trail, Lover’s Suspension Bridge, etc.



|| Sinvi ||



Known as “niahosa” in Cou, meaning “ancient tribe,” Sinvi is located between Saviki and Cayamavana and borders with Fanlu Township to the west across the Zengwun River, which runs through the region. Situated at an altitude between 400-800 m, Sinvi is an important agricultural area in Alishan Township with a rich and clean water supply provided by the Takppuyangu River, a tributary of the Zengwun River, creating an advantageous natural environment. Important landmarks: Old Settlement Site, Takppuyangu Riverside Trail, Takppuyangu Trail, etc.

|| C a y a m a v a n a ||

Cayamavana, meaning “plain on a mountainside” in Cou, is a Cou tribe that lies closest to the plains, receiving Han Chinese and Bunun migrants over time. There are various gazebos inside the tribe, most of which are built with satintails, bamboo, and wood. In recent years, Cayamavana has been actively developing its agritourism industry marketing Cou culture as a unique feature. Important landmarks: Tunabana Ecological Area, Cayamavana Historic Trail, etc.





|| P n g u u ||

Pnguu is located in the northern area of Alishan Township. The name means “where wetland plants thrive” and is derived from the “ララチ” (lalachi) during the Japanese period. The early settlers from Tfuya came across this place while hunting wild boars and decided to settle down here after seeing the lush vegetation. Important landmarks: Pnguu Historic Trail (Cross Road—Pnguu), Mount Daito Pass, Observation Deck, Fountain Cave, etc.



|| Nia' ucna ||

Niae' ucna means "the old Wen family" in Cou. Legend has it that there were two brothers in the Wen family. One year, the older brother did not come back home for the festival. The younger brother found out that he had started a new life on another fertile land. The father ordered the younger brother to stay at the old home, giving the place the name "Niae' ucna." Located in the southwest area of Tapang, the place has little light pollution and is ideal for observing the night sky, winning itself the title "Blue Tribe." There is a Ritual Stone (panicifatu) in Niae' ucna, a Cou tradition that is still discoverable only here. Important landmarks: Lover's Cave, Ku Fish Preservation Area, Tsotsos Historic Trail.



|| P o f t o n g a - v e o v e o ||

The ninth Cou tribe formed by migrants from the original eight Alishan Cou tribes that were devastated by Typhoon Morakot. The site was the end point of sika deer hunts for earlier Cou hunters who would trade the skin, antler, and velvet antler of sika deers with other ethnic groups. The Cou settlers thereafter named this place “Pooftonga veoveo” (the place where sika deers are chased and hunted). There is a tourist market named after a Cou expression “yokeoasu,” meaning blessing where visitors can buy Cou handicrafts and enjoy Cou and traditional dance performance. Important landmarks: Pooftonga veoveo Tourist Market.





Accommodation

Alishan Hotel

Address: No. 16, Shan-Lin Village, Alishan Township, Chiayi County 605.

Tel: 05-2679596



Oriental Pearl International Hotel

Address: No. 23, Shezailin, Shekou Village, Zhongpu Township, Chiayi County.

Tel: 05-2536999



Here is BNB

Address: No. 20-7, Tienliaozi, 13rd Neighborhood, Yiren Village, Zhongpu Township, Chiayi County.

Tel: 05-2533355



Hotel Day+

Address: No. 886, Chuiyang Rd. West Dist., Chiayi City

Tel: 05-2255999



Maison de Chine

Address: No. 886, Chuiyang Rd. West Dist., Chiayi City

Tel: 05-2293998





Stores

Shan Bin Restaurant

Address: No. 19 Alishan Township, Chiayi County

Tel: 05-2679663



Mountain Flavor Restaurant

Address: No. 1-1, 1st Neighborhood, Shanmei Village, Alishan Township, Chiayi County

Tel: 05-2586730



HANA Village Kitchen

Address: 2nd Floor, Tribal Market, 2nd Neighborhood, Alishan Township, Chiayi County

Tel: 0975-117154



Taiwan Formosa Hotel

Address: No 34-12, Shu Tau Kok Village, Zhongpu Township, Chiayi County

Tel: 05-2533598



Zhuangyuan Urn-Roasted Chicken Restaurant—Chiayi Branch

Address: No. 81-5, Dingzhongxia St. Zhongpu Township, Chiayi County

Tel: 05-2307555



Alishan Feast

Address: No. 23-2, Zhongpu Township, Chiayi County

Tel: 05-2537199



Tao Cheng Guwei Restaurant

Address: No. 121, Youxiao Rd. West Dist., Chiayi City

Tel: 05-2325209



Chiayi Peach Blossom Spring Restaurant

Address: No. 870, 1st Section, Daya Rd, Chiayi City

Tel: 05-2757585



Alishan Township Festivals and Holidays

|| M a y a s v i ||

Venue: Tapangū, Alishan Township, Chiayi County; Kuba, Tfuya.

Time: February

An important festival to pass on the Tsou tradition, taking place in February or August by the two major tribal communities Tapangū and Tfuya. The ritual is held in kubas and the plazas in front of them, in worship of God and the God of War. "Mayasvi," translated as the War Festival, differs from Homeyaya, which takes place in July and August in celebration of millet harvests, in event time, ritual, and meaning. In the past, Mayasvi was not held around specific times of the year but usually took place in celebration of victories or when a kuba needed to be rebuilt or renovated. As such, it was decided among the elders whether a Mayasvi should be held or not. Today, it has evolved into a biennial festival held on February 15, consisting of a range of activities including kuba renovation, god-welcoming ceremony, war ceremony (victory ceremony, tribal solidarity ceremony), male boy kuba initiation, rite of passage, god-send-off ceremony, and road ceremony.



|| H o m e y a y a ||

Venue: The homeyaya house of individual households.

Time: July-August.

Taboo: A family festival, participants need to acquire permission first and obey related rules.

A familial festival, Homeyaya is centered around the harvest of millet, an important grain in traditional Tsou diet. A traditional Tsou year starts with the sowing of foxtail millet and ends with its harvest, which takes place in July and August, making Homeyaya an important festival led by ceremonial groups. A New Year Festival for the Tsou, every family member is required to return home and participate in the festival. The family house serves as the place of worship that is dedicated to the millet goddess. The festival also serves to strengthen family bonds and consists of a series of rituals including cleaning, reunion, harvest celebration, thanksgiving, food sharing, family visit, millet wine tasting, elder meeting, and mountain god worship. The elder meeting in particular determines if next year's Mayasvi will be held or not. In the past, Mayasvi could last for a month. Today, the duration of the festival has been shrunk to just a few days, including six days for Tapangꨄ and four days for Tfuya, to reflect modern lifestyle.



|| Fona Festival ||

Venue: Alishan Township, Chiayi County
(see Township Office Announcements for details)

Time: October

Starting in the year 2002, the Bean of Life Festival is not a traditional Tsou festival but an emerging new festival centered around the theme of group wedding and combined with the cultural, tourist, and industrial resources of Alishan Tsou communities and supported by the local government. In the light of population decline, Tsou elders teamed up with local district offices and government to organize a group wedding event in 2002, inviting tribal men and women together to celebrate marriage and encourage couples to have more children. The so-called "bean of life" refers to a species of bean called "fo'na" in Tsou that is commonly seen around Tsou tribes.



|| Saviki Ku Fish Festival ||

Venue: Danayiku, Saviki, Alishan, Chiayi County

Time: November (see event announcement for details)

Saviki, meaning "beautiful as the lush mountains" in Tsou, is a community located between luxuriant forests and the Zengwun River valley. In 1995, the community established the first ecological park run and managed by local communities—Danayiku, which means "the valley of no worries" in Tsou. The ku fish in Danayiku was often hunted by malefactors, causing local tribesmen to start a ku fish-protection movement and volunteer as patrols. Typhoon Morakot caused serious damage to local communities, inadvertently causing local residents to come together and engage in the restoration of Danayiku's natural environment and giving birth to the Ku Fish Festival that celebrates the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature. Today, Saviki's Ku Fish Festival has become an important annual holiday where traditional Tsou dance and singing performances are showcased alongside agricultural products and handmade crafts, as well as traditional indigenous dishes.



|| Hufu Festival ||

Venue: Cayamavana, Alishan Township, Chiayi County

Time: November (see event announcement for details)



Chashan, called "cayamavana" in Tsou, is a community consisting of Tsou, Han Chinese, and Bunun residents who live together in peace, sharing and exchanging different cultures. The hufu serves as a place of exchange for the local community and a symbol of cultural sharing. In the early days, Tsou people buried the dead indoors under the floor of their living rooms and built hufus outdoors as an alternative place for gatherings. In order to pass on the sharing culture embodied in the hufu, local residents started to organize the "Hufu Festival," which is preceded by a beautification contest and guest receptions. The festival itself consists of a series of events including tribal tour, agricultural products showcase, exhibition, agricultural product DIY/craft, hufu dishes, opening ceremony (indigenous dancing performance), storytelling, warrior challenge, etc.

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