



Passing the Baton

Displacement, Return,
and Resettlement

Kahna mapansuhshuh



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riqaz sa Kakitlan tu kahiwan a lalawa

A Pilgrimage to the History of Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples

Kakitlan isa inai a prug ya ininthewan ianan shaba muntnash a kawash, minakawazaqan shaunabuqan, ribush numa hudun, az'az sa thaithuy inintusi a prug. kanuniza maqa tiakahiwan a lalawa masa zing-tii, sa izai tiakahiwan a lalawa ya min'ukaiza, sa suma wa thau min'awra ananak a lhanaz, numa kurubuzin thaithuy a ininthewan miakazash sarasaranan a thau. kanuniza isa makthin muntnash a kawash Kakitlan mathuaw makarishkish kilhim mushuqish naur a kalawan, numa munsai sa smukuth, a'ingriqazan mashtay ya thaithuy tu kahiwan antu tatal a ininthewan.

isa Tai-waan ifazfaz a Kakitlan Pazah tu kahiwan inintusi a prug, minakatai-ann waqrath kilhpuzafaw maza shaunatai-qaa waqrath kilhpuzaus maza, sa thuini izai a Miaw-liik kuan Sam-ii hiang, Tur-laam tiin shaunatai-tiung suu a Siu-kuung, Hung-yuan numa Tai-ia wa kuu, numa ianan suma wa thau matinanai sa Lam-tau Qariawan. isa makintusha matilaw a kawash, iqariawan lhmazawan kmalawa sa Pazah tu kahiwan a kazakazash ya mingkuynii, numa kinalawa sa Lam-tau kaun Pazah a qbit a kazakazash lhumpazaw a kalangkan, numawan mathuaw smukuth izai a kazash.

izai a patashan palalawa ma'a' nia mungkakailas ya thau ya prug a Adoor munai, munsai thithu mriqaz Lam-tau Qariawan inintusi Pazah qbit a kazash, mindahip mashtay amafazaq sa Pazah qbit a ininthewan a thau, masa Pazah qbit tu kahiwan putusi a lalawa ya mungkakailas. isa thuini maqarman sa Kakitlan a qbit, amiakuza inintusi izai a prug, amiakuza kilhim ananak a kazash, akalawa muhiaw sa izai Kakitlan kataunan a kazash dai.

Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples have put down roots on this piece of land for hundreds of years. From coasts to plains and forests to hills, these used to be the places where they called home, yet the political situations and historical reasons distanced them from the mountains and seas. Many have forgotten their own name, and their traces of living in those areas were erased ruthlessly. In the past decade, however, they have been trying to reveal who they really are and be who they are. Through the revitalisation movement, they show the world their real selves and uniqueness.

In central Taiwan, one of the Plains Indigenous communities, Pazeh, stretched from the north bank of Daan River to the south bank of Dajia River, approximately between today's Sanyi or Jhuolan Townships of Miaoli County and Shihgang, Fongyuan, and Daya District in Taichung City. Later on, part of the community members migrated to the Ailan Plateau in Puli Township, Nantou County. Around year 2000, Pazeh people restored their traditional new year celebrations in Ailan Plateau area and further established Pazeh Cultural Association in Nantou County in an attempt to revitalise their culture.

This time we have collaborated with a cartoon artist, Adoor, specialising in capturing the essence of people and traditions and local natural history in his work. By having experienced the life and culture of Pazeh in Puli, Nantou, Adoor produced comic strips to help readers understand the history of Pazeh's life and displacement. Now in the face of existence and identity crisis, Pazeh people have to figure a way out to establish themselves in the society and disentangle factors that undermine the understanding of their cultural value and uniqueness in order to retrieve the dying community identity.

naur kazash a kalangkan
CEO of the Indigenous
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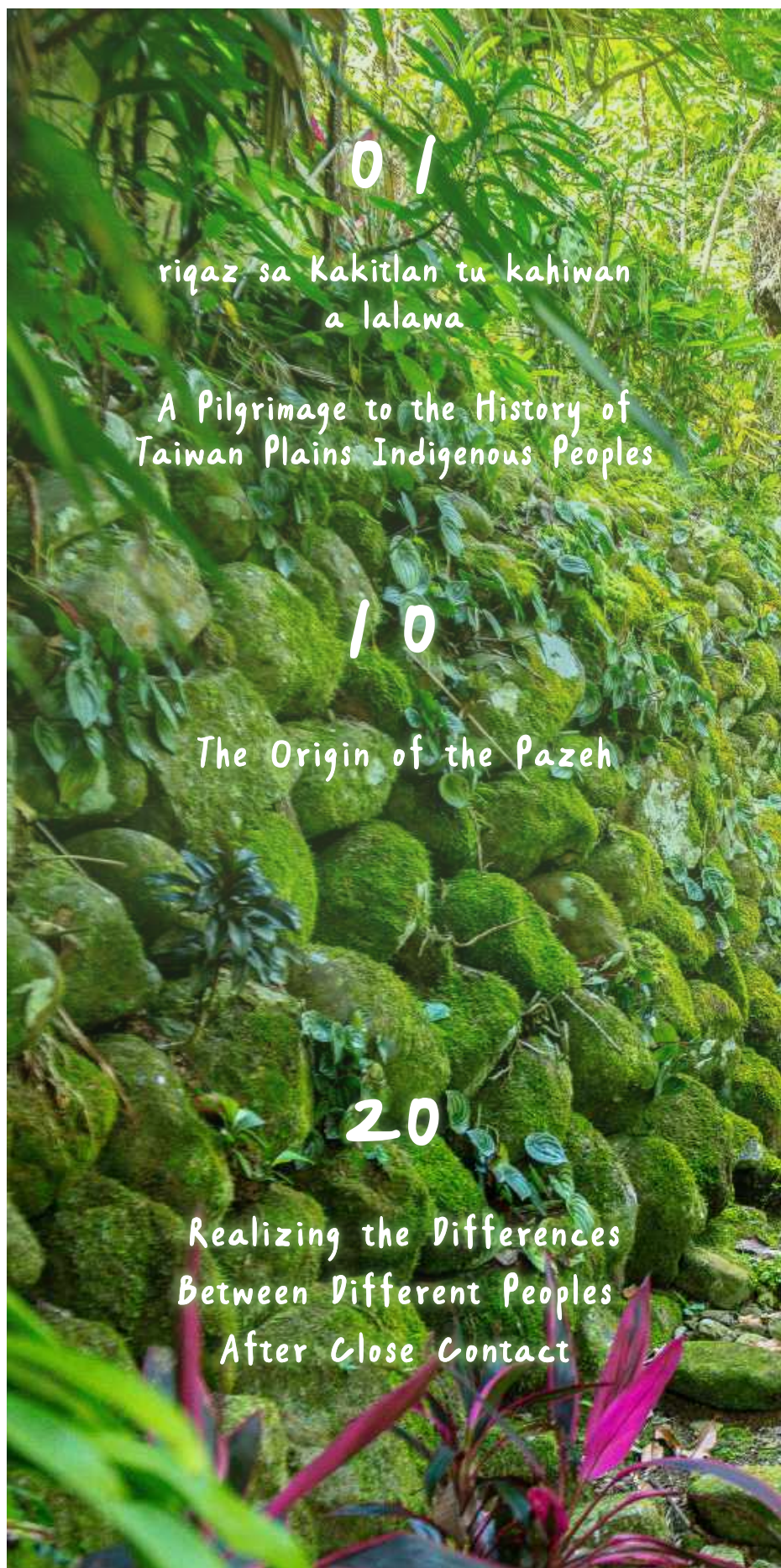
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A lush green forest with a stone path leading up through dense vegetation. The path is made of large, flat stones and is surrounded by various plants, including ferns and large-leafed plants. The background is filled with tall trees and thick foliage.

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Cultural Diversity isn't
Just A Slogan, It's Taiwan's
Everyday Life

Taking Up the Boton >>



Kahna mapansuhshuh

Note: "Kahna mapansuhshuh" means "Resettlement" in Bunun.



Passing the Baton

Displacement, Return, and Resettlement

Most of us are aware that there are at least nine indigenous peoples in Taiwan, an impression derived from the name of the famous indigenous theme park in Nantou, central Taiwan. Some may even know that currently, the number of officially recognized indigenous peoples has increased to sixteen. Furthermore, those concerned about ethnic issues would be aware that at the end of October of this year, the ruling has been made in response to the Siraya's petition for a constitutional interpretation regarding their indigenous identity. The Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples are eligible to apply to the government for ethnic recognition. But the question is how many subgroups are there in the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples? Where are they located? They could be ordinary people around you and me, but we know nothing about them at all.

Based in the Ailan area, Puli, the people of Pazeh is one of the subgroups of the above-mentioned peoples in central Taiwan. In this issue, the cartoonist Adoor takes a journey to the hometown of the Pazeh and meets a group of local villagers. After an authentic meal and a lecture on the Pazeh's history, her original impression that there is not much distinction between the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples and the Non-indigenous people has been overturned. The two ethnic groups are indeed quite different!



Adoor Yeh

Taiwan cartoonist

A lover of manga, anime,
and documentaries

A fervent researcher who
immerses herself in historical
documents when encountering
unfamiliar issues

Author of the single-issue
comic *Taskun Mudaan*
(Walk Together)

Seemingly chivalrous
on the outside, yet is as
approachable as the girl
next door

Adoor Opening the Door to Understanding the Pazeh

Let's Explore!





As a kid who grew up in Taipei, I have met several of my elementary school classmates and part-time job colleagues who had an indigenous background. In fact, I would not have known that if they had not declared their identities. In recent years, I begin to switch my focus to the creation of a state. To explore the issues about indigenous people's traditional territories, I approach various advocacy groups who protest on Ketagalan Boulevard in front of the Presidential Office Building. I also draw short comics on some of the related events which are then published in the *Creative Comic Collection*. In the process of researching, I find a difference in the composition between these indigenous groups and those I have previously encountered, which I never noticed. Perhaps this is because the latter are mostly the urban indigenous who have set their roots in cities for two or three generations. They rarely talk about indigenous issues and are less likely to mention their identities when they first meet. I do not know for sure whether they do so intentionally or it's because they have not been instilled with the concept of self-identity. But as I delve deeper into this question, I come to realize that such responses are caused by the interplay of a series of social and political factors, including a long history of deliberate differentiation, neglect, and discrimination; the stereotyping of their appearances and personalities; controversial policies such as indigenous students' preferential admissions in higher education, shotgun control, and the recognition of Taiwan indigenous languages. The Non-indigenous people, who introduced the modern concept of "state" when they came into power, have obviously failed to incorporate the indigenous communities, the original masters of this land, as a member of the country despite the fact that they have long lived and developed their distinctive culture here for centuries.

After that, I travel to a Bunun community to study their traditional culture and take part in their local revitalization project, which inspires me to draw on this experience to create the single-issue comic *Taskun Mudaan*. This experience leads me to understand that indigenous people are no different from most of us in terms of personality. Due to their historical background, they are forcibly characterized by certain personality traits to conform to the general public's stereotype impression, and cases like this are not uncommon. The Taiwan indigenous peoples in my mind are a number of ethnic groups who have their own roots and cultural values deeply connected to this land. Yet in the process of modernization, they are torn apart and forced to leave their ancestral land, struggling to find their way home. Even so, I still choose to refer to them as "masters of the mountains," because it not only reflects the reality from the past but also expresses my expectation for their future.

I never had a chance to meet the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples before. To me, they are far more mysterious than those who are initially classified as the Takasago (Mountain Indigenous Peoples) by the Japanese colonizers. My interest in them stems from one time when a relative of mine mentioned that my great-grandmother was an orphan from one of these ethnic groups. But I did not go any further to investigate it since there was no evidence to prove that, and it was only an anecdote among my relatives. As I recall this, it occurs to me that perhaps these peoples are not completely strange to me. Maybe I myself am a descendant of them, and it's just that I do not know it at all. I used to have only a rudimentary understanding of the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples, which is acquired from the textbook and previous impressions of street name rectification. It is not until I begin to research historical documents in recent years that I realized that many of the "aboriginal women" at that time used to serve as interpreters in important negotiations and meetings.

Whenever offered a chance to learn about Taiwan indigenous culture, I always consider it a rare and precious experience. This time I am brought on a journey to a brand-new area that I have never explored, both geographically and culturally. I can't wait to learn about the wisdom of the traditional customs of the Taiwan Plain indigenous peoples, especially how their modern descendants manage to preserve and keep alive their ancestral culture to create more collective memories to be shared and passed on by the people of Taiwan.



The Pazeh in Ailan, Puli, All Pitching in to Revitalize Their Language

The Pazeh is a subgroup of the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples in Central Taiwan, who are originally based in the areas of Fengyuan, Da'an (in present-day Taichung), and Liyutan (in present-day Miaoli). During the rule of the Zheng clan and the Qing dynasty, their territories shrank gradually and became insufficient to accommodate the community, which forced them to migrate en masse to the area of Ailan in present-day Puli Township of Nantou County in 1823. It was since then that the Pazeh people began to set down roots in the lowlands and merged with the Non-indigenous people through close contact and intermarriage. Over time, their ethnic subjectivity and identity have been blurred, even assimilated, by the Chinese majority, causing their native language and culture to disappear gradually.

Possibly inspired by the indigenous movements in the 1980s, dozens of Pazeh people called on each other in 1999 to launch revitalization activities in Ailan. Unfortunately, the campaign was put to a halt due to the 921 Earthquake that happened in the same year, which devastated Puli and the surrounding areas.

Having left Puli in his teens to work in Taipei and lived there for forty-plus years, Daway never gave up the longing to return home. It was not until 2000, when his children had all grown up and started their own families, that Daway decided to return to Puli to rebuild his home on the hillside where his family used to live, carrying on the story of this

Vanguards of the Pazeh Cultural Revitalization

Daway Abuk / Pan, Ying-Chieh



Representative of the Northern Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples, the Presidential Office Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee

Director of the Nantou County Pazeh Cultural Heritage Association

Pan, Wen-Hui



Pan, Mei-Chu



Sous chef good at making Umu

General Secretary of the Nantou County Pazeh Cultural Heritage Association

Pastor of the Ailan Church, Puli

land. “I wouldn’t make such a decision if what was left behind was a rice field,” he explains, “I am willing to come back because I love living in the mountains. This is indeed very challenging as the land has been left neglected for 42 years. It’s derelict. You can find nothing around here. No residents. No roads. This means I have to start everything from scratch, which takes a lot of courage.” While Puli is recovering from the trauma of the earthquake with many things waiting to be done, Daway, groping alone in the mountains, is also busy mapping out a blueprint for revitalizing his family’s land.

In 2003, when life gradually got back on track for residents in Puli, members of the local Pazeh community founded the Nantou County Pazeh Cultural Heritage Association to promote the revival of their language. “A aunt, Pan Jin-yu, who was in her eighties back then, was the only native speaker of Pazeh that remained alive. She took this issue seriously and put great energy into training young people of our generation to speak Pazeh so that we can pass it on, fearing that it might become extinct once she dies,” says Daway. They took advantage of the regular fellowship gatherings at the church to learn Pazeh, hoping to keep their mother tongue and the memories of their culture alive.

While relearning Pazeh and rebuilding his home in Puli, Daway also serves as a member of the Indigenous Historical Justice and Transitional Justice Committee to speak out for the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples. Although the community occupies only three seats on the commission, the status quo does not discourage him. Rather, he stresses that this is a precious channel for the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples to have a direct dialogue with the state, and that they should speak out bravely on the open platforms to highlight the existence of their community. The constitutional interpretation issued in October this year declared that the national law must recognize the identity of the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples within three years. He believes that there is much room for discussion on what and how they can do to live up to their status as indigenous people. This is just the beginning of more challenges waiting ahead. On this unfinished road to revitalization, the Pazeh people from Ailan, Puli, are actively embracing their indigenous culture without flinching.



Talu Abuk / Pan, Ying-Hsiung

Lucky

An able man who possesses both great social and cooking skills

Good at making Pazeh pickled dishes

Pan, Hsiu-Hsia

Top chef good at making Umu

Niu Niu

The Origin of the Pazeh

The Pazeh legend has it that the people are descended from Maqiyowas, who came down from heaven to settle and had offspring in the plains of central Taiwan. One day, a flood came and inundated the homeland of the Pazehs. Almost the entire village was killed except for Savung Kaisi and Vana Kaisi, a sister and brother who fled to the mountains and survived the disaster. A few days later, when the flood receded, the couple resettled in Fuluton (today's Fengyuan in Taichung), got married, and had a daughter and son. They cut their children into small pieces and turned each piece into a person. These people were scattered to the four winds to produce offspring, forming the four earliest communities of the Pazeh people: Pahoropuru, Dyaopuru, Lalusay, and Auran.

Before the Non-indigenous people from China came to Taiwan, local indigenous peoples were generally able to retain their territories and space for living despite some occasional struggles over interest and power. During the rule of the Zheng clan and the Qing dynasty, however, the authorities enticed the Pazeh to cede their land in exchange for irrigation water and employed the strategy of "letting the barbarians fight it out among themselves," which led them to lose most of their territories and became plagued by constant infighting, respectively. The community was forced to relocate en masse and eventually scattered in Yilan County, Puli, and Liyu Lake.

The Ailan-based Pazeh community in Puli converted to Christianity in 1871, which caused the disappearance of many of its traditional rituals and culture. Yet thanks to the introduction of the Romanized writing system by Western missionaries, the Pazeh language was able to be preserved. The unified religious belief helps to foster the cohesiveness of the community. Although the language was once listed as endangered by the United Nations, the determined and never-say-die people of Pazeh, strive to revive their native language with the church as their core base by preserving it in written form and using it to tell their stories.

* In the Qing dynasty, the Chinese interpreter Chang Ta-Ching funded the construction of the Huludun Ditch (formerly known as the Babuza Ditch) in today's Taichung Plain to facilitate irrigation and traded the water with the Pazeh people for the ownership of their land.

*The Qing government used the power of the Pahoropuru Community to quell the resistance of other Pazeh communities.

The Pazeh's Folk Tales

The Fish—Loving Fanpo Ghost

There was a Pazeh man who went fishing in the river at night when fish tended to come out to feed. Every time he dropped the catch into the bamboo basket, he felt that something seemed to be going on inside. But he did not check it because of the poor visibility at night. Upon returning to the village, he emptied the catch out of the basket for inspection, only to find that all the fish had turned into stones. He knew immediately that this was the spell cast by Fanpo Ghost, an evil sorcerer who practiced black magic. He turned to the shaman from the village who also possessed magical power for help. "I beg you to stop playing tricks on our poor fellow man, whose catch is no easy gain. You may leave since you've filled your stomach," said the shaman to Fanpo Ghost. Then, with a wave of the shaman's hand, Fanpo Ghost flew away, and the man's catch would never turn into stones again.





The Mango Tree in the Granny's Backyard

A granny in the village planted a tall mango tree by the earthen wall in her backyard. Every year the tree was heavily laden with fruit, attracting hungry kids to steal the mangoes either by hand or by throwing stones to knock them off the tree. But stones that missed the targets would break the roof tiles, causing the roof to leak on rainy days. These naughty kids who would not listen became a headache to the granny.

One day, the granny heard a child crying behind the house. She went to the backyard to find that a kid was clinging to the tree, unable to break free. He was so frightened that he was crying his eyes out. Upon seeing this, the granny recited a spell to unbind him from the tree. The naughty kid dashed away as soon as he was freed.

The Old Man that Gets One's Hair Curly

In the village lives an old man who possessed magic power. Every morning, he would sit under the eaves of his house and watch people passing by. When kids went past his home on their way to school and saw him, they never failed to greet him with great courtesy, for if they did not do so, they would be punished. One time a kid passed by him uneasily and forgot to give a greeting. Then something weird happened. The kid's hair grew more and more curly as he traveled on. When he came home from school, his family knew immediately that it was the magic cast by the old man for his impoliteness. It was not until they turned to another granny from the village to help undo the spell that the kid's hair became straight again.



The Braggart That Cast Spells

There was a man in the village who could cast spells and was nicknamed "A-Chung the braggart" because of his love of bragging. One day, he visited one of his relatives and ate with the family. During the meal, he played a trick by keeping the chopsticks upright in his palm. They would not drop no matter how he flipped his hand as if they had been glued to it. A-Chung's nephew, who was sitting at the table, was very amused by his trick.



One day, the nephew asked A-Chung to teach him to cast spells. Upon hearing the request, the braggart put on a solemn face and rebuked him, "Casting spells isn't something that can be taken lightly. There are many taboos, and one must pay tragic prices if he wants to master it, including the loss of posterity, suffering from serious illness, and even falling into poverty for the rest of his life. The abuse of spells will not only hurt you but also harm others. Therefore, I can't teach you that." The kid did not truly understand why he was scolded, yet he was still amazed by the Pazez spells even though he had no chance to learn about them.

Self-Taught Knowledge You Cannot Learn in School

How much did you know about Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples at first?



In the beginning, my knowledge about them was zero, but now it has gone from zero to one. I used to think that the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples have been profoundly assimilated into and affected by the Non-indigenous Chinese society, but I am surprised to find out that the Pazeh language has been so well preserved. I learn from the mentor that this would not have been possible without the endeavors of the church, it turned out that their history and means of cultural preservation are more like those of their counterparts based in the mountains. Unlike that of the Non-indigenous Chinese people, part of the Taiwan indigenous culture was recorded and preserved by the Western missionaries who came during the Qing dynasty.

What impressed you most today?



I knew almost nothing about the history of the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples before today. I have only learned from the literature left by foreign scholars about Taiwan mountain indigenous peoples that there had been quite a few indigenous females married to Japanese, the Non-indigenous Chinese, and mainlanders in those days, for they spoke two languages and could therefore serve as interpreters in negotiations. As for me, what I know about the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples is that thanks to their position in the middle ground, they play the role of intermediaries to facilitate the communication and cultural exchanges between the non-indigenous and other indigenous ethnic groups. Take the mentor for example. As a Pazeh who also speaks fluent Taiwanese, now he is serving as a bilingual guide to introduce his native culture in the language spoken in the lowlands.

When did you begin to learn about indigenous culture? Through what channels?



I have learned almost nothing about that while in school. All my knowledge about Taiwan indigenous peoples was self-taught by searching for information on my own. Most people around me are not interested in the indigenous communities at all, be it their culture or situations. A young indigenous man once told me that some of his colleagues, who were also indigenous, cared nothing about issues related to them and considered themselves urban people. This gives me a feeling that indigenous people are hampered by the burden of their identity when it comes to the passing on of indigenous culture. It seems that they are constrained by an overemphasis on indigenism, which requires them to live up to what people expect them to be or do.

In 2013, I once thought of drawing a fictional story about the Austronesian peoples. The idea was inspired by the autobiography of a Western missionary who ventured into the Amazon jungle to preach to local indigenous peoples who had never come into contact with other humans and record their languages. I intended to draw a fictional comic with similar settings based on this real story, featuring a foreign missionary traveling to an indigenous village isolated from outside civilization. But so far, I have only finished the beginning of a short story, for if the story is not backed up by a comprehensive, detailed research of historical evidence and facts, the storylines would appear lacking in depth. It did not occur to me that Taiwan has its own indigenous peoples until later as I went on to look for more information for the project. But then I switched my focus to the research of the Cilan Mountain, and the creation of this story was therefore suspended for several years. It was not until 2016 that the second episode came out. Later, when I was thirty, I was commissioned by *Creative Comic Collection* to draw short comics. I approached the indigenous advocacy groups who protested on Ketagalan Boulevard to gain first-hand observation and understanding of indigenous issues. That was my very first time coming in contact with Taiwan indigenous people.

Have you heard about any indigenous myths or legends?



I have read about the legend of the sacred stone of the Atayal. My interest in their history and culture was triggered by a previous visit to Cilan Mountain, where I found many of the large sacred trees there were named after ancient Chinese sages, such as Confucius. I felt it was quite out of place, so I did some research to find that the place was run by the Veterans Affairs Council. Later I learned that the mountain was in fact part of the Atayal's traditional territories. Throughout the process of researching, I began to gain a rudimentary understanding of the people of Atayal. I did much research about the Atayal and Bunun by combing historical documents left by the Japanese, which had detailed descriptions of the customs of Taiwan indigenous peoples. For example, the Atayal used bird divination as a basis for deciding the good or ill of a given circumstance by observing the flight direction of birds. The Bunun, on the other hand, had such stories as the myth of the flood, the tale of the lazy married woman, and the legend of two suns. I also remember that some indigenous groups in southern Taiwan had the tales of "black dwarves," a legendary people who had been extinct. I am an enthusiast who loves researching historical documents, but so far, I haven't had a chance to come into contact with the Atayal people in person.

This is your first time in the Pazeh community spending time with the locals. How did you feel about that?



Some of them are funny. I am not sure if I can compare this experience to the contemporary "cyberpunk," which is typically used to describe the impression given by the neon lights in Hong Kong along with a sense of science and technology. This is how I feel about some of Taiwan's indigenous communities that demonstrate a fusion of traditional elements and modern techniques, which is playful and very much like a kind of indigenous aesthetics. The experience of working with the Pazeh instructors this time is rather different from those I had with other mountainous indigenous peoples before. The feeling is quite different. Take the Bunun for example. The villagers I met were older and had worked in Taipei when young before they returned to engage in farming and doing business. But the elders from the village tended to criticize them for being too unconventional and going astray from the Bunun traditions. The views of the older and the younger generations were divergent in many aspects. Those who returned to their hometowns to start a new career might have to make efforts to gain the recognition and approval of the elders. As for the Pazeh, on the other hand, the problems they are likely to encounter are completely different since they have strong solidarity enhanced by the church and are almost of the same generation.

The last time you had contact with indigenous people was to work on placemaking. How is this time different from your previous experience?



Many of my friends are engaged in placemaking, which is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, and management of public spaces. Take the Zhengbin Fishing Harbor in Keelung for example, festivals are held to attract the participation of local residents. Such a trendy approach of using popular elements to draw people's attention is completely different from that of indigenous peoples, whose cultural revitalization is not achieved instantly but through gradual accumulation and cooperation with academic circles, relying on scholars and experts for their research results or study of historical documents. Daway Abuk, one of the instructors, pays particular attention to the authenticity of historical data. This is because while writing research papers, some authors might seek to reach the desired conclusions by using the data or facts that meet their needs. Another case is the color of the traditional Pangcah costumes. It used to be black but was changed to red for the sake of stage performances. However, it's quite difficult to prove this argument. Once a false argument is proposed from the very beginning, it's possible to give rise to more incorrect assumptions. This is why Daway Abuk is particular about the overall historical accuracy and strives to avoid spreading erroneous ideas in the process of cultural revitalization, fearing that the results might radically deviate from the tradition.

Today I learn that the Pazeh people focus their revitalization on the language, while less attention is paid to other aspects. This makes me worry that it could hinder the passing on of their culture. On the other hand, though, it would be wrong to think that the people of Pazeh are significant simply because they have a rich culture and that they can only be recognized by doing something that fulfills the expectations of the public. After all, the existence of the Pazeh is an undeniable fact, and they do have their own culture. How to preserve and keep it alive, however, is an issue to be considered in the next stage. It's just that the threshold for learning a language is pretty high, which might be challenging for those who are getting on in years. The task is much more difficult compared with experiencing the culture through daily activities.







Looking Into Traditional Pazeh Daily Life

When Daway returned to his family land in 2000, it was a wild jungle. It had been abandoned for quite a long time and was severely damaged by the floods in 1959. Daway initially wanted to come back here and live a simple, quiet life in the woods, so although he never received any landscape design training, he still put in much thought and effort to create a pleasant living space. Shortly after Daway returned to his hometown, and started to learn more about their language and culture. Eventually, Daway transformed this piece of land into the “Pinialay mupazah Pazeh a reten” Cultural Park, a place where the people’s stories and history can be preserved.

Learning About the Life Of the Pazeh Through Indigenous Species

Giant Elephant’s Ear (biarax)

Before plastic bags existed, people used the leaves of the Giant Elephant’s Ear plant to carry vegetables, fish, and meat. Although most people are taught in school that the Giant Elephant’s Ear is a poisonous plant and we should stay away from them, Daway points out that the leaves are actually safe, it’s the sap inside the stems that are poisonous. If you are stung by a bee or other insects outdoors, put the sap onto the wound and it will reduce the swelling.





Taro (dukun) looks very similar to Giant Elephant's Ear, but there is one way to tell them apart. Sprinkle water on the leaves: if the water forms little drops on the leaves, then this is taro because its leaves are covered with fuzz; but on the leaves of the Giant Elephant's Ear, the water will spread out and stay on the surface.



Giant Elephant's Ear

Taro



The stems of wax begonia also carry much water and can be drunk when thirsty.

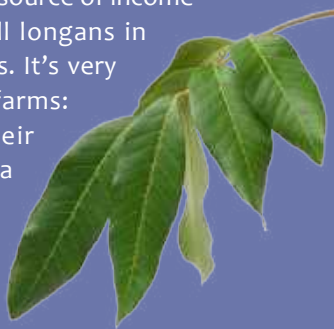
Parabarium linearicarpum

The Parabarium linearicarpum is easy to identify. If you get thirsty in the mountains, eating Parabarium linearicarpum leaves can quench your thirst. This plant is also used in Chinese medicine to reduce swelling.



Longan Trees (madu kahuy)

In the early days, longan trees were a source of income as people in the rural areas will sell longans in the city in exchange for daily supplies. It's very similar to the situation in chicken farms: many farms raise chickens but their family only gets to eat it a few times a year as most of the chickens are sold for money. Chicken is only served on special occasions or when relatives come to visit.



If you see a Longan tree, there must be someone living nearby!

Formosan Palm

The Formosan Palm serves many purposes for mountain indigenous peoples: it is used as brooms or as roofs to shield them from wind and rain. For the Pazeh, the rough leaves of Formosan Palm are the best tool to string fish and shrimp when catching fish by the streams.





Common Paper Mulberry (talupun)

Nicknamed “deer tree”, common paper mulberry is the perfect tree for raising deer because deer love its tender leaves. The bark of common paper mulberry is good for making paper pulp, so community members used to trade the tree bark for other goods.

Mountain Soursop (ananah)

Also known as mountain soursop, Ananah fruits are often enjoyed by the community members. It is especially popular in Puli and hailed as the “Fruit King”.



Schefflera Tree

Cooked Schefflera leaves can remove the toxins of stinging nettle and poisonous woodnettle. In addition to being an emergency antidote in the mountains, schefflera is also a toy used in indigenous children’s games. Children would pick off all the leaves and use the bent point of the stems as the axle center and spin the entire stem with their fingers. The stem that falls off first loses!



If you are competing with others, remember to find the stem with the sharpest angle.

Lanceolate Blumea

Lanceolate Blumea has a very mild feature which is neither too warm nor too cool. When you have a cold, the plant can be made into soup to alleviate the symptoms, and its leaves can be used in chicken soup for new mothers after giving birth. Due to its health benefits, the march marigold is also known as “Pazeh Ginseng”.



Moss (Xapet)

Moss is considered green silk by the Pazeh and the most popular natural food enjoyed by the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples. Villagers collect moss grown on the rocks in unpolluted river valleys and rise them thoroughly, then they soak the moss in the pond and stir them to clear out dirt and other impurities. The clean moss, which is healthy and delicious, can be enjoyed as a cold dish or cooked in soups.

Taiwaniana Alsophila

Taiwaniana Alsophila is a prehistorical species and has appeared in the movie Jurassic Park. It is a type of landscaping plant.



Boar, Stream Shrimp, Bamboo Partridge—I Want Them All

In addition to the common boar traps, Daway also taught Adoor how to make traps to catch shrimp and bamboo partridge. Community members used to get their meats this way.



Traditional shrimp cages were made with bamboo before plastic was available.

Bamboo Partridge Trap



Unlike the boar trap which has to be camouflaged to look as natural as possible, bamboo partridge traps can be placed anywhere. Boars are very smart and know that they should avoid trails that people frequent and flee when they smell the scent of people. But bamboo partridge will walk right into the trap.



This is much heavier than the wild boar trap.

Boar Trap



Pazeh Stone Walls—Six Stones Surrounding One



When our ancestors built the stone walls, they surrounded one stone with six others. This method can stabilize the wall as well as the soil and gravel behind it so that it will not collapse easily. These stone walls survived the 921 Earthquake, which proves they are very strong.

Realizing the Differences Between Different Peoples After Close Contact

You have visited other Bunun communities before, how is this one different from the others?



The Bunun communities I visited before also have a lot of vegetable gardens, but theirs don't blend into the surroundings as well. Most of them are flat gardens tended by the elderly and surrounded by mountains. They are also very vast. The gardens I saw today are terraced fields in the woods.

The mentors introduced a lot of plant knowledge today, thoughts?



Many of those plants can also be found in the plains and we have a vague idea of how to use them, but the mentors know more in-depth details. For example, we were all taught that Giant Elephant's Ear is poisonous, don't touch it. But today the mentors said that Giant Elephant's Ear can heal hornet stings. This is wilderness experience and knowledge directly from nature, not from other people. My Bunun friends have even more rare knowledge about the mountain wilderness. They can identify plants that I have never seen before, let alone know what they are.

I usually don't pay attention to my surroundings when I'm in a natural environment, but after today, the plants suddenly start to stand out. Right off the top of their heads, the mentors shared how to eat the plants and how to use them. When I taught drawing lessons to Bunun students, I'd ask them to draw their gardens or animals that they've seen or unforgettable stories. But maybe these are too common for them, so they don't really elaborate on them.

As for us Non-indigenous people, we don't really use plants enough. Most of us just admire the flowers at the flower markets, that's all. My mother grew up in the Hakka rural area, so she knows a lot about plants, too. But I just can't remember anything about plants, so my Mom is always like, "how can you not even know this?" But I do enjoy drawing plants. When I visited Wu Sheng's (Taiwanese author) tree garden to collect inspiration, he also introduced a lot of indigenous species to me.

You visited the mentor's home village today to learn more about the mountains and forests. Do you have any past experience going into the mountains?



The mountains I visited are more like recreational destinations, like Elephant Mountain, Tiger Mountain, Qixing Mountain, Jiufen, and Jinguashi. When I'm in the mountains, I just calmly walk and think, breathe in the phytoncide, and purify my soul and mind. I'm a homebody, I usually stay in Taipei and rarely go outside. When I do it's usually because someone set up an assignment for me. For example, some of the indigenous friends I met recently want to rebuild their Atayal family house and hope that I can illustrate their execution process into a comic. I might need to go into the mountains with them early next year. That would be the first time I've gone so deep into the forests. The indigenous peoples I've interacted with so far have all relocated to the foot of the mountains.

You learned how to make traps today, did you have any hunting experience when you visited the Bunun communities in the past? How was it?



The Bunun people I met before mostly do farm work, their ancestors were relocated to the plains during the Japanese Occupation Period to work in the fields. But they are also hunters. Nowadays they mainly work with the Forestry Bureau on conservation projects and also patrol

the mountains to catch illegal loggers. So I haven't participated in hunts that actually catch animals. I do know that they carry rifles with them when they go into the forests and may take action if needed, which is not the same as passively putting down traps like today. I'm surprised that you can make a trap with such simple tools. I've only seen snap traps before and I've never seen such a traditional handmade contraption.



This is the first time I've made these traps. I think shrimps are not very bright, they actually think the traps are their homes. It was very interesting today to experience the life of indigenous peoples. I can imagine them using these hunting tools in the past, just like how we go shopping in convenience stores: the mountain is their convenience store and they just make traps when they want to eat.

What are your thoughts on indigenous hunting traditions?



When I talk about the indigenous peoples with my friends, they would say things like, "their ethnic background lets them get extra points in exams", or "they should stop hunting because the wild animals are almost gone". However, if hunting is part of their tradition and they don't do it like in Africa where the rich pay to hunt giraffes on jeeps, I don't believe we need to forbid it. The indigenous people just want to make a living. Humans are also part of nature, although some environmentalists exclude humans and some include us. It's all very academic so I don't recall it clearly, but if humans are included, then I think the indigenous peoples are the closest to nature. And if we want to push it further, in the past the Non-indigenous people viewed the indigenous people as animals, not humans. If you view indigenous peoples like that, then hunting is part of their nature, you can't just change your mind now and say "you are now considered human and you cannot hunt".

When the western law system was introduced to Taiwan, there were conflicts between the system and local culture. But when the ruling party wants to exclude certain groups from the regulations, there will be problems. Taiwan has customary laws, so some bad Non-indigenous customs, such as foot binding, are gone. Of course, there were other customs that just disappeared without concrete reasons. But the traditional cultures of the indigenous peoples were preserved, why? Today I heard that it was because the missionaries helped preserve some of them, so the customary laws gave the indigenous peoples a little more flexibility than the Han people, but there wasn't much elbow room, either, to be honest. Five years ago I met some legal consultants who were talking about using customary laws as a reference to revise national laws so that the public can accept them. But these processes take a lot of time.

What are your thoughts on the indigenous peoples cultural revitalization?



I know originally only a few Bunun groups sang the Pasibutbut, but now it has become mainstream for all Bunun people. It feels like all Bunun people are reviving Pasibutbut, but in reality, a lot of this culture is reconstructed. The Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples, maybe because they have fewer people, can only focus on reviving language and literature. When I heard about that I was curious, like, in addition to the modern poetry they wrote, are there any more ancient materials that exist? Like the Bunun would pass down some ancient songs or warrior songs that describe the people's lives and culture. The Pazeh also have their own language, so I wonder if their ancestors also wrote things down to express their feelings?





We are Still Here !

Living Out the Stories of the Pazeh

The Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples were formerly known as “civilized aborigine” in the Qing dynasty and “Pingpu peoples” during the Japanese rule, respectively. Throughout their history, however, they have lived so close to the majority Non-indigenous people and were even assimilated into the mainstream society that they have lost their indigenesness, with their identity gradually fading from people's memories or being ignored intentionally. Yet the Pazeh people based in Ailan, Puli, are still striving to preserve their indigenous culture despite their cross-ethnic lifestyle.

The Pazeh Culinary Culture

We all know that most mountain-based indigenous peoples and Hakkas developed the habit of preserving food with salt in the early days without refrigerators. But few people are aware that the highly sinicized Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples also have a food culture of pickling.

Talu Abuk used to work in a restaurant as a chef. Now he is devoted his excellent culinary skill to the “Pinialay mupuzah Pazeh a reten” Cultural Park. He combines his cooking knowledge with ingredients gathered from the mountains and local crops from Puli to re-present authentic Pazeh home cooking.



Fermented Pork (inumas u rumut)

Pickle stir-fried pork with glutinous rice, rice wine, and salt to let it absorb the fragrance of rice while diluting the flavor of rice wine. It takes only two weeks or so before the dish is ready to eat.

Like the Atayal and Amis, the Pazeh also have the habit of making fermented raw pork. The flavor can be adjusted to suit one's personal preference.



Fermented Fish (inumas u alaw)

Fermented fish is a well-known dish in Atayal cuisine, but don't think that the *Atayal is the only indigenous people who handle fish this way.**

The Pazeh-style fermented fish is typically made with salt, rice wine, and **glutinous rice***. First, stir-fry the uncooked rice until more than 80% of it turns brown. Then dip the fish into the mixture of rice, rice wine and salt. Leave the fish to ferment for three months before it is ready to eat.



* The Amis are connoisseurs of wild plants who eat a wide range of them. Other indigenous groups, though not consuming as many kinds as the Amis do, also have their unique ways of eating and cooking wild vegetables.

* White rice will do, but glutinous rice is sweeter in taste and thicker in texture.

Tofu with Alianthus Prickly Ash

Alianthus prickly ash is a spice plant commonly used by Taiwan indigenous peoples in their cooking. This dish features a mixture of tofu and alianthus prickly ash topped with ground peanuts to add a bit of texture.

Scrambled Egg with Thai Basil

Thai basil is also a culinary herb commonly used by the Pazehs to add flavor to simple dishes.



Fragrant Manjack Fruit

Though small in size, the fragrant manjack fruit must be boiled over high heat first and then simmered at low heat for four hours.



Water Bamboo

The most famous crop of Puli and a common vegetable on the dining tables of the Pazeh in Ailan.



Pickled Bamboo Shoot

Pickle bamboo shoots with yeast, salt, and a little bit of sugar and leave the mixture to ferment for six months or so to produce the best flavor.



Vegetable Fern and Bird's Nest Fern

The vegetable ferns and bird's nest ferns offered in the restaurant are grown by Daway locally. In the past, they used to be flavored plainly with salt water, while nowadays, they are mostly stir-fried or blanched and then flavored with seasoning.



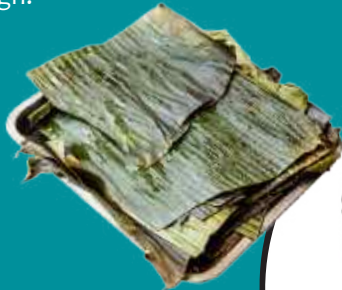
The richly flavored pickled bamboo shoot can also make a good soup base.

Umu: Must-Have Dish for the Pazeh New Year

The Pazeh New Year falls on November 15 annually. On this day, such festive events as singing the song of Ayen, Tâng-Lô-Bú (hitting gong and dancing), Maazazuah (marathon as a rite of passage), and Paarazam (cross-holding dance) are held to celebrate the autumn harvest. Every household would gather together before the New Year to prepare umu rice cakes as a food offering to their ancestors, thousands of which are made each time. The dish looks similar to the herbal rice cakes commonly consumed by the Non-indigenous people. Try your hand to make one following Adoor's demonstration to see how they are different.

Soak glutinous rice in water for six hours. Then grind the rice into rice pulp and dehydrate it with a machine. Mix the clumps with blanched mugwort to make the dough.

1



Roast banana leaves until they can be crumbled by hand. Then cleanse them with water.



We use the leaves of bananas for wrapping, while those living on the hillside prefer Alpinia. It doesn't matter which one you choose. Just use the material that is close to hand. But banana leaves will add an extra flavor to the umus.

Prepare the Fillings

Savory filling: dried radish strips, dried shrimps and shrimp shells, mushrooms, fried shallot, pepper, and minced pork. All cooked and seasoned.

Sweet filling: speckled beans, cooked and seasoned with pepper, sugar, and salt.



2



Add an appropriate amount of oil to the dough and knead it. Grab a portion of the dough and wrap the filling into it.



It's like playing with clay!

3

Roll the umu into a long oval shape. Place it on a piece of banana leaf and fold it in half.



One must distinguish the front and back of banana leaves when wrapping umus, which is difficult for those who are inexperienced. One is likely to be scolded by older people for wrapping an umu with the wrong side of the leaf.



4

Steam the wrapped umus for 30 minutes or so.



In the early days when families used to have many children but had few things to eat, the elders would turn whatever food materials available at home into umus to feed their children. Over time the practice has gradually evolved into a Pazeh culinary culture, featuring the umu as a must-have dish in celebration of their New Year.

The Pazeh people in Modern Days

Puli is a melting pot of the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples, which is home to several subgroups, including Kaxabu, Babuza, and Taokas. The Pazeh, on the other hand, are based in the Ailan area, living next door to the Papora. The two peoples are bounded by the slope of Tieshan Road, with the Pazeh living on the Ailan Plateau up the slope and the Papora at the lower end of it. Many of the churches, schools, and hospitals are located in Ailan because the power of the Pazeh was the more powerful in the past.

There are three Pazeh communities residing in Ailan: Patakan, Aoran, and Lalusai, which are the names of their former settlements around today's Pengyuan, Taichung.

In the 2000s, the Pazeh successfully constructed a network of cultural revitalization with the church serving as their core base. They have made remarkable achievements in language preservation and have received many indigenous



The slope of Tieshan Road.

literature awards sponsored by the Ministry of Education. Twenty years have passed, yet the Pazehts have still not been able to break free from the shackles of Sinicization. What is worse, they are faced with the outflow of young people that threatens all the minority indigenous peoples in Taiwan, making the passing on of culture even more difficult. Without these indigenous ethnic groups, would there be a gap in the history of Taiwan? We must strive to preserve and keep the culture of Taiwan indigenous peoples alive before it is too late. After all, it is these fascinating stories that make the soul of our island.

Cultural Diversity isn't Just a Slogan, It's Taiwan's Everyday Life

What indigenous cuisine impressed you most?



Cinavu is the most basic. There's also Reeves's muntjac meat, flying rat, and wild greens. The Bunun people also have lots of bitter bean dishes and soups. We had some cured foods today, which I don't get to eat as often in the Bunun community. It's the first time I saw cured fish and ate it. It tastes good, with a strong alcohol flavor. I prefer cured meat to cured fish. The fish tasted way too alcoholic. I remember going to one concert by a male indigenous singer. He had outdoor catering. I had a lot of salted pork, cured foods, and blood sausage or game sausage.

In the past few days, we have talked much about the impact of the church on the Pazeh community. Do you have any observation or thought on that?



Whether the impact brought about by the church is good or bad may vary from person to person. But this reminded me of a priest I previously met in eastern Taiwan, who told me that skipped-generation families were quite common in indigenous communities and that some male elders might even sexually abuse their young granddaughters. Not knowing who they could rely on, these little girls had no choice but to turn to the priest for help. Most people might think that they should call the police, but in reality, such cases are very difficult to handle. Placement services for children may not always be the best solution since we have to respect the will of the victims. I hope that in addition to relying on the church for temporary placement and shelter, the government will pay more attention to this issue and value every single human life.

How important is it to get to know indigenous culture? What did you take away from the three-day visit?



Getting to know indigenous culture is getting to know indigenous history, which has long been neglected by the mainstream society. Any culture can be impacted at any moment by a policy or decision and change. In today's information explosion era, it's worth researching how Taiwan's indigenous cultures can gain a foothold like this. Since I started paying more attention to indigenous issues, I've become more sensitive to issues ranging from how their daily habits take shape to how they are deprived the power of discourse, and how the political system is shaped.

I learned from many indigenous peoples that Taiwan's cultural diversity isn't a slogan, not something to mothball, it's practiced by real people in their daily lives. The dynamic often comes with destruction, integration, and reconstruction. How should we preserve customs? I think indigenous peoples are more experienced in cross-cultural exchange than the Non-indigenous, they connect with Austronesian and other indigenous cultures. Culture lets me start from Taiwan and gain a broader understanding of the world.



Over the past three days under Mr. Daway Abuk's guidance, I went from knowing nothing about the Taiwan Plains Indigenous Peoples to being able to get a glimpse of history and its context. The visit was short but my interest grew, and now I want to find historical documents and comb through treasures I've overlooked. This will also help my creative process.

Mr. Daway Abuk built an indigenous park in the century-old terraced paddy fields passed down in his family for generations. In the park, he teaches ancestral knowledge of plants, animals, and hunting. At the park entrance, there are his neighbors' wild beehives. Not feeding bees sugar is evidence of a clean, toxin-free environment that ensures high quality honey. The park has collaborated with National Chi Nan University in academic fields and it's also Nantou Wild Bird Society's bird watching location. Mr. Daway Abuk has put much effort towards preserving the natural environment. I still remember he picked up a pebble from the ground and drew how his ancestors built terraced field landscapes by hand, from shoveling, piling earth, to stacking huge rocks. The people's hard work in the past opening up land became vivid before our eyes. We saw a monkey from across the stream when we strolled in the mountains. He was taking his time. I could tell he already sees this place as his home.

The Pazeh meal Mr. Talu Abuk prepared for us was so huge that it could feed an entire village! I could feel the hospitality. The traditional Pazeh cured meat is made from raw pork, but a blanching step has been added to the preparation process to cater to modern tastes without compromising the sweetness that follows the savory flavor. Fish that was cured for more than three months to the point you can eat the bones. It's very salty and goes well with rice. It's soft, firm, and chewy. Taiwan giant bamboo shoot pickled with black beans is soft and refreshing, that goes well with rice too. I put shrimp traps in the stream, and the catch was my lunch the next day. Taiwan giant bamboo shoot fish soup was another unforgettable dish. I was impressed by Mr. Talu Abuk's culinary skills. I went home with a jar of homemade pickled Taiwan giant bamboo shoot from Mr. Daway Abuk. I'll try pairing it with ramen.

The traditional Pazeh snack called "umu" is mugwort rice cake wrapped in banana leaves. The recipe for its filling was specially created. One of the most special flavors was with the speckled bean filling. I have a soft spot for the smell of the beans, the soft texture, the salty and sweet rice wrapper. The signature flavor of radish was both nostalgic and fresh. After trying to make umu, I ran into instructor's son. He said he didn't learn to make umu as a kid. That reminds me of my family never teaching me to speak Hakka and Taiwanese. Some things are harder to be passed down in a family.

Hearing instructors sharing Pazeh history and cultural preservation, what impressed me most was his down-to-earth, prudent attitude in seeking proof. He reminded us that transmitting misinformation from unverified papers with quotation after quotation could lead the pursuit of traditional culture off-track. Then it will be even harder to make corrections. So before any assumptions are made, careful research is needed.

The fulfilling three-day visit was more than a chance to see Pazeh history and cultural preservation, it also showed me the hospitality of the Pazeh people. Mr. Daway Abuk presented me two jars of preserved food as gifts. I'd like to thank *Indigenous Sight* and my friends for giving me a chance to get to know people on the island Taiwan who work hard to preserve living culture.





Taking Up the Baton >>

