

WORDS FROM THE TAI-NAN CITY MAYOR:  
(TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH)

"THE HOLY MOTHER - MA TSU - IS THE GUARDING  
GODDESS FOR ALL FISHERMAN AND SAILORS ON  
THE SOUTH OF CHINA. LONG TIME AGO, THE  
IMMIGRANTS CROSS THE OCEAN TO TAIWAN  
ALMOST DEPEND ON MA-TSU TO PROTECT  
THEM FOR SAFETY. TO THANK FOR THE  
PROTECTION FROM THE MA-TSU, THOSE  
IMMIGRANTS BUILT THE TEMPLE FOR HER.  
AFTER DEVELOPING MORE THAN 300 YEARS,  
MA-TSU HAS THE MOST TEMPLES, AND  
THE MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE IN HER"  
(5,000 TEMPLES - 200 MILLION PEOPLE)

TEMPLE 1  
- MY TURTLE -

HAPPINESS, HANDSOME SALARY,  
LONG LIFE AND JOY

CARD 3 OF 3

VIDEO

DURING THE WORSHIP CEREMONY THE  
BELIEVERS ALSO ASK FOR FAVORS OR  
SEEK GUIDANCE FROM THESE DIVINE  
CREATURES. OTHERS ARE HERE  
TO SHOW THEIR APPRECIATION FOR  
GRANTING THEIR WISHES THE  
PREVIOUS YEAR.

CARD 1

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY  
SINCEREST OF THANKS  
TO I-JUNN CHENG, A COAUTHOR  
OF THIS PRESENTATION FOR  
MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR ME  
ACCOMPANY HIM IN FEB 98  
TO THE PENGHU ISLANDS, where  
~~WE~~ WE SPENT 10 HOURS  
NON-STOP VISITING 5  
TEMPLES TO WITNESS THE TURTLE  
SACRIFICE CEREMONIES

PROFOUND EXPERIENCE

CARD 2

AND ALSO VOICE APPRECIATION  
TO THE PEOPLE OF PENGHU  
FOR WARM HOSPITALITY  
AND UNCONDITIONAL  
ACCEPTANCE INTO THE  
TEMPLES OF THEIR GODS,

TEMPLE 2 CHENG POINTING  
-1592- MING DYNASTY AT MAP  
TIEN-HO (MA-TSU) - (OLDEST IN TAIWAN)  
TEMPLE

quote  
\*  
SIGN: MA-TSU WAS THE MOST RESPECTED  
NAVIGATION GOD IN THE SOUTH PART OF  
CHINA. MA-TSU RELIGION SPREAD TO PENGHU  
WITH THE ARRIVAL OF IMMIGRANTS FROM  
FUJIAN PROVINCE AT THE END OF THE MING  
DYNASTY, LATER ON SPREAD TO TAINAN,  
AND THE TO OTHER PARTS OF TAIWAN.  
MA-TSU HAS GRADUALLY CONVERTED  
INTO A PATRON SAINT TO THE  
PEOPLE.

MIN-LING TRANSLATION.

CARD 1 OF 2 MA-TSU

COUPLED WITH TURTLE WORSHIP (960-987CE)

X  
LIN-WAN-ANG (MO LIN) WAS A GIRL FROM A COASTAL PROVINCE OF CHINA. ONE DAY HER FATHER AND OTHER BROTHER WENT OUT TO SEA AND MET WITH DISASTER, THE GIRL INVOKED THE GODDESS OF MERCY AND RESCUED THEM. LATER, SHE OBTAINED ENLIGHTENMENT AND BECAME THE GODDESS MA-TSU, WHO HELPS FISHERMEN IN DANGER. IN TAIWAN, MARINERS LIVES ARE IN CONSTANT PERIL.

(AS SEA TURTLES ARE TODAY IN MANY AREAS)

VIDEO TUG OF WAR

Rarely  
AT THIS MOMENT, THE TEMPLES IN PENGHU ARE ALIVE WITH PEOPLE COMING AND GOING PRAYING TO TURTLES PERHAPS ~~ONCE IN A MILLENNIUM~~ <sup>SEEKING GUIDANCE AND GOOD FORTUNE</sup> SAFETY AND PEACE. Venerating MA-TSU

THE SEA TURTLE SYMPOSIUM COINCIDES WITH THE CHINESE LANTERN FESTIVAL AND PENGHU SEA TURTLE SACRIFICE CEREMONIES - COUPLE WITH VENERATION OF MA-TSU.

AND EVEN IF THIS HAPPENS MORE OFTEN THAN 1000 YEARS, IT WILL ONLY BE ONCE THAT BALAZS, CHENG, AND WANG BRING THIS BEFORE YOU, AS HAPPENING TODAY

I'LL CLOSE NOW BY POINTING  
OUT THAT THE PENGHU PEOPLE,  
AND THOSE OF US ~~HERE~~ AT THIS SYMPOSIUM  
TODAY, A HALF A WORLD APART,  
SHARE COMMON ELEMENTS IN  
OUR BELIEFS IN THE MYSTERIES  
AND WONDERMENT OF SEA  
TURTLES. AND THAT, AT THIS  
MOMENT, AS I SPEAK, WE ARE BOTH  
EXPRESSING THOSE VIEWS IN THE  
MANNER THAT OUR CULTURE  
AND CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE SHAPED  
US TO DO SO  
IN OUR OWN WAYS, WE PRAY FOR SAFETY AND PEACE  
AND CONTINUITY - FOR OURSELVES, AND FOR THE SEA TURTLES.

Tourism PENG-HU FROM: TOURIST GUIDE BOOK  
quote X "WHEN YOU TRAVEL HERE, IT SEEMS  
YOU ARE IN PARADISE. SHE IS THE  
HOMETOWN OF THE SEA, A PRETTY  
ARCHIPELAGO, THE "HAWAII" OF  
TAIWAN."

TEMPLE 3

"SHAN-SHUI" TEMPLE

FAMOUS FOR GOLDEN TURTLES

118 OUNCES (7 1/2 LBS) MOVING TURTLE

CARD 2 OF 3

MANY TEMPLES IN PENGHU CONDUCT SEA TURTLE WORSHIPPING RITUALS DURING THE LANTERN FESTIVAL, THE MOST IMPORTANT FESTIVAL IN PENGHU.

LANTERN FESTIVAL IS THE 15<sup>th</sup> DAY OF THE FIRST LUNAR MONTH (2-3-4 MARCH OF THIS YEAR)

THE RESIDENTS OF PENGHU BELIEVE THAT THE SEA TURTLE IS AN (AUSPICIOUS) CREATURE <sup>DEVINE</sup>

BLESSED WITH GOOD FORTUNE. THIS THEY WORSHIP FOR PEACE, PROSPERITY AND GOOD FORTUNE.

MOVE!

FROM: ESSAY BY  
LYALL WATSON

"WE ARE THE PATTERN-MAKERS, THE WATCHERS OF THE WORLD, SORTING THROUGH THE ENTRAILS OF THE EARTH IN AN ENDLESS SEARCH FOR MEANING. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY, AS THOUGH CONSCIOUSNESS CARRIES WITH IT THE PENALTY OF A PRESSING NEED TO KNOW. SO WE LOOK FOR SIGNS IN EVERYTHING, READING NATURE LIKE A BOOK, HOPING ALWAYS TO COME ACROSS SOME ~~MESSAGE~~ SORT OF MESSAGE HIDDEN BETWEEN THE LINES. SOME CLUE, SOME HINT OF DIRECTION, ANYTHING THAT WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO UNDERSTAND WHO WE ARE, AND WHAT ON EARTH WE SHOULD BE DOING. THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS."

MORE ONLY  
THE PENGHU PEOPLE - 15 <sup>day after</sup> <sup>new moon</sup> <sup>of first</sup> <sup>month</sup> <sup>year</sup>  
DURING LANTERN FESTIVAL  
OFFER IMAGES OF SEA TURTLES AS  
SACRED SYMBOLS TO THEIR TEMPLE  
GODS - AND VENERATE ~~THE~~  
MA-SIU THE SEA GODDESS  
GUARDIAN  
PROTECTOR OF MARINERS  
FOR ~~SAFE~~ PROTECTION FROM THE  
SEA, LONGEVITY, PEACE, PROSPERITY  
'AND GOOD' FORTUNE.

PENG-HU FROM: TOURIST GUIDE BOOK

“PENGHU IS AN OCEANIC COUNTY. MOST OF THE RESIDENTS LIVE OF FISHING. \* FACING THE CHANGEABLE NATURE, IT IS MORE VIOLENTLY REQUIRED FOR THEM TO PRAY TO GODS. SO THEY RESPECT HEAVEN AND EARTH AND ARE AFRAID OF GHOSTS AND GODS. DUE TO THIS FACTOR, THE DENSITY OF TEMPLES IN PENGHU IS THE NUMBER ONE IN TAIWAN, AND THE TEMPLES ARE VERY LUXURIOUS.”

|| - insert -

\* PENGHU'S COASTLINE IS VERY LONG AND MOST OF THE RESIDENTS LIVE ON THE SEA, SO THEY HAVE TO FACE THE CHALLENGE OF EVIL WAVES.”

PENGHU - TAIWAN STRAIT  
- 100 MILES ACROSS -

64 ISLANDS <sup>OF WHICH</sup> 20 POPULATED ISLANDS  
49 SQUARE MILES - CORAL AND BASALT.

96,000 PEOPLE; MAKUNG CITY 60,000

97 VILLAGES - <sup>THAT CAN BE VISITED</sup> 174 TEMPLES-BUILDINGS  
(BUT THOUSANDS OF TEMPLES SMALL AS 1M<sup>2</sup>)

800 years - 400 years  
FISHING - SQUID/FINFISH; PESCADORES ISLANDS.

TOURISM - 2 million A YEAR; AGRICULTURE

PENGHU ISLANDS - DIVIDING POINT  
EAST CHINA SEA/SOUTH CHINA SEA  
HOT SUMMERS/COLD WINTERS. STRONG NEMOONSON.

People and turtles do not give up

= GOOD MORNING =

THE "MESSAGE" MY TALK IS INTENDED TO  
CONVEY TO YOU IS THAT THE CULTURAL  
HERITAGE RELATING TO SEA TURTLES IS  
DIVERSE, DEEP AND SIGNIFICANT

AND THAT MORE INFORMATION OF THIS NATURE NEEDS  
TO BE PRESENTED AT THE SEA TURTLE  
SYMPOSIUM, PUBLISHED IN LITERATURE,  
AND USED TO INTEGRATE (APPROPRIATE) SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION  
PRACTICES WITH LOCAL CULTURE, CUSTOMS  
AND BELIEFS. AS A PRELUDE...  
IN PAST TALKS - REGULARLY VISIT - INSPIRATION

CARD 2 OF 2

WHEN CHINESE EMIGRANTS <sup>FIRST</sup> CAME TO  
PENGHU 800 YEARS AGO, AND 400 YEARS  
LATER TO SETTLE TAIWAN, THEY  
BROUGHT WITH THEM THEIR TRADITIONS  
AND BELIEFS. INCLUDING THEIR  
BELIEF IN MA-TSU WHO WOULD  
GUARD THEM THROUGH THE HARDSHIPS  
OF THEIR NEW LIFE.

CARD 1 OF 3

← PENGHU SETTLEMENT - TURTLE SACRIFICE

(THE HAN (CHINESE) PEOPLE FIRST SETTLED IN PENGHU SOME 800 YEARS AGO, MORE THAN 400 YEARS BEFORE SETTING FOOT ON TAIWAN.)

CHINESE CULTURE TRANSMITTED TO TAIWAN VIA THE PENGHU ISLANDS.

<sup>TODAY</sup> MOST OF THE PENGHU RESIDENTS ARE ~~THE~~ DESCENDANTS OF CHIENCITO, FUJIAN PROVINCE OF CHINA. DESPITE CHANGING TIMES, MANY OF THE TRADITIONS, CULTURAL PRACTICES AND BELIEFS STILL REMAIN.  
(MANDARIN LANGUAGE / TAIWAN LANGUAGE / PENGHU DIALECT)

## CHINESE LANTERN FESTIVAL

15<sup>th</sup> NIGHT OF THE FIRST LUNAR MONTH. CHINESE NEW YEAR = FEBRUARY 16  
(CHINESE YEAR = MARCH 2, 3, 4 MARCH 3 TEXAS = MARCH 4 PENGHU TAIWAN)

WHEN THE MOON IS FULL FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE LUNAR NEW YEAR, CELESTIAL SPIRITS ROAM THE SKIES. TO HELP PEOPLE SPOT THESE SPIRITS, ESPECIALLY WHEN CLOUDS OR FOG HIDE THE MOON, THE ANCIENTS CARRIED TORCHES. WITH TIME THE TORCHES WERE REPLACED WITH LANTERNS.

TODAY - DAZZLING CELEBRATIONS - 2-4 MARCH 99  
THREE DAYS - LIGHT-COLOR-LASERS TAIPEI



AUSPICIOUS -  
AFFORDING A FAVORABLE  
AUSPICE

AUSPICE - DIVINER

DIVINATION - THE ART OR PRACTICE OF  
FORSEEING OR FORTELCING FUTURE EVENTS  
OR DISCOVERING HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE  
USUALLY BY THE INTERPRETATION OF  
OMENS (OR BY THE AID OF  
SUPERNATURAL POWERS)

~~- THE SPIRIT OF GOD~~

TAIWAN -

86 GODS - 9 ARE MAJOR

GOD = GROUPINGS AT TIME  
= OFFICIAL POSITION (AND NOT ALWAYS A NAME)

C. THOMPSON

## EARLY IMMIGRANTS -

WHY DID THEY HAVE TO TAKE THIS BIG RISK TO CROSS? NOT TO EXPAND CHINESE TERRITORY, NOT TO EXPAND THE CHINESE SOVEREIGNTY, THEY WANTED TO ESCAPE THE MISERY OF LIFE IN CHINA.

THE AMBIGUITY PERMEATES EVERYTHING IN TAIWAN TODAY. EVEN RELIGIOUS LIFE. AT THE ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE GODDESS MATSU'S BIRTHDAY, PEOPLE ARGUED WHETHER MATSU SHOULD BE VENERATED AS A LINK TO CHINA, OR, IF THE MANY MIRACLES SHE HAD PERFORMED FOR HER FOLLOWERS MADE HER TRULY TAIWANESE.

-TUG OF WAR - VIDEO

IT IS,  
INDEED, SPECIAL THAT A MOHAVE DESERT BOY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, TRANSPLANTED TO THE MID-PACIFIC HAWAIIAN ISLANDS 35 YEARS AGO, CAN TEAM UP WITH TWO <sup>CHINESE</sup> COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS FROM TAIWAN, TO BRING TURTLE SACRIFICE RITES AND THE SEA GODDESS MA-TSU OF THE PENG-HU ISLANDS, TO A SEA TURTLE SYMPOSIUM IN TEXAS.

CARD 1 OF 3

MA-TSU

T'EN-SHANG SHENG-MU

"HOLY MOTHER IN HEAVEN"

OBSCURE CULT ORIGINS, BUT GENERALLY  
ACCEPTED STORY - BORN 960 (CE) SUNG DYNASTY,  
ISLAND OF MEICHOU - FUKIEN PROVINCE.  
BIRTH ATTENDED BY AUSPICIOUS PORTENTS.  
EXCEPTIONALLY PIOUS. PRESENTED WITH CERTAIN  
CHARMS AND SECRET LORE BY TAOIST MASTER  
AT 13. AT 16 MANIFESTED HER MAGICAL POWER  
BY SAVING ~~MOTHER AND FATHER~~ <sup>AND ELDER BROTHER</sup> WHOSE BOAT  
CAPSIZED. DIED 987 (27) TEMPLE BUILT  
TO ATTRACT HER CONTINUING FAVORS.

L. THOMPSON "CHINESE RELIGION"

CARD 2 OF 3 MA-TSU

AS DECADES THEN CENTURIES PASSED STORIES  
OF MIRACLES WROUGHT BY THE GODDESS  
ACCUMULATED UP AND DOWN THE SE SEABOARD,  
AND SHE BECAME A FAMILIAR GUARDIAN  
SPIRIT, PARTICULARLY AMONG SEAFARERS.  
12th CENTURY IMPERIAL COURT GAVE OFFICIAL  
RECOGNITION AS A DEITY OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.  
- THE CULT CONTINUED TO GROW UNTIL THE  
GODDESS BECAME ONE OF THE MAJOR DEITIES  
OF SE CHINA, AND THE MOST IMPORTANT  
DEITY OF SAILORS, FISHERMEN, AND ALL  
WHO MUST HAZARD THEIR LIVES UPON  
THE SEA.

CARD 3 OF 3

MA-TSU

SHE RECEIVED HIGH TITLES BY  
IMPERIAL DECREE -

1409 "T'EN FEI" IMPERIAL CONCUBINE OF  
HEAVEN WHO

"PROTECTS THE COUNTRY AND SHELTERS THE  
PEOPLE, LOOKS AFTER [THOSE WHO CALL ON  
HER] WITH MYSTERIOUS LING, AND SAVES  
UNIVERSALLY BY HER GREAT KINDNESS."

TITLE / 1683 "T'EN HOU" CONSORT OF HEAVEN

TO THE PEOPLE, SHE IS MORE FAMILIARLY  
KNOWN AS MA-TSU, A FUKIEN  
WORD FOR GRANDMOTHER.

## TAIWAN

PORTUGUESE  
ILHA FORMOSA "BEAUTIFUL ISLAND"

230 MILES LONG

130 MILES WIDE

> 2/3'S OF ISLAND = FOOTHILLS & MOUNTAINS.

100 MILES FROM CHINA, TAIWAN STRAIT  
2 MILLION REFUGEES - 50 YEARS AGO.

21.5 MILLION POPULATION.

## \* CHINESE RELIGION \*

... IS A MANIFESTATION OF THE CHINESE CULTURE.

TO ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND RELIGION IN CHINA AS SEVERAL SYSTEMS OF DOCTRINES IS TO READ WESTERN EXPERIENCE INTO A QUITE DIFFERENT SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

RELIGION IN CHINA IS SO WOVEN INTO THE BROAD FABRIC OF FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE THAT THERE WAS NOT EVEN A WORD FOR IT UNTIL MODERN TIMES (WHEN ONE WAS COINED (FOR IT) TO MATCH THE WESTERN TERM.

## SEVENTH MONTH

15<sup>th</sup> DAY OF SEVENTH MONTH.

DURING ENTIRE MONTH, THE GATES OF PURGATORY STAND OPEN AND THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO HAVE NO ANCESTRAL SACRIFICES - THE BEREAVED SPIRITS - ARE FREE TO WANDER ABOUT IN THE INVISIBLE DIMENSION THAT IMPINGES UPON THE MORTAL WORLD. DURING THIS MONTH, MANY SPECIAL MEASURES ARE TAKEN BY THE LIVING TO PLACATE THESE GHOSTS AND AVERT HARM.

# KAUILA - HAWAIIAN MYSTICAL SEA TURTLE PROTECTIVE SPIRIT

BORN AT IUNALOU BLACK SAND BEACH,  
ISLAND OF HAWAII - OFFSPRING OF TWO KINDS  
OF SUPERNATURAL SEA TURTLES.

AT WILL, SHE WAS ABLE TO ASSUME  
HUMAN FORM AND PLAY WITH CHILDREN,  
AND WATCH OVER THEM ALONG THE SHORELINE  
SO THEY WOULDN'T BE HURT. THE PEOPLE  
LOVED KAUILA FOR THIS AND BECAUSE HER  
UNDERWATER SPRING GAVE THEM DRINKING WATER.

"FROM: 'ECOLOGY AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF  
SEA TURTLES' - 14TH PROCEEDINGS - ANNUAL SEA TURTLE  
SYMPOSIUM"

THE PENGHU FOLK FAVORITE IS TO  
MAKE RED TURTLE CAKE FOR  
INCREASING GOOD LUCK AND LONGER  
LIFE.

THERE ARE MANY KINDS OF TURTLES, SUCH  
AS FLOUR TURTLES, THIN NOODLE TURTLE,  
PEANUT CANDY TURTLE, CAKE TURTLE,  
RICE PACKAGE TURTLE, 'COIN TURTLE',  
AND GOLD TURTLE.

Amy

I THINK ONLY PEOPLE IN PENGHU  
WILL BELIEVE BOTH MA-TSU AND  
SEA TURTLES BECAUSE TURTLES HAVE  
APPEARED IN PENGHU SINCE LONG AGO.  
IN SOME CHINESE LEGENDS, PEOPLE  
BELIEVE TURTLE CAN PROTECT PEOPLE,  
ESPECIALLY IN THE OCEAN. SOME STORIES  
SAID TURTLE CAN TAKE PEOPLE ON  
THEIR BACK AND SWIM THEM TO A  
SAFE PLACE. SAME WITH MA-TSU.  
THEY BOTH CAN SAVE PEOPLE IN  
THE OCEAN AND PROTECT THEIR LIFE.

Amy

MY PRESENTATION WILL INCLUDE  
TEMPLE VIEWS <sup>SCENES</sup> OF A  
- 6,000 kg sea turtles of Rice Floue  
- A 7 1/2 lb pure gold sea turtle - MECHANIZED  
- 180kg RICE CAKE TURTLE - AND -  
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE TAIWAN SEAGODDESS  
MA-TSU AND HER CLOSE  
ASSOCIATION WITH SEA TURTLES  
IN THE PENGHU ISLANDS.

AS SEEN AND UNDERSTOOD THROUGH  
~~THE~~ EYES AND MIND AS A VISITOR  
FROM THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS.