An abstract painting with a vibrant blue and black color palette. In the lower-left foreground, a hand is depicted holding a small globe. Above the hand, a face is partially visible, looking towards the viewer. The background is filled with various abstract shapes, including a large black cloud-like form and a decorative border with small white and blue elements. The overall style is expressive and artistic.

# **Linking Indigenous Wisdom and Sustainable Land Use Practices : case studies on indigenous eco-tourism in eastern Taiwan.**

# Taiwan in a glance

- Location: Pacific Ocean, 120 km (74.6 mi) off the southeast coast of mainland China
- Area: 36,008 km<sup>2</sup> (13,902.8 sq mi)
- Highest elevation: 3,952 m (12,966 ft)
- Weather: tropical and subtropical
- Natural hazards: typhoons and earthquakes



# Demographics

- Total Population: 23,061,689
- Population Density: 668 /km<sup>2</sup> (1,730 /sq mi)
- Ethnic groups:
  - 98% Han Chinese (70 % Hoklo, 4% Hakka, 4% Waishenren)
  - 2% Taiwanese aborigines

# Taiwanese Aborigines

- Their ancestors may have had the island largely to themselves until mainland Chinese began settling in large numbers within the last thousand years, particularly within the last 400 years. (Diamond, 1999)
- Taiwanese aborigines are Austronesian peoples, with linguistic and genetic ties to other Austronesian ethnic groups, such as peoples of the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Madagascar, Polynesia, and Oceania (wikipedia, 2011).



# Recognized Tribe




Until of May 2008, 14 tribes have been officially recognized: Amis, Atayal, Bunun, Paiwan, Puyuma, Rukai, Sasiyat, Tao, Thao, Tsou, Truku, Sediq, Kavalan, and Sakizaya. (The latter two being Plains aborigines)

# Challenges met by Taiwanese Aborigines

- Continued contact and conflict with a series of colonizing peoples: Dutch, Japan, Kuomintang Government.
- Central government's policy focusing on language shift and cultural assimilation
- Language deaths
- Loss of original cultural identity
- Economic and social barriers which include high unemployment rate and substandard education
- Many people began to pursue higher degrees and political self-determination and economic development since early 1980s.
- Recent revival of ethnic pride.

# Aborigines and Ecological issues

- Much of the island's natural environment is under stress from a high population density, over-industrialization, and natural disasters such as typhoon and earthquakes.
- The indigenous tribes of Taiwan are closely linked to conservation issues on the island, as they share a special connection with the environment, and as their communities are often directly impacted by environmental degradation.



How have some aborigines attempt  
to reestablish environmental  
stewardship and economic/social  
self-reliance?



# Case study 1: Bulaobulao

- An eco-tourism enterprise, an intentional community comprised of 7 families
- Location: Yilan County
- Tribe: Ataya tribe
- Area: approximately 24 acres



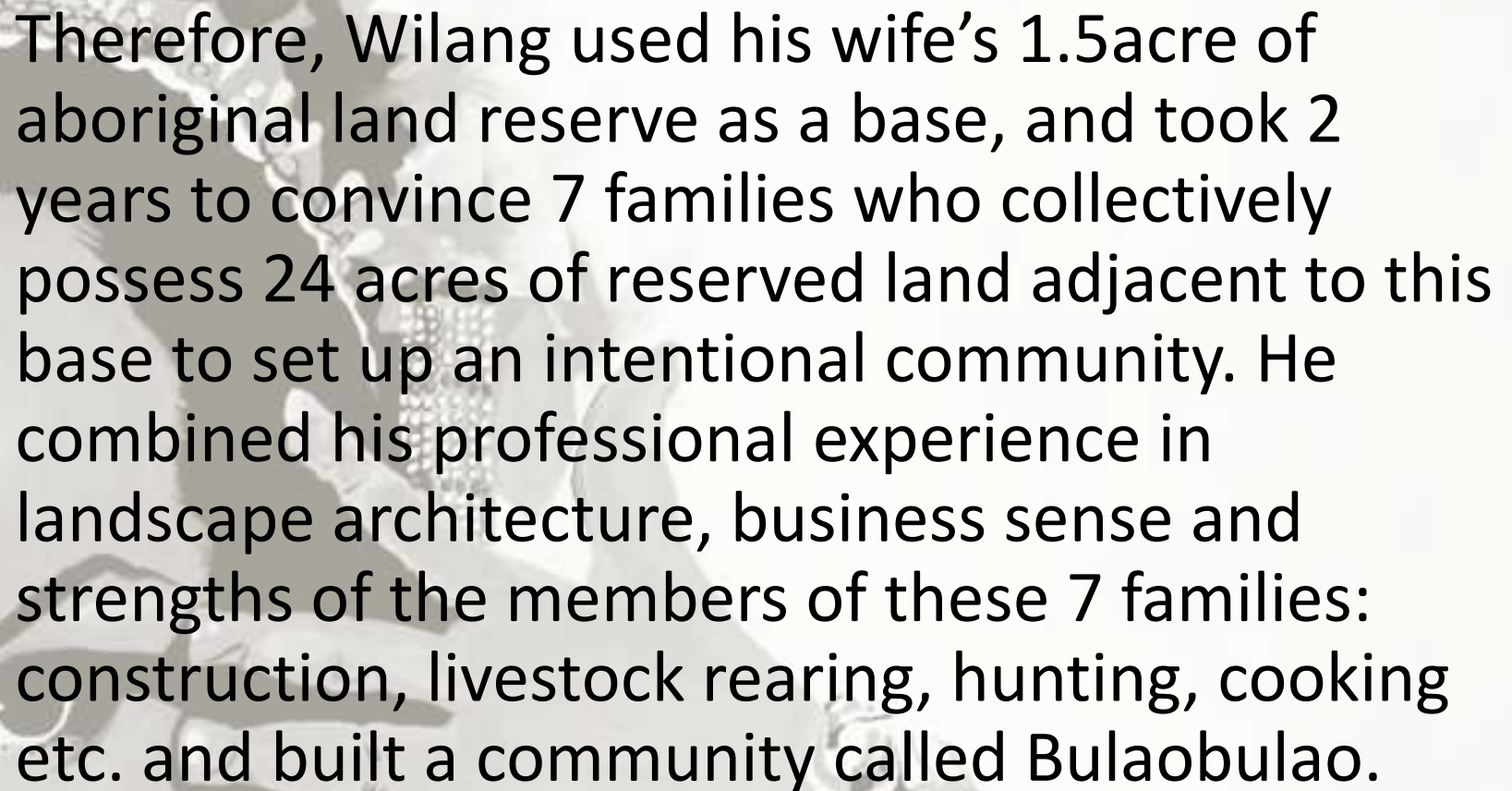
Established 7 years ago and have been offering one-day package tour of interpretive walks through the village and authentic meals made with local ingredients.

# How it all got started....



Wilang, the founder of Bulaobulao, is of Han Chinese ethnicity; his wife is from an Ataya village nestled in the mountains of Yilan county. Whenever he went back to visit his wife's home village, he noticed the following problems:

- Polarized demographics—children and old people
- Unhealthy dependency on the welfare system
- Unsustainable land use practices



Therefore, Wilang used his wife's 1.5acre of aboriginal land reserve as a base, and took 2 years to convince 7 families who collectively possess 24 acres of reserved land adjacent to this base to set up an intentional community. He combined his professional experience in landscape architecture, business sense and strengths of the members of these 7 families: construction, livestock rearing, hunting, cooking etc. and built a community called Bulaobulao.



Bulaobulao- a place you could wander around with ease while listening to raindrops trickle







A place that's constantly evolving, and tries to bring together the old and the new in order to create a lifestyle that's specific to its natural surroundings.





Ataya women are known for their superb weaving skills. This grandma had stopped weaving for a long time before she was invited back to teach weaving at Bulaobulao







An elaborate and slow feast was served and guests are guaranteed to leave Bulaobulao tipsy from all the home brewed millet wine







*Interpretive walk was given by Ataya boys with a uniquely aboriginal sense of humor. Guests could also experience archery and rice cake pounding. Fun was had by all!*



# What makes Bulaobulao special?

- It's constantly evolving architecturally, scenically, culturally, and politically
- It blends the old and the new
- Its establishment strives to address economic, cultural and environmental issues all at the same time

# What are “Bulaobulao effects”?

- Increased livelihood
- Introduction of eco-friendly values
- Revival of agricultural activities
- Revival of traditional festivals and public participation



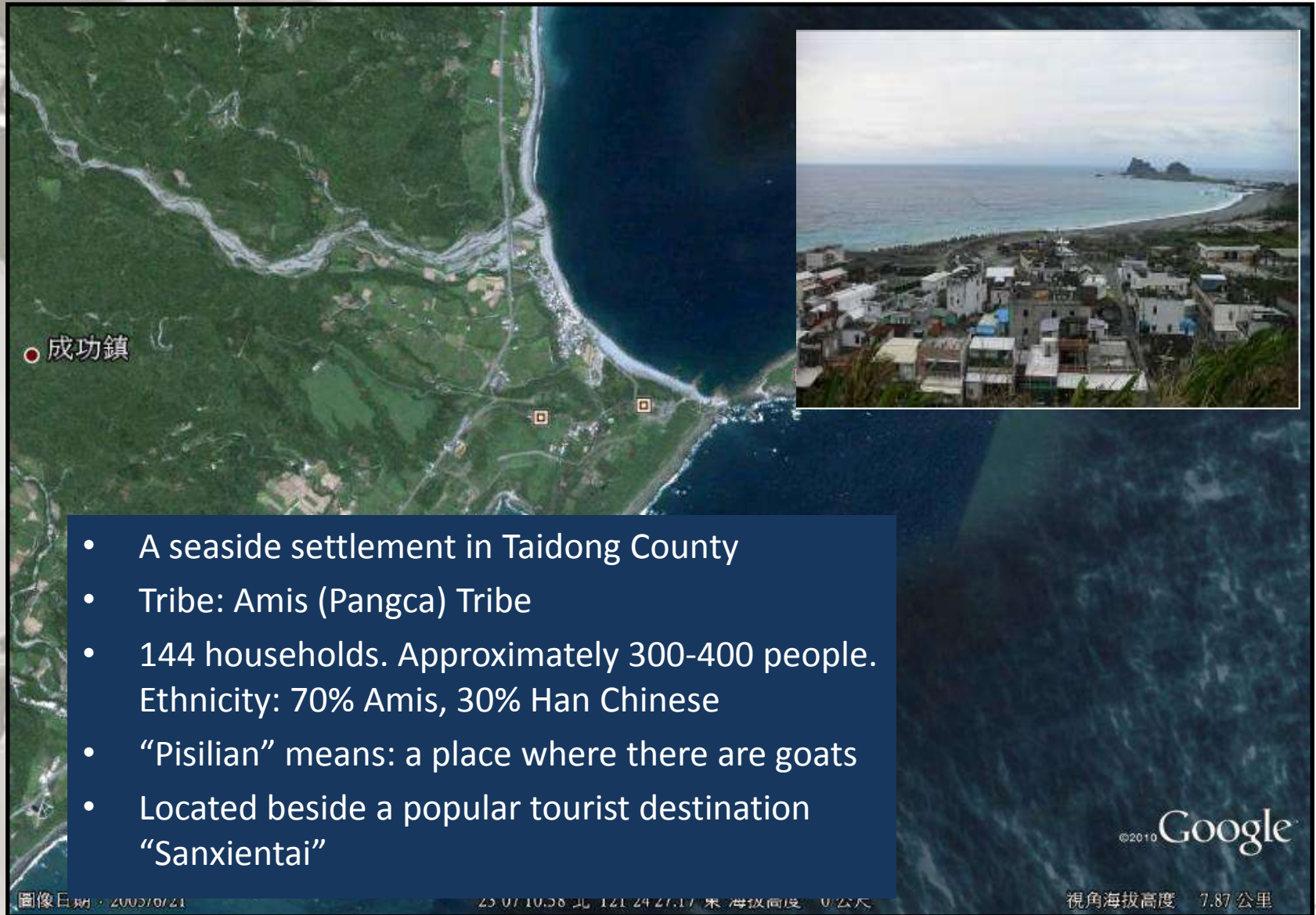


Reintroduction of farming and lifestyles  
connected to the land

→ a reverence for land/nature/ancestral spirits

→ a revival of traditional festivals and other  
cultural practices

# Case study 2: Pisilian



- A seaside settlement in Taidong County
- Tribe: Amis (Pangca) Tribe
- 144 households. Approximately 300-400 people. Ethnicity: 70% Amis, 30% Han Chinese
- “Pisilian” means: a place where there are goats
- Located beside a popular tourist destination “Sanxientai”









Means of Livelihood: People engage in local fishing related activities and wage labour in the agriculture or construction trade. Many have left the village to work in far-sea fishery, also more have left for the cities to work.







- Due to a lack of local job opportunities, village people often left for the cities in search of work, leaving their children to be cared by the elderly. This has created problems of education.
- Derelict buildings can be seen everywhere in the community.

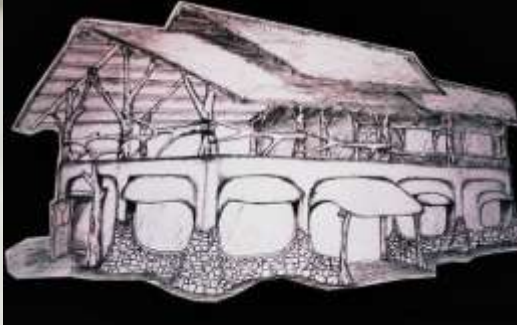




# The birth of Pawpaw drum!



# The Rebirth of an old building







*Visitors are drawn to beautiful places, but more often they are drawn to interesting and authentic stories*



Who can resist the beats, the songs , and the charm of Pawpaw drum kids?





# Different models

- Intentional community v.s existing community
- Youths are the changing force of Pisilian
- The three pillars of development



# Bibiliography

- Diamond, Jared (1999). *Guns, Germs, and Steels*. New York, NY. W. W. Northon& Company, Inc.. 339
- Wikipedia, (2011). *Taiwanese aborigines*. Retrieved October9, 2011 from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwanese\\_aborigines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwanese_aborigines)