

Indigenous Taiwan – History, Women’s Issues, Cultural Changes

“Indigenous Perspectives” - Monthly Broadcast on HealthyLife.Net

40–June 27, 2024

Audio podcast: <http://www.ecologia.org/news/40.IndigenousTaiwan.mp3> (57 min.)



Young woman playing music in the Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village¹

Randy Kritkauský: Greetings, or may I say Bozho in Potawatomi, to those joining us for today's Indigenous Perspectives show. I'm Randy Kritkauský, an enrolled Potawatomi tribal member and the co-host of Indigenous Perspectives.

Carolyn Schmidt: And I'm Carolyn Schmidt, the other co-host.

Randy: We are physically on the unceded land of our other-than-human kin, the winged ones, the rooted ones, the four legged ones, the mountains and the rivers who have been present on Turtle Island and have been partners and caretakers for countless millennia. They have been here long before the two-legged arrived - before the Indigenous peoples who came over the Beringian Land bridge from Asia more than 15,000 years ago, and long, long before the European two-legged arrived more recently.

¹ Image credit Bernard Gagnon, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwanese_indigenous_peoples Wikimedia Commons CC BY-CA-3.0

Carolyn: We also acknowledge that the place where we are right now is part of the traditional unceded lands of the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) peoples, part of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. There is also a strong historic presence of Anishinaabe peoples in what is now known as the Greater Montréal area, where we are at this moment. Tio'tia:ke – its Mohawk name; Mooniyang – its Anishinaabe name - or Montréal, has also long been, and continues to be, a gathering place for many First Peoples from all directions.

We have a heightened awareness of Montréal/Mooniyang as a gathering place today, because our guest for today's show, who is also in Montréal right now, is Hong Chung-Chih, also known as Ayah Demaladas. She is an Indigenous scholar from the Kasavakan community of the Pinuyumayang tribe in Taiwan. Ayah is a PhD candidate at the School of Religious Studies at McGill University. She specifically focuses on Gender and Women's Studies. Ayah's research interests revolve around exploring the relationships between the life and spirituality of Indigenous women, Indigenous traditional practices, and Christianity.

Growing up in a colonial context where Indigenous peoples have been forced to assimilate, Ayah's commitment is to reconstruct the distorted Indigenous cosmology and restore the sacred nature of Indigenous women. To achieve this, she dedicates herself to drawing upon the lived experiences of Indigenous Taiwanese, revisiting current Indigenous discourses, and exploring the methodologies of Indigenous studies. So, welcome, Ayah. We are thrilled to have you here on the show today.

Ayah Demaladas: Thank you.

Carolyn: So if you could start us off with a quick background sketch about Indigenous Taiwanese peoples, whom many of our listeners will not be knowing that much about?

Ayah: Inavayan. Hello, everyone. My name is Ayah Demaladas, I am also known with my Chinese name Hong Chung-Chih, and later I'll tell you about why I prefer to be named with these two names simultaneously. And yes, in Taiwan we do have Indigenous peoples. We are not so well known by the international world because the Chinese influence in Taiwan has been [many] decades and that really impacts our life.

So Indigenous peoples in Taiwan are a part of *[the group of people]* we call Austronesians, who inhabited Asia Pacific Islands, also Indonesia. So nowadays in Taiwan we have 16 tribes recognized by the government. We used to have more before those colonial settlers came, until after those kind of assimilation policies. *[Those]* who still remain part of our culture, part of our oral history and who still have someone who can speak that language are now recognized by the government. So there are totally 16 tribes or groups.

So my tribe, my group is named Pinuyumayang; this is a very small tribe located in the eastern part of Taiwan. To talk about how big is the group of those Indigenous peoples in Taiwan: we only account for around 2% of the total population of Taiwan. So it will be around 550,000 total of us in these 16 tribes. In my tribe, we have only around 10,000 people, but we are not the smallest – the smallest tribe has only 200 something, only a few hundred.

So that's the basic background about the Indigenous peoples in Taiwan. We were there, we have been in the island, according to those archeologists' research, we have been inhabiting the island since at least 6,500 years ago. So you may be very curious, what happened during those past few thousand years?

Because we Indigenous peoples are like many other Indigenous peoples in the world, we don't have texts, we don't have *[written]* characters. Our histories were only passed on by oral history. It's really hard to tell people how long we have been there and what had happened before. But anyway, according to the archeologists' research, we have been inhabiting the island for at least 6,500 years now. I mean, just recently there are some new findings that claim that Indigenous peoples might live there like 10,000 years ago. So they're still trying to find out more evidence to figure it out, how long that we Indigenous people have been living in the island.

Currently Indigenous people in Taiwan, we don't have an independent Indigenous council; we are not like the First Nations Council here in Canada. But we do have a state government-labeled Indigenous People's Council. But this council is under the whole government institution. So it seems like that we have been having our own people, Indigenous people, working in the Indigenous People's Council in the government level. In many ways because it is included - it is a part of the government institution - we have quite a lot of limitations. So that is why many of us are struggling with getting back our identities by recognizing our culture, revitalizing our languages and so on.

One thing I want to mention here before we go to the next part, many of our Indigenous people, like many other Indigenous peoples in the world, we don't really speak our language, our mother tongue. My English is better than my mother tongue. Yes, I'm sorry to say that. But because of a very strict One-Language policy that *[was]* practiced since 1950 to the late 1990s by that government² at that time, not the current government³, *[but]* the Nationalist government that came to Taiwan. So that *[One-Language Policy]* really disturbed *[our efforts]* to pass on our culture.

We are now struggling how to revitalize our culture. Many people in the world thought that Indigenous peoples in Taiwan may have more resources in terms of economy. I cannot deny that. But we have more different struggles, that later on I can share, that really prevent us from recognition as Indigenous peoples.

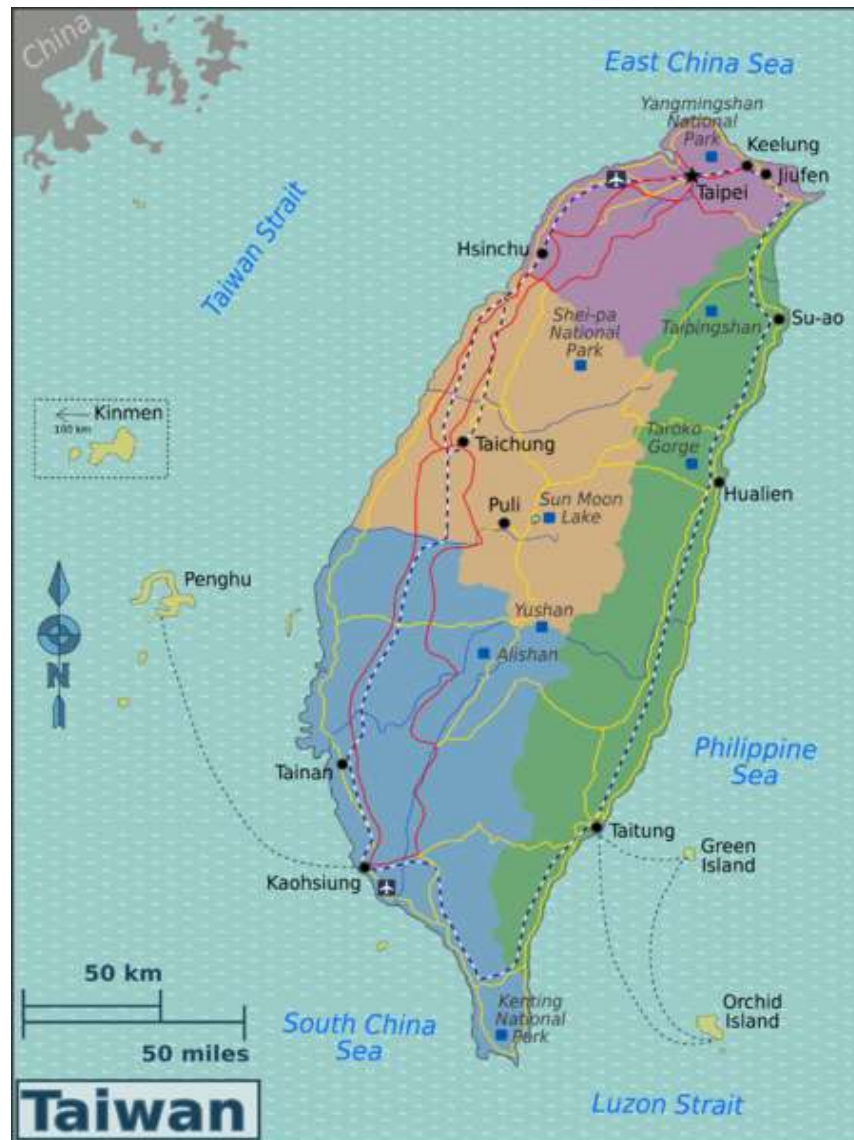
Carolyn: This has been a wonderful very clear overview and I have one question. In the United States and in Canada, there is for many Indigenous people, First Nations, there is a sense - the knowledge - that they were pushed off their original lands. And some of them still are on their original lands; others are working to get back more control of original lands. How does this apply to your situation in Taiwan?

Ayah: For sure it happened in Taiwan. If people happen to know that Taiwan is an island which is really small, it's around the size of Vancouver Island in Canada, and with a very big population, we have 23.5 million people. Of course I already said that we Indigenous people count only 2%. So you can imagine that the other 95% are Mandarin Chinese, Chinese people from mainland China. And the Chinese people immigrated to Taiwan; a large number of Chinese people immigrated to Taiwan around 400 years ago. So when they came, they chased away - they kicked out - those indigenous people on what we call Plains areas. We have more Plains areas on the western part of the island and my tribe is on the eastern part.

² The Kuomintang (KMT), also called the Nationalists, were led by Chiang Kai-shek. They engaged in a decades-long struggle against the Chinese Communist Party for control of China. In 1949, the Communists under Mao Zedong's leadership won. The KMT lost and its leadership then fled to Taiwan with their army and supporters, and established the KMT as the ruling party in Taiwan.

The One-Language policy was a policy of the KMT in its establishment of rule over Taiwan. The KMT was a one-party dictatorship for about fifty years, but during the global democratization wave of the 1990s (collapse of the Soviet Union, end to apartheid in South Africa, etc.) Taiwan transformed its political structure to become a democracy.

³ Taiwan is now a functioning democracy, and has had changes of political parties in national elections. Currently, the Democratic Progressive Party has the majority, the KMT is the opposition party, and there is a significant third party, the Taiwan People's Party.



Map of Taiwan, showing geographic regions⁴

- green = Eastern mountainous area, where Ayah's people are located
- purple = northern area including the capital city Taipei; most heavily industrialized
- orange = central plains area
- blue = southern area – includes tropics and palm trees
- yellow = outlying islands

Notice also the Circle Island Railway (white dots), which Ayah mentions that the Japanese built.

And then the Japanese - later on, when [the] Qing dynasty of the China lost the war with the Japanese empire in 1895, in order to cease the fire the Qing dynasty handed over Taiwan, this small island, to Japan. So when Japan came, again, those [Japanese]

⁴ https://wikitravel.org/upload/shared//4/4e/Taiwan_Regions_Map.png WikiTravel, Creative Commons license

people, they like the Plains area because it's much easier to get a living. So again, they chased away our Indigenous people more deeply to the mountains, or they just took the better land of our Plains area's Indigenous peoples and reeducated them to become Japanese. So in this kind of policy, and also because of the Chinese settlers came before 400 or 500 years ago, Indigenous peoples' lands were taken.

We don't have that kind of theory saying that the land has no people living on that, so no one possesses that.⁵ But the Chinese people, how they did was they ride horses and then they took a very long string. So as long as the horse [*can travel*], the string can reach, so as big was the land that they would occupy. So that's on the Plains area. So I mean Indigenous people from the Plains area, most of them have been assimilated into the Chinese Han culture. Only a very few tribes were able to find some evidence that they used to live there - to prove that they used to exist - only less than five tribes. But they can't - they cannot get back their land anymore because there are no documents to prove that this land used to be their land. So similar situations for the eastern part of Indigenous people, when the Chinese settlers came, they also did the same way.

The other situation will be like this: when the [*Japanese*] colonial government came, they claimed the mountain areas. You remember that I said the Chinese settlers chased away the Indigenous people to other areas. So if people happen to know that there are a lot of mountains in central part of this island, Taiwan, most of our indigenous people were chased away, kicked out into the mountains. So when Japanese government came, they wanted to control the island. So they claim those Indigenous people's traditional territories as national land, so the land of the king.

So in this sense, Indigenous people couldn't possess the land ourselves and we don't actually have the individual rights to possess land. For [*our*] Indigenous people, like other Indigenous people in the world, the land belongs to the community. So that made a lot of conflict between the Japanese colonist government and the Indigenous people.

And then later on the [*next*] colonist government, the Kuomintang - KMT, the Nationalists from China - they followed what the Japanese government's land policy

⁵ Ayah is referring to the "terra nullius" (empty land) justification that the British used in Australia to justify their occupying land and forcibly taking it from the Aborigines, the Australian Indigenous people. The idea was that the Indigenous people didn't have any rights to the land because their population was too sparsely distributed and they didn't have European-type agricultural settlements, boundaries or private property - the visible signs of "civilization".

was. So they also claimed that most of the Indigenous territories are a part of the national land; we call it the government land, something like that. Until now, most of our Indigenous people cannot, or let me put in this way, most of the Indigenous community, we cannot possess our Indigenous traditional territories land. And this is a big issue.

Randy: So in this crunch between all of these different foreign empires and colonists, what happened to your culture? It's obvious that you became dispossessed of your land, but what happened to your cultures?

Ayah: That's another good question. Let me put in this way. In the past 400 years, that's the most serious period of time for the Taiwanese Indigenous encountering colonialism. But the more serious - not one, but two - were Japanese and KMT, Kuomintang from China. But in some ways when Japanese empire came, they at the very beginning, they did not really want to make Taiwanese - including Indigenous people - they did not want us to be a part of the Japanese citizens. So they were not really strict, but they were really, in my grandmom's words, Japanese were "really fine." Because Japanese came to develop this whole island. They set up schools, medications, and also railways. The railway going around the island was built up at the very beginning by Qing Dynasty, but they only did a little bit. When Japanese government came, the Japanese government wanted to make a long island circle, kind of like we call Circle Island Railway.

But of course Japanese exploited Taiwan a lot, they took away our food, very good food, and also our elite, very smart people. But they didn't - I mean the Japanese government did not strictly forbid us to speak our language. So there are some policies that we - not only Indigenous, all Taiwanese people had to learn Japanese because that's the official language and the language taught in the school - but that's all. The *[traditional]* language was able to be preserved because the Japanese government did not really intervene in our family life. But because - I studied in the religious studies - the Indigenous religious practices were not so seriously stopped by the Japanese government as well. We still practiced partially our traditional ceremonies on *[during]* the Japanese empire's colonialization.

But when the KMT came - if people happen to know the history, KMT wanted to fight back to the Communist party in China to get back the land in China. So when KMT came, they wanted us to all become supporters of this "civilized world" . So

there was *[the]* One-Language policy⁶ and also some community relocation that happened. So I may say that nowadays you can see most of the Indigenous people don't speak our language very well and we don't really know our oral history. So yes, it's a lot of things happened and we are coming *[now]* to rebuild our own identity. So that's quite hard, yes.

Carolyn: Thanks and you've brought us up to close to the present day, since the Kuomintang took over Taiwan in 1949. And we'll pick it up when we come back from break and we'll go from there. Thank you.

Segment Two

Carolyn: Welcome back to Indigenous perspectives. We're talking with our guest today, Ayah Demaladas, about her experiences as an indigenous Taiwanese woman. So Ayah, can you pick up the struggle for Indigenous cultural dignity, moving into the present and the growth of some other influences in addition to the Chinese and Japanese?

Ayah: I just briefly talked about the influence from the Japanese and Chinese colonialist governments, and I want to mention another very strong influence, which is I consider as a colonial influence from the West, which is Christianity, the Christian Church. So here when I talk about Christianity in Taiwan, in the Indigenous peoples' communities in Taiwan, there are two largest Christian groups. One is the Catholic and the other one is the Presbyterian Church.⁷ So we do have some other Christian churches in our Indigenous community, but they are not considered the majority or the primary denomination. So just we can bear in mind.

There was - not a story, there was a case- in 2018 - let me explain this with two stories.

In 2018 in one of the annual harvest festivals in the Amis tribe, Pangcah tribe - one of the Indigenous tribes in Taiwan - they call this harvest festival Ilisin. So during the preparation of the 2018 Ilisin, one of the committee members, a young man, he

⁶ The one language was Mandarin Chinese; other languages were banned from schools, workplaces and media under the KMT's harshest rule, martial law 1949- 1987. There is an excellent nuanced description of the goals of the one-language policy its impact on different groups, and their opposition to it, in Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language_policy_in_Taiwan_during_martial_law

⁷For a thoughtful examination of the complex relationship between the Indigenous peoples of Tawan and their adoption of Christianity, see "Are We Really Free in God's Hands?" by Bali Nangavulan, Indigenous Sight website, 2020-06-21 <https://insight.ipcf.org.tw/en-US/article/316>

raised the issue, shall we revive the commemoration services for our ancestors, which has been interrupted for 40 years?



Amis harvest festival (Ilisin) in Dulan, Taitung County⁸

And his proposal attracted a lot of people and really many people disputed it. They discuss and they even fight. So in that particular community, oh, I forgot to tell you where the story is, it happened in Fata'ang community, Fata tribe. So the Fata'ang Presbyterian church leader, they stood up and then they show an official letter which was agreement signed by the Fata'ang community leaders and the Fata'ang Presbyterian church's leaders in 1976, - I forgot the year, I'm sorry, but around 40 years ago or 50 years ago - the agreement says that "we should respect all kinds of religious backgrounds that our community people have and we should stop the ancestral commemoration services."

So this was a very huge thing to the Fata'ang young people. As I already told you that during the Japanese and Kuomintang domination, they didn't want us to pass on our culture. So it's one of the ways for the young people of Fata'ang to get back their cultural identity and also the dignity of being a Pangcah. So they did not want to fight with the church, but they told the church that, "you know what, because our ancestors were the center of the community and without our ancestors we couldn't be us now. So we should do this as we had done before."

But the church kept saying that "you know we are now all Christians, so we should stop those kinds of ritual religious practices that is Pagan."

⁸ <https://taiwaneverything.cc/2020/10/12/indigenous-tribes/#Amis>



A view of Fata'an from behind the village, looking toward the central mountains. The Indigenous villagers believe their ancestors descended from these mountains to settle on the plains where they have lived for generations⁹

So this induced a lot of discussions among not only the Pangcah tribe, but other Indigenous Christian churches and Indigenous local communities. Many Indigenous Christians thought, that “that's the agreement that was signed, so we should follow.” But for the younger generation, they found themselves hard to accept this idea, because to memorize their ancestors is one of the ways they can reconnect to the Pangcah heritage. So this is one thing that Indigenous Christians thought: that “this is an event that we should overcome [*move away from*]. We should tell them [*the young people wanting to revive the ancestor ceremonies*] that if we went back to do this ritual, we are living away from God.” Things like that.

⁹ Image by Nathaniel Brown, Taiwan, 2022. <https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/taiwan-finding-solace-and-identity-traditional-healing>

So this event also induced the Pangcah Presbytery, the regional office, to hold some, if I'm not wrong, they call conversations. They call to those Indigenous Christians Pangcah Christians, "come and talk" and then they even published a manual, a handbook, to teach the Indigenous Christians how to persuade others [*to oppose the ancestor ceremonies*].

So this is the story in my church - oh, I forgot to say I'm also a Presbyterian, but I don't support this because I thought this is another form of colonialism. If we cannot recognize ourselves and our ancestors, how can we reconnect it to the very beginning when we were created? So I don't really fully support this concept.

And in this Ilisin another story happened. A woman who came together with me two years ago, we went to Ilisin in another community. So the opening day, two of us were about to present the women's dance together. So she ran a bit late, like five minutes before the opening dance, and I saw her wearing her costume wrongly. I was so surprised, because I don't belong to that tribe, but I know how to dress as a Pangcah woman because my husband is a Pangcah. But this woman was dressed in the wrong way. So I reminded her, I said, "Sister, you put something wrongly." And then she was crying. She said, "Oh my gosh, I didn't notice, because my mom did not want me to come. My mom prayed for me to give me cleanness, to clean me before I come to join, because she thought I'm coming to an evil gathering." So by the way, her families are generations of Indigenous Presbyterian Christians.

Carolyn: That's a really powerful story, Ayah, we'll pick this up right up again after the break. Everybody stay tuned.

Segment Three

Carolyn: Welcome back to Indigenous Perspectives. And Ayah is going to pick it back up with her stories of the stresses within the Indigenous Taiwanese communities.

Ayah: I just shared about the ladies' stories in another community, Kavalan's, Ilisin, But I forgot to tell you that this is not my tribe's story. I'm married to another tribal people. So my husband is from this tribe named Pangcah. And Pangcah tribe is the largest tribe in Taiwan. Their population is 220,000. It's like 22 times of my tribe. It's a very big tribe.

Anyway, so I went back two years ago, I participated in Ilisin in my husband's community in Kavalan, that's the name of the community. And this lady was one of

my partners. We worked together as a women's group who support to hold this four days, three nights Ilisin activity. It's a community activity. And Kavalan is the largest community of Pangcah in Taiwan. So every year there are more than a thousand Kavalan people coming back to this annual harvest festival, Ilisin. So that day - then we come back to the story that day, my friend, let's just call her S.

So S. was crying and telling me that her mother was praying for her to cleanse her before she came. Then I noticed that she was kind of seeking for help. So I brought her to the changing room and then we dressed her traditional costume and she began to tell me the story. (By the way, those stories, I already get their consensus. They're willing to share the stories.)

So S. told me that because in her family, there are already three generations of Christians around the Presbyterian church. Her mother never joined any annual Ilisin, and the church has been practicing a kind of non-encouraging policy to their church members. So they don't say no, the church leaders, they didn't say no to Ilisin, but they never encourage it. And if you told the church leaders, I want to join the annual Ilisin this year, the church leader will ask you why? Why?

So she told me about that story, that she decided to go and attend the Ilisin since a few years ago. But her family was really kind of rejecting seriously to her decision and she was really sad about that because she thought that a part of her Indigenous identity should be from this traditional community gathering. So that was the story that she was crying. She redressed herself. But I thought that she was really brave. Even her family, all of her family - she has an elder brother who is a pastor in Presbyterian church - so all of her family fight with her, but she in the end participated this whole four days, three nights event and she was one of the hardest workers. I mean together, women were all the workers who prepare and who hold that events together. And then I interviewed her later on, then I found that it was longer; the story goes back to longer when her grandparents converted to Christianity.

The main focus of my PhD research is how Christianity impacted the life of Indigenous women in Taiwan. So Pangcah tribe is a matriarchal tribe in tradition. Which does not mean women dominated the tribe, no, but the women of Pangcah were really highly respected by their family and the community. So usually in this tribe, women manage the family economy and also - how you call that - the kinship. Yes, the family kinship really follows the mother's side. So it's a matrilineal society.

But I was really surprised to hear from S. when she talked to me that her father was one of the family members who strongly rejected her proposal to attend any [of] we call traditional ceremonies in the community. By the way, S. is the only family member among her family who now currently lives in the community. It's only S. who lives in the community; others of her family members now live in the urban area.

Then I interviewed her, I asked her about what's the transformation, what are the changes from your grandmom's time to you? And because she's also a very dedicated Christian, so when I tried to ask her, "what do you think are the impacts of church to your life?" She told me that, "oh, you know what, yes, we did have very good traditional practices when we were under the matriarchal family system before, but not now, because now we're now all Christian." So we are in her terms kind of like, "We are educated, we are encouraged to live in a new way. We are newborn person."

So you may be very curious to what happened to her? Why did she talk to me in this way? Because I found out in her family when her grandparents converted to Christianity, I found that her grandfather began to practice the authority in the family, which has not been a traditional practice before in this tribe. So I asked her about this and then she said, "We are now all Christians, so we are newborn person. We live in the new ways."

Carolyn: So is it fair to summarize the new ways as being more male dominated within the family?

Ayah: Yes, for me I believe so. But, I can say that most of the interviews that I had worked together two years ago, all of them are Christian and most of them, they avoid to use the word that "we now follow the men-dominated principles." They avoid to use any words to indicate that. But they in some ways say "a new way of living" which I can say like "men lead the family, like man is the head of family, like Jesus is the head of the church." Something like that. They all agree.

Carolyn: So thanks, we need to take another break and everybody stay tuned.

Segment Four

Carolyn: Welcome back to Indigenous Perspectives. And Aya is going to pick up her story of S. and then move along to talk about language revitalization currently going on. So over to you, Ayah.

Ayah: Yes, thank you. So the end of the S. story is that I tried so hard to ask her if there are some negative impacts from the Christian Church to her family. She was telling me that “You know what, we're now reborn person. We have new life.” So she told me that she has been very happy and grateful to be Christian. So this really happened to my research. When I interview other Indigenous Christians, including Catholics, most of them told me that they are so grateful the church came to help them. And I tried so hard to ask them if there are some impacts from the church that really do something negatively to their families. But they tried very hard to avoid that the church in fact influenced the family structures of the Pangcah tribe and most of them now follow what the Bible teaches. The man is the head of the family. Jesus is the head of the church, something like that.

So this also connected in some parts to the revitalization movement or project in Taiwan, because most of the attendees who attend church services in Indigenous churches are women. And since we begin to have our so-called revitalization movement in *[the]* early 2000s, Indigenous people in Taiwan are guided by the Indigenous People's Council of the state. I know it's very different from what's happened here in Canada. So my First Nations friend in Canada says that he *[has]* envy about our situation because our revitalization movement is guided and also financially funded by the government. But he didn't notice that we are also limited by the government.

So the church found that this is an opportunity to cooperate with the state government because of the funding. And then we can in some ways expand our mother tongue language projects. For your information, nowadays in Taiwan, the Indigenous churches are using our Indigenous languages in our Sunday services, all different tribes speaking in different languages, in their own languages, in their Sunday services.

However, we found a very big gap because the younger generation, as I told you, I don't speak mother tongue, so how can I understand the service? So many churches began to have this kind of, we call bilingual, the pastor speaks in the mother tongue and someone or the pastor translates to Mandarin Chinese. So our church has been doing this language revitalization project by our own. And now just last year or the year before, the government's Indigenous Peoples Council - Council of Indigenous People, C.I.P. - they found this opportunity as well because they got a lot of funds and they need to do this kind of community language revitalization projects. So they came and then cooperated with our Indigenous church leaders. So they designed

this kind of project. And as I just said, that many of the attendees in the church services are women. So most of these projects are run by the pastors of the churches and their women members.

Or you may ask me, so what's the difference if the women join this kind of program? I will say that in this very patriarchal church institution, it's enough evidence to prove that women, the female members of the church, are mostly the human powers only. Because the projects [are] usually designed by the leaders of the church, and we have less female leaders in our local churches. But all people who are executives in these projects are female church members. So there are many different kind of evidence to show that this very patriarchal church institution is influencing the Indigenous women's life and so on.

So you may ask me, "So why are you here? You are [an] Indigenous woman here in Canada and doing research on Indigenous Taiwanese, not the First Nations. Why are you here?" This is something very sad to say - I myself am also a Presbyterian and it would be very hard for me to do this kind of research in the island in Taiwan because in many ways that we Indigenous people are so much in love with Western missionaries when they came to Taiwan. I cannot deny those missionaries did a lot of good jobs. They supported us, they set up education institutions and medication systems and so on and so on. The first - for your information the first school in Taiwan was set up by the Dutch Protestant church missionaries, from Dutch Protestant church.

So it is really hard for me to talk about and to criticize how the patriarchal culture of the church has been impacting the Indigenous women's life in the island in Taiwan. If I studied there, I might have less supporters. And the other thing is that - it's really also sad to say - that because if I got a degree abroad, I would have the right to speak. Because I'm a lay person, a woman, Indigenous, and if I don't have the PhD degree, how can I talk to my church and the society? But anyway, I thank the First Nations experience here and the government of Canada really in many ways, and the School of Religious studies at McGill really supports me in many ways. And thank God I'm here.

Carolyn: Wow, this is a very powerful statement. I'm sorry to be ending our program, but our time is up. So thank you so very much for everything you've given us in this program. We really appreciate all of your insights, and we'll be in touch with you as your future moves forward.

Randy: So, Ayah, in my Potawatomi language, Migwetch is “thank you.” So I want to express my gratitude in my native language. And I want to say to those who are listening, I hope this broadcast has given you time and space to reconnect with your roots and Mother Earth. Before your busy day distracts you from this moment, we encourage you to reach out and feel the presence of living flora and fauna, animate kin, and perhaps even that of your ancestors and others who have walked on. Allow yourself to touch their presence, capture that moment and hold onto it

Carolyn: And write to Randy, let him know about your experiences or with any questions or suggestions for the shows. Randy can be reached at his email, randykritkausky@hushmail.com, or through his website, which is www.randykritkausky.com

Migwetch; migwetch to all.

Ayah: Mayanadah.

Carolyn: Thank you.

++++
“Indigenous Perspectives” monthly podcast is hosted by Randy Kritkausky and Carolyn Schmidt, and broadcast on the fourth Thursday of each month, 12 noon Eastern Time (US & Canada), on HealthyLife.net.



Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike CC BY-NC-SA

Creative Commons License Others may remix, adapt, and build upon this work non-commercially, as long as they credit “Indigenous Perspectives – Randy Kritkausky and Carolyn Schmidt” and license their new creations under the identical terms (i.e. non-commercial; share with attribution.)

++++