

## Reviews

**OATG website manager Pamela Cross reviews Tsai Yushan's book about her work on the textiles of the aboriginal Taiwanese people.**

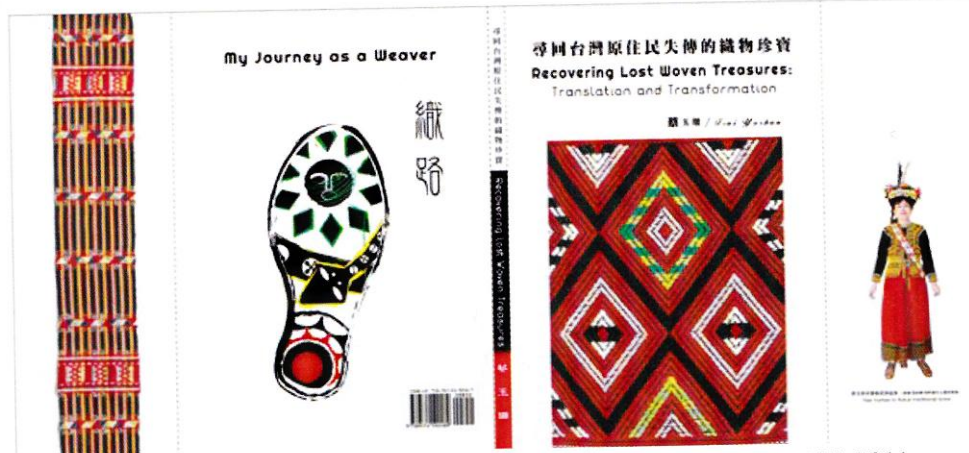
*Recovering Lost Woven Treasures: Translation and Transformation*, self-published in 2012 by Tsai Yushan, ISBN 978-957-41-9248-9.

The textile photos in the book are of a very fine quality: the sort of photos which make you touch the page to feel the textile as you can see each thread in it! I also appreciated the old sepia photos of the different aboriginal tribes from the collection of Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines which are used in the second, major, part of the book where Yushan's brief descriptions of the textiles of each of the 14 tribes are accompanied by photos of her research pieces of the woven or embroidered textiles of each tribe.

The first part of the book has essays in English, French, Chinese and Japanese. There is an outline of Yushan's textile background and her 'journey as a weaver'. I think the essence of the book is summed up by Yushan (page 28) when she says: 'Would you like to know how the aboriginal Taiwanese wove their beautiful fabrics? By decoding their methods today, we can preserve their precious lost arts and skills. In addition, through innovations in interpretation, we can present a new face of these arts for the eyes of the world to see.'

The last section of the book is a list of illustrations and sources of materials for analysis. This is laid out tribe by tribe and has thumbnails of, I assume, all the textiles that were in the 2012 exhibition of the same name – an amazing body of incredibly fine work researched and created by Yushan. Many of the pieces are shown enlarged in the preceding tribal descriptions in the book. Information on and photos from the exhibition can be found at: <http://www.tribaltextiles.info/community...php?t=2305>.

The book is indeed 'My Journey as a Weaver', as stated on the back cover of the



book, with the focus on what Yushan refers to on page 36 as 'Stage 3: 1999–2011. Studied Taiwanese aboriginal textile-making skills and the patterns associated with different tribes.' It both presents the results of this research and stands as an amazing testimony to her very determined efforts and finely honed technical skills. I am in awe!

The book is available from the Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines <http://www.museum.org.tw> or message on line <http://www.tribaltextiles.info/community/viewtopic.php?f=5&t=2346> It retails at US\$30 with an additional air shipping cost of US\$10 to Europe/USA or US\$6 to Asia.