

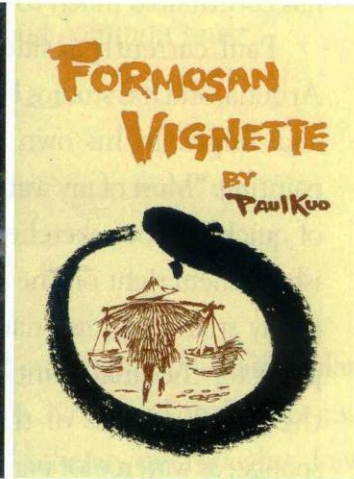
About Paul Kuo and the Formosan Vignette

The numerous watercolors and sketches throughout this book are all the work of my friend Paul Kuo. The watercolor paintings were specifically created for this book while the sketches were selected from the “*Formosan Vignette*,” also by Paul, which originally appeared in the Taiwan-English newspaper in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Paul was born of Taiwanese parents in Tokyo, Japan. As a student at Taiwan University, majoring in languages in the late fifties, Paul was affiliated with the China Post, the only English-language newspaper at that time in Taiwan. He contributed a column known as the *Formosan Vignette* for many years. After World War II, and the Korean War, there were numerous American newcomers to Taiwan. The Taiwanese customs and everyday aspects of daily Taiwanese life were interesting to the newly arrived, curious American visitors. In the

illustrations of the Taiwanese way of life in the *Formosan Vignette*. It also depicted the healthy life style of yesteryear before the intrusion of technology. As you read this book, I hope you will agree that Paul’s art has contributed much to this book.

By JackChou; Breaking the Food Chain



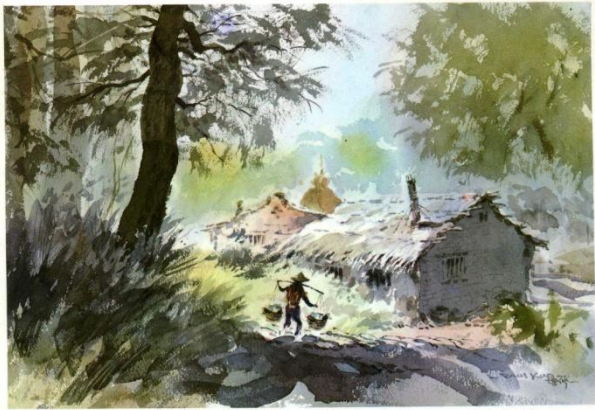
form of pen and ink sketches, Paul cast his observant eye over the land and people of Taiwan. His artistic and illustrative skill built a bridge for Americans to understand the Taiwanese culture and life.

Paul and I met while serving our compulsory military training for officers after graduation from college. At over six feet, he was the tallest of the full company of 132 men, and being slightly shorter than him, I was number two. As fervent Taiwanese patriots, we immediately became good friends. Paul’s *Formosan Vignette* drawings were gathered into a book in the 1960s. While reviewing his book, I recalled that there were many nostalgic, interesting

The Formosa Vignette, brain child of Paul Kuo, is also the foster child of two mission padres. Back in 1957 Father Everett J. Mibach, S.J. ghosted the captions for a few seasons. For the last two years the China Post's daily feature has been haunted by a bald Bostonian, Father Frederic J. Foley, S. J. Both fathers have taken a great interest in Taiwan life and customs. They consider Taiwan as their real home and find in its folklore and legends an inexhaustible mine for cartoon, material.



Paul Kuo signs his cartoons with the two Chinese characters "Chu Jen", meaning "Giant". This gives some indication of the height of the lanky, Tokyo born, Taiwanese. Paul graduated from the Department of Foreign Languages, National Taiwan University, several years ago. For the past three years he has been casting an observant eye over his land and his people. The result is his series of drawings recording many interesting facets of Taiwan life. Paul and his mentor will be off to the States in the Summer of 1960. This collection of Paul Kuo's work will linger on after the daily offering has ceased to exist.



WATERCOLORS BY PAUL KUO



趕鴨回家 對開

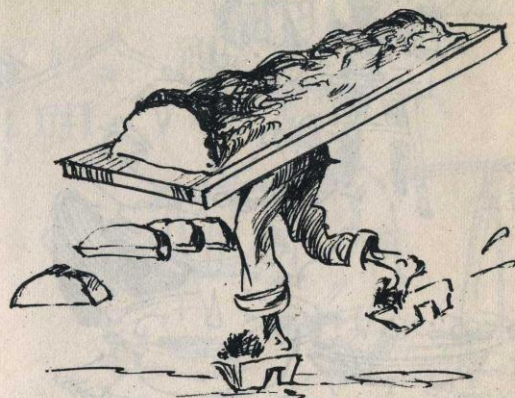
Homeward Bound 22"x30"





THE BEETLE WAS VEXED

Roast beetles are a delicacy in some parts of Taiwan. The bamboo variety *Sipalus hypocrita*, is particularly tasty and favored by those who know. Since it feeds on bamboo shoots it partakes of their flavorful succulence.



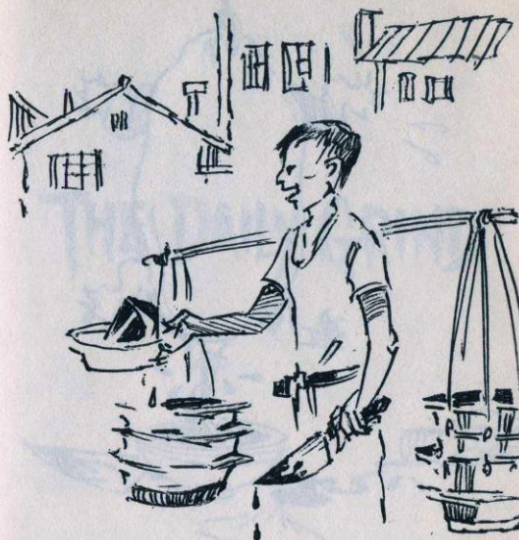
KEELUNG KAMABOKO

This spiced ground-fish loaf has no Chinese equivalent but goes by its original Japanese name. It is a favorite food, added to soups or as is, and can be bought in any market.



ONE FISH BALL!

Every market sells these tasty tid-bits. The raw fish is ground, pressed into balls and then boiled before being put on sale. A few of them will add something to any dish.



BLOOD PUDDING

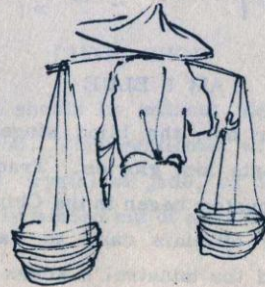
Congeaed pigs' blood has world-wide acceptance as a table delicacy. In Taiwan it is usually served with leeks as an appetizer.



STEP RIGHT UP

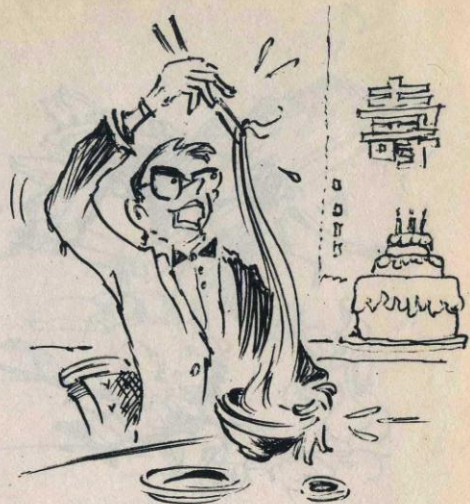
The blood of a special soft shell turtle, *Trionyx sinensis*, is very dear. In some medicine shops a drink of this panacea costs NT 200. On top of that, the head of the ungrateful animal still bites after being cut off.

THE DAILY GRIND



GET A LIFT WITH BETEL DAILY

The betel nut and leaf act as a mild stimulant when chewed with a little lime paste. The resultant quid blackens the teeth, incarnadines the lips and reduces speech to a mere gurgle. This delightful bolus is more popular in the South.



LONG NOODLES, LONG LIFE

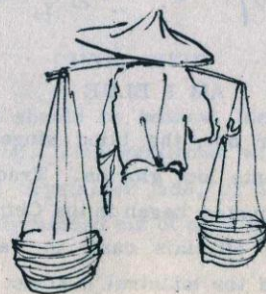
The birthday cake is a new addition to anniversary celebrations but will never displace the traditional "longlife noodles". In order not to break the symbolism of longevity this king-length spaghetti must be slurped and inhaled without biting or breaking.



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AM I BLUE

Blue or not, the blind singer of sad songs laments lost glories. Tradition has it that the custom began in the Ching dynasty when many officials came to Taiwan and appreciated the minstrel's songs of the far off homeland.



CHOP, CHOP

Nobody should be without his personal seal or chop. This gentleman will cut you one out of crystal or jade, or if you are economically minded out of pear wood.



NYLON KNITTER

A bit of a mystery how it's done, but for a trifle this lassy will zip up your laddered nylons. Just another of the many services offered under the arches.



LIFE'S FRAGILE CROCKERY

Nothing useful is ever thrown away. The china repair man will drill tiny holes in your broken platter and rivet the thing together again. A legendary apprentice is said to have practiced on egg shells.



SOCK AND BUSKIN

The only thing between us and the streets requires occasional rebuilding. This itinerant cobbler has an air conditioned shop with no overhead. Even without the help of machinery he does a first class job.



SOUTHERN TAIWAN SPECIALTY

Feng Li or *Ong Lai*, it's pineapple to you, the summertime fruit of sunny Taiwan. Versatile article, it can be made into jam, candy, wine and brandy. Taichung is famous for a cookie filled with pineapple paste.



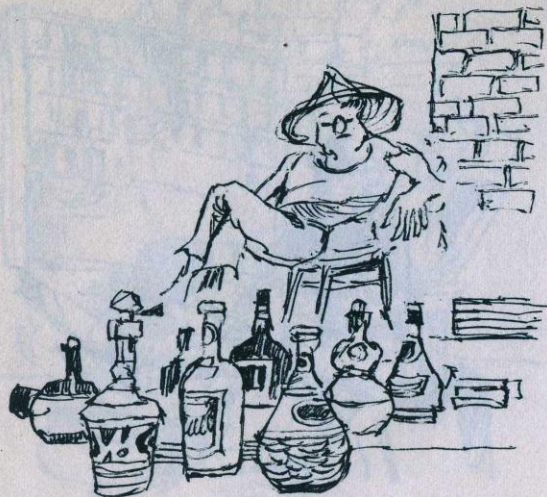
SHOE SHINE GIRL

The ladies are invading every field. The occasional lady pedicab driver can be seen cruising the streets, and the fair sex seems about to drive the male bootblacks out of business.



TAIWAN MADE

Under the arches the cigarette vendor awaits his customers. The best brand is somewhat like Virginia Straights. A special smoke sold only in aborigine territory really packs a wallop.



BOTTLE, BOTTLE!

Some fine collector's items here. The world's cordial containers form the stock-in-trade of this sidewalk merchant. You may find a bargain in his stall.



PAPER YOUR DOORS, MISTER?

The most fragile part of a Japanese house is the paper doors which admit light but keep out cold. This gentleman specializes in redoing your torn and broken paper doors.



ANCIENT ART

Chinese paintings and examples of the calligrapher's art are brushed on very thin white paper. Any number of mounting shops do nothing but back the fragile art work with heavy paper and cloth, producing the traditional Chinese scroll.



SOY SAUCE

The humble soy bean has to go through a tortuous process before it ends up as this tasty table condiment. It's our own Taiwan Worcestershire. Those kegs on the bicycle are loaded with it.



EXPRESS LUNCH

Gangway for the nimble delivery boy. He's rushing a noon meal in six courses to a nearby business office. Local eateries cater to the take-out and send-out trade.



REASONABLE FACSIMILE

This artist specializes in charcoal or dry-brush reproductions. Given sufficient monetary incentive he will duplicate your grandmother or Clark Gable.



SILHOUETTE MAN

Photography's forerunner, the scissor art, still flourishes the world over. This "picture-in-a-minute" specialist operates on Taipei's Hengyang Street.



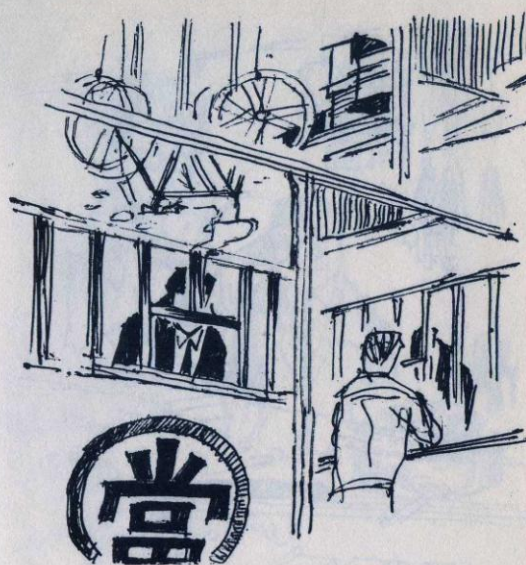
PRINTER'S DEVILTRY

Typesetting in a Chinese printery requires a rack with over 6,000 characters. Composing is minor memory feat, but our lads are equal to it.



WEST GATE BAZAAR

What do you want, typewriter, sunglasses or a new cashmere sweater? All these and more can be bought at the consignment store, that carry-over from another day and age. If you are in a selling mood, the store will dispose of your isaacs for a percentage.



GOLD WATCH AND CHAIN

The interest may be high but it's one way of getting a bit of ready cash. From bicycles to last winter's quilts there is nothing that can't be pawned. The old style pawn shops have a screen which hides the customer and preserves his "face."



FILING DEPARTMENT

The key-artist makes and repairs Chinese style locks. However, in a pinch, he will produce a YALE approximation, or do a Houdini on your locked car.



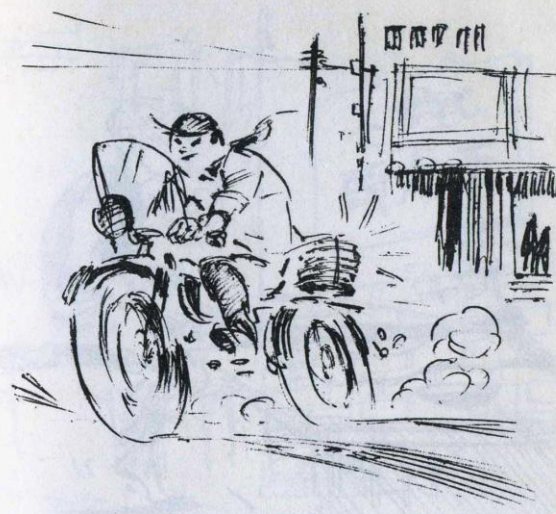
FESTIVE MISCELLANY

This shop specializes in everything for weddings and parties. Firecrackers, punk, tea candles, "spirit" money and red lanterns. When doubtful about a wedding present have this fellow run up a congratulatory scroll. It's probably just what the new couple needs.



KNEADY ARTISTS

This is not a convention of blind men. The dark-glassed practitioners of thwack and thwump wait at the door of the hotel ready to offer a soothing massage to the guests.



POINGGG!!!

That last sound you heard was the ring of film cans being rushed from one movie house to another by special messenger. Only in Taiwan can one movie print serve for three simultaneous but staggered showings.



KNEADING NOODLES?

The old fashioned noodlemaker still uses an affair like this to knead his heavy mass of dough. The resounding "clap, clap" of the mixture striking the table acts as an advertisement for his product.



HACK WORK

That old gentleman you see sitting there with his pens and paper is a public scribe. He will take dictation, copy documents or express your epistolary sentiments in high style. Formerly a standard feature outside post offices, he now occupies a stall or a store.



BOOKMART

Magazine stands under arches, a typical Taipei sight. There is plenty of reading matter abroad these days and even the humblest office boy seems to be perusing his own special digest and brushing up on his English.



MOBILE SERVICE

"Right here, lady. New heels and half soles while you wait." Taipei is filled with stop and fix it men of every variety. This one does shoes, the next hot water bottles and umbrellas, another gentleman specializes in sharpening kitchen choppers.



AIR CONDITIONING

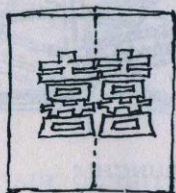
Baby fish are delicate things. When being shipped to Taipei from the South the small fry get a special attendant. His only duty is to aerate the water with a wire egg-beater.



"CRUNCH!"

Anyone who has bitten into a rock in the middle of his rice will be grateful to these patient pickers who go over every grain by hand. A fine screen and a strong light produce almost 100% accuracy. But, oh brother, if one stone gets by!

WEDDING BELLS



ACKNOWLEDGED DECEPTION

The feast is set, the guests are met and merry sounds the din. The bride and groom toast over three hundred guests. A truly Homeric feat, were the bottle not filled with tea.



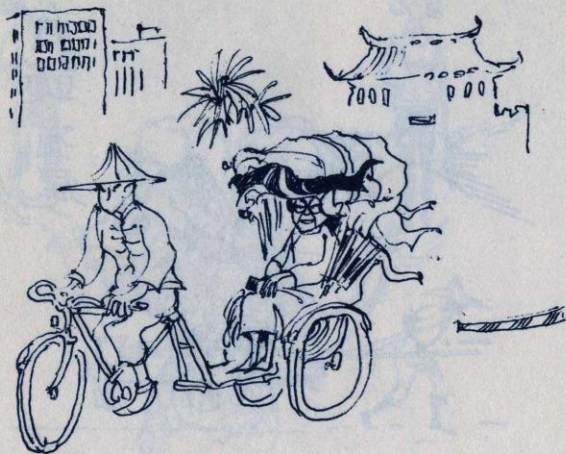
HYMENEAL HYDRA

All over the world the matchmaker's tongue is proverbially unreliable. In her effort to please both sides this female cupid had outdone double tongue and become two-headed.



THE HEAD AND TAIL OF IT

In order to show restraint and politeness the future bride's parents accept only part of the engagement gifts. A part of everything is sent back to the boy's parents. This gift fish is a bit cut up about the custom.



HAZARDOUS OCCUPATION

That red draped pedicab is taking the match maker back and forth between the house of the prospective bride and groom. Red signifies happiness but here it might connote some of the danger in joining two for life.



DOWRY ON DISPLAY

It looks like moving day. However, the furniture is too new and the carts are too lightly piled. It is actually a procession of wedding presents. Everything from radios and sets of china to vessels of a humbler use are exhibited for all to see and admire.



SAD FAREWELL

Before her wedding the bride bids good bye to her family at the "Sister's Dinner". She gives money to her relatives, tears are shed, and the meal is left for the poor to eat.



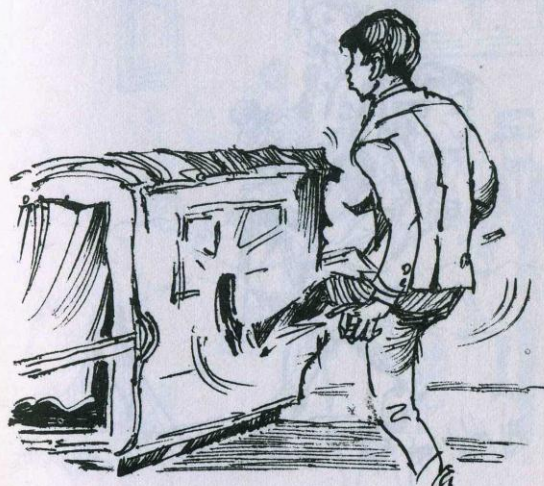
WEDDING CUSTOM

When the bride arrives in her wedding car she must wait until a young child opens the car door, invites her to get out and offers her a plate of oranges. She touches the oranges and gives the child money wrapped in red paper.



HEART ECHOES HEART

Ancient wedding custom requires a pig's heart and an orange to be part of the bride's hope chest. The heart is a symbol of love, the orange, a personification of sweetness.



WHO'S BOSS AROUND HERE?

At first the sedan chair, and later the sedan was kicked by the Taiwan bridegroom to show that he was master of the timid bride inside.irate taxi drivers have caused the custom to die out.



TAXI! TAXI!

Carrying off the bride is an authentic aborigine custom in Taiwan. The bridegroom needs a stout heart and a strong back.



IN-LAW PROBLEM

When the new bride first comes to the bridegroom's home all of his brothers and sisters are driven out of the central altar-room. The sight of so many in-laws might shock her



PROGNOSIS OF GENDER

Glutinous rice balls swimming in sweet soup make a favorite wedding feast dessert. Count the number of "Hsiao T'ang Yuan" in the bowl. If even, the couple's first child will be a girl, if odd, a boy. Odd?



DRINK, DRINK, DRINK!

These are "red letter" days. On the astrologer's calendar that means a good omen. Hence a flurry of weddings jam the restaurants and keep the photographers busy. Here the happy pair enlist the help of a high capacity friend to accept all the congratulatory toasts in their stead.

**HAPPY
PAIR**



IT'S LIKE THIS HONEY

Weaving his way home after a late evening with the boys the hen-pecked husband fears he must "kneel on the abacus". This homely Taiwanese figure vividly expresses hubby's discomfort as he faces an irate tai-tai.



BEAUTY IN THE COMMONPLACE

With the inborn grace of a ballet dancer the lady laborer slings up a scoop of mortar to the waiting mason. No time-motion study is required for this operation. Long practice has made an effortless art out of a humble task.



HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM

It's a question who wears the pants in this Hakka type family combination often seen in Southern Taiwan. The husband watches the baby while the wife does the harder work in the fields.



AHCHEW!!

Sneezing twice in succession is a sign that someone is thinking of you. Here his better half wonders, "Now, who could be thinking of hubby?"



BEWARE THE PEAKED BEAK

In the Book of Taiwan Proverbs it is written. "The wife with a sharp nose will always butt it into her husband's business." To wit, she will be a shrew and trouble-maker.

BLESSED EVENT



PREMATURE ENGAGEMENT

Country couples used to engage their children before birth. This rather risky custom has pretty well died out. It was a little too hard on the youngsters.



SUPPLEMENTARY DIET

Immediately on the birth of a child the maternal grand-parents send the new mother a gift of bottles of rice wine and a rooster cooked with sesame oil. The old custom is probably predicated on just plain common sense.



BABY ON ROCKS

Here is Mother polishing off baby with a small pebble. Rubbing it over the skin and the head of the baby she hopes to communicate some of the hardness of the stone to the baby's body. It is sort of an old fashioned "Rock-a-by-Baby."



RED EGGS

After 24 days the new born baby should have his head shaved. All the neighbors' youngsters are invited in to receive red eggs, a sign of joy.



SPIRIT ARRESTER

In the country charms and amulets are often put on children to ward off evil spirits. This youngster wears a lock. A symbolic punishment borne in youth will keep away greater evils to come.



LITTLE ROCK HEAD

When a mother receives presents for her new-born child she has to return a handful of rice and a pebble to the kind donors. The rice signifies that she is not in need of food. And the stone? That means the baby's head is like a rock. In other words, the kid is healthy.



HAIRDO, FAMILY STYLE

My lady will be beautiful the world over, but only in Taiwan can you find such a friendly homely atmosphere. Children are welcome, the nursing mother patiently waits and children squall.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR BABY!

Little Ozzie is one year old. A family feast is held to celebrate the anniversary. Huge steamed rolls, filled with red bean paste and dyed brilliant red are a "must" for this dinner.



FOUL TEMPER

Do you know why Junior has such a bad temper? Do you know why he is bent on tearing up books and toys? Because he takes after his father? Wrong! It's that chicken foot he is chewing on. If you want baby to have a sweet and loving disposition keep him on a diet which is free from fowl feet.



DOUBLE WHAMMY

Twin whorls in baby's silken locks are a bad sign. This reverse cowlick presages fits of anger and a generally twisty temper.



JOHNNIE'S GOT THE MEASLES

A month after he's had the pesky disease the youngster is pelted with soy beans to insure the complete disappearance of the spots. NAMRU please note.