

Insuishigen: A Symbol of Friendship Between Japan and Taiwan

This statue of a man hauling water buckets was a gift from Taiwan to Japan, to commemorate the creation of a sister-lake relationship between Lake Tazawa and Taiwan's Cheng Ching Lake in 1991.

"Insuishigen" is the Japanese reading of the sculpture's title when written in traditional Chinese characters. Pronounced "yin shui si yuan" in Taiwanese, it is an admonition meaning "when you drink water, think about its source."

The sculpture appeals to humankind to be grateful for clean drinking water. It illustrates that while now many take it for granted, until not so long ago, fetching water required laborious effort. The inscription on the side of the statue base reminds us that sunlight, air, and water are the three necessities of human life, and that without clean water all life will perish.