

Reading & Listening Recommendations to accompany The CHP Taiwan Series

Taiwan in 100 Books

<https://a.co/d/3JL7ic>

“*Taiwan in 100 Books*” is an accessible introduction to works on the country and an enjoyable shortcut to understanding the country’s history and culture. It’s also a bibliophile’s elixir packed with the backstories of the authors and the books themselves; there are tales of outrageous literary fraud, lost manuscripts, banned books, and publishing skulduggery.

This single volume distills hundreds of titles and decades of reading into a riveting narrative of Taiwan from the early seventeenth century to the present. Relive Taiwan’s most dramatic historical event in “*Lord of Formosa*” and “*Lost Colony*”. Learn about the White Terror in “*A Pail of Oysters*”, “*Green Island*”, and “*Formosa Betrayed*”. Discover dated “time capsule” accounts such as “*Flight to Formosa*” and “*Taipei After Dark*”, and others like John Slimming’s “*Green Plums*” and a “*Bamboo Horse*” that have stood the test of time. Turn the pages of obscure books such as “*The Jing Affair*” and “*Dragon Hotel*”, undeserved best-sellers like the “*The Soong Dynasty*”, and some of the best academic works. Experience unique facets of life in Taiwan in “*Shots from the Hip: Sex, Drugs and the Tao*” and “*Barbarian at the Gate: From the American Suburbs to the Taiwanese Army*”. Follow authors on their quests, whether conservationists going undercover to expose the illegal wildlife trade, adoptees returning to find their biological parents, or foodies in search of the perfect beef noodle soup.

Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China’s First Great Victory over the West, by Tonio Andrade

<https://a.co/d/aY7XjOV>

Lord of Formosa, by Joyce Bergvelt

<https://a.co/d/8rUGx4H>

Small Sea Travel Diaries: Yu Yonghe’s Records of Taiwan, by Macabe Keliher

Among the Headhunters of Formosa, by Janet McGovern

<https://a.co/d/8OpSPMd>

Accidental State: Chiang Kai-shek, the United States, and the Making of Taiwan by Hsiao-ting Lin

<https://a.co/d/dFuB53Z>

Green Island, by Shawna Yang Ryan

<https://a.co/d/5OuPKBg>

A Pail of Oysters, by Vern Sneider

<https://a.co/d/5mCreML>

Formosa Betrayed, by George H. Kerr

<https://a.co/d/dwV4aY9>

Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors: Folk Religion in a Taiwanese Village, by David K. Jordan

<https://a.co/d/gegl8HE>

A Taste of Freedom: Memoirs of a Taiwanese Independence Leader, by Peng Ming-min

<https://a.co/d/9JGtiww>

Playing in Isolation: A History of Baseball in Taiwan, by Yu Junwei

<https://a.co/d/0jmEY19>

Barbarian at the Gate: From the American Suburbs to the Taiwanese Army, by T.C. Locke

<https://a.co/d/hxUAyKG>

A Culinary History of Taipei: Beyond Pork and Ponlai, by Steven Crook & Katy Hui-wen Hung

<https://a.co/d/0GvGjeH>

The Chinese Invasion Threat: Taiwan's Defense and American Strategy in Asia, by Ian Easton

<https://a.co/d/hsDa3V9>

Some Remarks about these books:

***Green Island* by Shawna Yang Ryan**

<https://a.co/d/6cp2N7y>

Both a family history and a political primer of Taiwan, spanning the years from 1947 to the 2003, this is my go-to fiction recommendation. The title comes from the name of an island where many political prisoners were sent during the martial law era. *Green Island* opens with the birth of the female narrator as revolt against oppressive Nationalist rule breaks out on the streets of Taipei. She is delivered by her father, a doctor who is arrested and sent to Green Island. A deserved popular and critical success, this is one of the few Taiwan works available as an audiobook.

***Lord of Formosa* by Joyce Bergvelt (Camphor Press, 2018)**

<https://a.co/d/3VTpBxO>

Recounting Taiwan's single most gripping historical episode, Ming loyalist warlord Koxinga and his fight with Dutch forces in southwestern Taiwan, *Lord of Formosa* sticks close to the known facts. Koxinga's life intertwines perfectly with that of the Dutch presence on the island. He was born in 1624, the year that the Dutch East India Company established a settlement on Taiwan, and he died in 1662, the year the Dutch were expelled. Dutch-born author Bergvelt adds flesh and breath to a fascinating cast of real-life figures, making them accessible for modern readers.

***Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West* by Tonio Andrade** (Princeton Univ. Press, 2013)

<https://a.co/d/93XBfuw>

Few stood against many as the fate of Taiwan hung in the balance. This is a gripping account of the 1660s clash between Ming loyalist Koxinga and besieged Dutch colonists at Fort Zeelandia. Written by a historian with a flair for narrative, Taiwan's most exciting historical episode is recounted in fascinating detail, with twists and turns, and wide zooms out for comparisons of European and Chinese technological prowess. It's an accessible book yet so richly informative and dramatic that it rewards multiple readings.

***Accidental State: Chiang Kai-shek, the United States, and the Making of Taiwan* by Hsiao-ting Lin** (Harvard University Press, 2016)

<https://a.co/d/0WvKYh1>

How did Taiwan become the country it is today, how did it become the Republic of China? Hsiao-ting Lin, a leading Taiwanese historian and an archivist at Stanford's Hoover Institute, convincingly argues that the Nationalist state in Taiwan under Chiang Kai-shek came about in large part from happenstance. The book draws on both English- and Chinese-language archival materials, including newly released official files and personal papers to explain what happened to Taiwan in the crucial years following World War II; it also examines what didn't happen but might have, such as the island being placed under temporary American trusteeship. *Accidental State* is unbiased and nuanced history, and packed with fun but intelligent counterfactual nuggets.

***A Taste of Freedom: Memoirs of a Taiwanese Independence Leader* by Peng Ming-min**

<https://a.co/d/5GStYUg>

For a readable work about a political figure, it's hard to beat this moving autobiography of a reluctant hero and his journey from bookish youth to renowned scholar to political dissident. Alongside the personal story, it gives a broad sweep of Taiwanese history; the increasingly militaristic Japanese rule of the 1930s, the disastrous early years of KMT rule, and the decades of White Terror political suffocation. The book was originally published in 1972 in English, two years after the author's daring escape from house arrest in Taipei to freedom in the West.

***A Culinary History of Taipei: Beyond Pork and Ponlai* by Steven Crook and Katy Hui-wen Hung** (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018)

<https://a.co/d/bOYuKS9>

Despite the title, this is a history of the food of Taiwan, not just Taipei. The "ponlai" in the subtitle refers to a strain of rice developed in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial period, stickier and quicker maturing than the *indica* rice cultivated previously; and this specificity gives a good indication of the admirable depth the book goes into. There's great breadth too, the authors covering almost everything you might be curious about, whether aboriginal crops or traditional banquet culture, religious food offerings, food folklore and prohibitions, the evolution of basic ingredients, and the origin stories of iconic dishes.

Playing in Isolation: A History of Baseball in Taiwan by Junwei Yu (Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2007)

<https://a.co/d/ayaFLs1>

Taiwan's national sport helped forge national identity and provided succor when the country was becoming increasingly isolated on the international stage. Between the years that saw the PRC take the China seat at the United Nations and Washington switch diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing, Taiwan's Little Leaguers enjoyed one of the greatest sporting runs of all time; from 1971 to 1981 they went unbeaten at the annual LLB championship in Williamsport. A whole generation of Taiwanese grew up rooting for these schoolboy teams, and among them was author Junwei Yu. He describes the history of baseball in Taiwan with passion and expertise, yet is not afraid to douse nostalgia with a cold bucket of scandal. An enjoyable read, even for non-baseball fans such as myself.

Also highly recommended:

Formosa Files Podcast:

<https://www.formosafiles.com/>

Formosa Files Podcast on Apple

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/id1588477096?mt=2&ls=1>

Formosa Files Podcast on Spotify

<https://open.spotify.com/show/23NZCM4ik6o3UYkM473ltz?si=8dac29ffc0344226>

Camphor Press

<https://www.camphorpress.com/>

Talking Taiwan Podcast

<https://talkingtaiwan.com/>

Taiwan: A Political History, Denny Roy

<https://a.co/d/gAh9TLX>

Taiwan: A New History, Murray A. Rubenstein

<https://a.co/d/blUsPFo>

Taiwan in the Modern World (17 Books)

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08DCQD4B2?>

[binding=kindle edition&ref=dbs s ks series rwt tkin&qid=1681666969&sr=1-4](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08DCQD4B2?binding=kindle+edition&ref=dbs_s_ks_series_rwt_tkin&qid=1681666969&sr=1-4)

Carl Zha's Silk & Steel Podcast Taiwan Series, featuring Xiangyu

<https://youtu.be/9UvpTIIce0w>