



# A New Illustrated History of Taiwan

*Dr. Wan-yao Chou, Translated by Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey*

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The original Chinese edition of A New Illustrated History of Taiwan was the first book on Taiwanese history for general readers to be published after the lifting of martial law in 1987. It first appeared in 1997, followed by two revised and expanded editions. Beginning with the prehistory of Taiwan and ending in the early 1990s, the book covers such important topics as the culture and history of Taiwan's aboriginals, the Dutch VOC period, Koxinga, the immigration of the Han Chinese, Han-aboriginal relations, Japanese colonial rule, post-war KMT rule, and Taiwan's long struggle for freedom and democracy. In most of the world, school children study the history of their countries in class. In post-war Taiwan this was not the case. Senior high school students did not get a separate textbook for Taiwanese history until 2006; prior to that date it was not studied at all for over half a century and then only as a minor portion of Chinese history. Even today Taiwanese history is studied for fewer hours in school curricula than Chinese history. For many Taiwanese this book was their first opportunity to read about their own history. A New Illustrated History of Taiwan is grounded in the latest research and presents a variety of perspectives on Taiwan's history. It also gives special emphasis to cultural life and the arts. These factors and the author's graceful writing style have deeply engaged readers of the Chinese edition. A Korean translation of this book (Seoul: Shingu Publishing House, 2003) and a Japanese translation (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2007; revised edition, 2013) have also been very well received.

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