

HISTORY

Roundtable est. 2017

May's Topic: Asian & Pacific Islander History

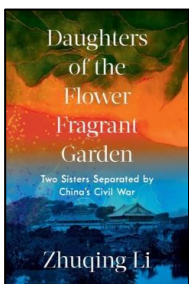
Meeting Date: Tuesday, May 27th, 2025 at 6:30pm

Register at www.greenwoodlibrary.us or by calling 317-881-1953.

More info and handout at www.greenwoodlibrary.us/historyroundtable.

Read. Watch. Listen. Discuss. Read any non-fiction book, watch a documentary, and/or listen to a podcast pertaining to Asian & Pacific Islander history. Once you've read/watched/listened to the item, come to the roundtable prepared to summarize your book/video/podcast for all the participants. Possible resources include (but are not limited to) –

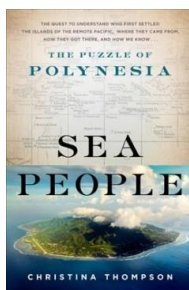
Books:



[Daughters of the Flower Fragrant Garden: Two Sisters Separated by China's Civil War](#) by **Zhuqing Li** – NONFICTION HISTORY WORLD ASIA Li; eAudio via [Libby](#)* and [Hoopla](#)*

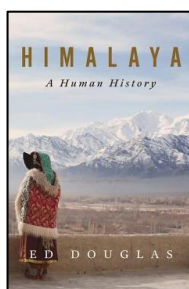
Jun and Hong were each other's best friends until, in their twenties, they were separated by chance at the end of the Chinese Civil War. For the next thirty years, while one became a model Communist, the other a model capitalist, they could not even communicate. Li recounts her aunts' experiences with extraordinary sympathy and breathtaking storytelling. A microcosm of women's lives in a time of traumatic change, this is a fascinating, evenhanded account of the recent history of separation

between mainland China and Taiwan.



[Sea People: The Puzzle of Polynesia](#) by **Christina Thompson** – NONFICTION HISTORY WORLD Thompson; [eBook](#) and [eAudio](#) via Hoopla*

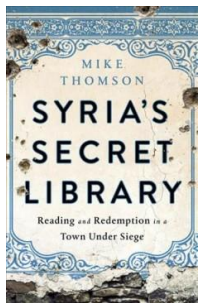
For more than a millennium, Polynesians have occupied the remotest islands in the Pacific Ocean, a vast triangle stretching from Hawaii to New Zealand to Easter Island. Until the arrival of European explorers, they were the only people to have ever lived there. Both the most closely related and the most widely dispersed people in the world before the era of mass migration, Polynesians can trace their roots to a group of epic voyagers who ventured out into the unknown in one of the greatest adventures in human history.



[Himalaya: A Human History](#) by **Ed Douglas** – NONFICTION HISTORY WORLD ASIA Douglas

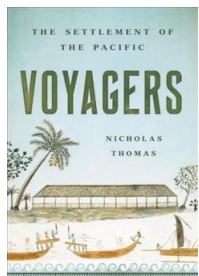
For many years, the unique and astonishing geography of the Himalaya has attracted those in search of spiritual and literal elevation: pilgrims, adventurers, and mountaineers seeking to test themselves among the world's most spectacular and challenging peaks. But far from being wild and barren, the Himalaya has been home to an astonishing diversity of indigenous and local cultures, as well as a crossroads for trade, and a meeting point and conflict zone for the world's superpowers. Spanning millennia, *Himalaya* explores the history, culture, climate, geography, and politics of

the Himalaya for a soaring account of life at the 'roof of the world'.



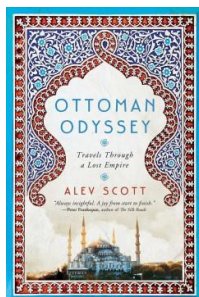
Syria's Secret Library: Reading and Redemption in a Town Under Siege by Mike Thomson – NONFICTION HISTORY WORLD ASIA Thomson

Daraya lies on the fringe of Damascus, just southwest of the Syrian capital. Yet for four years it lived in another world. Besieged by government forces early in the Syrian Civil War, its people were deprived of food, bombarded by heavy artillery, and under the constant fire of snipers. But deep beneath this scene of frightening devastation lay a hidden library. This precious horde was not bought from publishers or loaned by other libraries—they were the books salvaged and scavenged at great personal risk from the doomed city above.



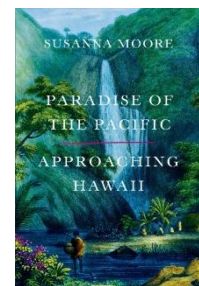
Voyagers: The Settlement of the Pacific by Nicholas Thomas – available via Evergreen Indiana*; [eAudio](#) via Libby*

The islands of Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia stretch across thousands of miles of ocean and encompass a multitude of different peoples. Starting with Captain James Cook, the earliest European explorers to visit the Pacific were astounded and perplexed to find populations thriving thousands of miles from continents. Who were these people? From where did they come? And how were they able to reach islands dispersed over such vast tracts of ocean? In *Voyagers*, the distinguished anthropologist Nicholas Thomas charts the course of the seaborne migrations that populated the islands between Asia and the Americas from late prehistory onwards.



Ottoman Odyssey: Travels Through a Lost Empire by Alev Scott – NONFICTION HISTORY WORLD ASIA Scott; [eBook](#) via Hoopla*

Alev Scott's odyssey began when she looked beyond Turkey's borders for contemporary traces of the Ottoman Empire. Their 800-year rule ended a century ago - and yet, traveling through eleven countries from Kosovo to Greece to Palestine, she uncovers a legacy that's vital and relevant; where medieval ethnic diversity meets 21st century nationalism, and displaced people seek new identities. In every community, history is present as a dynamic force.



Paradise of the Pacific: Approaching Hawaii by Susanna Moore – available via Evergreen Indiana*; [eBook](#) via Hoopla*

This is a dramatic history of America's tropical paradise. In *Paradise of the Pacific*, Moore pieces together the elusive, dramatic story of late-eighteenth-century Hawaii--its kings and queens, gods and goddesses, missionaries, migrants, and explorers--a not-so-distant time of abrupt transition, in which an isolated pagan world of human sacrifice and strict taboo, without a currency or a written language, was confronted with the equally ritualized world of capitalism, Western education, and Christian values.

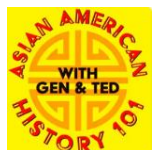
Video:



Sailing a Sinking Sea: Exploring the Culture of the Moken People via Kanopy*

The Moken are a seafaring community and one of the smallest ethnic minority groups in Asia, traditionally spending eight months out of the year in thatch-roofed wooden boats. Wholly reliant upon the sea, their entire belief system revolves around water. *Sailing a Sinking Sea* weaves a visual and aural tapestry of Moken mythologies and present-day practices.

Podcasts:



Asian American History 101

Asian American History 101 is a fun, family-friendly, and informative podcast co-hosted by Gen and Ted Lai, the daughter and father team. The podcast will entertain and educate people as Gen and Ted dive into the vast history of Asian Pacific Americans from the struggles they faced to their contributions and triumphs.

*=requires GPL Evergreen Indiana card