

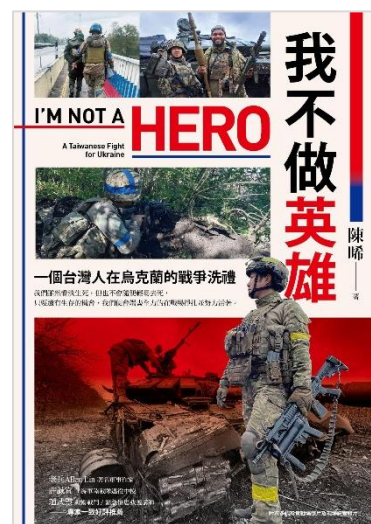
I'M NOT A HERO: A TAIWANESE FIGHT FOR UKRAINE

我不做英雄：一個台灣人在 烏克蘭的戰爭洗禮

This isn't the war you see in the news – it's a soldier's firsthand experience on the front lines. After five years in the French Foreign Legion, Chen His decided to join the International Legion for the Defence of Ukraine. His frontline diary captures eight months of battlefield realities through text, photographs, and videos.

As a Taiwanese man with a childlike optimism, Chen His chose to join the French Foreign Legion. Five years later, when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, he decided to shift to a new battlefield, joining the International Legion for the Defence of Ukraine to put his training and experience into practical use surrounded by the flames of war. With only a tablet and a silent keyboard, he documented daily life on the brutal Kharkiv front for eight months, capturing his actual experiences of war through text, photographs, and videos.

The book's first-person perspective gives readers a direct look at the brutal but precious moments of war: life-or-death moments of being targeted by the enemy, risky decisions to make a move that would save a squadmate, and the constant pain of losing comrades in battle that he could never quite get used to. As a memento and a reminder to himself to remain vigilant, Chen would take an item from the bodies of fallen comrades. But aside from the ruthlessness and precarity of the battlefield, he also depicts the joys to be found in the midst of frontline hardships: soldiers celebrating the birthdays of absent comrades with cakes conjured from their backpacks and the heartfelt welcome and gratitude of local residents reassured him that



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his choice was not in vain. Yet it was an unexpected deception and betrayal that forced him from the battlefield.

As a frontline soldier, Chen not only bears witness to the developments on the modern battlefield with this personal record of events, but also commemorates its heroes, both the dead and those who remain on the front lines, continuing to fight. “We’re all going to die, but it won’t be today,” he tells us. By writing about those who put their lives on the line, Chen has turned anonymous individuals into more than just numbers in history, carrying the weight of their souls into readers’ hearts.

Chen His 陳晞

Chen His, a native of New Taipei City, Taiwan, served in the French Foreign Legion and later in the International Legion for the Defence of Ukraine. While fighting in the war, he recorded his battlefield experiences on X (formerly Twitter) using the anonymous account Bu Shi Lushan (a line from a poem by Su Shi meaning “I cannot know the true face of Mount Lu”). On the battlefield, he was called “Speedy”.