
Tonio Andrade's e-book *How Taiwan Became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han Colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007) is a superb monograph. In this review I will explore how it evolved, what it is about, and why it is as important as it is.

This book has its own interesting history that demonstrates its author's willingness to be on the cutting edge of scholarship in the new millennium. It had its origins in Andrade's dissertation, “Commerce, Culture, and Conflict: Taiwan under European Rule, 1623-1662” (Yale University, May 2001), an award winning effort honored with the *Hans Gatzke Prize* in May of 2001. A year later Andrade won a Gutenberg-e Prize, from the American Historical Association. According to the instructions given to those who win the prize, the dissertation was to be revised and then published as an e-book by Columbia University Press when those revisions were completed. Funding was supplied to allow Andrade to do the additional research he needed to do.

In the years that he was writing his Yale dissertation and in the years that followed its completion, Andrade wrote a series of fascinating and well written articles on the West and Taiwan that were published in a number of journals. These articles include “Political Spectacle and Colonial Rule: The *Landau* on Dutch Taiwan, 1629-1648.” *Itinerario* 21.3 (1997): 57-93, “The Mightiest Village: Geopolitics and Diplomacy in the Formosan Plains, 1623-1636.” In *Pingpuzu qun yu T aiwan lishi wenhuaku wenwenji*, eds Pan Inghai and Chan Su-chuan (Academia Sinica Press, 2001), “The Company’s Chinese Pirates: How the Dutch East India Company Tried to Lead a Coalition of Pirates to War Against China, 1621-1662.” *Journal of World History* 15.4 (2004): 415-44, and “Pirates, Pelts, and Promises: The Sino-Dutch Colony of Seventeenth-Century Taiwan and the Aboriginal Village of Favorolang.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 64.2 (2005): 295-320. Andrade used these articles as the new and carefully polished building blocks of his book. All the work was completed by early 2007, and the new book was then published on line and in a shortened hard copy version.

Let us now explore *How Taiwan Became Chinese*. Andrade begins with a chapter on the larger context of Taiwan’s development and its limited place...
in Ming Chinese consciousness. Andrade then describes the island as it was just before the officers of the Batavia (Java)-based VOC (the Dutch East Company) decided to make the island their base in their attempts to trade with a China that was controlled by an inward looking, and failing, Ming state. We find an island and a southwestern Taiwan populated by tribal bodies of aboriginal peoples whose origins remain a subject of ongoing and lively scholarly debate. We also find a very limited presence of Chinese from Fujian who had made the region a seasonal base for trade and fishing.

All of this—the strong aboriginal hold on the region and the island writ large and the limited Chinese presence—would change with the coming of the Dutch sea captains, merchants, and Reformed Protestant missionaries, as the author shows us in the well written and very dramatic series of chapters that make up the core of Andrade’s book.

The author frames each of these chapters in the same way. Each one begins with a moment that has its place within a larger narrative. He first describes this moment in time and then shifts back to when that moment—one that represents a larger set of interlocking events—begins and he then allows the narrative to flow to that moment at the chapter’s beginning and then beyond it. In making each chapter present one specific piece of the story, Andrade is able to develop a large scale narrative. Each of the diverse elements and patterns of the Dutch period-writ-large can be found when we put the pieces together, yet all the chapters also stand alone in a memorable way. I must further note that Andrade is a student of Jonathan Spence and in this book one can see that the apprentice has done much to emulate the grace and power of the master’s style—as well as Spence’s supreme ability to make information accessible to almost any reader.

The book combines elements of political history, military history, social history, and economic history and the blend of these different forms is seamless. In this book, the reader will also encounter a new type of colonialism, what Andrade calls the “dual colonial,” and will also come to understand how this new type of hybrid society worked. These insights alone make the book valuable.

I have enjoyed the time I spent reading How Taiwan Became Chinese. It is, beyond its contribution to the scholarly literature, simply a good read. There are only few scholarly books that can be spoken of in that way and I must add that among these there has never been one that was the author’s first which met that description. It takes years for the best of us to reach