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Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West

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BOOK REVIEWS

HOW ZHENG CHENGGONG DEFEATED THE DUTCH IN TAIWAN

Andrade, Tonio. *Lost Colony: The Untold Story of China's First Great Victory over the West*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 2011. 456pp. \$35

Written on several levels, *Lost Colony* is at the same time a Ming–Qing transition history, a Chinese maritime and naval history of the seventeenth century, and a global historical argument about the relative places of Europe and Asia in world history. Extensively researched in Chinese, Dutch, and English sources, the book tells the engaging story of Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong), a Ming loyalist who failed to remove the Qing from Nanjing in 1659 but did defeat and remove the Dutch from Taiwan in 1662.

Born of a Chinese father and a Japanese mother, Koxinga was trained early as a samurai in Japan and later as a Confucian scholar in China, where he passed arduous stages of the imperial examinations. This complex background, including his difficult relationship with his larger-than-life father, challenged Koxinga to become a major force during the Ming–Qing transition period. Koxinga's father, Zheng Zhilong, was the founder of a great Zheng family legacy on the Fujian coast. Elements of his colorful tale are recounted in the early part of the book. In 1625 he pushed the Dutch from their fort

in the Penghu Islands in the Taiwan Strait eastward to Taiwan itself, where the Dutch reestablished their premises in swampy area farther from the center of their desired trade connections along the Chinese coast.

The book is replete with stories of how natural phenomena, such as typhoons and storms, affected and helped determine military outcomes, as in Koxinga's first campaign, in 1658, to take Nanjing from the Manchu Qing. Koxinga's force included something like 150,000 troops on ships, the largest naval force put together in Chinese history up to that time. The force was devastated by storms en route to engagement and was forced to turn back. Koxinga's second campaign to take Nanjing, in 1659, is a fascinating study of early military success followed by failure. Koxinga did not heed the advice of his leading field commanders. His decision-making process led to defeat in this second campaign against the Qing.

The core of the narrative goes on to the page-turning saga of Koxinga's subsequent campaign to take Taiwan from the Dutch, including their

fortress Zeelandia, near present-day Tainan. Koxinga succeeded in taking the fortress and driving the remaining Dutch back to Batavia (currently Jakarta) over the course of a bitterly contested nine-month siege.

Andrade compares Chinese seventeenth-century military capabilities with those of the Dutch, especially on four levels. His conclusions are, first, that the technology in guns was about equal but that second, the military discipline of the Chinese was better than that of the Dutch, whose discipline was vaunted in Europe at the time. Third, as for ships, the ability of the Dutch ships to sail to windward gave them an edge over Chinese. Fourth, although the Chinese outnumbered the Dutch by a large margin, the Renaissance fortress configuration, with corner battlements, allowed the Dutch to hold out for many months before surrendering. That was long enough for Koxinga to study and absorb the technology of the Renaissance fort and incorporate it into his own counterstrategy. Each side had elements of relative strength, and the elements were not static in terms of relative advantage. Thus, Andrade proposes, during the seventeenth century China was fairly similar to Europe in terms of military capabilities.

Koxinga and his heirs controlled Taiwan until 1683, when they were defeated by a former Zheng family commander, Shi Lang, who had defected to support the Qing emperor. Andrade makes the interesting observation that the Qing dynasty, following the Taiwan campaigns of the late 1600s, was an era of 160 years of peace in China, requiring little in the way of military advancement. Meanwhile, Europe was embroiled in nearly constant warfare, improving its

military capabilities decade by decade. Thus the Chinese were to be at a distinct military disadvantage when the Opium Wars began in 1839, and the century of humiliation for China was by that time a *fait accompli* with respect to relative military advantage.

The book includes a fine set of maps and figures, as well as a dust jacket with an evocative seventeenth-century painting by Andries Beckman of the Dutch fort at Batavia. The Dutch governor of Taiwan, Frederick Coyet, was executed symbolically in front of this fort for losing the profitable colony of Taiwan to Koxinga.

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Lo Jung-pang, edited by Bruce Elleman. *China as a Sea Power: A Preliminary Survey of the Maritime Expansion and Naval Exploits of the Chinese People during the Southern Song and Yuan Periods*. Singapore: National Univ. of Singapore Press, 2012. 378pp. \$35

Lo Jung-pang (1912–81), the scion of a distinguished Chinese family, was a great historian, old enough to have received a traditional Chinese education when young and young enough to have mastered the Western way as a student abroad. Like many of his cohorts, he chose exile, becoming one of those who for decades kept the study of China alive outside the country until the post-Mao liberalization of the 1980s allowed its resumption at home. Lo, a long-serving professor and historian in the United States, focused on China's great middle era and launched the field of China's maritime history. Bruce Elleman's unearthing and editing