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CURRICULUM VITAE

Curriculum Vitae

Wei-chung Cheng (1974) holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from National Taiwan University, Taiwan in 1998; an MA in Sociology from National Cheng-chi University, Taiwan in 2001 and an MA in History from Leiden University in 2003. He served at the National Museum of Taiwan History during 2005-6 and continued to pursue his research towards a PhD degree in History at Leiden University.

A recipient of Taiwan Merits Scholarships (2007-2009) from National Science Council, Taiwan; the Dissertation Fellowship for ROC Student Abroad in 2010-2011 from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, Taiwan; the Academia Sinica Scholarship for Doctoral Candidates in Humanity and Social Science from Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan (2011-2012); the Su Tian-shui Postgraduate Scholarship for the Study of Tainan (2012) from the Aisiang Cultural and Educational Foundation.

His book (written in Chinese) 'The Fabrication of Formosa' earned an award of the China Times Top Ten books (2006). He is the co-editor of a Dutch archival source 'The Dutch Formosan Placard-book, Marriage, and Baptism Records' which is published in Dutch, English and Chinese. He also has published articles on the VOC's rule of Taiwan and on Chinese maritime expansion during the 17th century (in English and in Chinese).

PROPOSITIONS
PROPOSITIONS

I

What set Cheng Chih-lung apart from his peers in the overseas trade were his prominent military skills and practical mentality rather than his cosmopolitan character.

Cf. Charles Ralph Boxer, 'The Rise and Fall of Nicholas Iquan (Cheng Chilung)', *T'ien Hsia Monthly*, Apr.-May (1941), 1-39.

II

Cheng Chih-lung's headquarters at An-hai harbour were because of the shallow waters difficult to approach for the large heavily armed ships of his rivals. Yet An-hai could closely control the island of Amoy, the only deep water harbour for overseas trading junks in south Fu-chien. It was the strategic position of An-hai rather than the skills of its merchants that made the difference.

Cf. Lin Jen-ch'uan, *Ming-mo ch'ing-ch'u Ssu-jen hai-shang mao-i* [Private Trade during the Late Ming and Early Ch'ing Dynasty], (Shang-hai: Hua-tung shih-fan ta-hsüeh, 1987), 158-60

III

The personal contradictions between Cheng Chih-lung and Cheng Ch'eng-kung should not make us ignore that under their successive effective leaderships the maritime mercenaries continued to expand the overseas empire of the Cheng. The Oedipous complex explanation misses the point.

Cf. Ralph C. Croizier, *Koxinga and Chinese nationalism : history, myth, and the hero*, (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1977)

PROPOSITIONS

IV

The wars raged by Cheng Ch'eng-kung against his adversaries aimed to remove hindrances of his commercial expansion. The expedition to Nanking aimed to facilitate the trade between Chiang-nan and Japan. The occupation of Taiwan was to served as a springboard to enlarge Sino-Indian trade on the one hand, and to seek (via Manila) access to the Spice Islands.

Cf. John E. Wills Jr., 'Maritime China from Wangchih to Shih Lang', in Jonathan D. Spence and John E. Wills Jr (eds.), *From Ming to Ch'ing*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 223-8.

V

The maritime history of the China Seas should not closed up in the 'sprouts of Chinese Capitalism' or the 'periphery history of China' debates. It should be positioned on the interface and the overlapping zones of international trade and geo-politics.

VI

A synthesis of the fragmental pieces of evidence collected from the VOC archives, can effectively create an overview of the overseas trading network of the Chinese junk merchants.

PROPOSITIONS

VII

Although the overseas Chinese hardly identified themselves with Chinese authorities, the term ‘overseas Chinese history’ implies a concealed cultural identity with China. As a result the Chinese abroad have often unintentionally become victims of the Sino-centric perspective.

VIII

Compared with the far flung activities of the European East India Companies, the Chinese maritime activities in Asian waters may have been moderate, but as cultural and material brokers, the overseas Chinese have contributed to fundamental changes in Southeast Asia since the early phase of globalization.

IX

The experience of comparing diverse sources from the standpoints of different cultural backgrounds is almost like watching a movie with sub-titles in different languages. They are adapted to local contexts while trying not to distort too much what is shown on the screen.