

# Church and State in Dutch Formosa

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper examines the politics of church-state interactions in Dutch Formosa. How did Dutch Christians and local indigenous converts relate to the colonial government in Taiwan during the Dutch era (1624–1662)? Did Protestant missionaries and their followers play a mainly priestly or prophetic role when dealing with the Dutch East India Company and its representatives in Taiwan? Did Dutch authorities adopt a laissez-faire attitude to native and foreign Christians' religious practices, or did they actively support the missionary effort in Formosa? This essay tests Anthony Gill's political-economic model of church-state interaction by analyzing published collections of primary Dutch-language and translated documents on this topic and by examining related secondary works. The study concludes that although a few missionaries tried to soften the edges of colonial dominance of Taiwanese aborigines, most clerics enthusiastically participated in the Netherlands' brutal suppression of indigenous culture and even some aboriginal groups. The government, meanwhile, appears to have endorsed missionary activities on the assumption that conversion would "civilize the natives," who would in turn embrace Dutch colonization.

In its relatively brief period of colonial control over Formosa (1624-1662), the Dutch state established a remarkably vigorous administrative apparatus that attempted to gain profit from the island's abundant natural resources and to convert and Christianize the natives. Under the auspices of the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), or Dutch East India Company, a highly complex administrative structure developed that included Calvinist missionaries and political leaders on the island, colonial authorities in the company's Asian headquarters in Batavia, and a board of directors in the Netherlands. In many respects, their interests overlapped as government officials largely believed that the religious goal of "civilizing the natives" would promote their secular economic interests. There were, nonetheless, potential points of conflict

among them. For example, at times political leaders complained that scarce company resources were better spent on military campaigns than on spiritual ones, and religious leaders sometimes contended that successful missionary efforts required that they distance themselves from a colonial infrastructure that primarily sought economic profit from the island.

Theoretically, the paper tests the economic approach to religion-state interactions in an understudied cultural, political, and social setting: East Asia. The two pioneering works (Gill 1998; 2008) applying rational-choice models (Downs 1957; Finke and Stark 2005) to religion and politics have together focused on the Americas and Eastern Europe rather than Asia or Africa. A couple of later scholars have adopted this perspective when analyzing China (Yang 2006; Xie 2011), yet even the PRC deserves much more academic attention. And no one appears to have used self-interest to explain church-state relations in East Asia over centuries of Christian presence in the region (Moffett 1992; 1998). Our essay thus contributes to the political science, religious studies, and historical literatures by using this viewpoint to study the culturally Chinese island of Taiwan since the arrival of Christianity.

### *Theories of Church-State Relations*

Rational choice theory explains the decisions of political actors by focusing on the interests behind their actions.<sup>1</sup> The theory contends that political actors are driven to stay in power and maximize resources while religious actors desire greater spiritual influence over society.

Majority religions frequently use their influence over the government to restrict minority religions and to expand their social reach, and political leaders respond favorably if that religious

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<sup>1</sup> Parts of this section draw on our earlier work published in “Church and State in Spanish Formosa,” *Review of Religion and Chinese Society* (2014).

group is politically powerful or if the authorities conclude that spiritual goals are consistent with their secular ends. But religious and political interests might not always naturally overlap. For example, Anthony Gill explains the expansion of religious freedoms in Latin America after the 1990s by examining a case where political and religious leaders came to have divergent interests. National Catholic churches adopted a pro- or anti-government policy based on what would maximize their support from the largely poor populace. Before they faced competition from socialists, spiritists, or evangelical Protestants working among the economically marginalized, the Catholic hierarchy had been content to ally with authoritarian leaders and their upper-class backers. Gill's theory suggests that a religious group would support or oppose the political authorities based on which option will maximize its number of adherents and amount of resources. Money and other "goodies" from the government are nice, he implies. But a rational group of believers will not seek such political capital at the cost of popular rejection of their religion—at least when ideological competitors are also seeking converts among the same people. Political leaders, on the other hand, expanded the scope of religious freedoms when doing so increased their ability to stay in power and enhanced the economic well-being of the countries that they ruled, regardless of the interests of the majority religion. Religious freedom, thus, was the outcome of different combinations of actor strategies.

With its central focus on the strategic interaction between political and religious leaders, rational choice theory largely ignores the role that ideas play in political decisions. If one instead focuses on religious ideas, one key sociological theory belongs to Max Weber ([1921] 1952, [1922] 1963). In his terms, a religion may play a "priestly" or a "prophetic" role. In the first, clergy are dependent on or are part of the political apparatus; they give religiously based advice and comfort to the monarch or other political leaders, support the government's policies, at least

in public, and try to get the masses to obey the state by convincing them that God is on the side of the status quo. Religious leaders do not see themselves as separate from or independent of the state. In the second role, a church or other religious entity opposes and criticizes the state for its deviations from justice and appeals to the government to return to God's laws. Religious authorities see themselves as independent of political ones and in critical judgment of worldly practices that violate religious norms.

Applied to Dutch Formosa, Gill's explanation suggests that the political leaders of the Company would be motivated to support the Calvinist missionaries financially and militarily if the clergy helped Dutch officials to work more efficiently. The clerics might, for example, preach against drunkenness and adultery, persuade soldiers that they were on a Christianizing mission from God, and provide medical care to sick and injured troops. By learning the local aboriginal languages, converting the natives to Protestantism, and negotiating on behalf of Dutch officials, Western religious leaders in Taiwan could also help the colonize the area and "pacify" local Yuanzhumin 原住民 (original inhabitants) who might otherwise violently resist European imperialism. The Company would have no interest in fostering religious pluralism in the region, however, whether such diversity were to come from Catholic "heretics" on the northern coast of the island or "superstitious" indigenous Taiwanese groups. The key argument is that political actors will behave in such a way that it helps them stay in power and advances the profit interests of the company that hired them. Rational-choice theory does not presume that colonial and religious authorities will never disagree; Dutch officials and missionaries may differ in their preferences on economic policies, for example, even if they see eye-to-eye on the overall goals of the colonization and Christianization of Formosa.

If Gill's state-related interpretation is false, however, this symbiotic relationship between colonial and religious authorities would either never have developed or it would have been challenged in some fundamental ways during the nearly forty-year period of colonial rule. This lack of cooperation may suggest that local representatives of the Dutch government would refuse to give missionaries salaries or military protection, would impede missionaries' efforts at evangelism, would either support or at least not discourage traditional indigenous religious practices and might even restrict Protestant rites. Or at a minimum, disconfirmation of the theory would require political officials to show indifference to the missionary endeavor, thereby allowing religious competitors to flourish, either in the form of Spanish Catholicism in the North or native religions throughout the island.

For the church in Dutch Formosa, rational-choice theory would posit that the Dutch missionaries would do their best to minimize competition from native religious leaders and support colonial rule in Taiwan. The ministers should try to convince dubious or rebellious Yuanzhumin of the moral superiority of Western culture and the rightness of Dutch conquest of Formosa. They should provide secular, linguistic, and medical services and even military aid to the government since without its presence, they would never be able to continue to proselytize local villagers. If the colonial experiment were to fail, the missionaries would no longer have state-supported access to potential converts and would need to leave Taiwan and abandon evangelization of the natives. In Weberian terms, Gill's theory argues that the ministers would take on a largely priestly role in which they were supportive of and subservient to state interests.

Should the economic model prove inaccurate, however, these clergy would take a principled, prophetic stand against Dutch exploitation of Taiwanese aboriginals and attempt to undermine colonial military and commercial operations in the region. It is not so much that the

religious leaders would behave irrationally, in Gill's terms, but rather that the religious impulse to transmit the gospel and to transform the Formosan culture in light of Christian values would cause tension with company officials and lead them at critical junctures to challenge colonial practices that violated their religious mandate.

In the pages below, we argue that the rational choice theory is partially supported in the case of Dutch Formosa. Political actors on the island and in Batavia implemented policies that favored Christian missionaries; officials did so because they believed that converting the natives would ease the process of colonial rule and because they desperately needed the linguistic and cultural knowledge that only these religious leaders possessed. Consolidating the support of the Christian ministers, in short, was a rational step toward achieving the Company's secular ends. The rational choice theory is persuasive in explaining the position of political actors but weaker in explaining the motivations of the missionaries. While on numerous occasions missionaries assumed a priestly role and supported political ends, at other times political and religious leaders come into conflict because of divergent interests. In particular, religious leaders chafed at state policies that seemed to prioritize secular over spiritual ends.

### *Background*

It is impossible to separate Dutch Formosa and its rivalries in Asia from the broader religious and political conflicts occurring at the same time in Europe. In some ways, establishing a Dutch colony on the island was simply another way to combat the Dutch Republic's primary foe, the Spanish Empire. Between 1568 and 1648, Dutch citizens in Europe struggled to free themselves from the yoke of the Roman Catholic, Spanish monarch as part of what became known as the Eighty Years' War or Dutch War of Independence. Spain called a truce in its battle against the

new Dutch nation in 1609, and definitive independence came in 1648 with the signing of the Peace of Münster (Parker 1985; Israel 1995; Parker 2015).

The Dutch Republic chartered the Dutch East India Company in 1602 and granted it exclusive rights to migration, trade, war, and treaty-making with foreign powers on behalf of the government (Andrade 2008:11; Chiu 2008:4). The Company grew rapidly and established a series of colonial outposts in Africa and Asia. Perhaps ironically, the Dutch presence on Formosa was directly related to military defeat. The Dutch attacked the Portuguese-held Macao in 1622, but the Portuguese successfully defended the port city. Having failed in that effort, the fleet of twelve ships from the Netherlands eventually ended up in the Bay of Tayouan (Anping district of today's Tainan) on Formosa's southwest coast. The intent of this expedition was to establish a trading post so that the Dutch could take full advantage of the lucrative trade between Japan and China (Blussé 1984:161; Lin 2006:11). Shortly thereafter, they began construction of Fort Zeelandia at the entrance to the bay. Over the next twenty years, the Dutch expanded their reach over most of the island, drove their rivals the Spanish from Northern Formosa, and fundamentally reshaped the religious and political practices of the native population.

The Formosa “discovered” by the Dutch in the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century was politically and culturally complex. While geographically isolated in the South China Sea, Formosa had been visited by Chinese and Japanese fishermen and traders for decades to take advantage of the island's abundant natural resources. As we will note below, Dutch religious and political authorities used to their benefit the tensions among the Japanese, Chinese, and various indigenous groups on the island. Formosa was also internally divided among dozens of aboriginal groups that spoke various languages. No sovereign political authority ruled all of Formosa; rather, there was endemic conflict among the different villages. These divisions

facilitated the colonization of Formosa as the Dutch forged alliances with some tribes against others and used a divide-and-conquer strategy to expand their footprint on the island (Shepherd 1993:50-59; Blussé 1995:173). In 1636 the Dutch decisively defeated Mattau, one of the island's most powerful villages and one that had been responsible for the killing of 60 Dutch soldiers in 1629. Dutch military success against Mattau persuaded other "intransigent" villages not already under Dutch rule prospectively to sue for peace. The result was the beginning of what historians refer to as a *Pax Hollandica* in the southwest and southern plains region around the Bay of Tayouan (Andrade 2008:64; Chiu 2008:59). Missionary success among the aborigines followed closely on the heels of military victories as native populations became more receptive to adopting the Christian faith in light of Dutch power (Shepherd 1993:64; Cheng 2009:186).

#### *Political Authorities' Interactions with Religion*

Leonard Blussé (1995:157) notes that the first charter of the VOC made no reference to religion, but that the second in 1622 made the "conservation of public religion" one of the Company's duties. The Company was anything but lax in its spiritual obligations as officials in Batavia sent 32 Dutch Protestant ministers to Formosa during its control of the island (Chiu 2008:205). The VOC paid ministers' salaries, covered their travel costs, and sent members of the army to protect missionaries against attacks from hostile forces. The island's first missionary, George Candidius, confidently predicted in a letter to officials in Batavia that a "Christian community" would be established on Formosa that would "vie with the most flourishing and glorious in Holland itself" (Campbell 1899:89). His optimism sprang from a contrast he drew between Taiwan's open religious market with virtually no religious competition and the situation in other parts of Asia where clerics faced religious challenges from Muslims and other well-established traditions.



Sources vary greatly on the number of indigenous Taiwanese Christians in Dutch Formosa, but one estimate suggests that 6,078 Formosans had become Protestant Christians in the core area of Dutch rule (Chiu 2008:205). If one assumes that all of the 1,800 or so Dutch on the island also identified as Christians (Yang 2000:75-77), the total Christian community might have amounted to about 8,000 souls.

The attitudes of state officials toward religion in Dutch Formosa tend to support Gill's rational-choice theory. Company officials hoped to maintain political power and maximize profit on the island. For the most part, they concluded that Christianizing the native population would contribute to those ends. In 1631 Formosa's Governor, Hans Putmans, sent a letter to the Governor-General in Batavia, Jacques Specx, which made just this point: "Leaving aside the matter of the progress of Christianity entirely out of the question", he noted, "we think that even [ . . . ] political reasons should induce us to advance the work" (Campbell 1899:105). Whatever their personal religious convictions were, Company officials concluded that aid to religion benefited the Company. An excerpt from the Day Journal of the Tayouan Council in that same year similarly implored: "May the Almighty grant that our feeble effort for the glory of His Name and the conversion of these heathen serve also the profit and advantage of the Company!" (Campbell 1899:115). State officials, in short, saw promoting religious ends as economically and politically rational, and the authorities often went to great lengths to do so.

Not only did it provide material support for clergy, but the VOC also tried to abolish native practices that violated Christian norms. As Philip Gorski (1999:149-50) notes, Calvinism placed a heavy emphasis on the outward conformity of the Christian community with biblical laws and mores. Practices that particularly concerned the missionaries included head-hunting, mandatory abortions for women under the age of 35, "sexual immorality" such as adultery and

incest, and marriage customs that kept men and women living apart until the men were over 40 (Shepherd 1995:58; Wills 2007:92). At the heart of the maintenance of those practices were the *Inibs*, local priestesses who encouraged conformity with “pagan” values. Candidius described these priestesses as “old crones who teach the very contrary of what I teach” (Campbell 1899:94). At his urging, these *Inibs* were eventually banished from the villages near Fort Zeelandia, a process that could only be accomplished by Company personnel (Blussé 1984:167; Lin 2006:75-76; Cheng 2009:188). The idea that *Inibs* prohibited the work of both church and state was so ingrained that nearly two decades later, in 1646, Formosa’s Governor, François Caron, instructed the Council of Formosa to “deliver Tevorang from the witches and false priestesses; inasmuch as by their heathenish, yea diabolical superstitions they exercise the most baneful influence on our still unenlightened converts” (Campbell 1899:219).

The demise of the *Inibs* created a vacuum that was quickly filled by Dutch missionaries. Candidius and his colleague Robert Junius were the two longest-serving missionaries on the island and the most instrumental in transforming native religious and cultural practices. They evangelized the natives, waged a spiritual campaign against idolatry in its various forms, opened schools, and introduced marriage ceremonies throughout the island. As a result, indigenous social structures were destroyed (Kuo 2001:134-162; Lin 2006:41; Scott 2014: 254). But they could not have been broken by the clergy alone; it took the full weight of Company personnel to pull off so monumental a task.

So long as political officials believed that spiritual aims advanced their worldly interests, they rationally aided the Christian mission. Nothing personifies this attitudes more dramatically than the military campaign against Mattau. As we noted above, hunters from this village had killed 60 Dutch soldiers in 1629. In the aftermath, Candidius and Junius made their case for a

military expedition against Mattau. In 1631, Governor Putnams reported to his superiors in Batavia that “the ministers Candidius and Junius emphasized the point that this [a military campaign against Mattau] would be the best and most powerful means by which to spread our religion, not only among the people of Sinkan but also in other villages” (Blussé 1999:189). In 1635 Batavia committed the necessary personnel to wage a successful campaign against the village, a campaign that was led by Junius and included hundreds of Dutch soldiers and more than one thousand indigenous troops (Shepherd 1993: 56; Scott 2014:255-56). This combined force burned the village to the ground. Blussé (1995:178) contends that these missionaries thus encouraged, or even manipulated, Company officials to assume an active military role in Formosa. The result, the clergy believed, would be a more stable political environment that would enable them to spread the gospel on the island.

We found no historical evidence to suggest that the government encouraged religions other than Reformed Protestantism, by, for example, tolerating Roman Catholicism in areas under their control or aiding traditional Yuanzhumin religious practices. The Netherlands might have been a Seventeenth Century hotspot for religious tolerance, but Formosa by and large was not. In this context, therefore, historical experience seems to have matched rational-choice predictions.

This is not to suggest, however, that political officials never challenged religious aims. There were persistent debates among the various actors about how much money it was costing the Company to support missionaries, and political authorities sometimes chafed at recommendations from the clergy. In a 1629 letter to the Governor-General in Batavia, Formosan Governor Peter Nuyts laments that Candidius “raises so many difficulties. The principal action that he requires and judges to be necessary for further progress is that the people

must be forced to listen to him by laws and punishment, but if we come to inflict punishment, this will only greatly endanger our [secular] mission here.” Two decades later, in 1658, the Council of Formosa (perhaps at the behest of the ministers then on the island) announced to the Governor-General in Batavia: “We now declare that idolatry in the first degree shall be punishable by public whipping and banishment from this place; that those guilty of incest shall be severely whipped in public and wear chains for six years” (Campbell 1899:316). However, the Committee of Seventeen (the head of the entire Company) responded that they “in no wise believe that these are the appropriate means whereby to lead these poor benighted people to forsake idolatry and to bring them to the saving knowledge of the truth” (Campbell 1899:317). It is of course ironic that a corporate board is giving theological lessons to the trained clergy on the ground.

Political officials therefore behaved in ways that they concluded would rationally benefit the secular aims of the Company on Formosa. For the most part, this policy meant that they aided the Christian mission in various ways throughout their forty years on Formosa.

### *Religious Leaders' Interactions with the State*

If the behavior of political officials vis-à-vis religious groups can largely be explained in rational choice terms, what of the actions of religious leaders concerning the state? As a reminder, a rational-choice theory posits that religious leaders want to maximize their spiritual influence over society. In a colonial context, one way to accomplish this goal is to minimize competition from native religious leaders, and a second is to ally with powerful political authorities who can provide resources for a religious mission. A fair amount of evidence supports this theory. As we

noted above, missionaries successfully lobbied political leaders to rid villages of Protestantism's only religious competition on the island: the *Inibs*. With a religious monopoly ensured, Protestant Christianity flourished in the villages under Dutch control. Moreover, the clergy facilitated military efforts by leading armed campaigns (in the case of Junius) or at least encouraging them (for most of the rest of the clergy).

It would be an understatement to say that the clergy merely cooperated with state-building elites. More than simply allying themselves to the Company, ministers were de facto political, judicial, educational, and administrative representatives for the VOC in the villages where they served. In those myriad roles, they opened schools and churches, regulated sexual practices, served as judges in local disputes, collected taxes, and provided relief to the poor (Blussé 1984:177; Shepherd 1993:62-3). As a symbol of the close bond between church and state, Junius reported to the Directors of the Company in 1636 that a peace treaty had been signed with the village of Sinkan "in front of our church," that the indigenous troops met "in front of the church" for prayer before the attack on Mattau, and that "in front of the church" the troops watched as "seven prisoners of Soulang were decapitated" (Campbell 1899:122 and 126). With their linguistic knowledge, relative longevity on the island, and familiarity with local conditions, the clergy were instrumental in extending administrative control over Formosa.

From the standpoint of the clergy, pacification of the island made possible its Christianization. Candidius reported on the tremendous progress in the recently pacified village of Sinkan, where he baptized nearly 900 villagers, celebrated 50 Christian marriages, and had begun to celebrate Sunday worship services (Scott 2014:250). Junius personally baptized an estimated 5,900 Formosan natives (Lin 2006:1). None of this would have been possible, in their minds, unless the political conditions were right, and the political conditions would only be right

if Dutch order and rule were established throughout the island. Overall, colonial authorities and Protestant missionaries on the island exhibited a mutually supportive relationship.

### *A Weberian Perspective*

In many respects, a rational-choice examination of Dutch Formosa corresponds with what Weber described as a priestly religion. As a reminder, in this model religious leaders are dependent on the state, see themselves as part the political apparatus, support the government's policies, and try to get the masses to obey the government by convincing them that God is on the side of the status quo. On its surface, the structural relationship between the Company and the clergy as we have described it is almost a textbook case of priestly religion. But, there were various ways in which religious and political interests in Dutch Formosa diverged, and in those instances the rational choice model is not the only, or even the best way, to describe the behavior of Dutch religious leaders.

The most obvious difference between secular and religious officials was on the purpose of colonization of Formosa in the first place. The primary motivation for the former was economic and for the latter spiritual. As Blussé notes (2000:XIII), the letters of the Governor-General "are full of reproaches about the high cost of the Formosan administration, and in particular the high costs of the [P]rotestant mission, which was Company sponsored." Among their revenue raising schemes, the Dutch sold deer-hunting passes to Chinese and also leased them farmland. Both policies, however, intensified conflict between the Chinese and the aboriginals, who believed the hunting grounds and the leased land were their own. Because their revenue came from the Chinese, Company officials defended the leaseholders against the

aborigines (Shepherd 1993:78; Andrade 2008:134). In 1635, Governor Putnams wrote to his superiors in Amsterdam requesting an additional 400 soldiers to “enlarge the Company’s authority and power among this rude nation” and to make possible an increase in “the number of Chinese land labourers” who at the time were being “molested by these barbaric people [aborigines] with greater frequency every day” (Blussé 2000:291). When push came to shove, then, Company officials preferenced economic interest over the potential Christianization of the native population.

Dutch clergy, on the other hand, rejected a purely economic calculus, defended their aboriginal mission field against the Chinese immigrants, and chafed at assuming administrative functions if they concluded that it undermined their religious goals. While Candidius was more than willing to defend the religious mission in secular terms, he also intoned that spiritual ends were more important than economic ones. In a letter he wrote to Governor Nuyts, Candidius suggested that “I want to find and get hold of a nation where the mind of the people can be bent and drawn towards our religion because of its intrinsic quality, not because of some other external unimportant things or because of profit. Well, this is the case with the inhabitants of Formosa, to whom we are not bound by such ties.” His political colleagues might have seen Formosa as a potential profit center, but Candidius viewed it instead as a *tabula rasa* unsullied by the logic of a profit economy and open to genuine evangelization.

Both Candidius and Junius enthusiastically supported the military conquest of Formosa. The purpose of territorial expansion for them, however, was that it offered more opportunities to spread the Christian message. In 1636 Junius reported to the Board of Directors in Amsterdam on the “favourable results of the war” and on how “great has been your acquisition of territory!”

He concluded, however, by positively noting “How wide a door has been opened to the conversion of the heathen!” (Campbell 1899:140).

The missionaries also defended indigenous Formosans against the newly arrived Chinese. In 1651, Governor Verberg complained to Governor-General Reyniersz that the “leasing” of the fields to the Chinese is “not so much to the disadvantage of the Formosans as some persons, chiefly the clergymen, loudly pretend it to be. The crooked ways and usurping pretensions of some clerical persons, who least of all should be guilty of such malpractice, impose upon the Government the very difficult task of endeavoring to prevent this” (Campbell 1899:274). From the standpoint of the clergy, the indigenous peoples were their mission field, and the ministers were willing to defend them against the Company. Missionaries also complained that the aborigines could not afford the small payments requested by the Company, and they wanted to continue a practice from the earliest years of colonization in which subsidies were given to recent converts (Shepherd 1993:75; Andrade 2008:184). Finally, clergy consistently asked to be relieved of the judicial and political offices required of them by the Company. Junius spoke for many of his clerical colleagues when he wrote to Company officials in Batavia: “As to the political offices, it is a burden that still rests heavily on our shoulders. . . . It requires great care and circumspection, exposes us to several dangers, and hampers us exceedingly in our vocation as clergymen” (Campbell 1899:150-151). The problem with these duties, Junius suggests, is that it compromised his ability to win converts to the faith.

Structurally, the clergy fit the Weberian ideal of priestly religion; they were part of the administrative apparatus of the VOC, and the Company paid their wages. Ideologically, however, the missionaries gravitated toward Weber’s concept of the prophetic role. They evaluated state policy in terms of its overlap with their religious calling, and they chided



Company officials when these administrators forgot that an important reason for their coming to Formosa was evangelistic.

### *Conclusion*

Under the circumstances of seventeenth-century Dutch Formosa, it was almost inconceivable that the Dutch clergy active in Taiwan would significantly oppose the VOC conquest and colonization of local indigenous peoples, or that the Company would interfere with or even fail to aid the church's religious activities on the island. A close, symbiotic relationship developed between the secular interests of the Company and the religious impulse of the missionaries within the colony between 1624 and 1662. The story of Dutch colonization of Formosa lends considerable support to a rational-choice theory of religious-state interactions. A key insight from rational-choice explanations focuses on how the religious marketplace affects the incentives of political and religious elites. Under a religious monopoly, clerics have little reason to oppose state practices or encourage religious tolerance. Even though in Europe the Netherlands was experiencing some degree of religious pluralism, its Formosan colony did not. Taiwan's historic church-state relations might more closely mirror that of colonial Latin America, where a near-religious monopoly also prevailed.

The application of Weber's concept of priestly and prophetic religion adds additional insight to the account. The absence of religious and political alternatives accentuated the priestly role of the church and the Christianizing function of the state. But there were deviations from this pattern, when the interests of the colonizers and the church diverged and religious leaders assumed a more prophetic than priestly function. The losers in all of these enterprises were the indigenous Formosans, who for the first of many times lost their land to foreign invaders. In

subsequent work, we hope to extend this empirical testing to later periods of the island's history and to the parallel Chinese society of Hong Kong.

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