

**Interview with Dr Llyn Scott, Editor of the Publication,
Scenes from Dutch Formosa: Staging Taiwan's Colonial Past
《Scenes from Dutch Formosa: Staging Taiwan's Colonial Past》
編者 Dr Llyn Scott 專訪**

Ann Heylen

**Associate Professor, Department of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature,
National Taiwan Normal University**

annheylen@ntnu.edu.tw

Llyn Scott was awarded the Ph.D. in Theater Criticism from Louisiana State University and M.A. in Stage Design from Florida State University. She began teaching performing arts and English at Soong Sil University in Seoul, Korea in 1984, and continued her teaching career at Fu Jen University in Taiwan from 1989 to 2009. She held the position of Theater Coordinator of the FJU College Theater from 1992 to 2009. Currently, she is Associate Professor of drama and English at Aletheia University in Tamsui. In addition to teaching, she has directed and designed more than fifty English language university student productions in Taiwan and over 100 productions throughout her teaching career. Besides *Scenes from Dutch Formosa: Staging Taiwan's Colonial Past* her publications include editing *English Onstage*, *Tales of Dutch Formosa*, and producing docudramas *Penalty of Piety* and *Tales of Dutch Formosa*.

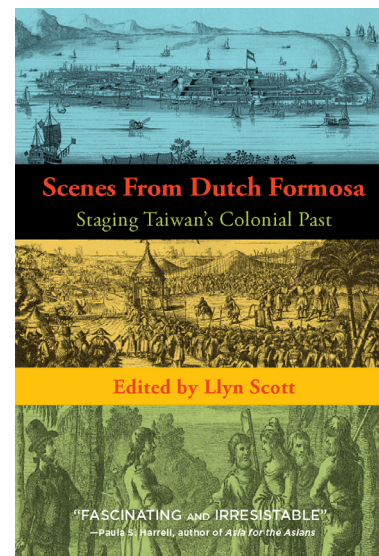


This volume is a brilliantly inspired history of drama featuring dramas about history. Prehistoric animist drama sits side by side with dramas by and about seventeenth century Christian missionaries and modern adaptations of traditional dramas in a buffet of primary texts alongside critical commentary and insightful histories, all eminently readable and joyfully devoured by the reader. From commedia dell'arte to contemporary anime, from the Netherlands to Italy to the mainland to Japan, this volume is comprehensive in its exploration of representations onstage of "Dutch Formosa" throughout the world for the past four centuries. Even experts will find something new, something exciting and something to cause one to rethink how Taiwan has been represented onstage, by itself and by others. A valuable reminder of Taiwan's intercultural past as staged then and now, how Dutch colonizers viewed the inhabitants of Taiwan and how they viewed themselves, and how Taiwan's past has been represented and misrepresented. International, interdisciplinary and intercultural there is something here for every scholar, student and artist interested in how the stage is used to depict society, history and the Other and the Self. This volume is a model for modern cultural studies, both in structure and content.

Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, Department of Theatre Arts
Professor of Theatre Arts
Loyola Marymount University

Excerpt from the Introduction:

"The book gives us a sense of the encounter between the *yuanzhumin*, who were tribal peoples during the years of Dutch control, and then makes us see the Dutch relationship with both the Chinese who came to Taiwan to play the role of cultural/economic intermediaries and the Chinese Ming loyalist rebels who fought the Dutch for control of this emerging Han agricultural zone in the early 1660s. It also makes us realize just how the Dutch view these different Chinese and indigenous peoples from the perspective of its pastors who wanted to bring them to Christ. It gives us insight into the culture of the colonizers and allows us to discover where they fit in the evolving *Verenigde Oost-*



Indische Compagnie mercantile and military imprium home-based on Batavia (Jakarta) after 1602. Finally, it gives us new and interesting ways of looking at how the Dutch attempted to deal with a mighty enemy, the Chinese/Japanese ethnic hybrid Coxinga who was pirate, Ming loyalist, warlord, and the fierce and implacable—if sometimes indecisive—foe of the new Manchu conquerors of China, who took over the Dutch colony after months of hard and bloody fighting in the 1661-1662 siege of the Zeelandia and Anping forts.”

Introduction, page xii

Murray A. Rubinstein

HOW DID THE PUBLICATION PROJECT START?

The first point that intrigued me was the catalogue of seventy-six books found in the Tayouan Consistory Library listed in Campbell’s *Formosa under the Dutch*.¹ I went through the list, one by one, tracing the complete titles, which were mostly in Latin and often were abbreviated, and matched authors with titles. When I read the final comment by Reverend Johannes Cruyff² on the loss of his personal library, that was a dramatic moment for me; I realized that these titles represent a treasure of 17th century knowledge. They were by no means only missionary books related to theology, but volumes on law, science, and philology.

IN 2003, YOU WERE THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR OF THE DUTCH FORMOSA RADIO PLAYS WITH RADIO TAIWAN INTERNATIONAL. IS THIS PUBLICATION A FOLLOW UP?

My longtime working relationship with Ann Heylen inspired me to continue the project. We had completed *Tales of Dutch Formosa* (TDF), but we did not have extant literature of the period itself. The TDF plays, together with Heylen’s ready translations of the lampoons in *East India Chat*, led to the idea of creating a collection of different genres. We began to find other contributors including John Shufelt who has written extensively on George Psalmanazar. As a theater person, I was also looking into the possibility of finding a contemporary adaptation of the *Battles of Coxinga*, a puppet play by Chikamatsu. I was very fortunate to discover Cory Einbinder and Kalle Macrides who had adapted and performed a popular culture version of

¹ Campbell, William (1992 [1903]), *Formosa under the Dutch*. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., pp. 328-330.

² Reverend Johannes Cruyff served the VOC in Formosa from 1649-1662. In 1651 he was appointed in Soulang where he stayed until 1662. See Chiu, Hsin-hui (2008), *The Colonial ‘Civilizing Process’ in Dutch Formosa 1624-1662*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, p. 308, 310.

Donald Keene's translation to broaden our spectrum of genres. With this, it became a mission to find other representative pieces to fill out and make the collection more comprehensive. To find a representative film became my next quest.

PLEASE TELL US SOMEMORE OF THE OTHER GENRES.

In total, the work has the following genres including sea shanties, the Preface and excerpt from Nomsz's Dutch neo-classical tragedy, two lampoons between Schoolmasters, Shipmate, Catechist, Merchant, and Military Officer, a Chinese screenplay, Japanese puppet play, Taiwanese video-game script, eighteenth century Italian comedy by Goldoni, and original radio docudrama. To make the *Sino-Dutch War 1661* a print-part of the book, we received the permission from the film director to publish the English subtitles. To this end, we transcribed the English titles from the film to create a screenplay.

I realized we had a gap in that so far nothing represented the aboriginals/ indigenous peoples. In 2001 I had written and produced *Snake Dreamings*--a dance drama montage of Chu lyric poetry, aboriginal chants, dance, drumming, Taiwanese snake myths, and extracts from Dutch Formosa VOC journal entries. The text by itself, however, was too fragmented to be published. Our search to fill the vacuum on the aboriginals/ indigenous peoples continued. A student had given me a manga series that features Koxinga. A translator was recruited to read aloud the story in English. As a result, we realized the narrative of Taiwan history through manga sounded too simplistic and generalized to add much of value to this project.

The translator for the Koxinga comic book, Igor Wu, knew about a video-game based on the Taiwanese legend of Princess Banenn and the Snake King. Thanks to him, we switched to the video-game, contacted, and interviewed the author, Michael Wu, and discovered that he also had written a novel about Princess Banenn.³ This was a substantial find with enough literature to merit publishing. We watched the video-game and copied the Chinese audio. We decided to include episode five in our book. This episode had characters, action, and even though it had a game format, we could omit that part and still have a very nice dramatic story that made sense. The video-game text translated into English allowed us to represent the snake mythology and cultural elements of the Paiwan people. This was great. Kurt Cline then came on the scene. He has an interest in shamanism and as a researcher, he was quite happy to do more research on

³ 古昌弘、謝建宏，2009，《巴冷公主之一鬼湖情緣》，台北：大智通文化。

snake symbolism. Cline is based in Taiwan and familiar with cultural performances. He drew inspiration from dance in particular such as Cloud Gate Dance Company's *Nine Songs* with images of shaman, mother goddess, and snake totem.⁴

THE VOLUME CONTAINS SEVERAL TRANSLATED PIECES AS WELL.

Translations are a central part of the volume. Grunnill and Harmsen helped to complete the 17th century historical background through plays. After collecting the literature, we needed to locate researchers to provide the academic background for each work. This was necessary to connect and give the reader some lenses with which to interpret and appreciate the selection of excerpts. It was not possible to translate all the plays in their totality, so we only selected dramatically crucial and thematically contrasting scenes that might excite the reader. For example from *Anthonius Hambroek or the Siege of Dutch Formosa*, we chose the scenes depicting Hambroek as a hostage of Koxinga sent to persuade the Dutch officers in the fort to surrender. His heroic refusal to capitulate to the enemy and save his life brings out vividly contrasting emotional reactions from all the characters including his daughter and Chinese guard. In addition to the historical and academic background, for a little relief, we added the production log for Adhesive Theatre's adaptation of *The Battles of Coxinga*. It is lighter in tone, but adds a real sense of how a director and actors invented a popular culture style of performing and interpreting a 17th century puppet play through animé.

IS THERE A VISIBLE THREAD RUNNING THROUGH THE BOOK, A THEME THAT BRINGS ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TOGETHER?

We wanted to focus on variety and diversity of viewpoints. Even the opinions of the different characters are in contrast with each other. Let me give an example. In the lampoons, we read about VOC bureaucratic corruption. In the sea shanties, we have nostalgia, complaints, and human emotions. We encounter the heroicizing of the Dutch cause in the Hambroek play which contrasts with the Chinese interpretation of the Dutch in the *Sino-Dutch War 1661* film. In the Japanese puppet play, Koxinga's mission is portrayed in scenes of highly stylized violence characteristic of Japanese theater. The differences are striking, and through this selection of literature one can catch a glimpse of the cultural aesthetics that pervade all the

⁴ *Nine Songs* by Cloud Gate was choreographed by Lin Hwa Min. <http://www.lcsd.gov.hk/ce/CulturalService/Programme/en/dance/000003df.html>.

different mimetic visions centering on a single historical theme and its main players.

THANK YOU DR SCOTT FOR THIS INTERVIEW. WE CONCLUDE WITH A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE EDITED VOLUME, FOLLOWED BY THE TABLE OF CONTENTS:

With an international cast of contributors, and beautifully illustrated, *Scenes from Dutch Formosa* brings together a variety of genres and historical essays to contextualize the Dutch Formosan colonial era between 1625 and 1663 for an audience of postcolonial studies, culture studies, and performance studies readers. The collection examines diverse Dutch, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and Taiwanese dramatic-dialogic interpretations of the Dutch East India Company's (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*) presence in Taiwan. Introductory and concluding essays set the global stage with a scholarly sweep on the role of Dutch Formosa in an ongoing international drama of diplomacy.

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A.J.E. Harmsen

Departments of Dutch Studies and Dutch Language and Culture

Leiden University

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Translated by I. C. Grunnill

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Graduate Institute of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature

National Taiwan Normal University

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Ann Heylen

Graduate Institute of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature

National Taiwan Normal University

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A.J. E. Harmsen

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Llyn Scott

Department of English

Aletheia University

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Department of English

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Ann Heylen

Graduate Institute of Taiwan Culture, Languages and Literature

National Taiwan Normal University

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Llyn Scott

Department of English

Aletheia University

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Murray A. Rubinstein

Baruch College of the City University of New York

Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University