

<p>Kirk W. Larsen, <i>Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Choson Korea, 1850-1910</i>, Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press, 2008, 328 pp..</p> <p>Dominique Tyl</p> <p>In the very clear and extremely useful introduction, the author explains why and how the concept of imperialism or colonialism, can be applied to understand the relationship between Qing empire and its neighbour, the Choson kingdom of Korea. If the thesis is well enunciated in the first pages of the book, the demonstration has to go through the turns and twists of history as succession of significant events.</p> <p>This gives a beautiful reading, but sometimes difficult to follow step after step. Would only the specialists be able to really see through all re-readings of years rich of rapidly cumulative events? The book is the outcome, considerable reviewed, of a Ph.D. dissertation, and not an historical novel.</p> <p>Happily, with a lively style in many pages, take you by hand all along the period under scrutiny, and you reach the end of the book with the satisfying feeling that you know a lot about Qing imperialism, but also with debates concerning this policy inside China, herself entangled with other imperialist powers on her soil, Japan's ambition, Russia advance toward the East, Britain's diplomacy in Korea, and this country's troubled government and society.</p>	<p>Kirk W. Larsen, 《传统、条约及贸易：清朝帝国主义与朝鲜，1850-1910》，哈佛大学亚洲中心，哈佛大学出版社，2008 年，328 页。</p> <p>狄明德</p> <p>在该书颇为清楚且非常有用的引言中，作者解释了为何帝国主义或殖民主义可被用于理解大清帝国与其邻邦朝鲜王国之间的关系。这一理论在此书的前几页就得到了很好的阐释，但其论证却须经过由许多相继重大事件构成的曲折历史来展开。</p> <p>这固然给读者带来上佳的阅读体验，但有时却很难让我们按步骤地跟上作者的思路。难道只有专家们才能真正看透对这由事件迅速累积而成的编年史的所有重读吗？这本书更像是经过仔细检查的博士论文，而不是历史小说。</p> <p>幸好，文章多处的行文风格都很生动，作者手把手地带你一起仔细观察那一时期，如此一来，当读完本书后，你会满足地感到你对清朝帝国主义有了颇多的了解，但面对书中所述的（当时）中国的政策、中国与其它帝国主义强权之间在中国领土上的纠缠、日本的野心、俄国向东方的扩张、英国在朝鲜的外交、以及这个国家的问题重重的政府与社会，你也会心生争议。</p>
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Maybe, when you read the first pages of the book intending to go from beginning to end, you may see the introduction as another piece of concept clarification, somehow abstract, followed by summary of each chapter, as customary. Well, before reading a chapter and at the end of it, go to the introduction, think again over the concepts (imperialism under various forms), and appreciate the clear line or two on the subject-matter of what you have just read.

Suggestion for a reading which reaps harvests beyond initial intention of many a reader. You will be attracted by this part of the world where actors are not strong western powers versus poor, anachronistic Asian declining forces. Of course, Japan is a case of ambivalent position. But high imperialism was somehow late to come, and limited in time. Of obvious significance, of course; but not enough to understand all that happened there during the 19th century, and probably at least some aspects of our own time.

So, what happened? First, the author invites to re-evaluate the tribute system, whose too simple interpretation by J. K. Fairbank cannot do “justice to the multiplicity of relationship between China and Korea over the centuries.” (p.24) Then, appear influential Chinese persons...

During the period under study, Li Hongzhang, of course is very present (see the useful, but not too detailed index). He is the main figure among the reform-oriented modernizers aiming at strengthening China,

也许,当你在读此书的前几页并打算从头至尾一遍读完时,你可能会把引言看做另一份有些抽象的概念解释,而在其之后按惯例接着对每章内容的概要。那么好,在开始读每一章之前以及在读完每一章之后,你可以再回到引言部分,重新思考一下那些概念(在各种形式下的帝国主义),并鉴赏针对你刚刚读过的主旨内容的一两条清晰主线。

如果你想从此书得到超越一般读者之阅读初衷的更多收获,那么将会吸引你的是这部分世界,而其中的参与者并不是西方强权相对贫穷、落后的亚洲衰退势力。当然,日本是一个矛盾的案例。但不知何故,高度帝国主义来得很晚,并且延续时间也有限。它当然有明显的重要性;但不足以理解在 19 世纪所发生的一切,也至少不足以理解我们当今时代的一些方面。

那么,到底发生了什么?首先,作者重新评价了进贡制度,因为他认为 J. K. Fairbank 对此制度的解读过于简单,以至于没有“公平看待几个世纪以来中朝两国关系的多元性。”(第 24 页)。随后,文中出现了几位有影响力的中国人...

在该书所研究的那一时期里,李鸿章当然有其重要地位(详见有用但不太详细的索引部分)。在中国当时众多的改革派现代化推进者中,李鸿章是主要人物,他旨在强国兴邦,甚至为

even at the cost of concessions in order to avoid uncertain open conflict. (p.57) He also approved the installation of a telegraph line in Korea linking more efficiently the two countries and checking Japanese influence. (p.136). His end came with the defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese war in 1894.

Yuan Shikai, another important figure, does not invite to sympathy. Called the *de facto* king of Korea (p.130) when he was Qing high commissioner in this country, he was described by nearly everybody as intelligent, ambitious, brutal, intriguing, coarse, etc... Li Hongzhang made repeated effort to refrain his activities, but Yuan did succeed to enforce a policy of domination in Korea.

Less known, Chen Shutang is credited with successfully promoting official Qing diplomatic and commercial presence among Korean people. Merchant, sometimes soldiers, and other ordinary Chinese people should not be forgotten, and we see them quite alive along the pages of the book...All this does not summarize all the data, descriptions, and analysis of the book, which show how China tried to keep its advantages in Korea, in adopting a multilateral imperialism approach, but failed at the end...

What about Korea? We have already noticed that the tributary system should not be seen in a too simplistic Sinocentric order accepted by China's neighbors. The book ends with the pure colonization of Korea by Japan, with an evaporating presence of Great-Britain. For a variety of reasons, Qing China was more interested in expanding

此不惜让步,以避免无常的公开冲突(第 57 页)。也正是他批准在朝鲜架设一条电话线,以使中朝两国之间的联通更为高效,同时牵制日本的影响力(第 136 页)。但中国在 1894 年(中日)甲午战争中失败,他的时代也随之结束了。

另一位重要人物是袁世凯,但他很难得到读者的同情。当他在朝鲜任职清朝高级专员时被称为真正的朝鲜之王(第 130 页),几乎所有人都把他形容为有才智、有野心、有魅力,但也残忍、粗俗等等...李鸿章曾多次试图遏制他的活动,但袁还是成功地执行了在朝鲜的统治政策。

人们对陈书堂的了解较少,可正是他成功地在朝鲜民众中推行了正式清朝外交及商务往来。当然,(当时的)商人、官兵、及其它普通中国百姓也不该被忘记,我们可以在书中看到对他们生动的描写...作者在书中用大量数据、描写和分析展现了清朝中国是如何试图通过采用多边帝国主义方式来保持其在朝鲜的优势,但却最终失败...对此,以上的评述无法概括其全部。

朝鲜又当如何呢? 我们已经注意到,进贡制度不该被过分简单地视为一项由各个中国邻邦所接受的以中国为中心的规则。该书最后以日本对朝鲜的完全殖民、大英帝国在朝势力的蒸发消失为结尾。因种种理由,清朝中国对向西扩张更感兴趣(据 Perdue 和 Emma Teng 就中国扩张

<p>westward (books of Perdue and Emma Teng on Chinese expansionism, cited by Lars, have been reviewed in this journal).</p> <p>It is also significant even for today to read that Korea has a strong sense of identity and a decisive ability to guard her autonomy (p.291); any special relationship, here meaning friendly, between China and Korea does not completely erased, among the Koreans, the worry of any resurgence of Chinese imperialism. (p.293)</p> <p>The footnotes, which are often substantial, besides giving references, are welcome to be edited this way. It facilitates very much their reading, as they add much interesting information and quotations enriching the text. A good editorial decision of a book whose author seems to say it was fun to write (p.vi). The adjective would not exactly apply to its reading, probably a better word would be captivating.</p>	<p>主义的著述，由 Lars 引用，其书评已在本杂志刊出)。</p> <p>如此书所述，朝鲜有着强烈的本体感（本体身份归属感），并且有决定性的能力来捍卫其自治（第 291 页）；中国与朝鲜之间任何友好的特殊关系都不能完全抹去朝鲜人对中国帝国主义苏醒的担心，而这即使在今天看来也意义重大（第 293 页）。</p> <p>用于提供参考信息的注脚通常字数都很多，但本书的注脚被以这样的方式编辑却很合适。这可以在很大程度上促进其阅读，因为这些注脚增添了许多有趣的信息和引用语，从而丰富了文本内容。这样的编辑决定对此书很好，虽然其作者表示写作是有趣的（第 vi 页），但“有趣”这一形容词并不适于来形容对此书的阅读，也许“迷人”一词更为恰当。</p>
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