

CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649317745

Chinese Foreign Policy by John Ross

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN ROSS

**CHINESE
FOREIGN POLICY**



CHINESE
FOREIGN POLICY.

BY

REV. JOHN ROSS,

NEWCHWANG.

SHANGHAI:

PRINTED AT THE "CELESTIAL EMPIRE" OFFICE,

1877.

Ch 120.19
/

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
FROM THE
ARCHIBALD CARY COOLIDGE
FUND

December 31, 1937

CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY.

THE conquest of the "Middle Kingdom" by the early Chinese settlers, like the planting of the English colonies in America, Australia, and New Zealand, was by the ploughshare rather than by the sword. For they too found other races before them, the Miao and the Man, the Di and the Yi, who occupied the hills for the hunt and the plains for their flocks. But if they ploughed valley after valley and got possession of hillside after hillside, producing food for hundreds where their savage predecessors could scarcely feed units, they had from the first to protect with the sword the produce of the plough. If they have steadily and rapidly increased both in population and in the acreage reclaimed by their industry, they have never been able to lay aside the sword, for their nomad neighbours on all sides much preferred taking the grain for the granary to the toil of tillage. And only a study of her history can show how often China has had to bend her neck to the bondage of men who passed most of their lives in the saddle and knew nothing of the steady labour of the farm.

Away from her side, she has seen around her from Japan to India for thirty centuries only barbarians ignorant of phi-

losophy, destitute of literature and learning civilization only by contact with her. Not once but a dozen times has the defeated Greece of the East taught the victorious Romans. And the intellectual pride which is so offensive to our foreign taste, is only natural to one who has during that period always lent and never borrowed. Other peoples could wield a defler sword, but she has not known that nation which could command so graceful and dexterous a pen. It is only recently that foreigners, possessing so many hundred-fold greater learning, have attempted to make it available to her by giving some attention to style, and any one reading the graceful flow of the native pen need not be astonished if the Chinese up to the present have despised the stilted and uncouth style dictated by the foreigner. Not that she is unwilling to learn; she has not had the means. There is scarcely one in a myriad of Chinese scholars who has had any reason to be convinced of the greater philosophical research and literary ability of western nations, though they have long acknowledged, because they have had ocular proof of, the superiority of western mechanical skill. Thus her literary pride is easily accounted for, and instead of decrying it let those who can, help those who have begun to remove it, by teaching her greater learning than she knows and higher truths than she is possessed of.

Because she has been the most diligent cultivator of the soil in Eastern Asia she has been and is by far the most wealthy nation. She has therefore never known any nation outside her borders, which was not actuated by the desire, always carried out when possible, of filling their lean purses with her full ones. Her conquests have therefore been as a rule purely defensive, and instigated by frequent attempts on the part of her defeated few to plunder her treasures and take possession of her soil. If the present dynasty and the

people under it are in mortal dread of foreign annexation it is only because they have never known a country with the power, which had not the desire to rule over China. If they are now afraid of Europeans so were their forefathers of other nations, the Han of Hwingnoo, the Wei of Zowzan (Yowyan), the Tang of Doojue (Doogna) the Sung of Liao and Kin, and the Ming of Mongols. If therefore the experience of the ages teaches, Chinese experience proves conclusively that no outside country and no foreign people can seek her borders without designs upon her freedom.

China's first contact with western nations did not tend to create respect for their character, for, from what is known of the ancient traders, they appear to have been often enough ready to sell pounds of principle for ounces of silver. She began to fear designs on her territory about two centuries ago as will be seen below. She has since then had occasion greatly to increase her estimate of western power, and she is now ready to submit to almost any humiliation rather than risk a war which she knows will be certain defeat. She has learned to dread the prowess of the west, as her ancient dynasties the northern hordes, but she has not yet acquired the knowledge of the immense superiority of those principles actuating foreign governments. The Chinese are ignorant of Christianity. They are unacquainted with its power, beginning to be felt in moulding the foreign as well as the domestic policy of western powers, and which will soon classify wars of mere conquest with the free-booting, marauding baron of the middle ages and the private individual robber of earlier times, each of whom believed it right enough to take possession of what did not belong to him. If then we feel offended, we need not be astonished if the Chinese regard us as their fathers did the Mongols, and it is no great wonder if

they believe that wars are levied against them only because of the indemnity to be paid after the war is over. They believe, and all their bitterly conservative and exclusive foreign policy is based on the belief, that western nations are bent on seizing the treasuries of their cities and the lands of their beautiful valleys.

It is vain to reason that foreign nations, could take possession of her land on any month of any year they chose. It is useless to explain that foreign nations wish only to be her friends and have no other desire than to see her strong and prosperous. She will not believe, for all her long past history proclaims the reverse. If you argue that such a belief is absurd after the various wars, which always laid her naked at the feet of the foreigner, and more especially the last war which saw her capital under foreign arms and her Emperor a fugitive, the sage politician will still shake his head and persist in believing that there were other reasons for retiring from Peking, besides the ostensible ones. And what could be this true reason? "The knowledge by the allied powers of the universal hostility against them in the hearts of all the Chinese people, there being no native party to welcome them, as there always has been in every dynastic change. They saw the time for seizing China was not yet come. They retired, but only to bide their time. They departed, but only after they took important measures to create a foreign party in China to receive them on their return. They are now preparing their armies, laying their measures, creating a foreign party, and when ready, they will seek for and seize the merest pretext for proclaiming war,—a war which will be a short, sharp, terrible struggle in which the present dynasty will be cracked up like an eggshell, and which will leave China plundered as she

"never was before". Such is the universal belief of intelligent Chinese, whatever they say, or however they may attempt to hide it.

It is not true that the present Manchu Government hates foreigners more than a native one would, nor is it true that the common people love foreigners more than the magistrate does; nor again is it true that mob violence is instigated by the magistrate, though it may be true that he does not always do even what he could to restrain it. Manchu hate of the foreigner is nothing like that of the blue-blooded Chinamen's and no one dreads the effects of mob-violence against foreigners as the magistrate does, though I believe that in heart he is one with the mob, not because he is a magistrate but because he is a Chinaman. I have heard it stated on the best authority that after the Tientsin massacre, the highest officials in the land were in a state of terror day and night, and the reader following the above rapid sketch of the present basis of Chinese foreign policy will understand the reason. Mobs are however above the law, for though the Chinese are, in ordinary circumstances, perhaps the most easily governed of all nations, when their passions are thoroughly roused there is no controlling them.

Do people who clamour against the tardiness and conservatism of the Chinese government know to what they are driving? Are they aware that it is as impossible for a government to stand in China as it is in England, without the good will, based on the respect of the people? and that the present dynasty has lost enormously in native esteem because of the numerous concessions made to the ever increasing demands of foreigners? The central government labours under the disadvantage of being a small foreign nation ruling over a large one, and ruling by means of respect for past bravery