

DOCTORAL THESIS

張蔭桓(1837-1900)與近代中國: 一位清季大臣從"雜流"置身"貳卿"的個案研究

林錦源

Date of Award:
2005

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張蔭桓（1837-1900）與近代中國——
一位清季大臣從“雜流”置身“貳卿”的個案研究

**The Life and Times of Zhang Yin-huan (1837-1900) in Modern China:
The Changing Political Career of a Late Qing Official**

林錦源

哲學博士學位課程

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二零零五年八月

提要

張蔭桓是十九世紀下半葉活躍於中國政治舞臺的外交官員。然而，歷年來史學家對其評價皆一譽參半。張氏出身佐雜，報捐監生知縣起家，能夠置身貳卿，以清代推崇“清流”的官場標準而言，這些例子是殊不常見的，亦往往最容易受人誹議。

過往大部報捐者都是借助自身或家族財富而取得虛有其名的官銜，充其量，祇為空虛的國庫補充一點收入而已，大部份人的一生都是庸碌渡過。張蔭桓自知出身低微，但是他並沒有因此而妄自菲薄，反之，更加積極進取，以求獲得上司的賞識和器重，就“非清流”黨而言，這種個案是較為罕見的。

本文旨在透過探討張蔭桓的仕途生涯，從而達至知人論世的目的。事實上，張氏的仕途就與不少中國近代重要歷史事件相互緊扣在一起，透過全面剖釋張蔭桓的仕途經歷，也就是一頁晚清中國史的縮影和寫照。從剿捻到治河、從海防到教案、從稅關到租界、從出使到華工的保護、從索賠談判至商借外債、從遣使拒使到全權大臣、從招股集資到鐵路礦務的開發，這些都是張蔭桓生平事蹟的真實寫照，也是全文研究重點所在，也間接反映當時中國實在無法擺脫列強壓迫和侵略的厄運。

本文的結論認為張蔭桓能夠從佐雜置身貳卿的個案，殊非僥倖。固然其才華受到上司以至光緒皇帝的賞識和器重，是不可或缺的因素；然而，政治的取向猶如一場賭注，只需將注碼押錯，也很容易成為政治鬥爭的犧牲品。張蔭桓在維新變法期間，從沒有發表過激之言，其改革思想較著重經濟發展，傾向緩進和欠缺激情，更有甚者，張氏從未有觸及憲制的改革，對密友康有為的「托古改制」變法思想，從不表示支持，充其量祇是著眼於金融、經濟、工業生產和整頓地方吏治等各方面，當中如鐵路、礦務、招股等雖說是戊戌新政，但均離不開洋務的本質和範疇。

一些學者認為張蔭桓是戊戌維新的積極參予者和實際推動者，這種觀點是很值得商榷的，透過本文的進一步論析，張氏充其量祇可算是維新運動的同情和支持者，由於與同鄉康有為的交往甚密，長期被誤作“康黨”人物，亦因此而失去性命，這是他自己無法預計，也是無法操控的。

在英德商貸與俄借旅大的外交談判期間，張蔭桓被指稱貪污受賄，他在香港上海匯豐銀行及華俄道勝銀行均有來歷不明的存款，這些新史料的發現為張氏貪污納賄的指責和批評，提供了實質和使人懷疑的論據，也為這位悲劇人物在歷史上留下了不可磨滅的一點。

Abstract

Zhang Yin-huan was an active politician and diplomat in China during the second half of the nineteenth century. However, historians' assessment of Zhang has always been mixed. Zhang obtained his first post as an Expectant Magistrate through the purchased title of student of Imperial Academy, and was eventually promoted to the rank of Junior Vice President of the Board of Revenue. There were only a few such cases of exceptional promotion for officials without formal academic qualifications, and they were usually looked down upon by the traditional scholars.

Many of the other officials who obtained official ranks through title purchase in their early years did so on their own or their families' wealth. They spent their lives making little contribution to the nation. Despite his humble background, Zhang had never hidden his own capabilities, on the contrary, he put extra effort in his performance to gain his supervisor's appreciation and recommendation.

This thesis studies and accesses the career of Zhang Yin-huan in the context of his age. Zhang's career was intertwined with some of the most significant historical events in modern China. Detailed analysis of Zhang's civil career is necessarily a study of Chinese history in the late Qing period. From suppressing Nien bandits to organizing works on rivers to preventing flooding, from planning coastal fortifications to handling of foreign missionary affairs, from administering the levy of customs and duties to negotiating the leasing territories to foreign powers, from being Minister to foreign countries to advocating for protection of overseas Chinese, from negotiating war indemnity to negotiating bank loans, from being rejected as Plenipotentiary by the Japanese to being appointed as Plenipotentiary with full power and from fund raising through stock issue to opening mines and railways, Zhang's life and career, besides being the focus of this thesis, was also a vivid illustration of the oppression and invasions of China by foreign powers at the time.

This thesis concluded that Zhang's career success was not due to luck. Indeed, his success would not have been possible if his talent had not been recognized by his supervisors and the Emperor. However, politics are in some way just like gambling: by taking the wrong side, all can be lost. During the Reform Movement, Zhang was not a radical or an active reformer as suggested by some scholars, as he was more inclined to economic aspects of reformation and favoured a mild and gradual approach. In this way, he was at most a sympathizer and supporter of the Reform

Movement rather than an active advocate. Yet this sympathy and his close friendship with Kang Yu-wei, who was also from Nam Hoi, Guangdong, eventually cost him his life. The outcome was certainly beyond his control and anticipation. Being suspicious of accepting bribes during foreign loan negotiations and the leasing of the Liaotung Peninsula, including the harbours of Port Arthur and Talienwan to Russia also tarnished his name, making him a tragic historical figure in modern Chinese history.

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