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印象與真相—— 清朝中英兩國的覲禮之爭

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乾隆朝英使馬戛爾尼 (George Macartney, 1737-1806) 來華事件中最引人注目的覲禮之爭，一直是學界的世紀之謎。本文根據龐雜的清宮檔案以及散見於歐、美各地的西方原始材料，嘗試深入析探各文本與圖像的形塑過程及其作者的主觀意識，新發現當時或為提供雙方稍後各自表述的空間，遂協議先在入覲時行略加修改的中式禮節：雙膝下跪三次，每次三俯首深鞠躬，但不叩頭；緊接著在呈遞國書時，則用英式禮節，單膝跪地，親手將國書交給皇帝，但免去吻手禮。

又由於馬戛爾尼否認雙膝跪叩一事，亦與一八一六年來華的阿美士德 (William Pitt Amherst, 1773-1857) 使團及一八三三年的律勞卑 (William John Napier, 1786-1834) 事件有直接或間接的關涉，故文中也將討論這些與覲禮相關之衝突在鴉片戰爭以及晚清的對外交涉中所曾扮演的角色，並嘗試辨明歷史真相與印象間的分際。

關鍵詞：中英關係 覲禮之爭 馬戛爾尼 阿美士德 斯當東

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Impression vs. Reality:
A Study on the Guest Ritual
Controversy between Qing China and Britain

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Among all incidents that took place during the visit of George Macartney (1737-1806) and his retinue to China in 1793, the diplomatic encounter involving the guest ritual between China and Britain is particularly controversial. Which form of ceremony Macartney actually performed in front of Qianlong's throne has long been an unsolved mystery and topic of debate in academic circles.

Using numerous documents from the Qing imperial archives, British manuscripts, as well as printed materials from various libraries throughout Europe and North America, the author attempts to provide an objective and comprehensive historical account of these guest rituals and how they were narrated throughout history.

By analyzing the way in which texts and illustrations were produced, and conducting direct and cross examinations, the author attempts to grasp the subjective point of view of each author. New findings reveal that the Chinese and the British reached a compromise, and later reports of these guest rituals documented by Chinese and British officials were created in such a way as to provide ample room for interpretation advantageous to each side, while neglecting those aspects considered less respectful.

The agreement was that Macartney would perform a slightly modified Chinese ceremony during the reception of the British Ambassador, which consisted of kneeling three times on both knees and bowing profoundly thrice each time without performing the kowtow. Immediately thereafter he would perform the British ceremony when delivering the credential, which involved kneeling on one knee and delivering the document into the Emperor's own hands while omitting the kissing of the Emperor's hand.

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Macartney later denied having knelt down on both knees and this controversy directly or indirectly influenced the diplomatic encounters between Qing China and Britain when Macartney's successors William Pitt Amherst (1773-1857) and William John Napier (1786-1834) visited China in 1816 and 1833, respectively. Analyzing these events, the author tries not only to investigate the impact of these confrontations on the Opium War and the diplomatic history of the late-Qing, but also to differentiate between impression and reality in history.

Keywords: Sino-Britain relations, guest ritual controversy, George Macartney, William Pitt Amherst, George Leonard Staunton