Abstract

Guo Songtao (郭嵩焘) was the first Chinese minister to Great Britain in the late Ch‘ing period.

During his two-year stay in the Great Britain, he saw how the western countries differed from China. He recorded down his observations in a diary, and it is through the study of his diary, letters and memorials that I have gathered materials about Guo Songtao’s ideologies.

This Academic Exercise is a study on his views on the western world and his comparisons of the western countries with China. I have focused on the political, diplomatic, educational and culture aspects of his views. These four areas help to illustrate the fact that Guo Songtao was a high ranking diplomatic official who was concerned with issues that greatly affect the two civilisations. As Guo Songtao was an intellectual with an open-mind, his understanding of the Chinese culture and acceptance of the western world has provided an interesting insight on China’s attitude towards the west.