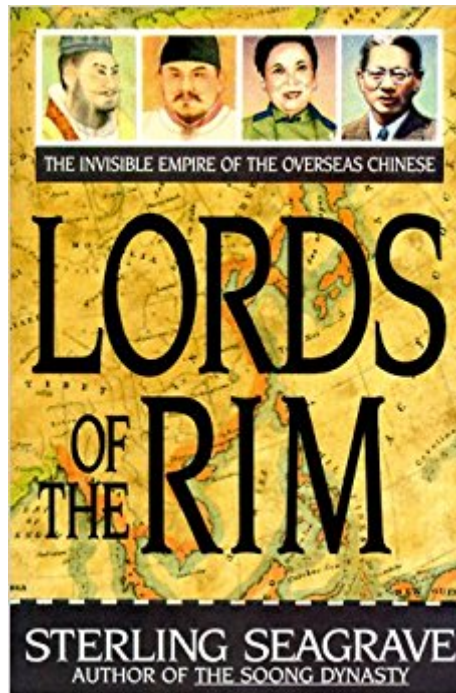




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# Lords Of The Rim



## Synopsis

An examination of the complex web of Chinese operations dominating the Far East's booming economies is part economic analysis, part history, and part cautionary tale that encompasses murder, betrayal, corruption, and syndicates and features kingmakers, emperors, generals, spies, and pirates.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

On one level, this book is a lively version of Chinese history from 1100 B.C. to the present, through the screen of the dealings of its merchant class. On another level, it is an Arabian Nights tale of scandal, war, politics and, above all, money-making. "To be rich is good," runs an old Chinese proverb. On yet another level, it is a brilliant analysis of the enormous power wielded by a widely scattered group of 55 million Chinese merchants who live in self-imposed or government-ordered exile throughout Asia and, increasingly, in the U.S. and Canada. In the scramble of Western entrepreneurs for footholds in China's enormous markets, asserts Seagrave (The Soong Dynasty), this is the group to reckon with. They're already there. They have a hammerlock on commerce in nearly every country of the Pacific Rim. It is they who financed the current economic boom that has made China the third largest market in the world after the U.S. and Japan, and they who have the greatest stakes in which direction post-Deng China takes. To top off his engrossing account, Seagrave speculates on several possibilities including the breakaway of some southern regions, origin of most of the overseas Chinese, into independent countries. Seagrave has delivered an engrossing mercantile history and he looks forward, with a blend of apprehension and admiration, to

the early 21st century, when China is expected to become the world's largest market and the Chinese to join the ranks of the world's most powerful producers. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Seagrave, the son of missionary parents, has written numerous books about the Far East, including *Dragon Lady* (LJ 3/15/92). He believes that today 55 million expatriate Chinese dominate the economy of the Pacific Rim. Here he explores how these overseas Chinese came to be so powerful. Seagrave begins in the 11th century B.C.E., when merchants were exiled to the South China coast by the oppressive Chou dynasty. They then moved offshore, establishing economic power bases. Seagrave describes how over the centuries the overseas Chinese became incredibly rich. He discusses many contemporary issues, including their financing of the economic boom in China, how they achieved an edge on Western companies, and how even the Japanese cannot do business without their assistance. His is an engaging and absorbing history appropriate for the general reader as well as the specialist. Highly recommended. W. L. Wuerch, Micronesian Area Research Ctr., Univ. of Guam Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I have read this one twice and bought several copies to give to those who have an interest in China. Worth the read. Full history of China. Written by a British diplomat who grew up in China. Highly recommended. An Englishman gave me my first copy.

Thank you!

The Seagraves never fail to inform, Their efforts are stellar in all books that I've read and reviewed. Always a five-star production.

Great book and lots of good info. Seagrave books never disappoint.

I was pleasantly surprised by this offering of Sterling Seagrave's as normally, his works would be double the thickness of this book but hey, isn't it this saying that don't judge the book by its cover? The book spanned thousands of years, going back through time in China illustrating to us what events led to the exodus of Chinese overseas. I simply couldn't put the book down reading about those legendary statesmen like Sun Ping, Sun Tzu, Wu Tze Shih, Chao Tsao, & so forth. I vaguely knew of what my older generations told me about them when I was a kid but now, everything is

coming back to me. Sterling Seagrave is at his best unwoven all the complex threads that have had been set up by those master puppeteer, who in this case is none other than overseas Chinese. I don't believe the author is making up stories here at all. Many readers found the content rather far-fetched but people in the region would disagree with that because South-East Asia is undeniably an interesting place to be. Rather, I'm astounded by his in-depth knowledge of what's happening in the South East Asia. Many of the incidents mentioned were happening in my time & I could still vividly remembered what I read in the newspaper or what I heard from the older generations who used to work for those tycoons. Whilst it's true that the second part of the book is becoming overbearing (probably it's because I have known of the incidents already or that it's already been covered in other Sterling Seagrave's offering), overall, this is still a well-researched book. A job very well-done, indeed.

Conspicuous by its absence, Sterling Seabright's *Lords of the Rim* has clearly ruffled more than a few feathers, at least in the Chinese Pacific Rim Community. It strikes me as odd that Seabright's EXCELLENT TREATMENT of such topical subjects as Chinese Triad criminal activity, colonialism, monopoly and banking practices and, most recently, the triggering of the so-called Asian contagion by an oligarchy of greedy, Chinese-Thai land speculators and monopolists should suddenly be unavailable. Perhaps Seagrave's blunt warning to us and his glaring examples from elsewhere on the Rim were a tad too clear for Canada's cloyingly naive immigration and multicultural establishment. We, in Canada are arguably next in line for slow colonization of China's Triad driven migration . Seagrave does well to warn us of it. Other, less cogent and less relevant works by the same author are easy to find. What, then, has happened to *Lords of the Rim*?? Seagrave's publisher does us a disservice by not making such a recent Seabright work available.

Good long-term history of Chinese groups throughout Asia and the Pacific rim. Solid base of traditional societies and the basis for leaving China, maintaining family and regional ties and exploiting commercial and political opportunities. Plenty of twentieth century details in many countries. Eye-opening details of the role of illegal trade, political intrigue and amoral business practices. Somewhat overstates the role of regional connections and the universal accumulation of wealth. Sometimes sounds like a conspiracy theory journalist's expose. I look forward to reading the updated version to see the author's view of the last 15 years in China. He had a relatively negative view of the prospects, highlighting the risks of governmental collapse and overseas Chinese investments leaving.

This is a fine little book comprised of, as the Publisher's Weekly review put it, a Chinese merchants' history. If you are wondering what you will find within its pages, the subtitle, *The Invisible Empire of the Overseas Chinese*, is a good indicator. *Lords of the Rim* is a tapestry of sorts: a series of case studies and interconnected anecdotes involving overseas Chinese and the often-secret societies they have formed. Sterling Seagrave traces their origins, shows us where they're at presently, and explains how they make their money. Mr. Seagrave is a journalist-turned-author and his research, as always, is impressive. His writing style is simple, but effective. He's exceptionally good at making history come alive, and is at once intellectual and fun. I've heard critics say he's prone to invention, but I've never heard of anyone finding evidence of this. He remains one of my favourite writers; his book about Ferdinand Marcos is spellbinding as are his *The Soong Dynasty* and *Dragon Lady*. His depth of knowledge regarding East Asia is staggering. One of my only reservations with this book is the author's prediction that parts of southern China may one day secede. I'm not so sure I agree, and it seems to me that predictions on that scale are not one of mankind's strong suits. That aside, *Lords of the Rim* is a nice, informative book. Troy Parfitt, author

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