

# **Korea's Confucian Strategies toward China during the Qing Dynasty and Their Implications**

Sungbae Kim  
Institute for National Security Strategy

**November 2013**

## Knowledge-Net for a Better World

---

The East Asia Institute (EAI) is a nonprofit and independent research organization in Korea, founded in May 2002. EAI strives to transform East Asia into a society of nations based on liberal democracy, market economy, open society, and peace.

EAI takes no institutional position on policy issues and has no affiliation with the Korean government. All statements of fact and expressions of opinion contained in its publications are the sole responsibility of the author or authors.

 **EAI** is a registered trademark.

© Copyright 2013 EAI

This electronic publication of EAI intellectual property is provided for non-commercial use only, as long as it is unaltered and complete. Copies may not be duplicated for commercial purposes. Unauthorized posting of EAI documents to a non-EAI website is prohibited. EAI documents are protected under copyright law.

ISBN 978-89-92395-53-3 95340

**The East Asia Institute**  
#909 Sampoong B/D, Eulji-ro 158  
Jung-gu, Seoul 100-786  
Republic of Korea  
Tel 82 2 2277 1683  
Fax 82 2 2277 1684



## Korea's Confucian Strategies toward China during the Qing Dynasty and Their Implications<sup>1</sup>

Sungbae Kim  
Institute for National Security Strategy

November 2013

### I. Back to the Future: Tribute System Returns?

With the rapid rise of China, interest in the traditional political order of East Asia has been increasing. Recent predictions say that China's economic power will increase to two-thirds of that of U.S. around 2015, and its economic power will be comparable to the U.S. by around 2020 (IMF World Economic Outlook Database, April 2011). If the present trend is sustained, it is almost certain that China will take the position of hegemon at least in East Asia, if not on a global scale. With China returning as the East Asian hegemon more than one hundred years after it lost that status in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, discussions on the revival of the traditional international order, with China at the center, have come along naturally.

Today, China attempts to manage the U.S.-China relationship in terms of the "New Pattern of Great-Power Relations" (新型大国关系) termed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013 (习近平), which is defined as a historically-unprecedented relationship between an established great power and a rising great power. This concept tries to seek an international order with distinct Chinese characteristics. A case in point for China's desire to exert its ideals on the international system is the "Chinese Dream" (中国梦), which President Xi frequently stresses. The "Chinese Dream" emphasizes a wealthy and powerful state, the rehabilitation of the Chinese nation, the happiness of the people, peace, development, and

---

<sup>1</sup> The author appreciates the helpful comments from Chaesung Chun and Ji-young Lee.



cooperative prosperity (习近平 2012; 习近平 2013; 陈向阳 2013). The vision of a “Chinese Dream” should not be interpreted independently of the rich historical resources that China possesses, and it will likely accompany the reinterpretation of the traditional order. In a sense, the “Chinese Dream” is a modern version of historical Sinocentrism. Then, what was the essence of Sinocentrism in the past, and how was the concept of China itself defined? Were Sinocentrism and China constructs that were built only by the Chinese people? Or was China what East Asians made of it? How China interprets its own history is urgent and essential. It may not be desirable for the entire region if China interprets East Asian tradition with expediency and tries to apply it to the present.

While it is important to understand China’s perception of the traditional East Asian order and its interpretation of the present, it is equally critical to know the thoughts and practices of China’s neighbors. A careful look into the interactions of the various regional participants is necessary in order to deeply understand the organizing principles that exist beyond just the superficial and institutional understandings of the traditional East Asian order. China has not been the only one to treat its neighbors in a Confucian way. Other nations, including Korea, have employed the same practices. In this context, it is intriguing to study how Korea, which used to have the most typical investiture-tributary relationship with China, interpreted China and tried to maintain the Sino-Korean relationship. The future of the East Asian order will be settled not simply by the will of China alone. Instead, the collective strategic choices of its neighboring countries will also become significant variables. Therefore, China’s international political choices in the context of its future relationship with Korea should be the center of attention. Modern studies on Korea’s traditional methods of response in the Sino-Korean relationship, which ensured its survival for thousands of years in the face of China’s regional asymmetric power, may provide meaningful implications for predictions on the future East Asian order and will help Korea to make healthy strategic choices.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze Korea’s traditional Confucian strategies toward China in order to understand the traditional East Asian order and to predict the future East Asian order. As a theoretical premise, a brief preliminary review will be made of the existing frameworks for China’s traditional foreign relations and the traditional East Asian order. The possibility of alternative models will be suggested by considering cultural and power/imperialistic factors simultaneously and by clarifying the characteristics and limitations of existing dominant models such as the Fairbank School and the New Qing History School. In addition, case studies on traditional Korean Confucian scholars will reveal the complexity of the traditional order of East Asia by displaying Korea’s complicated strategies toward China, in which ideology and strategy were at work



concurrently. Through this, the following will be found: the traditional East Asian order reflects both cultural and power factors; it was constructed reciprocally by China and its neighbors; and the definition of China was at the core of the East Asian nations' strategic choices. Moreover, it is also explored that cultural factors are as important as power distribution in the reconstruction of the future order of East Asia with the return of China, and that soft power is an essential part of Korea's strategies toward China.

## II. Frameworks for Traditional Chinese Foreign Relations

In the context of rising China, recent studies on Chinese traditional foreign relations have gained popularity in China. The so-called “Chinese school” and “new Sinocentrism” are representatives of this trend. In contrast to overseas studies of the traditional East Asian order, those originating in China, despite its position at the very center of East Asia, were previously rare. It is only recently that interest in the tributary system from the perspective of international politics – rather than general historical studies – has started.

Qin Yaqing anticipates the emergence of a “Chinese school” in the area of international politics with the rise and integration of China into the international community. According to him, the three intellectual resources that will lead to the creation of this new school of thought are the two-thousand-year-old notion of *Tianxia* and the tributary system, one hundred years of revolutionary ideas and their practice, and three decades of reform and related experiences (Qin 2006; Qin 2011, 50). However, a Chinese school in international politics has just begun and is at an immature step in its development process. Although there have been profound studies of the tributary system and critical reviews of Western studies for years, there is no new theory in sight yet (Zhou 2007; Zhang and Xu 2007; Zhang 2009; Zhou 2011).

New Sinocentrism is not only immature but also dangerous. Among others, Zhao Tingyang's attempt to present the concept of “All Under Heaven” (天下, *Tianxia*) as a system of global governance that can replace today's international order looks rather threatening (赵汀阳 2005; Zhao Tingyang 2011). It is understandable to try to introduce the idea of empire that will appear beyond modern nation-state systems and to compare it to the traditional notion of “All Under Heaven.” And it is true that “All Under Heaven” might provide significant implications in that it, unlike the modern international order, does not have a strict distinction between “inner” and “outer” on the basis of territorial borders or assume that there is only one geographic, cultural, and political space. Yet in order to claim the possibility of the application



of the traditional order to the present, it requires a deeper understanding of the historical system itself. For example, the concept of “All Under Heaven” cannot be separated from *Li* (禮) and the investiture-tributary system (冊封朝貢, *Cefeng-Chaogong*) which operated as the central principles of the East Asian international order at that time. If one highlights the spontaneity of the reemergence of “All Under Heaven” and overlooks the hierarchy of it, it risks misconstruing the political power reality and covering up intentions to disguise an asymmetrical power distribution with an idealistic notion. The selective interpretation of tradition, if combined with Chinese nationalism, may lead to very serious consequences. Thus, a thorough understanding of the tradition is a matter of special importance, rather than a rash claim. In any event, it will be crucial how China tries to interpret the traditional East Asian order. President Xi’s idea of the “Chinese Dream” (中國夢) seems to reflect to some degree the Chinese school or new Sinocentrism, but it must be discussed much more.

The most representative theory on China’s foreign relations is “Chinese World Order” developed by John King Fairbank. Most studies in China or overseas tend to follow the framework of Fairbank’s analysis of the traditional order. Qin Yaqing also uses Fairbank’s framework to study the traditional Confucian international order. In formulating his framework for “Chinese World Order,” Fairbank pointed out that a completely different international order from Western modern sovereign order was at work in the East Asian region before China was integrated into the Western modern international order. According to his work, this Chinese world order, basically an extension of the domestic political hierarchical structure, was controlled by the Confucian norm called *Li* (禮) and was operated based on the investiture and tributary system. In addition, the Chinese constructed a self-centered concentric world based on their unique notion of *Tianxia* and Sinocentrism, which included a Confucian-culture Sinic Zone, an Inner Asia Zone comprising Mongolia, Manchuria, and Tibet, and the barbarian outlands of the Outer Zone. Korea, along with Vietnam and the Ryukyu Islands, belonged to the Sinic Zone, shared cultural homogeneity with China, and was classified as a core member of the Chinese world order. Yet, this China-centered concentric order was just an ideal. In reality, there were numerous instances when Chinese influence was far from dominant (Fairbank 1968, 2-10).

Fairbank’s work is highly appreciated because it introduced the China-centered traditional order of East Asia in Chinese terms, not from a Western perspective. Besides, it still is the most dominant theory in explaining China’s traditional foreign relations. And yet there are criticisms that Fairbank’s cultural model fails to capture the reality of international politics in East Asia because it overly depends on the assumed preponderance of Sinicization, Sinocentrism, and the tributary system. As Fairbank himself acknowledged, the investiture-tributary system was stable only during the Ming-Qing dynasties, and even then, it did not embrace all aspects



of China's foreign relations. Even between the Chosun and Qing dynasties, referred to as the most typical investiture-tributary relationship, *Sadae* (事大, serving the great) was maintained not simply through cultural and ideological homogeneity but also due to political power and strategic considerations.

A group of scholars, including Elliott, Millward, and Hevia, gathering under the banner of overcoming the culturalistic limitations of the Fairbank School formed the New Qing History School (Millward 2004; Perdue 2005; Elliot 2009). With the foreign relationships of the Qing Empire as their subject, they focused on the Qing's relationship with northwestern nomadic peoples and relativized the investiture-tributary system that was based on Confucian values and norms. This new school argued that in many cases the Qing's relationship with other Asian countries – in which the Qing Empire invested plenty of national resources, arranged marriages of convenience, employed religious patronage, conducted commercial transactions, and used subjugation as the major means of treating with them – had nothing to do with the tributary system or Sinocentrism (Millward 2004, 3-4). According to Hevia, Fairbank's model put too much weight on the tributary system and did not consider the statecraft conducted by the empire. Ultimately, the Qing Empire was defeated by the British Empire because the Qing failed to respond creatively to the new Western threat, not due to a rigid adherence to the tributary system (Hevia 1995, 13-20).

From the traditional perspective of the *Tianxia* political order, it is hard to deny that the Qing succeeded. But it also had strategic and practical traditions that sprang from nomadic origins and imperial thinking. Yet, the New Qing History School may have overly degraded the importance and weight of the investiture-tributary system, namely the order of *Li*. It is hard to believe that the Qing Empire was indifferent to the southeastern Confucian cultural areas, even though its threat perception was aimed toward the northwestern Mongolian tribes and it valued its Manchurian ethnic identity. On top of that, for an international order to form, certain norms and organizing principles shared by members are essential. It is true that, in the East Asian region, norms for dealing with 'outer' entities were non-existent, except for the "Cherishing men from afar" (懷柔遠人) policy within the investiture-tributary system and the *Chi-mi* (羈靡, Check-only-no-control) policy of the traditional *Tianxia* order. The practices of subjugation, religious patronage, and commercial transactions themselves cannot be considered organizing principles or norms of an international order. At least until the 'outer' entity of the *Tianxia* order was recognized by the Maritime Defense Theory and sovereign diplomacy was recognized by Western international law (萬國公法), the investiture-tributary system and *Sadae* have been the center of East Asian order. The New Qing History School, focusing on the relationship with northwestern nomadic tribes, neglected the relationship with the countries of the Confucian cultural areas, including Korea, Vietnam and the Ryukyu Islands. As a result,



there has been a tendency to argue that these areas are suitable for Fairbank's model. Nonetheless, this recognition that the Confucian cultural area fits with Fairbank's model might gloss over the reality. An uneven combination of the Culture Model and the Power (Empire) Model looks closer to reality.

Whereas the Fairbank model takes an excessively cultural approach, the New Qing History School tends to underestimate the importance of *Li*, the concept of *Sadae*, and the investiture-tributary system as an organizing principle. While it is true that the Qing displayed more general imperial properties than previous empires, it did not overlook *Tianxia* and the investiture-tributary system. The norms of *Sadae* and tribute enjoyed currency all over East Asia, not just in Confucian countries. On the contrary, strategic choices based on power politics were not only witnessed during the Qing dynasty but were also found in the Ming dynasty – a time when Confucian principles were at their peak.

Criticisms of Fairbank's analytical framework mainly point out that it holds Sinocentric and culturalist assumptions, lacks the power of logical explanation, and cannot be applied to the entire history of China (Zhang 2009, 554-560). To get over these limitations, it is necessary to analyze the perspectives of the neighboring countries which had relationships with China, not just China itself. The most suitable case for this might be the Chosun dynasty, which conducted the most typical and exemplar investiture-tributary relationship with China. This case might be helpful in overcoming the New Qing History School's neglect of the East Asian Confucian order.

In the Sino-Korean relationship, strategic considerations based on power politics were in action, as well as Confucian causes represented by the investiture-tributary relationship. Both the Qing, who conquered Chosun by force, and the Ming, who shared a Confucian political ideology with Chosun, treated Chosun ruthlessly with force at times and never withdrew their strategic suspicion. Dongjoo Lee Yong-hee distinguished between “*Sadae* as a cause” and “*Sadae* as power relations” and pointed out that an international order based on this complex *Li* of *Sadae* was shared not only by China but also by surrounding nations, including Chosun (Lee-Shin, 1972).

Cultural and political power factors were both at work simultaneously because ‘in and out’ and ‘domestic and international’ were not strictly separated in the traditional East Asian order. For neighboring countries, especially Chosun with its shared cultural homogeneity, China was the center of “All Under Heaven” as a territory and capital region (王畿, *wangji*) ruled directly by the Son of Heaven (天子, *Tianzi*, the Emperor) but was not conceived of as a different country in an us-versus-them mentality. In that sense, investiture (冊封, *cefeng*) might have been more important than the tributary system for political legitimacy. China, with its twenty four dynasties, has always been the object of definition for Korea. The debates within Chosun were intriguing over whether to recognize a China ruled by a Manchurian emperor as the country of the Heavenly Ruler, namely the True China (中華, *Zhonghua*,





the Confucian civilization). The practical choice made by the ruling class of Chosun was to recognize the Qing Empire as the successor of the civilization of Great China. The Chosun dynasty chose to maintain an investiture-tributary relationship with the Qing, but they strove to sustain the identity of Chosun as the protector of genuine Confucian culture (小中華) and to lead the Qing ideologically. As such, the Korea-China relationship during the Qing dynasty revealed complex cultural and power factors interacting with each other. In today's relationship, a combination of strategic and ideological considerations is at play, which can be seen in the coexistence of different political ideologies and common strategic interests. In this vein, the Korea-China relationship during the Qing dynasty provides numerous implications for today's relationship.

### III. Confucian Strategies to Deal with Qing China

In examining Korea's traditional Confucian strategies toward China, cases during the Qing dynasty will mainly be reviewed. As mentioned above, the Korea-China relationship during the Qing dynasty was a typical case in which power and cultural factors were intermingled and international identity politics surrounding the definition of China were in operation. In addition, for Korea, the Qing Empire provides perspective in dealing with modern China as the Qing had an alien ruler who was different culturally and ideologically from tradition. During the Korean War and the Cold War, Korea had a hostile relationship with China. Later, after the coming of détente and the beginning of a diplomatic relationship, there was still a different political ideology than China. The three cases of Park Ji-won, Park Gyu-su, and Kim Yun-sik, who made use of Confucian strategies toward China during the Qing dynasty, will be reviewed below. These cases are intriguing because the three figures lived, respectively, during periods of prosperity, decline, and shift in the Qing and had a grandfather-grandson-disciple relationship.

#### 1. Park Ji-won's Northern Learning (北學論): Bandwagoning and Soft Balancing

Park Ji-won lived in the period of the Emperor Qianlong (乾隆帝) during the heyday of the Qing dynasty. During his reign, Qianlong eliminated all the major threats to the Qing dynasty by subduing the rebellion of feudal lords in the south, subjugating the Mongolians in the north, and conquering the Jungar Empire in the west – who were the biggest threat to



the Qing. In addition, the Qing established a sponsoring relationship over the Lamaism of Tibetan Buddhism which exercised a powerful religious influence on the Mongolian tribes. It also prepared itself against potential threats from Mongolia and maintained a stable traditional investiture relationship with Chosun, Vietnam, and the Ryukyu Islands.

Park Ji-won was a representative scholar of the Northern Learning School in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Chosun dynasty. He had only a short career in the government and was not a high-level official in the Chosun hierarchy, but he was a very well-known scholar for his voluminous writings. He visited the Qing dynasty as a subordinate to the special envoy to Emperor Qianlong. The *Bishu Shanzhuang* (summer palace) in Jehol, or present-day Chengde, which Park Ji-won visited, was not just a summer resort but rather a place built for political, military, and diplomatic purposes. Politically, the location of the palace in the Manchurian region outside the Great Wall was intended to maintain the identity of the Qing rulers and to keep them from fully assimilating into Confucian civilization. On the military side, exercises conducted under the pretext of hunting in the Mulan area of Chengde displayed the military power of the Qing to the Mongolians. From a religious aspect, having built a temple where the Lama, the *Tathagata* (法王), could stay, it was used as an apparatus to perform soft power, and the emperor invited the Lama and his entourage to stay there (Foret 2000; Elliot 2009).

In this period of a resurgent China, Park Ji-won represented Northern Learning (北學) instead of Northern Conquest (北伐 or, euphemistically, Northern Expedition). Chosun Korea's theory of the Northern Expedition (北伐) of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was created under circumstances when the Qing could not yet rid themselves of threats inside and outside of their own borders, and it was the immediate result of Redeeming Zhou (尊周論, *Chonjuron*) and the recognition of power relations in East Asia. The adherence by Chosun to Northern Expedition until the late eighteenth century, when the Qing quelled threats along all the frontiers as well as central China, was a dangerous and unrealistic policy. Park recognized that the Qing dynasty, although ruled by a Manchurian emperor, was the successor of all the civilizations of the previous dynasties of China, including the Ming. The Qing Empire, even though it included both Confucian China and barbarian characteristics, was not ruled by barbarians but would undoubtedly become a substantive Chinese dynasty.

Park Ji-won exhibited knowledge and insight in seeing through the Qing's complex foreign relations and ascertaining the status, position, and distinct characteristics of Chosun in them. The *Tianxia* order of the Qing in the mid-eighteenth century possessed three different aspects. In the process of winning all ten military expeditions during his sixty-year reign and being called the "the Old Man of the Ten Completed Great Campaigns"



(十全老人, *Shi Quan Lao Ren*), Emperor Qianlong staged an “annihilating” conquest against the West Mongolian Jungar tribes, who were the greatest threat for the Qing in the northwest. He also implemented the “Cherishing Men from Afar” policy (懷柔遠人, literally Conciliation of Distant Tribes) for the Buddhist nation of Tibet in the south of Qinghai (青海). Thirdly, after twice invading Korea, the Qing maintained the investiture-tributary system with the Chosun dynasty based on the traditional *Li* concept of serving the great.

Park expertly understood the complex foreign relations of the Qing during his diplomatic travel to Jehol for the celebration of the seventieth birthday of Emperor Qianlong, which was called “*Wan Shou Jie*” (萬壽節, meaning ‘Eternal Life Celebration’). Park pointed out that the Emperor’s stay in Jehol (承德, in Hebei Province, 河北省) was nominally a summer vacation, but, in fact, it was an attempt to protect the northern Qing frontier against the Mongols. In addition, inviting the Lama to stay in the golden temple as the emperor’s mentor was an effort to safeguard the Qing from the Lama, who was even more powerful than the Mongolians.

“The Emperor stays in Jehol for a short time every year, which is a desolate and remote area in a frontier. Why in the world does He, the *Tianzi* (literally Heavenly Emperor), have to stay in this deserted frontier? Nominally a summer resort, but it really is to protect the frontier in his own person of the Emperor. From this, we can learn that the Mongols are strong enough. The Emperor invites Buddhist King (僧王, *Seng Wang*) of Tibet, and have Him stay in golden temple. Why in the whole world does He, the Emperor himself, pay Him this extremely respectful treatment as his own mentor in this exceedingly luxurious place? Nominally having Him as his mentor, the Emperor in effect locks the Buddhist King in the golden temple and prays to be safe. Thus we can infer that Tibet is stronger than Mongols” (朴趾源 熱河日記, 黃教問答).

It was pointed out in the preceding passage that the Qing adopted the policy of conquest (annihilation) of the Jungar, submission of the Outer Mongols, Cherishing-Men-from-Afar for the Tibetans, and the traditional Confucian tributary system for Chosun (including Vietnam and the Ryukyus). While this complex foreign policy was not contradictory for the Qing, it presented at times very subtle and problematic situations for Chosun. An illustrating example was when the diplomatic envoys of Confucian Chosun had to pay respect to the Lama of Buddhist Tibet under the order of the Qing Emperor. In the summer of 1780 when Park and his entourage travelled to Jehol, the Panchen Lama (班禪喇嘛), second in the Tibetan hierarchy, was also staying there on a visit to celebrate



the *Wan Shou Jie* of Emperor Qianlong over 100 years after Dalai Lama the Great V (羅桑嘉措, *Luo Sang Jia Cuo*) visited the Emperor Shunzhi (順治帝) in 1653 (Teltscher 2006). Calling himself *Wen Shu Pu Sa* (文殊菩薩, a Bodhisattva of Wisdom), Emperor Qianlong treated the living Buddha Panchen Lama with utmost devotion as his mentor, allowed him to enter his palanquin up to his royal private bedroom house, and even learned to speak the Tibetan language in order to extend his greetings to the Panchen Lama. Furthermore, Emperor Qianlong ordered Qing officials and Chosun envoys to seek audiences with the Panchen Lama. The Chosun envoys refused the meeting at first but were later reluctantly forced to have an audience with the Panchen Lama after repeated orders from the emperor. In spite of pressure from the minister of the Privy Council (軍機大臣, *Jun Ji Da Chen*) to kowtow to the Lama, the Chosun officials only bent their body a little before straightening up and immediately sitting down (微俯躬舉), which caused an embarrassing scene (朴趾源 熱河日記, 札什倫布). The Chosun envoys did not want to pay respect toward the Lama, but at the same time they were afraid to be seen as disloyal to the Qing emperor.

Emperor Qianlong demanded the Chosun envoys to exhibit courtesy and respect toward the Panchen Lama in order to help govern Inner Asia, including Mongolia, with stability by actively conciliating Tibet. To do so, it meant that the Qing, recognizing the Mongolians as their biggest threat, had to make effective use of the Lama, who exerted a powerful influence on the Mongolians. Park described the Qing emperor's strategy to decorate the temple in a lavish way, invite the Buddhist priests (法師, *Fa Shi*), and gain their favor by pleasing them and nominating them as nominal kings – a strategy which the Qing used to subdue neighboring nations. Park wrote that all these world affairs of *Tianxia* had little to do with Chosun, which was located in a small corner of the ocean. Although Park argued that even though he might be too old and grey-haired to foresee the future, if, in thirty years, another scholar began to worry about the difficulty of *Tianxia*, he would say the same things. Therefore, Park recorded the affairs of the Hu (胡, anciently used to refer to “barbarian” groups on the northern and western frontiers of China), the Di (狄, normally used to refer to Northern Barbarians, 北狄) and the other various tribes outside of China's frontiers.

“Although our country fortunately is located in a remote corner of sea and so has little to do with the situation of *Tianxia* and I cannot foresee future with my hair turned gray, if, within 30 years of time, anyone comes along who has the ability enough to worry about *Tianxia*, he might naturally think about what I said today” (朴趾源 熱河日記, 黃教問答).



Although Park Ji-won wrote that *Tianxia* affairs surrounding the Qing have nothing to do with Chosun, he understood that the Korea-China relationship would also be influenced by the major trends of *Tianxia*. As he recorded, the Qing maintained the traditional investiture-tributary system with Chosun and bestowed Confucian favors. It relieved Chosun from the requirements of tributes of gold and horses, while also eliminating unnecessary royal messengers, receptions, and the seeing-off of foreign envoys. In the case of the Chosun special envoy to Rehe (Jehol) sent to ask after the emperor, the Qing sent a high-ranking official, the minister of Privy Council (軍機大臣), to receive the envoy and his entourage. The minister then took them to the same level of seats as the liegemen in the Imperial court. Park interpreted that this kindness and preferential treatment was aimed to loosen the vigilance of Chosun and lay the ground to demand more from Chosun in the future (朴趾源 熱河日記, 行在雜錄).

It seems Park, having witnessed the performances played by Imperial families and officials, Mongolians, and Tibetans on the stage of *Tianxia*, received inspiration on the Korea-China relationship and Chosun's policies toward China. The core of the Confucian strategy toward China that Park Ji-won presented was a dual approach which distinguished a superior state (上國) of Confucian China (中華) from a great state (大國) of non-Confucian China. He suggested that Chosun needed to recognize the Qing Empire as a great state that brought Chosun into submission and respond with *Sadae*, but it still should not relax its vigilance. This can be translated that, with the right time and opportunity, Chosun might one day join forces with another group to restore the superior state (朴趾源 熱河日記, 行在雜錄). *Heosangjeon* (許生傳) in *Jehol Diary's* (熱河日記, *Yeolha Ilgi*) *Shinsepyeon* (審勢編) *Okgapyahwa* (玉匣夜話) clearly reveals the diplomacy toward Qing that Park Ji-won conceived. Denouncing the unrealistic Northern Expedition, he suggested several plans to deal with Qing. First, he proposed having daughters of the royal family marry officers and generals of the Ming who fled to Chosun after the fall of the Ming dynasty. He also suggested confiscating the houses of corrupt vassals and the powerful and giving them to Ming officials in order to form networks with them. Additionally, if Chosun sought to invade the Qing in the future, it first needed to learn about the Qing rulers. Thus, Chosun rulers should select sons and daughters to dress in the Qing style and send them to Qing to study and become officials there. For commoners, Park advocated that Chosun would do well to secure permission from the Qing for Chosun merchants to do business within the empire. Armed with information from merchants and transplanted officials, Chosun rulers could then form an alliance with feudal lords to enthrone a *Tianzi* emperor. If the strategy was successful, Chosun would become the master teacher of a superpower. If it failed, it could at least be the biggest (伯舅) of all



feudal lords (朴趾源 熱河日記, 玉匣夜話). In the same context, Park observes in *Banseonshimal* (班禪始末), after seeing Tibet's Panchen Lama glorified as the mentor of Emperor Qianlong, that someday Chosun might be the teacher of Chinese emperor (朴趾源 熱河日記, 班禪始末).

Park Ji-won's strategy of Northern-Learning toward China, in a modern perspective, corresponds to a type of soft-power diplomacy or soft-balancing, instead of the unrealistic and reckless Northern Expedition that conforms to today's balance-of-power policy toward China (Nye 2004; Paul 2005). Park's strategic thinking in regard to China is noteworthy in that it takes into consideration the cultural and power factors from which the traditional order of East Asia is comprised. Additionally, it understands China as a dynamic entity that includes both Confucian Chinese and barbarian factors, rather than a fixed, single entity. It is intriguing that he thought Chosun could also be actively involved in the formation of the leadership of emperor.

## 2. Park Gyu-su: Confucian Coalition and Balancing the West

Historically, China has always projected the image of a superpower to Korea. The only time when the political ideologies of Korea and China corresponded was when the Chosun and Ming dynasties coexisted. For most of the two nations' histories, the norm for Korean-Chinese relations has been based on the superiority or inferiority of power from the *Sadae* system. The kings of Korea legitimized their kingship and were guaranteed the preservation of the royal family (宗廟社稷) after being invested by the emperor of central China (中原, *Zhongyuan*) and paying tribute to him. Due to the importance of investiture on conferring power to Korean kings, the ruling class of Korea has always carefully observed power shifts in China and tried to gain relevant information by dispatching envoys. The foundation of Chosun itself was the result of a thorough and precise reading of the power shift from the Yuan to Ming dynasties. Even after the final dynastic change that brought the Qing to power by force and reestablished the tribute system, Chosun always paid close attention to the national power of the Qing.

During the time of Park Gyu-su, China was not the old China which ruled the known world but was withering under internal problems and outside threats. The Qing dynasty of Park Gyu-su's predecessors and his grandfather Park Ji-won was a powerful empire which brought the barbarians of the western border and all East Asian nations in to pay tribute. The China of Park Gyu-su's period was, however, declining, which he witnessed while working as an envoy to Beijing. After the Qing lost the First and Second Opium Wars to Britain and saw the emperor flee during the fall of their capital, Park



Gyu-su and the ruling class of Chosun shifted their core strategic consideration to the evaluation of the future of the Qing dynasty.

Whether for Park Ji-won or Park Gyu-su, the basis of Confucian strategies toward China was the evaluation of the *Tianxia* world situation. It is incorrect to believe that Confucian scholars clung only to Confucian beliefs and ignored the political power reality. Most Confucian scholars of the Chosun dynasty were well-versed on the power distribution and made it an important aspect of their strategy toward China. Park Gyu-su used the term “*Shi-Mu*” (時務, literally meaning ‘Urgency’) to describe the internal and external issues that Chosun faced. He tried to increase national strength and form a diplomatic relationship with Western countries and Japan on the basis of an objective awareness of Chosun’s capabilities. Park Gyu-su also considered the international political environment, which was evolving after the initial encounters between China and the Western imperialists, and maintained that the Korea-China relationship was the key element of national security. For that reason, it was crucial for Chosun officials in the late nineteenth century to carefully assess the overall capabilities of the Qing dynasty. Park Gyu-su’s judgment on the national power of the Qing can be inferred from his records made during two trips as an envoy to Beijing.

His first trip to Beijing was from January 18-June 19, 1861 as a special envoy to Jehol (Chengde) for asking after the emperor. The royal court of Chosun decided to dispatch him after the fall of Beijing and Emperor Xianfeng’s flight to Rehe in the aftermath of Second Opium War. Receiving royal instructions that he did not have to go to the emperor’s temporary quarters in Rehe, Park Gyu-su stayed and spent fifty days in Beijing looking around the ruined *Yuanmingyuan* (圓明園, Old Summer Palace Gardens of Perfect Clarity) and Changchun Gardens (暢春園). He investigated the situation, visited scenic spots and historical places of interest, and interacted with Chinese public figures. Park Gyu-su’s student, Kim Yun-sik, recorded a document regarding the mission to China. In it, he pointed out five merits for dispatching an envoy to ask after the emperor. First, Chosun had always dispatched envoys of consolation in times of distress throughout the Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming dynasties. After two hundred years of the *Sadae* relationship, Chosun could not help but to send envoys to the Qing during that troubled period. Second, the Chosun and Qing dynasties maintained a relationship that is akin to “Lips and Teeth” (唇齒), a complementary relationship with a common destiny, and the Qing troubles were not a matter of indifference for Chosun. Third, Chosun had fortunately evaded the Western imperialist invasion up to that time with the help of China. Western imperialism, however, would reach Chosun sooner or later; therefore, Chosun needed to understand the weaknesses and strengths of the imperialists. Fourth, even though the Qing were temporarily in difficulty,



after it overcame its current troubles, the Qing would appreciate Chosun's loyalty and later favor Chosun through diplomacy and with military support in times of emergency. Fifth, Chosun should learn a lesson from the Qing's mistakes and avoid making similar missteps (金允植 雲養續集, 奉送璣齋朴先生珪壽赴熱河序). Overall, this document reveals the strategic considerations for understanding the Qing circumstances, promoting the *Sadae* relationship, and, in turn, expecting diplomatic and military support from the Qing. Though written by Kim Yun-sik, it is likely no different from the opinions of the Chosun royal court and Park Gyu-su.

Park Gyu-su's evaluation of the status and national strength of the Qing is roughly shown in the report he sent to *Bibyeonsa* (備邊司, the Officer of Border Defense) during his time in Beijing. He wrote that anti-Qing forces like the NianJun (捻軍) Rebellion and *Taiping Tianguo* (太平天國, Taiping Rebellion) were rampant in many provinces of China and were expanding their strength every day while waiting for an opportunity to invade Beijing. Moreover, he relayed to the Chosun court that the Western barbarians aimed to trade and propagate Christianity but were not interested in acquiring land. Even after the fall of Beijing to the British, there was no plunder. Christianity, despite strong Western missionary efforts, appeared to not gain popularity among the people. Thus, he concluded that the near future was uncertain (“顧其時勢 則若不保朝夕”), yet on the surface it looked calm and stable. There was no commotion in the streets, and inns and markets were no different than before. It seemed to Park Gyu-su that the Qing were still outwardly displaying the appearance of a huge nation (“可見大國之風”) (朴珪壽璣齋叢書, 熱河副使朴珪壽抵人書).

On his second trip to Beijing, Park Gyu-su made a more positive evaluation of the status and national power of Qing. He made the visit from August 1872 to January 1873, in the capacity of an “emissary for celebration and paying gratitude” (進賀兼謝恩使行) to honor the marriage of Emperor Tongzhi (同治帝). Around this time, the Qing had subdued the NianJun Rebellion and the Taiping Rebellion. Under the leadership of the Empress Dowager Cixi (西太后) and Prince Gong of the First Rank (恭親王), the Self-Strengthening Movement (洋務運動) was in full throttle. Park Gyu-su, during his two-month stay in Beijing, kept in contact with about eighty high-ranking Qing officials, including Wan Qing Li (萬青藜), the head of the Diplomacy and Education Department (禮部尚書). He especially planned to meet Chong Hou (崇侯) but failed because Chong Hou went to France as an envoy with an apology to the French government. Instead, Park Gyu-su managed to meet Chong Hou's brother, Chong Shi (崇實), and learned about the situation in the West from him. Park Gyu-su reported, on coming back from his mission in January 1873, about the situation in China:





“It has been years since the western barbarians started to live in the city. At first the transaction of western products was very vigorous but recently the Chinese came to understand that they don’t suit practicality and trade them anymore, so westerner suffered a loss. Earlier on, Chinese bought a lot of western cannons but now they are making their own imitating the western ones, so westerners lost again. Back then, westerners earned profits from selling *Huolun chuan* (火輪船, steam-powered paddle boat), but now China manufactures them, so westerners lost again. In the past, westerners benefited from Opium but now China makes its own tobacco so they lost again” (承政院日記, 高宗9年12月26日).

Park Gyu-su argued that the Western nations were wasting their national resources on frequent wars. And after the Tongzhi Restoration (同治中興, *Tóng Zhì Zhōngxīng*), China’s national strength was restored through the achievements of the Self-Strengthening Movement. He saw that in comparison with his first trip to Beijing, the threat from Western forces and internal rebellion had been reduced tremendously. At the same time, the Qing’s economic and military strength and competitiveness had recovered considerably. Thus, he judged that even though the power of Qing as an empire had decreased markedly in comparison with the past, its status as a superpower was still firmly maintained. After numerous wars against multiple Western powers, such as the British Empire, France, Germany and Russia, the Qing remained firmly as the power base of East Asia. Still, the decisive characteristic of Park Gyu-su’s international politic evaluation was his emphasis on culture.

Park Gyu-su’s era was on one hand a period of reorganization of the East Asian international order and also a transition period in the history of civilization. Although Korea had undergone numerous reshuffles of power with the dynastic changes of the Yuan, Ming, and Qing, the mid- and late-19<sup>th</sup> century was a time of fundamental change with China incorporated into the modern international order after the Opium Wars and the dissolution of investiture-tributary system. Furthermore, this was also a transition period in the history of civilization when the modern Western standards of civilization began to represent “international law” (萬國公法) and “national prosperity and military power” (富國強兵) started to overwhelm and replace the traditional Confucian standards of civilization in East Asia.

Yet, Park Gyu-su maintained the thought that the essence of Western civilization lay in Christianity. He lacked the ability to understand that capitalism and the formation of nation-states made the “national prosperity and military power” of the West possible. It was Park Gyu-su’s fundamental limitation that he understood this transition period in



the history of civilization only in the spatial dimension of the competition between Eastern and Western civilizations and did not see the temporal dimension of the transition from tradition to modernity. He assumed that the essence of Western civilization was based in Christianity and focused his attention on criticizing the problems of Christian doctrines and their aggressive nature. The perception that the essence of Western civilization lies in Christianity is quite a Confucian idea. Therefore, he recognized “Eastern Occupation of a Western Power” (西勢東漸) in the context of Confucianism having fought against Buddhism and Lamaism in the past, displaying his inability to understand it in terms of the spread of modernism. Moreover, he predicted hopefully that someday Western civilization might be embraced by Confucian civilization and Westerners would convert to the Eastern Way (東道) thanks to the superiority of Confucianism (朴珪壽 朴瓚齋文, 地勢儀銘). He even forecasted in the poem he left during his visit after the Second Opium War that although Confucian civilization was in an urgent crisis - just as Buddhism faded away after prospering during the Period of the North and South Dynasties - Western religions would face the same fate and one day convert into a Confucian civilization. From the perspective of the traditional Sino-Barbarian Dichotomy (華夷論), even Western barbarians, when influenced by Confucian civilization, might change completely from barbarians to “the Civilized in Chinese Way” (“歸我同文夷一變”) (朴珪壽 瓚齋集, 辛酉孟春將出疆留別諸公).

With regard to Chosun’s strategy toward China, Park Gyu-su perceived China as a civilization rather than just a nation. Although the Manchurians seized and dominated the imperial court of China and changed the system of attire, they should be recognized as the legitimate successor of Chinese civilization and considered China. Park reported having been given a special award for dispatching a special envoy to ask after the emperor. Also, when emissary Cho Whie Lim reported to King Chul Zhong (哲宗), he stressed that the Emperor Xian Feng praised Chosun as “the State of Proper Ritual” (“禮儀之邦”) (日省錄, 哲宗12年6月19日). This implies that Chosun recognized the Qing as the proper successor of the Chinese civilization and placed great importance on the *Sadae* relationship with the Qing. This is clearly distinct from the “Opinion of regarding Qing as Barbarians” (衛政斥邪論). The Qing dynasty was recognized as “an Entity bound together by a Common Destiny” with Chosun to protect Confucian civilization under the circumstances of “Eastern Occupation of Western Power.” He also viewed the crisis of the Opium Wars and the fall of Beijing as the problems of Confucian civilization and not just of China (朴珪壽 瓚齋集, 辛酉孟春將出疆 別諸公). Park Gyu-su was able to perceive China more flexibly beyond the narrow idea of respect-Ming-and-expel-Qing (尊明排清主義). He understood China as a civilization, not just in terms of territory. In



the context of the modern international system, it is difficult to view China in terms of civilization, but Park Gyu-su perceived China as a world pursuing its own standards of civilization rather than view it as the nation-state we see today.

The strategies toward China that Park Gyu-su presented, understanding China as a civilization, were quite subversive or revolutionary. Since only Chosun maintained the Confucian tradition after the fall of the Ming dynasty, he kept the optimistic belief that someday Chosun could be the mentor of the Chinese emperor (“惟我東方道學之盛，文物之備，非唯有辭於今日之天下，亦可爲異時大國之師而惟茲”) (朴珪壽 璣齋叢書，居家雜服攷 77-78). This thought was similar to his grandfather Park Ji-won’s hope that, after seeing Tibet’s Panchen Lama glorified as a mentor of Emperor Qianlong during his visit to Jehol, Chosun might be able to overcome its humiliation and someday become the master teacher nation of the Chinese emperor. And if not, it could at least be the biggest (伯舅) feudal lord to manage China and aid in establishing a new emperor (“率天下諸侯，薦人於天進可爲大國師，退不失伯舅之國矣”) (朴趾源 熱河日記，玉匣夜話). It is important to continue to mold and shape the idea that China is the common heritage of East Asia. That is, China is not something that was already given, but it is an object to be defined. It is suggestive to define China as the common inheritor of Confucian civilization, not a nation of the Han tribe. It has been no more than one hundred years since China existed as a nation-state. It may suit the interests and benefit East Asia as a whole if China becomes a twenty-first century-type empire, not an aggressive or defensive nation-state. It is worthwhile to study even today the fact that Chosun maintained its unique status in the international order of East Asia through the medium of Confucianism and that Tibet exerted its influence on the Qing dynasty and secured its survival through Lamasim.

Lastly, in the view of Confucian strategy toward China, it is noticeable that Park Gyu-su, as his grandfather and others did, tried to establish a Confucian network. The officials Park Gyu-su made contact with during his two travels to Beijing were Han-tribe officials such as Shen Bing Cheng (沈秉成), Dong Wen Huan (董文煥), Wang Zheng (王拯), Huang Yun Gu (黃雲鵠), Wang Xuan (王軒), and Feng Zhi Yi (馮志沂), and not Manchurian high-ranking officials. Although they were working in the royal court of the Qing, they were Confucian scholars who believed in the so-called “Way of the Saint,” and they formed a sense of solidarity with him. Park Gyu-su thought that the Confucian scholars of the Qing and Chosun dynasties needed to enhance and spread Confucian values in order to protect the Qing, during crises such as the fall of Beijing (朴珪壽 璣齋集，顧祠會飲賦贈沈仲復諸公). His criticism of the “norms of vassal-not-doing-diplomacy (人臣無外交)” can be, contextually, interpreted as a will to actively establish a network of Chinese Confucian scholars, rather than to criticize “No-Peace-with-Barbarians discourse



(斥和論)” (朴珪壽 瓏齋先生集, 與沈仲復秉成). Building up a network and forming solidarity across distances and even borders is difficult even in today’s era of telecommunications and transportation. Yet it was possible due to a sense of cultural homogeneity.

### 3. Kim Yun-Sik’s Pro-China Line: Vassal but Autonomous (屬邦自主)

Following Park Gyu-su, Kim Yun-sik also confronted a failing Qing Empire. Incidentally, the relative weight of China in Kim Yun-sik’s international political assessment was remarkably lower than that of Park Gyu-su. This, in part, reflects the difference in the situation of Korea between the 1860-70s and the 1880-90s. Park Gyu-su had only partial contact with Western nations through *Byeonginyangyo* (丙寅洋擾) and *Shinmiyangyo* (辛未洋擾), and it was all in regard to China. On the other hand, from the 1880s when Kim Yun-sik was actively working, Western countries starting with Japan and the U.S. established diplomatic relationships with Chosun and resided within diplomatic quarters in the kingdom. It was, therefore, inevitable that the weight of China would be comparatively reduced. This means that the international political space was reshuffled from *Tianxia* to “*Tianxia* plus All Nations (萬國).” Kim Yun-sik explained the shift of the international political space with the change from *Buksadongtong* (北事東通) and the Ban on the Ocean (海禁) to All Nations (萬國) and diplomacy.

“Our country by nature has had no other social intercourse than serving Qing in the North and commercial relation with Japan in the East.... Since we became obedient to Qing, for hundreds of years, protecting each other persisted. But now the Ban on the Ocean is already lifted and our country came to stand self-reliant (自主)” (金允植 雲養集, 天津奉使緣起).

“Our King has a grand plan and thus think about diplomacy” (金允植 陰晴史, 181-182).

In the traditional Confucian thinking of Chosun, the international political space of China was always perceived as *Tianxia*. Yet in the process of propagating modern international politics, the Qing dynasty took on the characteristics of just one of the All Nations. The rather unfamiliar concept of “Pro-China” reflects the change in the international political environment. Earlier, when the Chinese ambassador to Japan, Huang Zunxian (黃遵憲), proposed a pro-China policy, unity with Japan, and an alliance with the U.S. (親中國, 結日本, 聯美國) in his book “Chosun Stratagem” (朝鮮策略), there



was a controversy in Chosun on the meaning of a pro-China policy, especially when Chosun had been engaged in the *Sadae* relationship already. The intention of the Qing was to reorganize the Korea-China relationship and make Korea into a subject nation in the modern sense or at least leave it under China's influence. This is was the real meaning of pro-China. In a sense, for the first time in the history of Korea's diplomacy, the pro-China line was born in the 1880s under the influence of modern international politics.

At the time of Kim Yun-sik, China rid itself of *Tianxia* and the standard of civilization. With the invasion of the West into the East, it set itself as the great power with which Chosun had to strategically cooperate in order to ensure the survival of Korea. Kim Yun-sik's "Vassal but Autonomous State" (屬邦自主論) and "Double-Ended Policy" (兩得論) represent this perception. He chose the strategy of securing the survival of Chosun by actively involving China in the traditional subordination order. Kim Yun-sik distinguished a subject nation (屬國) from a vassal nation (屬邦) and thought independence did not contradict with a vassal nation. Even for Kim Yun-sik, a subject nation could not be accepted, because it meant a dependent nation in the modern sense. On the other hand, he perceived that a vassal nation, even though it paid tribute and needed to be invested, could still exercise independence in diplomacy and domestic politics. Accordingly, he did not strenuously resist the insertion of a vassal clause in the treaty with the U.S. He recognized that if Chosun remained a vassal state, it could maintain its independence and obtain security in the bargain.

"If Chosun declares to all nations (that Chosun is a vassal nation of China) and records it in the treaties, China will be laughed at when it does not help Chosun in times of Chosun's emergency, and seeing that China takes care of us, other nations will not take Chosun lightly. Furthermore, if we record that Chosun retains autonomy below (the treaty), it will not harm our act of diplomacy with other nations and exercise of autonomy. Since we do not have to worry about the loss of autonomous right and not betray the moral duty of serving the great, it might indeed be called double-ended benefit (兩得論)" (金允植 陰晴史, 57-58).

This double-ended logic ensured security through the vassal clause and secured autonomy through the right of domestic affairs and diplomacy. But the Qing, after the Yim-O (or Imo) Military Mutiny (壬午軍亂) in 1882, stationed its military and fortified its domination over Chosun and interfered in its internal affairs and diplomacy, pursuing a policy that was out of line with the traditional vassal relationship. This provided the background for the emergence of Yu Kil-jun's *Yangjeol* system theory (兩截體制論).



While participating in the modern nation system, it was the common agony of Chosun diplomats in the nineteenth century to be forced to consider if the traditional relationship with China was a help or a burden. Yu Kil-jun's *Yangjeol* system theory (兩截體制論) represented the latter, while Kim Yun-sik's "Vassal but Autonomous State" (屬邦自主論) and "double-ended benefit" (兩得論) was the conception of the former.

In terms of Confucian strategy toward China, Kim Yun-sik's conception looks scrawny in comparison with those of Park Ji-won or Park Gyu-su. All that remains is the urgency of survival by leaning on China. There is no trace of the lofty ambitions of running *Tianxia* as the land of *Tianzi's* mentor. If one looks at China as an Eastern power and no longer as *Tianxia*, it reveals hints of the modern international order in distinguishing the domestic from the international. While the view of China as a civilization appears to be maintained in the sense of a homogeneous tribe (同種同文), the image of a single entity as an agent in international politics overlaps with China. This is probably because the Qing was in a transition period from the *Tianxia* order of prosperity to a withering period to the modern international order. But in the near future when the international order advances again with the prosperity of China as a backdrop, the Confucian strategy toward China may come home to roost again.

#### IV. Implications: China is What East Asians Make of it

Today, with the return of China as an empire over one hundred years later, Asian nations, including Korea, must perceive China as 'yet another world' pursuing its own standard of civilization similar to the previous Chinese empires, rather than viewing it in terms of modern international politics. It is not desirable to sink into the modern sovereign thinking that sets a strict distinction between "inner from outer" and "domestic from international" politics. China is what East Asians will make of it. The future of China will not be decided by China alone since it will exercise a huge influence on the whole of East Asia. East Asians must actively participate in domestic discussions on the national strategies of China. It will benefit East Asia if China is led into a twenty-first century type of open-ended empire and not an aggressive nation-state.

There are implications for Korea today to be found in the cases of Confucian strategies highlighted above. First, it is necessary to move away from the dichotomy between the inevitability of pursuing balance-of-power strategies with China's rapid expansion of



national/military strength and the existence of a single option for engagement policy due to irreversible interdependence. It is time for a vision, as Park Ji-won and Park Gyu-su illustrated, to lead China that creates a twenty-first century standard of civilization with a complex nation network that goes beyond the simple and naive China Threat and Restraint theory. Especially for a small nation like Korea, opting for a balance-of-power policy is nothing more than a twenty-first century Northern Expedition, which is neither possible nor desirable. It follows that it is necessary to offer other alternatives, such as a soft-balancing strategy on the basis of cultural factors such as knowledge, norms, diplomatic alliances, negotiations, and an offensive engagement policy of actively participating in discussions on China's national and foreign strategies.

Second, Chosun scholars tried to employ a kind of soft-power diplomacy, mobilizing such cultural factors as knowledge of neo-Confucianism and the norms of *Li* (禮). The reason why all the Confucian scholars of Chosun, almost without exception, were engrossed in scholastic exchange was that they actually saw it as the core of civilization. The importance which they placed on *Li* was in the same vein, because the Eastern order of that era was a mixture of normative factors and power factors. The demonstration of the vision for the mentor nation of *Tianzi*, based on the superiority of civilization, displays an extraordinary imagination with its cultural diplomacy. This kind of cultural diplomacy is much more indispensable today to deal with China.

Third, Chosun tried to develop a type of public and network diplomacy toward China, seeing it as a complex political community, not a fixed entity. Park Ji-won and Park Gyu-su viewed the Qing dynasty as comprising at once both Confucian Chinese and barbarian characteristics with its aggregation of the Imperial family, officials, feudal lords, vassals (藩邦), and subjects. The Qing was defined not as a barbarian dynasty ruled by Manchurian emperors but as, in name and reality, the very China which succeeded the Confucian Chinese traditions. This multi-layered approach toward Confucian liegemen of the Qing Empire, Confucian officials, and merchants might be called the forerunner of the public or network diplomacy of today.

Finally, it is possible to give some policy advice to China as well. A long period of Confucian peace was possible due to the complex soft-power/network diplomacy practiced among the Qing and their surrounding nations. The Qing dynasty conquered the Jungar tribe who threatened the center, forced the submission of the Mongols, reconciled with the Tibetans, and demonstrated civility toward traditional tributary nations. Qing's complex foreign policy toward its surrounding nations, as well as its domination over *Tianxia* with overwhelming power, enabled Chosun's Confucian scholars to extend the Confucian soft power/network diplomacy to the Qing. If the Qing Empire pursued only



an imperial policy based simply on power, there might have been no room for a Chosun Confucian strategy toward China, except for unilateral subordination or an anti-Qing policy. The People's Republic of China today may have to contemplate and take this into consideration in its design for the future order of East Asia. ■





## References

---

### 1. Books and Archives

『承政院日記』

『日省錄』

金允植. 『陰晴史』

金允植. 『雲養集』

金允植. 『雲養續集』

朴珪壽. 『朴璣齋文』

朴珪壽. 『璣齋集』

朴珪壽. 『璣齋先生集』

朴珪壽. 「居家雜服攷」 『璣齋叢書』

朴珪壽. 「熱河副使朴珪壽抵人書」 『璣齋叢書』

朴趾源. 「駟迅隨筆」 『熱河日記』

朴趾源. 「札什倫布」 『熱河日記』

朴趾源. 「班禪始末」 『熱河日記』

朴趾源. 「黃教問答」 『熱河日記』

朴趾源. 「玉匣夜話」 『熱河日記』

黃遵憲. 1880. 『私擬朝鮮策略』

习近平. 2012. “习近平：承前启后 继往开来 继续朝着中华民族伟大复兴目标奋勇前进”  
新华网. 2012.11.29

习近平. 2013. “习近平同美国总统奥巴马共同会见记者” 中华人民共和国外交部.  
2013.6.8

陈向阳. 2013. “中国外交进入为梦想而奋斗的 时期.” 中国网. 2013.4.7



## 2. Research Documents

- Brzezinski, Zbigniew and John J. Mearsheimer. "Clash of the Titans." *Foreign Policy* 84, 1 (2005).
- Elliot, Mark C. *Emperor Qianlong*. New York: Longman, 2009.
- Fairbank, J. K. *The Chinese World Order*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- Forêt, Philippe. *Mapping the Chengde: The Qing Landscape Enterprise*. University of Hawaii Press, 2000.
- Friedberg, Aron L. *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011.
- Hevia, James L. *Cherishing Men From Afar - Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995.
- IMF. *World Economic Outlook Database* April 2011.
- Kang, David. *East Asia Before the West: Five Centuries of Trade and Tribute*(Contemporary Asia in the World). New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.
- Katzenstein, Peter. ed. *Civilizations in World Politics*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Mearsheimer, John. J. *Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003.
- Millward, James A., Ruth W. Dunnell, Mark C. Elliott, and Philippe Forêt. ed. *New Qing Imperial History*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004.
- Nye, Joseph S. *Soft Power*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2004.
- Paul, T. V. "Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy." *International Security* 30, 1 (2005).
- Perdue, Peter. *China Marches West*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Suzuki, Shogo. *Civilization and Empire - China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society*. New York: Routledge, 2009.
- Teltscher, Kate. *The High Road to the China*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.
- Zhang, Feng. "Rethinking the 'Tribute System': Broadening the Conceptual Horizon of Historical East Asian Politics." *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, (2009).
- Zhang, Xiaomin and Xu Chunfeng. "The Late Qing Dynasty Diplomatic Transformation: Analysis from an Ideational Perspective." *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1 (2007).



Zhou, Fangyin. "The Role of Ideational and Material Factors in the Qing Dynasty Diplomatic Transformation." *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 1 (2007).

Zhou, Fangyin. "Equilibrium Analysis of the Tributary System." *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 4 (2011).

赵汀阳. 2005. 『天下体系』江苏省教育出版社. Translated by Roh Seung Yeon. 2010 『天下体系』 Seoul: Publishing House "Gil (The Road)"

金子修一. 2001. 『隋唐の国際秩序と東アジア』東京：名著刊行会.

西島定夫. 1962. "6~8世紀の東アジア." 『岩波講座：日本歴史』2. 東京：岩波書店.

西島定夫. 1970. "序説-東アジア世界の形成." 『岩波講座：世界歴史』4. 東京：岩波書店.

西島定夫. 2000. 李成市 編. 『古代東アジア世界と日本』東京：岩波書店.

堀敏一. 1993. 『中国と東アジア世界-中華的世界と諸民族』東京：岩波書店.

堀敏一. 1994. 『律令制と東アジア世界』東京：岩波書店.



*Author's Biography*

**Sungbae Kim**

Institute for National Security Strategy

Sungbae Kim is Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Strategy (INSS). In that position, he provides advice to government and contributes to development of policy on North Korea and Korean peninsula issues. Prior to this position, he served as Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of National Unification (2006). Before taking up that position, Dr. Kim served as Senior Director and Director (2003-2006) of the Strategic Planning Bureau, National Security Council (NSC) of Korea, where he contributed to establishing national security strategy, including devising strategy for all bilateral and multilateral summits (2003-2005). Dr. Kim received his Ph.D. in Political Science at Seoul National University.

## Knowledge-Net for a Better World

---

- This article is the result of East Asia Institute's research activity of the Asia Security Initiative Research Center.
- Any citation or quotation is prohibited without prior permission of the author.
- The contents of this article do not necessarily reflect the views of EAI.
- East Asia Institute acknowledges the MacArthur Foundation for its generous grant and continued support.

