China and The Korean Peninsula  
(Summer 2014)  
Yonsei University

Date and Time:
Classroom: Room

Sukhee Han
Telephone: 02-2123-3962
E-mail: shan65@yonsei.ac.kr
Office: #605 New Millennium Hall

Course Description

It is well-known that China has uniquely maintained close relationship with both Seoul and Pyongyang governments for more than two decades. Along with its substantial rise as a global power, China has become one of the core powers to influence over the issues around the Korean peninsula. For twenty years, Seoul and Beijing have enjoyed amicable ties, particularly in the fields of economy and culture. Taking advantage of the potential formation of new regional security order, both governments are now discussing to expand bilateral cooperation to the fields of politics and security. In contrast to it, Pyongyang still remains a troublesome ally for China, refusing Chinese advice to commit itself to the Chinese model of reform and open-door policy and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Due to North Korea’s incessant provocations, including its nuclear tests, China feels growing fatigue for its alliance with the North. In the coming years, it seems to be an interesting question to watch how China would manage the Sino-North Korean relations. For the consistent regional stability and prosperity, the positive role of China is highly required by the regional states.

“China and the Korean Peninsula” is first introduced at the GSIS in this semester. The major objectives of this class are 1) to help understanding the various issues regarding China and two Koreas; 2) to analyze the issues from a balanced perspective; 3) and find out and suggest optimal solutions for the conflict resolution. This is a team-teaching class. Professor Han and Dr. Jin will address the issues both from Korean and Chinese perspectives. This is not a lecture class, but a seminar class. All the students are required to read assigned reading materials before each class starts. Grading standards and reading lists are followed:

Grades
Midterm Exam: 30%
Final Exam: 30%
Class Participation, Attendance, Presentation, and Quiz (just in case): 40%
**Part I**

**Week 1 (): Introduction**  
No Reading, Course Explanation, Presentation Schedule

**Week 2 (): China and Korea – Natural Endowments and Diversities**  
**Issues:**  
1. Geographic data of China and Korean Peninsula  
2. Economic and political systems  
3. Review of 20 Years of Korea-China Relations

**Week 3 (): Tributary System**  
**Questions:**  
1. How do you define East Asian Tributary System?  
**Issues:**  
1. Historical review of Tributary System  
2. Sinocentrism, the idea of Tian’xia, Sadaejuui, “Little China,” and Confucianism  
**Reading List:**  

**Week 4 (): Medieval History (I) – Ming and Chosun**  
**Questions:**  
1. Why did Ming decide to dispatch troops to Korean Peninsula during Japanese invasion?  
2. How would you describe the relations between Ming and Chosun?  
**Issues:**  
1. Relations between Ming and Chosun  
2. Japan’s invasion  
3. Wanli’s decision to dispatch troops to Korean Peninsula  
4. Korean Peninsula as a buffer zone  
**Reading List:**  
2. Ray Huang, “The Korean Campaign,” in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume*


**Week 5 (): Medieval History (II) – Qing and Chosun**

**Questions:**
1. Why Chosun despised the rise of Jurchen or Qing in the beginning?
2. What changed Chosun people’s attitude?

**Issues:**
1. The rise of Jurchen
2. The conflicts between Ming and Qing
3. The relations between Qing and Chosun

**Reading List:**

**Week 6 (): The End of Chinese Suzerainty – Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895**

**Questions:**
What brought Chinese Suzerainty to an end? (Internal and External)

**Issues:**
1. Western powers’ invasion: began with the Opium War
2. An industrialized Japan: Meji Restoration
3. Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895

**Reading List:**
Week 7 (): Korean War

Questions:
1. What are the main causes and consequences of the Korean War?
2. Has the war ended officially?
3. Will there be another Korean War on the peninsula?

Issues:
1. Brief layout of historical evolution of the Korean War
2. Different views on the Korean War from different sides
3. Consequences and implications
4. Findings based on newly released materials (Particularly Chinese views)

Reading List:

Week 8 (): Mid-term Exam

Part II

Week 9 (): Sino-DPRK Relations

Questions:
1. Are China and North Korea truly allies?
2. Strategically, how important are China and North Korea to each other?
3. Why China claimed Sino-DPRK relations as “bilateral relations between normal states”?
4. What are other regional powers’ assessments of Sino-DPRK relations?

Issues:
3. Critical view of China-DPRK relations (a truly normal bilateral relationship?)

Reading List:

Optional:

Week 10 (): ROK-U.S. Alliance and ROK-China Partnership

Questions:
1. Is ROK-U.S. alliance a Cold War product?
2. How does China perceive ROK-U.S. alliance?
3. What are main driving forces for normalization of Sino-ROK bilateral relations?

Issues:
1. ROK-U.S. alliance
   1) The evolution of ROK-U.S. alliance in chronological order
   2) Role of ROK-U.S. alliance; Chinese view of ROK-U.S. alliance
   3) The future of ROK-U.S. alliance
2. Korea-China Normalization
   1) Historical background: why?
   2) 1992: how?
   3) Implications: political communication, trade, and security cooperation

Reading List:


**Optional:**


**Week 11 (): ROK-China Economic Relations (FTA, etc.)**

**Reading List:**


**Week 12 (): Cheonan and Yeonpyeong**

**Questions:**
1. Why states reacted differently?
2. What are the main implications?

**Issues:**
1. A brief review
2. Reactions from South Korea and the U.S.
3. China’s explanation and responses (including its reaction to the joint military exercise)
4. Major issues of conflicts

**Reading List:**

2. “China and Inter-Korean Clashes in the Yellow Sea,” *Crisis Group Asia Report*
5. You Ji, “Yeongpyeong: Tough Test for China’s North Korea Policy,” RSIS Commentaries, Number 161 (December 1, 2010)

Week 13 (): Six Party Talks and North Korea’s Nuclear Deal

Questions:
1. Why China hosted Six Party Talks?
2. Why China insists on resumption of Six Party Talks?
3. What are the defects of Six Party Talks?
4. What is your choice if you were a policy-maker of these parties respectively?

Issues:
1. Is “Six Party Talks” dead or not?
2. Who is winning the game among the six players?
3. Why such a conundrum? (Comparative analysis of major nuclear crisis)
4. Any way out?

Reading List:

Optional:

Week 14 (): The Future Relations between China and the Korean Peninsula
Questions:
What will be the main variables to discuss the future of Korean Peninsula?

Issues:
1. China’s perception of its core interests on the Korean Peninsula
2. Will China truly welcome a united Korean Peninsula?
3. Future of relations between China and the Korean Peninsula

Reading List:

Week 15 (): Wrapping Up Session (Documentary and Debate)

Week 16 () Final Exam