China and The Korean Peninsula
(Summer 2015)

YISS, Yonsei University

Date and Time: Mon-Thu 9:00pm-10:40am
Classroom: Room New Millennium Hall

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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%
Course Schedule

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

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

Week 3 (July 7, 8): Tributary System
Questions:
How do you define East Asian Tributary System?

Issues:
- Historical review of Tributary System
- Sinocentrism, the idea of Tian’xia, Sadaejuui, “Little China,” and Confucianism

Reading List:

Week 4 (July 9, 10): Sino-Japanese War of 1592-1597
Questions:
Why did Ming decide to dispatch troops to Korean Peninsula during Japanese invasion?

How would you describe the relations between Ming and Chosun?

Issues:
- Relations between Ming and Chosun
- Japan’s invasion
- Wanli’s decision to dispatch troops to Korean Peninsula
- Korean Peninsula as a buffer zone

Reading List:
Number 1 (Fall 2010):41-66.


Week 5 (July 14, 15): The End of Chinese Suzerainty – Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895

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

Issues:
Western powers’ invasion: began with the Opium War
An industrialized Japan: Meiji Restoration
Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895

Reading List:

Week 6 (July 16, 17): Review and Mid-Term Examination

Week 7 (July 21, 22): Korean War

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

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

Reading List:


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**Week 8 (July 23, 24): Sino-DPRK Relations**

**Questions:**
Are China and North Korea truly allies?
Strategically, how important are China and North Korea to each other?
Why China claimed Sino-DPRK relations as “normal relations”?
What are other regional powers’ assessments of Sino-DPRK relations?

**Issues:**
“Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the People’s Republic of China and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”
Critical view of China-DPRK relations (a truly normal bilateral relationship?)

**Reading List:**

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**Week 8 (July 28, 29): China-ROK Relations**

**Questions:**
What are main driving forces for normalization of China-ROK bilateral relations?
How to evaluate China-ROK relations during the past two decades?

**Issues:**
Historical background: why?
Economic relations between China and ROK
China-ROK FTA issue
Security issues: difference vs. consensus (Cheonan and Yeonpyeong, etc.)

**Reading List:**


**Week 9 (July 30, 31): Contemporary Issue between China and Korean Peninsula**

**Issues:**
ROK-U.S. alliance
North Korea’s nuclear brinkmanship and the Six-Party Talks
North Korea contingency issues
Korea’s stance between the US and China:

**Reading List:**

Week 10 (August 6, 7): Review the Final Questions:
What will be the main variables to discuss the future of Korean Peninsula?

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

Reading List:
3. Chu Shulong, “The Strategic Situation in Northeast Asia and China,” CIR, Volume 22 Number 1 (January/February 2012): 92-95