

The Constitution of China's Role Identity as a Responsible Major Power: Exploring International Interactions and Domestic Ethical Notions

Yuening Du

School of International Relations and Diplomacy, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing,
100080, China

202120116007@bfsu.edu.cn

Abstract. As a member of the international society, China, along with other state actors, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and transnational corporations, actively assumes its corresponding responsibilities. This paper explores the constitution of China's role identity as a "responsible major power", a significant yet relatively unexplored topic. Employing the sociological theoretical framework of identity theory, the paper transcends traditional constructivist theories and examines how expectations linked to China's role as "responsible major power" are generated and fulfilled. This involves interactions with other international actors in international institutions and the influence of traditional domestic notions. The paper highlights that China's behaviors align with a "responsible major power" and have effectively disseminated associated values and beliefs, albeit with varying levels of acceptance from its role partners. Moreover, China's perception this role identity is also influenced by "Tianxia" notion.

Keywords: China, major power, role identity.

1. Introduction

In the current complex and unstable world politics, the role of China is increasingly diversified as its influence gradually outstretches throughout the international society. Through active commitment to making vaccines a global public good, providing assistance to hundreds of countries in need of development and playing a key role in United Nations peacekeeping operations, China has been striving to act itself as a "responsible major power" in global arena. The Chinese model and experience in align with this role could provide alternative solutions for many global issues, thereby improving the efficiency of conflict resolution [1].

In this paper, the main manifestations (or expectations) of China's international responsibility include: maintaining global peace and promoting common development, which makes it responsible for the developing or underdeveloped countries; promoting regional development, hence assuming responsibilities within regional systems; and ensuring the development of the international order towards a direction with greater fairness and rationality, thereby demonstrating responsibilities within the global system.

The academic discussion on the construction of this role's identity revolves around the true intention behind the pursuit of a "responsible major power" status and its potential influence on shaping the current international order. In the practices of employing UN humanitarian assistance and Responsibility to Protect (R2P) norms, China has demonstrated its pursuit of normative preferences unique to its own perspective. China has transitioned from being a passive recipient of norms to internalizing these norms with Chinese characteristics in order to enhance its strategic competitiveness [2].

However, some aspects of China's responsible practices have been criticized as trampling on the liberal international order (LIO), rather than strengthening the current international system [3]. Apart from skeptics who view responsible China as a revisionist force, Ikenberry analyzed the possibility of China reconstructing the world order through cost calculations and optimistically believed that China would refrain from such actions [4]. These discussions mainly focus on whether a responsible

China seeks to maintain the status quo or acts as a reformist entity, but they seldom explore how a responsible China is constituted by international and domestic influences.

This essay argues that China's role identity as a "responsible major power" is constituted by its interactions with international actors and Chinese ethical notions. China demonstrates its commitment to responsibility by actively engaging in multilateral forums and international institutions. Through this participation, China has internalized Western-dominated norms and skillfully reinterprets and applies them to its regional states and partners. Additionally, the influence of Chinese ethical notions, such as Confucianism rooted in history, also shaped China's self-perception as a responsible state.

Identity Theory is applied here to explain how China interacts with actors at different levels and how its role identity is influenced by domestic cultures. This paper expands on the concept of role identity, extending it from individuals to states. Role identity refers to how an entity perceives itself and carries out specific expectations and actions associated with a particular role; this emerges from the interactions between entities and their role partners (other entities), as well as their perception of that role identity [5]. Stets and Burke pointed out that possessing a specific role identity involves fulfilling the expectations associated with that role, including effectively coordinating and negotiating the interactions with other individuals or entities involved in the role [5]. In the context of China's role identity as a responsible power, China is expected to act in a manner that aligns with the behaviors of a responsible power, while promoting the values associated with fulfilling that role. China strives to fulfill the expectations associated with responsible power in developing countries, regional and world system, while interacting with other actors or international partners coordinately. Thus, a sense of recognition with China's role as a "responsible country" is formed in international society.

The paper first interprets the constitution of this role from the perspective of international interactions. Next, it discusses how the domestic notions and cultures affect the process of identity construction. Finally, the paper answers questions about whether China's responsible practices aim to reshape the world order. By examining the interplay between international interactions and domestic factors, the essay aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the constitution of China's role identity and its implications for the changing dynamics of global power relations and the potential transformations in the existing international order.

2. International Interactions

Identity theory proposes that role-based identities typically entail interactions with other entities, highlighting the significance of role partners and the expectations required to effectively fulfill the role [5]. By actively participating in international institutions and multilateral forums, China achieves its expectations related to its role identity as a responsible major power. China's expectations encompass maintaining global peace, fostering common development, and assuming responsibility for the advancement of developing nations. Additionally, it aims to promote regional development and contribute to a more equitable and just international order, demonstrating its commitment to responsibility within the regional and global system.

2.1. Interactions in International Institutions

In the realm of international institutions, a mutually beneficial constructive interaction has transpired between China and the involved stakeholders. Initially learning neoliberal norms from international institutions such as United Nations, World bank and IMF et al., China has been socialized into a state receiving international aid, Peace-keeping Operations (PKO) and R2P norms. In a significant milestone, China participated in UNSC voting for the first time in 1981, casting its support in favor of the extended presence of the United Nations PKO force in Cyprus [6]. Subsequently, in 1982, China commenced fulfilling its financial obligations for peacekeeping operations. This indicates China's acceptance and fulfillment of UN peacekeeping norms.

Furthermore, China has internalized these norms with Chinese characteristics and thus can exercise them in compensation with the dominated practices. For instance, in the white paper titled

“China’s Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations”, China not only commits to upholding the vision of a community with a shared future, but also emphasizes the importance of addressing both and root causes of conflicts [7]. Moreover, it seeks to forge a new type of peacekeeping partnership, all while fulfilling its significant responsibilities as a major power and advocating for a sound and equitable reform of UN peacekeeping efforts [7].

Similarly, in the realm of international aid, China embraces the concept of “development aid” and places a strong emphasis on fostering cooperation among countries in the Global South. Diverging from traditional approaches, China adopts a state-driven development model that deviates from solely relying on the market-driven neoliberal approach. For example, through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China extends financial backing, technical proficiency and unrestricted trade and investment opportunities to participating nations for the development of crucial infrastructure projects, fostering connectivity and economic growth among the involved countries [8]. Notably, China refrains from imposing political conditions, upholds the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, provides unconditional support, and affording recipient nations the autonomy to choose their own paths of development.

However, by introducing innovative ideas and approaches, China is challenging the longstanding Western dominance in determining the development path of the Global South [9]. This alternative form of providing development funds not only questions the established norms that govern the international aid system but also directly challenges the existing neoliberal order. For instance, as a significant component of the BRI, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (or CPEC) has resulted in a rise in anti-Sino sentiments within Pakistan [10]. With infrastructure and energy ventures by China alone estimated to surpass a staggering \$60 billion, Pakistan finds itself heavily indebted to China, amounting to approximately 30% of its external debt [10]. Addis, et al. also pointed out that China is forging a novel form of African reliance via the BRI, as well as through the utilization of “debt-trap diplomacy” and other strategies [11]. As a result, this phenomenon appears to replicate a reminiscent pattern of dependency akin to conventional forms of aid, thereby rendering recipients increasingly susceptible to China’s economic and political sway.

Nevertheless, China’s efforts are actually aiding these countries’ comprehensive integration into the global capitalist economy through substantial infrastructure projects [1]. As a critical component of the World Bank Logistics Performance Index (LPI), infrastructure reflects a country’s capacity to engage in global trade and compete in value chains, making it an essential indicator for potential investors to thoroughly examine [12]. For instance, Kenya acknowledges the necessity of infrastructure development in facilitating export-driven economic bonanza. An exemplar collaboration between China and Kenya is the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway, which connects the capital city to the largest port city and serves as a prime illustration of their enduring partnership in the country’s infrastructure initiatives [13]. Additionally, Kimani, Kenya’s top UN envoy, emphasized China’s proactive role in ensuring the sustainability of debt in developing nations, countering claims that the “Belt and Road” initiative is a “debt trap” as alleged by certain countries [14]. Therefore, the assistance undertaken by China in recipient states have not only facilitated essential infrastructure development but have also created a conducive investment climate for multinational corporations from the Western world. This alternative source of development serves as a vital catalyst for economic growth, gradually reshaping the prevailing notions and understanding of aid within the existing aid system.

To conclude, China has effectively engaged with Western countries and developing nations within the neoliberal system, demonstrating its responsibility as a major global player. By embracing and integrating established international norms of peacekeeping and development, China has met the international society’s expectations. In return, China has introduced an alternative approach that reflects its own characteristics, with practice that in align with the “responsible major power” role identity.

2.2. Interactions in Multilateral Forums

China's engagement in multilateral forums is characterized by a strong commitment to constructive dialogue, as well as a focus on coordination and cooperation among participants. Through these approaches, China has successfully cultivated shared practices with its partners, gradually showcasing its normative power [15]. China's performance in multilateral forums need to garner recognition and acceptance from its partners, establishing it as a "responsible major power" that could meet their expectations for this role-based identity.

A multilateral forum serves as a platform for member countries to engage in discussions and collaborations on a wide range of issues, offering greater flexibility and diversity compared to specialized international institutions. While international institutions focus on establishing global norms and standards applicable to all members, multilateral forums center around specific topics or areas of interest, involving different actors. Consequently, the norms formed within these forums tend to be more tailored to particular situations or adjusted based on the needs of participating actors. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these norms relies on consensus-building and voluntary commitments, meaning their implementation depends on the willingness of participants. Therefore, the dissemination of certain norms is achieved through interactions among participants through dialogue and coordination.

Within the realm of international institutions, there often exists a situation of a "supervisor-subordinate relationship" between leading countries and others, including China. This interaction reflects a hierarchical relationship where the initiator imparts norms upon the recipients, strengthens the asymmetrical power relations between superordinate and subordinate actors [2]. However, China's approach in multilateral forums diverges from this paradigm, emphasizing the importance of equal partnerships. China grants all participants in the dialogue process with respect and equal treatment, facilitating collective efforts in addressing the challenges posed by the dominated Western discourse on development, modernization and globalization [15]. A proper illustration is the 7th ASEAN Regional Forum Peacekeeping Expert Meeting, where delegations from diverse countries engaged in fruitful discussions and shared experiences on peacekeeping operations. Demonstrating its commitment, China expressed its keenness to collaborate with ASEAN Regional Forum members, aiming to strengthen practical cooperation in the field of peacekeeping and help them enhance their collective capacity to effectively carry out peacekeeping tasks [16].

Moreover, China possesses normative power to exert influence through ideas and concepts, enabling other nations to engage in collective action and adopt a similar approach - 'they do as China does' [16]. This implies that China sets a precedent and offers compelling instances for others to follow suit. While recognizing the importance of shared objectives and values in multilateral cooperation, Chan adopting a "soft balance" perspective, contends that through providing regional public goods to Eurasian countries, China exploits the acknowledgement and acceptance of its leadership to moderately compete with the existing hegemony of the US, and the purpose is to establish new rules and norms [17]. Meanwhile, Han questioned the efficacy of China's efforts to promote norms, particularly in light of ASEAN's commitment to multilateralism and maintaining its own centrality as it has constrained China's ability to resolve conflicts with member countries that have emerged from the South China Sea dispute [18].

Indeed, in multilateral forums like APEC, RCEP and AIIB, China's efforts to emphasize its role as a major power responsible for regional development have not always aligned with the expectations of all participants. Thus, the success of such endeavors largely hinges on China's ability to establish a common identity and shared values with other countries, allowing for a clearer understanding of China's goals and enabling its partners to take action based on these mutual understandings.

3. Domestic Culture and History

Identity theory suggests that various entities can hold different perceptions of the expectations and meanings linked to particular roles, which can be shaped by culture and beliefs [5]. The expectations,

in alignment with “a responsible major power,” resonate deeply within Chinese ethical notions and are intricately intertwined with China’s historical journey. This profound connection molds China’s self-perception as a conscientious and accountable major power.

The “Tianxia (or All-Under-Heaven) View” of Chinese Confucianism and the Tianxia Order has lasted for thousands of years. For example, Mencius’ theory of benevolent governance opened up the tradition of “moralizing tianxia”. He believed that “virtuous governance” and “benevolence” were manifestations that “accord with Heaven” [19]. Xunzi proposed the concept of “the Tianxia as one”, advocating the use of the power of one country to achieve the great rule of the whole world [20]. From this thesis, it can be seen that in ancient China, Tianxia was regarded as the largest and highest political unit, where China took responsibility for issues belonging to Tianxia on a global scale. This reflects a harmonious political order that transcends regions and races.

Building upon the traditional Confucian ideology, Zhao Tingyang expanded the concept and put forth a vision for a “Tianxia” system in the 21st century. As Zhao suggests, the Tianxia system aspires to create a global order where universal cooperation is willingly embraced, emphasizing that the immense benefits derived from collaboration far surpass the enduring allure of conflicts [21].

However, Dreyer indicated that the Tianxia system is characterized by a hierarchical relationship centered around China where unequal states coexist [22]. Furthermore, China harbors ambitious aspirations to construct a neo-Tianxia system that supplants the Western-centric Westphalian system prevalent in Europe [23]. For instance, the notion of a “shared future” finds validation in the traditional understanding of Tianxia, serving as a manifestation of China’s endeavors to reshape the international order in alignment with its own self-interests [23]. Nevertheless, the concept of Tianxia is not sino-centric but rather represents a universal idea applicable to any society that values a collective spirit promoting harmonious coexistence [24]. It emphasizes the importance of a spiritual community that transcends geographical boundaries.

Indeed, it is of utmost importance for China to actively promote its time-honored norms, philosophical principles and collective imagination to increase its legitimacy as a responsible state and attract followers [25]. This comes from the Chinese people’s recognition of their nation’s cultural achievements and superiority. China upholds a morally upright and universally applicable belief system that should be embraced by all. The tributary system, as the most prominent external system of Tianxia order, established an anchor for contemporary China’s self-positioning of its national role identity.

The essence of the tributary system can be interpreted as the interaction between China and neighboring countries (vassal states), which obtains self-identity through the exchange of resources and comparison of power. While outsiders were not compelled to acknowledge and embrace China’s ethical and societal norms, they were actively encouraged to do so, as they could receive China’s special care [26]. As the custodian of these norms, China assumes a unique global responsibility, leading by example and encouraging others to embark on the path of righteousness, even if immediate fulfillment may be unattainable, the commitment to these aspirations remains steadfast [26].

In the late Qing Dynasty, under the impact of Western power and the concept of “the world”, the ancient Chinese “Tianxia view” and “Tianxia order”, which had a history of thousands of years, declared their collapse. China has to accept the fact that it is a country in the world and a weak country in the world. For China, which has long been a leader and an important power in Tianxia system, this transformation of role and identity is “abnormal”. For example, the signing of the China-Korean Treaty in 1882 marked a significant integration of Western treaty practices into the established tributary system between China and North Korea [27]. This transformation shifted the traditional tribute trade system into modern commercial trade framework governed by treaty regulations. Furthermore, the outcome of the Sino-French War in 1885 resulted in China’s loss of sovereignty over Vietnam [28]. The divestiture of major tributary countries marked a crucial juncture in the dissolution of the Chinese Empire, indicating China’s diminishing capacity to fulfill its responsibilities towards its neighboring tributary states.

Therefore, China has pursued the “great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”, making various responsible efforts in order to return to its “normal” role identity. China’s missions in the late 19th century onwards have been driven by a strong sense of nationalism and pride in its unique cultural values, aiming to regain global influence and standing while exerting moral influence [26]. For instance, Sun Yat-sen’s Three Principles of the People (1924) incorporated some traditional ideas in the process of promoting the Chinese revolution. He placed great importance on the revival of ancient classical learning and the restoration of traditional moral values, highlighting the superiority of China’s philosophy of life and political thought compared to Western countries [29]. Sun’s vision of democratic politics aimed to empower the common people of China, making them the ultimate decision-makers in their own political affairs; simultaneously emphasized the crucial role of rulers having a high moral standard and a genuine love for the people. Sun Yat-sen’s political ideology centered around the significance of Confucianism, as he encouraged the Chinese populace to reclaim their national identity and revitalized the moral principles deeply rooted in Confucian teachings [30]. Similarly, the concept of “a community with a shared future for mankind” in China since 2012 has also represented Chinese cosmopolitanism and Chinese rejuvenation.

To conclude, China holds a steadfast belief in the significance of its own cultural values and way of life, deeply rooted in its tianxia view. This notion has shaped China’s perceptions of itself as a major power offering inspiring guidance for the future of other countries, and it actively strives to reclaim its rightful and “responsible” position on the international stage.

4. Gray Areas Between a Revisionist and a Status-Quo State

The question of whether China’s responsible approach aims to reshape the world order has often been met with two contrasting answers: that China is either a country committed to maintaining the status quo or a highly threatening revisionist power. However, this binary response somewhat overlooks the multifaceted nature of China’s role as a “responsible major power”. In fact, there exist other potential answers that lie within the gray zone between maintaining the status-quo and reforming the world order.

As a “responsible major power”, China’s performance on the international stage does not aim to reshape the world order. Instead, it seeks to offer a promising alternative approach within the existing order or framework, going beyond the model advocated by Western powers or led by neoliberal international organizations. China’s actions represent a commitment to exploring new avenues and possibilities while operating within the bounds of the established global system. As China continues to rise as a significant power in the international arena, the coexistence of a dual order between China and the US—both at aspects of economic influence and military capabilities—has intensified the competition among intermediate countries [31]. This competition reflects the evolving dynamics of power and influence in the global landscape, with these intermediate countries finding themselves caught between the spheres of influence of these two major powers.

Nevertheless, in the current global landscape, a bipolar system has not yet fully formed, making it essential to perceive China qua a rising power acting in a unipolar system led by the United States. Moreover, the concept of liberalism in today’s world has transcended the control of the United States itself, becoming more profound and widespread. The United States has transitioned from being a leader in world order to becoming an integral part of it. Contrary to being a follower of the existing prerequisites of the world order, China stands out as an active participant that utilizes its responsible ideas and contributions to drive improvement and exploration. By leveraging its innovative thinking and responsible actions, China aims to enhance the world order and offering fresh perspectives to address global challenges in a constructive manner. Therefore, it is crucial to adopt a non-binary perspective when assessing China’s contribution to the existing world order as a “responsible power”, instead of simply categorizing its actions as either good or bad based on preconceived notions.

5. Conclusion

China's growing power and elevated international stature have bolstered its capacity to address global issues, while amplifying the expectations placed upon it by the international society. By scrutinizing China's performance in international institutions and multilateral forums, the paper illustrates that China has undertaken actions aligned with its role identity as a "responsible great power" and has disseminated corresponding values and beliefs, albeit with varying levels of acceptance from its role partners. Furthermore, China's traditional worldview has also shaped its perception of the expected responsibilities of a "responsible major power".

This study enriches the broader discourse on China's obligations within the global arena and its stance towards the existing international order. Moreover, the article promotes a nuanced and non-binary view on China's multifaceted and nuanced responsible actions. It also expands the boundaries of identity theory's applicability and offers insights for exploring role-based identity analysis in other states.

Nonetheless, this initial analysis merely scratches the surface, leaving ample room for more comprehensive exploration of both theoretical and substantive aspects. Here are some possibilities. Firstly, an explanation of China's national identity could be conducted from the perspective of group- or category-base identity. Secondly, while this article provides a concise explanation of China's adoption and internalization of dominated norms, a more strategic perspective could shed light on the motivations driving this behavior. Thirdly, what effects and potential impacts will China's responsible behavior have on the international community? Drawing on historical comparisons may allow for speculation on this topic.

References

- [1] Gülseven, Y. (2020). 'Aid with Chinese Characteristics': Competitive and/or complementary? *The Pacific Review*, 1-25.
- [2] Kobayashi, K. et al. (2022) Pathways to Socialisation: China, Russia, and Competitive Norm Socialisation in a Changing Global Order. *Review of international studies*. [Online] 48 (3), 560–582.
- [3] Lee, J. (2010) China Won't Be a 'Responsible Stakeholder'; Washington Needs to Revise its Approach to Managing the Rise of the Middle Kingdom. *The Wall Street Journal*. Eastern edition.
- [4] Ikenberry, GJ (2001) *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- [5] Stets, J. E. & Burke, P. J. (2000) Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*. [Online] 63 (3), 224–237.
- [6] Security Council, resolution 495 (1981): on renewal of the mandate of the UN Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus. [Online] Available at: <<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/26750>> [Accessed 27 August 2023].
- [7] The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 2020. *China's Armed Forces: 30 Years of UN Peacekeeping Operations*.
- [8] Department of Regional Openness, 2020. *Belt and Road Initiative Creates Remarkable Achievements*. [Online] Available at: <https://en.ndrc.gov.cn/netcoo/achievements/202105/t20210526_1280919.html> [Accessed 27 August 2023].
- [9] Gilpin, S. I. (2023) China, Africa and the International Aid System: A Challenge to (the Norms Underpinning) the Neoliberal World Order? *Journal of Asian and African studies (Leiden)*. [Online] 58 (3), 277–297.
- [10] Jones, K., 2023. The Belt and Road Initiative: China's Strategy to Bring Nations around the World into its Orbit. [Online] Available at: <<https://alec.org/article/the-belt-and-road-initiative-chinas-strategy-to-bring-nations-around-the-world-into-its-orbit/#:~:text=Launched%20in%202013%20by%20China%E2%80%99s%20President%20Xi%20Jinping%2C,estimates%20ranging%20from%20%241%20trillion%20to%20%248%20trillion.>> [Accessed 27 August 2023].

- [11] Addis, A. K. et al. (2021) Chinese and Indian investment in Ethiopia: infrastructure for ‘debt-trap diplomacy’ exchange and the land grabbing approach. *International journal of emerging markets*. [Online] 16 (6), 998–1025.
- [12] World Economic Forum, 2022. Growing Intra-African Trade through Digital Transformation of Border and Customs Services: Regional Action Group for Africa. [pdf] Available at: <https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Regional_Action_Group_for_Africa_2022.pdf> [Accessed 30 August 2023].
- [13] China Daily, 2023. Kenya's top UN envoy lauds ties with China. [Online] Available at: <<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202307/17/WS64b419c4a31035260b816af4.html>> [Accessed 30 August 2023].
- [14] China Daily, 2023. Kenya's UN representative: China 'debt trap' talk inaccurate. [Online] Available at: <<https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202307/12/WS64adff38a31035260b815ecd.html>> [Accessed 30 August 2023].
- [15] Kavalski, E. (2013). The struggle for recognition of normative powers: Normative power Europe and normative power China in context. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 48 (2), 247-267.
- [16] ASEAN, 2019. Co-chairs' Summary Report 7th ARF Peacekeeping Experts' Meeting. [pdf] Available at: <https://aseanregionalforum.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Final_Cleant-Text_Co_Chairs_Summary_Report-2.pdf> [Accessed 1 September 2023].
- [17] Chan, L. H. (2020). Can China Remake Regional Order? Contestation With India over the Belt and Road Initiative. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 1-19.
- [18] Han, D. G. X. (2017) China's Normative Power in Managing South China Sea Disputes. *The Chinese journal of international politics*. [Online] 10 (3), 269–297.
- [19] Mencius, *The Works of Mencius*, translated by Legge, J.. [Online] Available at: <<http://nothingistic.org/library/mencius/mencius26.html>> [Accessed 26 August 2023].
- [20] Xunzi, Xunzi: *The Complete Text*, Eric L. Hutton (tr.), Princeton University Press, 2014, xxxi+ 397pp.
- [21] Zhao, T. Y., 2019. *Redefining A Philosophy for World Governance*. Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [22] Dreyer, J. T. (2015) The ‘Tianxia Trope’: will China change the international system? *The Journal of contemporary China*. [Online] 24 (96), 1015–1031.
- [23] Mankoff, J. 2022. Sinocentrism and the Geopolitics of Tianxia. *Empires of Eurasia: How Imperial Legacies Shape International Security*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 251-268. <https://doi.org/10.12987/9780300265378-015>.
- [24] Babones, S. (2020) From Tianxia to Tianxia: The Generalization of a Concept. *Chinese political science review*. [Online] 5 (2), 131–147.
- [25] Česnakas, G. (2022) The Collective Imagination and the Limitations for the Tianxia to Replace the Westphalian World Order. *Politologija - Vilniaus Universitetas*. [Online] 105 (1), 133–166.
- [26] Cranmer-Byng, J. (1973) *The Chinese View of Their Place in the World: An Historical Perspective*. *The China quarterly* (London). [Online] 53 (53), 67–79.
- [27] Park, J. M. & Wang, C.-P. (2020) Interpreting the Maritime and Overland Trade Regulations of 1882 between Chosŏn and the Qing: How logics of appropriateness shaped Sino–Korean relations. *International area studies review*. [Online] 23 (1), 114–132.
- [28] Elleman, B. A. (2019) “Sino-French War (1884–85),” in *The Making of the Modern Chinese Navy*. Anthem Press, pp. 35–38.
- [29] Sun Yat-sen, 1924. *San Min Chu I, The Three Principles of The People*. [pdf] Available at: <https://chinese.larouchepub.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/San-Min-Chu-I_ALL-en.pdf> [Accessed 26 August 2023].
- [30] Gregor, A. J. (1981) Confucianism and the Political Thought of Sun Yat-Sen. *Philosophy east & west*. [Online] 31 (1), 55–70.
- [31] Ikenberry, G., 2015. Between the Eagle and the Dragon: America, China, and Middle State Strategies in East Asia. *Political Science Quarterly*, 131 (1), pp.9-43.