

Chinese World Order under Heaven and the so-called “the Law under Heaven” — the case of Sino-Northeast Asian Relationship during the Sui-Tang Dynasties

Kao, Ming-Shih

Abstract

The theory of traditional Chinese world order had been based on the elements of “politics, punishment, rites and virtues” proclaimed by Confucius. It follows four principles of integrating, governing, hierarchical and moralizing, according to the Classic of *the Book of Documents* (especially the Chapter of *Yu-gong*), proceed to a basic world order structure of three circles of Court Lieges, Outside Lieges and Non Lieges, depending upon the closeness to the Son of Heaven. This world order had been operated around the axis of father-son like patriarch versus subject relationship.

Since the Han Dynasty China had established Confucianism as the governing ideology. Confucianism had become the guiding principle for world order and the institution of “the Law under Heaven”. “The Law under Heaven” was constituted according to the Han legislating principle of “virtue is the main, supplemented by penalty; the punishment was taking place where the rites failed”. The complete monolithic world order under Heaven was firmly established during the Sui-Tang Period. The case in point of this world order under Heaven was mostly manifested in the relationship between China and Northeast Asian countries.

Keywords: Outside Lieges, Enfeoffment, Tributary System, Confucianism