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The modern transformation of Korean political thinking : revisiting the political ideas of the Late-Nineteenth-Century Reformists

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Citation

Kim, C. Y. (2019, November 14). *The modern transformation of Korean political thinking : revisiting the political ideas of the Late-Nineteenth-Century Reformists*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/80325>

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Issue Date: 2019-11-14

Propositions

1. Applying a conceptual framework of a tension between political necessity and ethical ideal provides a more coherent understanding of the history of Confucian political thinking in Chosŏn Korea.
2. Late nineteenth century Korean radical reformists inherited 'political necessity' ideas of Confucianism, but repudiated Confucian 'ethical ideals.'
3. From the eighteenth century onwards, a rational, empirical, and positivistic worldview was gradually making inroads into the thinking of Chosŏn's Confucian intellectuals, to the detriment of a hitherto dominant ethical worldview.
4. Overwhelmed by an intense urgency for modernization, late nineteenth century reformists saw Chosŏn culture and customs with a self-deprecating view.
5. The Confucian *minbon* notion functioned as the intellectual conduit between Confucian political thought and modern democratic ideas.
6. The roots of modern politics in Korea go all the way back to the constitutional and republican ideas and institutional reforms of late nineteenth century reformists.
7. The adoption of modern Western public values and parliamentarianism by late nineteenth century reformists was inspired by the practical needs of the time rather than by their intrinsic value.
8. The global proliferation of democracy and its dissimilar developments should not only be studied from a Western perspective, but also from the local perspective of the receiving polities.
9. The Colonial Modernization Theory is oblivious to the Confucian adaptability to modernity.
10. The instrumental rationality of modern thought and modern institutions needs to be off-set by a retrieval of the cultural values that were lost in the process of modernization.