Inter-Korean People-to-People Diplomacy: Social and Cultural Exchanges across the 38th Parallel

Kadir Jun Ayhan | ORCID: 0000-0001-8052-1938
Assistant Professor, Graduate School of International Studies,
Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea
ayhan@ewha.ac.kr

Siyeon Jang | ORCID: 0000-0002-4105-4449
Doctoral Candidate, Media and Communications, Hankuk University
of Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea
siyeonjang@gmail.com

Summary

The people of the two Koreas cannot communicate directly with one another. Since the early 1990s, South and North Korea have allowed a limited number of people-to-people exchanges. In this article, we map the South Korean government's theories of change regarding inter-Korean exchanges based on policy documents and semi-structured interviews with five high-level Ministry of Unification bureaucrats. We also explore the outcomes of inter-Korean exchanges, building on ten South Korean participants' insights. Our findings suggest that the primary goals of inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges have been to expand contact between the two Koreas to alleviate the sense of mutual alienation, to increase empathy and, in turn, to reduce tensions and establish peace on the Korean Peninsula. Participant interviews reveal that direct interpersonal interaction between South and North Koreans reinforces the idea of a superordinate Korean group identity.

Keywords

---

1   Introduction[1]

The people of the two Koreas are strictly prevented from communicating directly with one another. North Korea is a secluded country that tightly controls the inbound and outbound movement of people across its borders, and South Korea limits its citizens' interactions with North Korea through its National Security Law. Hence, it has been nearly impossible for people on either side of the 38th parallel to have meaningful interactions with each other since the beginning of the Korean War. In the early 1990s, the two Koreas agreed to allow a limited number of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges under the close control of both governments. Despite the new legal framework that allows interactions between South and North Koreans, and official rhetoric encouraging it, the number of inter-Korean human interactions has fluctuated in the last three decades. Progressive governments have put more emphasis on inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, while conservative governments have put them on hold.

There are four kinds of literature on inter-Korean people-to-people social and cultural exchanges. Firstly, some studies describe and list chronologically the exchanges that have taken place.[2] Secondly, a vast majority of the literature gives opinions or policy recommendations regarding government policies on these exchanges,[3] in some cases in specific fields such as animation co-production,[4] academic exchanges,[5] cultural heritage,[6] local government exchanges,[7] sports exchanges,[8] broadcasting and media exchanges,[9] cultural exchanges,[10] and religious exchanges.[11] Thirdly, some scholars have surveyed or

---

2   Hyundai Research Institute 2018; Jonsson 2006.
3   M. Jeon 2010; Y. Jeon 2019.
4   Y. Kim 2018.
5   Byun 2018.
6   C. Jung 2019.
7   Jung and Cho 2011; Kwon 2020.
8   Lee and Kim 2002.
9   J. Lee 2015.
10   Sin and Kim 2011.
11   Kyojin Jung 2011.

interviewed North Korean defectors as proxy subjects regarding the potential ripple effects of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges.[12]

Fourthly, some studies focus on a specific kind of exchange and analyse its particular aspects empirically. Among the latter type, Kim interviewed fifteen experts using the Delphi Method and concluded that inter-Korean sports exchanges helped ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula, but this too was subject to political and economic conditions.[13] Jung analysed the failed attempt to form unified teams for the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games and the successful case of forming unified teams for the 2018 PyeongChang Winter Olympic Games, concluding that the main determinants of success or failure were the external political dynamics (mainly US policies) affecting the Korean Peninsula and the characteristics of the South Korean administration.[14] Oh and Kim examined the political discourse that appeared in the media surrounding the unified sports teams of the two Koreas and concluded that sports were utilised as a political socialisation tool.[15]

Lee and Gu found that the South Koreans and North Koreans who interacted at the Kaesong Industrial Complex developed affection for one another despite limitations due to fluctuations in inter-Korean relations.[16] Kim interviewed 40 veterans of inter-Korean exchanges in the field of religion using Importance-Performance Analysis to determine the importance and role of religion in inter-Korean relations.[17] In a similar vein, Kim assessed the views of representatives of the Korean Conference of Religions and Peace (KCRP) regarding the role of inter-Korean interfaith dialogue in mitigating tensions in inter-Korean relations based on observations and interviews with them.[18] Yoon analysed the characteristics of different religions' exchanges with their counterparts and found that despite differences in religion, they shared a common ethos of reconciliation.[19] Ha examined the perceptions of South Koreans who watched a performance of the North Korean Samjiyon Orchestra by video using a Q Methodology and found that people feel culturally connected to North Korea through music.[20] In a rather rare observatory study, Lee participated in inter-Korean taekwondo exchanges from 2001 to 2002, observed

---

12   Heekyung Kim 2016.
13   D. Kim 2009.
14   Kiwoong Jung 2019.
15   Oh and Kim 2020.
16   Lee and Gu 2016.
17   I. Kim 2013.
18   Hwajong Kim 2012.
19   Yoon 2018.
20   Ha 2019.

the exchanges, talked to participants from both sides, analysed speeches and agreements in these activities, and concluded that taekwondo was a key bridge in inter-Korean relations that helped create mutual understanding between the two peoples.[21]

Our empirical study belongs to the fourth group of literature on inter-Korean people-to-people social and cultural exchanges. In this article, we have two aims. First, rather than taking them for granted, we assess and map the South Korean government's theories of change regarding inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, particularly social and cultural exchanges. In other words, we evaluate the process of these exchanges at the goal-setting stage. Second, we explore the outcomes of inter-Korean people-to-people social and cultural exchanges from the perspective of South Korean participants in these exchanges, building on their subjective insights and observations. Here, we do not focus only on a certain type of social or cultural exchange, such as religion or sports.

The article is organised as follows. In Section 2, we explain the contextual background of inter-Korean social and cultural people-to-people exchanges. In Section 3, we introduce our methodology. In Section 4, we give an overview of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges to contextualise our analysis. In Section 5, we map South Korea's theories of change in these exchanges, analysing its problem framing, intervention framing, method of intervention and expected outcomes from these exchanges, respectively. In Section 6, we explore the outcomes of social and cultural exchanges based on the insights of South Korean participants. Section 7 provides a discussion of our findings and concludes the article.

2   People-to-People Diplomacy

Most textbooks define diplomacy as an interstate practice of communication and representation.[22] Others understand diplomacy as taking place between estranged groups of people beyond the Westphalian notion of sovereign states.[23] Studies involving non-state actors' and citizens' role in diplomacy have mushroomed in the last two decades due to increasing interest in public diplomacy after 9/11. Works on this intersection have suggested that institutionalised non-state actors' intentional communication-based activities

---

21   B. Lee 2003.

22   For an overview of definitions of diplomacy, see Jönsson 2012; Murray 2008.

23   Constantinou, 1996; Jönsson 2012; Kelley 2014; Murray 2008.

to understand, influence and build relationships with people across borders to support their foreign policy-related goals are within the realm of public diplomacy.[24]

In one of the first conceptual works on citizen diplomacy, Sharp created a taxonomy: the citizen diplomat representing his government vis-à-vis another government; the citizen diplomat representing specific sectoral or local economic interests; the citizen diplomat advocating for a cause; and the citizen diplomat as a social change agent aiming to transform existing political arrangements on the domestic or international stage.[25]

Much of public diplomacy research is concerned with events or exchanges that can be relatively easily organised in non-adversarial contexts. In the case of adversarial nations, traditional diplomatic channels, including official public diplomacy, do not function effectively. In Sharp's taxonomy, the first type of citizen diplomat can fill this vacuum to supplement state-centric diplomacy, while the fourth type of citizen diplomat challenges their state's official diplomatic line and introduces their alternative citizen-led diplomacy. In a rare — but rather descriptive — work on US public diplomacy in adversarial nations, case studies in Geoffrey Wiseman's edited volume find that people-to-people exchanges are one of the last remaining channels of American public diplomacy with adversarial nations.[26] Kelley and Popkova have documented examples of 'disruptive' diplomatic actors.[27] For nearly four decades, studies on Track II diplomacy focused on civilians' role, particularly in conflict resolution, where state-centric diplomacy was not effective.[28] Process-focused Track II diplomacy initiatives aim 'to build relationships, trust, empathy, and mutual understanding' between the people of adversarial nations to create a solid foundation for the restoration of peace.[29] In a similar vein, Castells sees people-to-people interactions as vital 'to induce a communication space in which a new, common language could emerge as a precondition' for healthy traditional diplomacy.[30]

Borrowing from non-profit–government relations literature,[31] Ayhan introduced three kinds of people-to-people diplomacy: complementary, when the activities complement the home country's foreign policy goals; supplementary,

---

24   Ayhan 2019; Gregory 2016; La Porte 2012.

25   Sharp 2001.

26   Wiseman 2015.

27   Kelley 2014; Popkova 2019a, 2019b.

28   Davidson and Montville 1981-1982, 145-157.

29   Çuhadar and Dayton 2011, 282.

30   Castells 2008, 91.

31   Young 2006.

when the activities fill a vacuum in line with the home country's foreign policy goals; and adversarial, when people's initiatives challenge their home country's foreign policy goals and have independent agency.[32]

In this article, we are concerned with people-to-people diplomacy as a supplementary (filling a vacuum) aspect of state-centric public diplomacy.[33] We define people-to-people diplomacy as intentional, political and trans-boundary communication-based interactions between groups of people for public rather than private interests that contribute to peaceful management of relations.[34] This definition excludes people-to-people interactions that are non-diplomatic such as pure international exchanges, which do not have political objectives or relevance to foreign policy, or activities that are anti-diplomatic, such as warfare.

Organisers and practitioners of people-to-people exchanges between adversarial societies operate with underlying assumptions of change at individual, intergroup and social/systemic levels if they intervene through programmatic activities to reach their expected outcomes.[35] These assumptions are referred to as theories of change.

In the theory and practice of people-to-people exchanges between adversarial nations, there is an underlying ontological assumption. There are two units of analysis, which are in continuous interaction with one another. On one plane, there are individuals from both countries that participate in exchanges with their counterparts. On another plane, states have interactions with each other. Structural relations between the states influence the way individuals interact with their counterparts across the border, and the outcomes of people-to-people exchanges affect the structural relations between the states in a feedback loop. According to this ontological perspective, the two units of analysis co-constitute each other, with neither necessarily occurring prior to the other.[36]

In this article, our focus is on changes at the individual level, where the actual cognitive, affective and behavioural changes happen through socialisation. Indeed, our social interactions and relationships construct who we

---

32   Ayhan 2020.
33   The two Koreas do not recognise one another as states, and both aspire to unification, at least rhetorically. Therefore, they do not refer to their policies or activities vis-à-vis each other as foreign policy or diplomacy. However, from an analytical standpoint, the two Koreas' policies and activities vis-à-vis each other resemble foreign policy and diplomacy.
34   Ayhan 2019, 2020.
35   Shapiro 2005.
36   Cederman 1997; Johnston 2001; Wendt 2015.

are.[37] Through communication-based social interactions, actors can build new forms of beliefs, strengthen established beliefs or change their beliefs about other actors. These social interactions can also lead actors to form new attitudes, strengthen established attitudes or change attitudes towards one another. Many studies show that social actors' behavioural intentions and actual behaviours are affected by their beliefs and emotions.[38] Compared with mediated and symbolic communication, interpersonal, direct and experiential communication has longer-lasting effects on the cognitive and affective faculties of social actors as well as a greater ripple effect in publicising individual experiences.[39]

We discuss potential effects of individual-level changes at the intergroup and social/systemic levels when we map the South Korean government's theories of change regarding inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges since the ultimate goals reflect the expected causal mechanism between these exchanges and expected outcomes in the levels beyond individuals.

3   Background of Inter-Korean Social and Cultural People-to-People Exchanges

Throughout the article we follow the South Korean Ministry of Unification's classification system of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, of which there are three types: private economic co-operation (humanitarian aid), trade (the Kaesong Industrial Complex), and social and cultural exchanges.[40] While contact and symmetrical communication are limited in the first two kinds of exchanges, social and cultural exchanges allow Korean counterparts from the two sides of the border to meet each other and exchange ideas with relatively equal status. Therefore, we focus on social and cultural exchanges, defined as planned activities in the fields of culture, religion, sports, academics and the arts, among others, that are carried out with the participation of South and North Korean civilians.[41] These exchanges closely correspond to 'exchange' in Cull's public diplomacy taxonomy,[42] as well as the 'relational communication framework' in Zaharna's.[43]

---

37   Onuf 1998, 58-79.
38   Buhmann 2016; Ayhan and Gouda 2021; Yun 2014.
39   Holmes 2018; Pacher 2018; Tam and Kim 2019.
40   Ministry of Unification 2019.
41   Ministry of Unification 2014a.
42   Cull 2008.
43   Zaharna 2009.

Due to the current legal framework, inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges remain very limited and are closely scrutinised by both governments. Ad hoc interactions between South and North Koreans also happen in third countries without prior or subsequent notification of the Ministry of Unification. However, in this article we focus on planned and officially approved inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges for three reasons. Firstly, they are intentional and systematic activities with clear objectives. Secondly, they are of a political nature since each government decides whether or not to approve the exchanges. Thirdly, compared with other kinds of exchanges, social and cultural exchanges involve symmetrical, two-way communication between counterparts, as stated above. These three factors justify reference to these exchanges as people-to-people diplomacy, rather than mere people-to-people interactions.

Both South and North Koreans have been subjected to years of socialisation through upbringing, education, official discourses and popular culture to have certain habits and frames of reference regarding what the other Korea means. The South Korean education system has used anti-communist posters, writings and speeches to convey a negative stereotype of North Korea to primary and secondary school students, particularly in the 1970s.[44] South Korean films portray North Koreans as backwards and unable to adapt to capitalism,[45] while the feminisation of North Korea vis-à-vis the stronger male South Korea in symbolic marriages is also common.[46] Official discourses in South Korea tend to represent North Koreans as people who need help from South Korea.[47] In a similar vein, North Korean educational texts portray South Korea as a country that needs to be saved by North Korea from its suffering under the influence of the United States and capitalist exploitation.[48] North Korean news broadcasting content about South Korea is predominantly negative commentary rather than fact-based journalism.[49] In North Korean fiction, South Korea appears as the fantastic Other who fights alongside North Korea against foreign powers for national unification.[50]

For South Korean ideas to be attractive to North Koreans and vice versa, they must first penetrate the marketplace of ideas in the other society.[51]

---

44   W. Lee 2000.
45   Choi 2009.
46   Kim and Michell 2019, 143-144.
47   W. Oh 2011.
48   K. Oh 2020.
49   M. Jeon 2014.
50   Y. Lee 2015.
51   Kroenig, McAdam and Weber 2010.

Considering that both societies censor communication coming from the other, it is difficult to argue that there is a functioning marketplace of ideas. Particularly in the case of the secluded North, information coming from overseas is highly restricted and exposure to unsolicited foreign information may be severely punished.[52] Therefore, incoming and potentially attractive ideas — including policies, values, lifestyles and other elements of culture — must overcome huge barriers before making their way to North Korean society.

Hunger for and the novelty of incoming ideas may make them even more attractive to secluded North Koreans. Attitude change through cognition is more to occur likely in 'an iterated, cognition-rich environment where there is lots of new information',[53] which is the case for most North Koreans, but also for South Koreans, who are barred from having direct interactions with North Koreans.

Studies on South Korean governmental and non-state propaganda directed towards North Korea show that propagandists have found creative ways to penetrate the strictly controlled borders of North Korea through bribes at the border, or by sending their messages with drones, air balloons and even inside bottles thrown into the sea.[54] According to propagandists, South Korean materials — particularly popular cultural products — are commonplace on the black market in North Korea, so much so that North Korean leaders frequently demand that South Korean leaders halt propaganda coming from the South.[55] At the same time, propaganda materials can introduce cultural barriers that act as filters, distorting the message and arousing suspicion.[56]

Against this background, inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges introduce an alternative — albeit limited — channel of communication that exposes South and North Koreans to each other's ideas. The first interpersonal and experiential contact with the other can act as a shock to established beliefs, and iterated exchanges can socialise participants to reshape these beliefs. First-hand and direct experiences with their counterparts, sometimes on the other side of the 38th parallel, give South and North Koreans insight and awareness about each other and the chance to learn from their interactions. This, in turn, can provide them with more accurate perceptions and a more complex and deeper understanding of the realities of the other.[57] Indeed, much of diplomacy — traditional or people-to-people — implicitly or

---

52   MyungJin Kim 2019.
53   Johnston 2001, 497.
54   Sevin et al. 2019.
55   Sevin et al. 2019.
56   Zaharna 2010, 96.
57   Scott-Smith 2008; Shapiro 2005; Yang, Lee and Lee 2019.

explicitly has to do with aiming to socialise the other to internalise new understandings about certain issues and the world.[58]

It was not until the early 1980s that the South Korean government began to actively push for inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. Between the end of the Korean War in 1953 and the late 1970s, it was North Korea that more actively pursued inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. South Korea, not yet confident of its material and ideological competitiveness vis-à-vis North Korea, interpreted the North's insistence on exchanges as a psychological warfare scheme, which meant the North's attempts to initiate exchanges with the South failed (Interviewee B2). In 1971, South Korea accepted humanitarian aid from North Korea but would not allow the North to distribute it directly to the South Korean people in order not to lose ground to the North in psychological warfare.[59]

On 1 December 1948, South Korea enacted the National Security Law, which defines North Korea as an anti-government establishment and not as a sovereign country.[60] Until the end of the Cold War, the law was interpreted very strictly to limit South Koreans' exposure to communist influences, including people from socialist countries, written or visual materials and the arts, among others. Hence the law banned all kinds of interpersonal and/or mediated social, cultural, economic and political exchanges between South and North Korea.[61] The two Koreas' Red Cross organisations held talks for humanitarian exchanges for nearly two decades, without bearing much fruit.[62]

In the 1980s, some developments took place that changed South Korea's position. Firstly, South Korea surpassed North Korea on nearly every front, including GDP per capita, exports, technology, conventional military strength, diplomatic ties and exchanges with foreign countries, making the country more confident in its relations vis-à-vis the North. Secondly, the Soviet Union's perestroika and glasnost policies propelled communist nation states to reform and open up. The Roh Tae-Woo administration (1988-1993) sought to ride the tide and embrace South Korean citizens' desire for unification by forming the Nordpolitik, inspired by West Germany's Ostpolitik, to engage North Korea. Thirdly, the end of the Cold War ensured that South Korea had and would have the upper hand in its relations with North Korea. Fourthly, the end of the military regime and democratisation in South Korea allowed civil society to have a

---

58   Ayhan 2018; Johnston 2001; Nadelmann 1990; Risse 2000.
59   Korea Institute for National Unification 2013.
60   Ministry of Justice 2016.
61   Ministry of Justice 2016.
62   Ministry of Unification 2019, 3.

say in relations with North Korea and demand exchanges with their counter-parts in the North. These changes led to South Korea's more assertive approach in emphasising people-to-people exchanges with North Korea.

The Roh Tae-Woo administration introduced a policy called the Unification Plan for One National Community with the aim of strengthening ties between South and North Korea, as well as with other socialist countries. On 7 July 1988, the government announced the Special Declaration for National Self-Esteem, Unification, and Prosperity (also known as the July 7th Declaration). This declaration laid the groundwork for legalising exchanges and co-operation in social, cultural and economic areas between the two Koreas. In August 1990, the Roh government enacted the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Act and the Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund Act to that end. The 1991 North–South Basic Agreement further facilitated inter-Korean exchanges.[63] South Korea legalised inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges with these legislations, given that participants receive prior permission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to meet with North Koreans. Furthermore, the reforms also legalised direct and indirect communication with North Koreans using various media, but again subject to prior (planned interactions) or subsequent (if the interaction happens unplanned) notification of the Ministry of Unification.[64]

While the rhetoric regarding the importance of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges remained consistent from 1988 up to 2020, the actual practice of exchanges took place mainly under the progressive administrations of Kim Dae-Jung (1998-2003) and Roh Moo-Hyun (2003-2008). Only three social and cultural projects were approved between 1991 and 1998, when the first progressive government came to office.[65] On the one hand, progressive governments between 1998 and 2008 approved 149 projects. The progressive Moon Jae-In (2017-2022) also had similar ideas and intentions regarding inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, but the exchanges remained limited due to harsh international sanctions against North Korea during Moon's presidency. The Moon government approved eleven social and cultural co-operation projects during his five-year tenure. On the other hand, the conservative governments of Lee Myung-Bak (2008-2013) and Park Geun-Hye (2013-2017) virtually halted

---

63   Ministry of Unification 1998, 9.
64   Ministry of Unification 2019, 5.
65   The three social and cultural exchanges are the South and North Korea unified table tennis team (1991), South and North Korea youth soccer team (1991) and Research and Investigation of Cultural Relics in North Korea (1997).

inter-Korean people-to-people social and cultural exchanges, approving only five inter-Korean projects in the field of social and cultural exchange.[66]

4   Methodology

We begin our analysis with a process evaluation of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. We map the South Korean government's theories of change for these exchanges. We surveyed all references to inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges with a focus on social and cultural exchanges in publicly available primary sources including Ministry of Unification white papers, policy papers, reports and presidents' speeches.

We conducted fifteen interviews using purposive sampling through snowballing. Five of these interviews were with former or current high-ranking Ministry of Unification officials responsible for inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. Ten interviews were with members of civil society organisations who had iterative exchanges with North Korea as part of a delegation representing their organisation. We initially recruited a few bureaucrats as interviewees due to their high-ranking positions within the Ministry of Unification regarding inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. Furthermore, we recruited a few participants based on their high level of activity in inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges. Later these interviewees helped us recruit others with similar levels of knowledge and activity. Throughout the study, 'South Korean participants' refers to these South Korean members of civil society organisations who participated in numerous exchanges with their counterparts from the North.

Only one of our fifteen interviewees was female, which may be due to the snowballing nature of the sampling but may also represent the gendered nature of the exchanges, which may be male-centric.[67] All interviewees gave us written consent for conducting and audio-recording the interviews. The interviews were one to one-and-a-half hours long and were conducted either in interviewees' offices or at cafes of their choosing. The interviews were in Korean and were transcribed verbatim. We used NVivo software to code themes emerging from the interviews. We kept interviewee names confidential by mutual

---

66   For a detailed account on differences between progressive and conservative South Korean administrations' ideas, interests and policies regarding social and cultural exchanges, see Ayhan and Kim 2021, 32-58. For the statistics on inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, see Ministry of Unification 2013b, 2020.

67   Despite numerous attempts, we were not able to obtain gender statistics on inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges from the Ministry of Unification to clarify potential gendered dynamics of these exchanges.

agreement with them. Interviews with bureaucrats appear in this article with pseudonyms from B1 to B5, while activist interviewees have pseudonyms from A1 to A10. A full list of interviewees is given in Appendix 1.

The interviews with five high-level Ministry of Unification bureaucrats — four retired and one still in office — in charge of social and cultural exchanges under administrations ranging from Kim Dae-Jung to Moon Jae-In provided us with a better sense of the historical and political context of official documents. Primary sources and interviews with bureaucrats helped us to understand South Korea's problem framing, intervention framing, methods and intended outcomes in pursuance of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges.

In the second part of our analysis, we explored the outcomes of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. We used interviews with ten South Korean civilian participants in these exchanges to reflect the participants' subjective experiences and insights. We refer to interviews with bureaucrats in this section when relevant.

The time frame of this research is from 1988 to 2020, since it was the Roh Tae-Woo administration which legalised inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges. While we use this time frame to map the South Korean government's theories of change based on official rhetoric, the second section focuses more on the period from 1998 to 2008 due to the lack of social and cultural exchanges before 1998 and after 2008. Unless otherwise stated, Seoul or South Korea refers to South Korean governments without differentiating between administrations.

5   Mapping the Theories of Change

In this section, drawing on official government documents and key informant interviews, we identify how South Korean governments framed the problems in inter-Korean relations; how they framed inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges to address these problems; the methods surrounding these exchanges; and finally — and most importantly — the expected outcomes of these exchanges.[68]

5.1   *Framing the Problem*
In his famous July 7th Declaration, President Roh Tae-Woo suggested that the two Koreas had grown to see each other as archenemies following their

---

68   We build on Shapiro's 2002, 2005 framework for theories of change to evaluate the process of inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges.

division and that this perception only contributed to intensifying hostilities.[69] Consecutive South Korean governments that followed Roh believed that decades of almost no contact between the people of the two Koreas had caused alienation, a sense of difference, confrontation and antagonism engendered by the division.[70] President Kim Dae-Jung pointed to decades of separation, with no opportunity for reconciliation or exchange and under the constant threat of war, as a huge problem.[71]

Inter-Korean hostilities, in turn, created mistrust between the two countries. The 2002 Unification White Paper reflects that while the North was trying to figure out how to respond to recent changes in the international order in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 era, South Korean society was not ready to trust the new South–North relations due to 50 or more years of antagonism and confrontation.[72]

5.2   *Framing the Exchanges*

South Korea emphasised inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges and co-operation as the right intervention to expand points of contact between the two societies and overcome the aforementioned problems. Seoul saw exchanges as a dialogue starter that would create the foundation for further reducing the possibility of war on the Peninsula.[73] Roh Tae-Woo laid out social, cultural and economic exchanges that would contribute to mutual trust as the sound and prerequisite basis for solving all existing inter-Korean problems and possibly paving the way for unification as a nation state.[74] It was not only civilians that were meeting each other, but also government officials of both sides showing goodwill and doing the groundwork for exchanges to take place.

Seoul saw social and cultural exchanges as a low-cost, low-risk way to initiate dialogue. The 2000 Unification White Paper states that South Korea must identify sports, cultural, arts, religious or academic events that would be relatively easy for North Korea to accept to increase exchanges and contact and in turn to diversify relations with the North.[75] Interviewee B1 believes that social and cultural exchanges are particularly important because they are independent of the more conflictual political and military interests. The 2007 Unification White Paper suggests that in 2006, despite North Korea's missile

---

69   Tae-Woo Roh 1988.
70   Ministry of Unification 2000, 188; Ministry of Unification 2009, 14.
71   Ministry of Unification 2000, 185.
72   Ministry of Unification 2002, 1.
73   Ministry of Unification 2000, 185.
74   Ministry of Unification 1998, 177.
75   Ministry of Unification 2000, 9.

and nuclear tests, which created a difficult situation on the Peninsula, inter-Korean exchanges were kept intact to prevent further heightening of tensions and to stabilise North–South relations.[76] In other words, social and cultural exchanges were seen to generate momentum and act as a buffer for the improvement of North–South relations despite difficulties in other aspects of bilateral relations.[77]

5.3 *Method of Exchanges*

South Korea employed certain methods to ensure that inter-Korean exchanges would be sustainable and effective in the long term. Seoul deemed reciprocity and mutuality indispensable to these exchanges.[78] Without mutuality and symmetrical gains, it would not be possible to get the North Korean side to agree to exchanges and to sustain them over a long period of time. This mutuality in exchanges also served as the basis for mutual trust.

The main reason for the South Korean side to emphasise mutuality was because North Korea was reluctant to let the exchanges take place out of concern for maintaining its political regime, which might have felt threatened due to the power and information asymmetry between the countries and their societies.[79] Even the term 'sunshine' in Sunshine Policy, inspired by Aesop's fable 'North Wind and the Sun', was enough to make the North Korean side cautious about the asymmetric nature of the exchanges (Interviewee B1). Therefore, the South Korean side had to emphasise mutuality and convince North Koreans that this was indeed a positive-sum game (Interviewee B1).

In order to convince North Koreans of the win-win nature of the relationship, showing respect and sincerity were deemed very important. The 1998 Unification White Paper recommended showing sincerity to North Korea regarding the positive-sum aspect of exchanges.[80] In his 1998 Independence Day speech, Kim Dae-Jung said that both Koreas must respect each other's political regimes and avoid gaining advantage over one another because, in the end, it would lead to peaceful co-existence, peaceful exchanges and eventually peaceful unification.[81]

Nevertheless, convincing North Korea to participate in social and cultural exchanges was not done merely through pure persuasion but also involved inducements — that is, persuading North Korea to participate in exchanges

---

76   Ministry of Unification 2007, 4.
77   Ministry of Unification 2005, 34, 77, 134; Ministry of Unification 2007, 89.
78   Ministry of Unification 1999, 16.
79   Ministry of Unification 1998, 23.
80   Ministry of Unification 1998, 16.
81   Ministry of Unification 2000, 185.

of aid (Interviewee B1), similar to West Germany's experience with East Germany.[82]

The South Korean government was convinced that the win-win relationship would bear fruit for both sides only in the long term given the respective capabilities of the two countries. The 1998 Unification White Paper explained that in this win-win relationship, the amount, the kind and the time (frame) of giving and taking might not be the same.[83] Interviewee B1 also told us that win-win exchanges could be at different times or simultaneous. These explanations were directed at South Korean domestic audiences, who might feel that North Korea was benefitting more from reconciliation efforts by receiving unilateral aid without giving anything in return. Therefore, Kim Dae-Jung's government justified the exchanges as bringing absolute gains in the long term even if the South might seem to be gaining less in the short term.

Seoul emphasised that social and cultural exchanges should not be contaminated with political issues.[84] From the early years of reconciliation, policymakers portrayed social and cultural exchanges as key to creating a unification culture at the grassroots level, beyond the political negotiations between the two regimes.[85] Policy-making emphasised interaction and mutual understanding between ordinary citizens who had lived through the antagonistic period because of the perception that reconciliation and co-operation would not materialise based only on communication among a small number of bureaucrats and elites.[86] Such attention to ordinary people is understood to emerge out of a reflection on how people internalised flawed images of one another and adopted antagonistic attitudes as they lived through the period of disconnect.

5.4   *Expected Outcomes*

Based on the aforementioned problem perception, intervention framing and methods, Seoul envisioned certain expected outcomes from social and cultural exchanges. The most fundamental expectation was that they would contribute to reconciliation, co-operation and the creation of a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.[87] The Roh Tae-Woo government's 1991 Agreement on

---

82   Jonsson 2006, 53, 66, 72
83   Ministry of Unification 1998, 16.
84   Ministry of Unification 1999, 16; Ministry of Unification 2000, 185; Ministry of Unification 2010, 20; Ministry of Unification 2013a, 84; Ministry of Unification 2014b, 32, 80; Ministry of Unification 2015, 84; Ministry of Unification 2016, 56.
85   S. Oh 1993.
86   Ministry of Unification 2003, 13; Ministry of Unification 2016, 56.
87   Ministry of Unification 2000, 181.

Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, and Exchanges and Cooperation between South and North Korea laid out the framework for social and cultural exchanges which in essence were designed to achieve everything in the title of the agreement: reconciliation, non-aggression, and exchanges and co-operation. In his presidential inauguration speech, Kim Dae-Jung suggested that the mere putting into practice of the agreed-upon principles in the 1991 agreement would be enough to overcome the problems between South and North Korea and open the road to unification.[88]

The Unification White Paper pointed to inter-Korean exchanges as the solution to reduce tensions and contribute to a friendly climate in the two Koreas' relations.[89] The expectation was that the exchanges and co-operation would prevent relations from becoming strained and help stabilise relations.[90] The South Korean government believed that social and cultural exchanges contributed to reducing inter-Korean hostilities because of the broad range of participation in them.[91] In turn, the expectation was that the deepening and vitalisation of these exchanges would expand the opportunity for peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula.[92]

Seoul adopted and accumulated a functionalist assumption that expanding the basis of North–South relations could increase the stability of inter-Korean relations and that people-to-people exchanges, particularly social and cultural exchanges, could eventually influence and lead to positive outcomes in other fields, including security and peace.[93] In 2007, reflecting on the increase in the number of inter-Korean exchanges, the Unification White Paper suggested that these exchanges should be further expanded to help maintain the momentum in South–North relations.[94] People-to-people exchanges are seen as a prerequisite and a fundamental basis on which governmental exchanges are to be built.[95] Interviewee A2 suggested that the expectation was that the exchanges would increase interest in and support for inter-Korean relations through grassroots participation.

In the July 7th Declaration that initiated the engagement policy with North Korea, Roh Tae-Woo stated that exchanges are vital to tear down the walls of

---

88   Ministry of Unification 2000, 181.
89   Ministry of Unification 2001, 29; Ministry of Unification 2013a, 108.
90   Ministry of Unification 2007, 4.
91   Ministry of Unification 2007, 91.
92   Ministry of Unification 2007, 18.
93   Ministry of Unification 2007, 18, 89, 114; Ministry of Unification 2010, 78.
94   Ministry of Unification 2007, 18, 89, 114.
95   Ministry of Unification 1998, 177.

separation and to restore mutual trust.[96] Social and cultural exchanges and co-operation create the foundation for building a social and cultural community on the Korean Peninsula by helping both sides to better understand each other's different value systems and lifestyles and overcome prejudices and misunderstandings, gradually building up mutual trust.[97]

In a similar vein, another concept that appeared repeatedly in official documents and interviews is empathy. Social and cultural exchanges are defined as a process through which South and North Koreans alleviate their sense of difference and instead develop mutual empathy.[98]

These exchanges were significant not only for building mutual understanding, trust and empathy, but also for restoring awareness of ethnic homogeneity and ethnic community between the two peoples and cultivating the will for unification.[99] Roh Tae-Woo emphasised that both Koreas must strengthen ethnic bonds and create a sense of belonging to the same community.[100] In other words, interaction between the two separated and alienated peoples would facilitate the recategorisation of antagonistic identities into a shared Korean identity. According to the government's logic, it follows that, in turn, this would help minimise the cultural and psychological conflicts between the two societies that could be expected after eventual unification.[101]

Last, but not least, the South Korean government designed inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, albeit limited in numbers, to work as a proxy to supplement the public diplomacy objectives of South Korea in North Korea in the absence of official channels of public diplomacy, which had created a vacuum. The most important objective along these lines was for social and cultural exchanges to expose North Koreans to the freedoms enjoyed by South Koreans, with the expectation that this would ultimately lead to stable change in North Korea.[102] Interviewee B4 suggested that exposure to South Korean participants is like a small stream of water, but as it steadily grows, it can flow over the bank even if one tries to stop it, and this is the core point of exchanges.

---

96   Ministry of Unification 1998, 175.
97   Ministry of Unification 2008, 175; Ministry of Unification 2009, 14; Ministry of Unification 2010, 78; Ministry of Unification 2014b, 14; Ministry of Unification 2016, 56.
98   Ministry of Unification 2005, 134; Ministry of Unification 2006, 147; Ministry of Unification 2007, 89; Ministry of Unification 2010, 78.
99   Ministry of Unification 2001, 29; Ministry of Unification 2003, 180; Ministry of Unification 2008, 304; Ministry of Unification 1998, 9; Ministry of Unification 2004, 184; Ministry of Unification 2007, 135; Ministry of Unification 2016, 18.
100   Tae-Woo Roh 1988.
101   Ministry of Unification 2008, 175; Ministry of Unification 2009, 14; Ministry of Unification 2016, 56.
102   Ministry of Unification 2007, 91.

6 Exploration of the Outcomes of Exchanges: Insights from South Korean Participants

In this section, we explore the outcomes of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges at the individual level. This exploration is based mainly on qualitative analysis of interviews with South Korean activists who took part in these exchanges. We also refer to interviews with bureaucrats in cases where the same themes emerged.

In the in-depth interviews, South Korean participants talked about various aspects of their direct and experiential interpersonal communication with North Koreans. There was consensus among all participants that direct experiences change South Korean participants' cognitive and affective evaluations of North Korea and North Koreans, about whom the only information they had previously had come through mediators including mass and social media, national education and other third parties. The participants reported that the changes were not one-way — they observed the same cognitive and affective changes in North Korean participants' evaluations of South Korea and South Koreans in their exchanges. While the former is a reflection on their own experiences, thoughts and feelings, the latter is only their observation of North Korean participants' experiences, thoughts and feelings, which is more likely to be biased and/or mistaken. Nevertheless, considering the practical difficulty of gathering the latter data directly from North Korean participants, South Korean participants were a good proxy to provide insights regarding changes among North Korean participants. Below, we discuss the themes that emerged from our semi-structured face-to-face interviews with South Korean participants.

One of the most significant themes that emerged from the interviews is the difference between the South Korean and North Korean participants. Almost all interviewees suggested that, while South Korean participants in people-to-people exchanges were members of civil society, it is difficult to say the same for North Koreans. They thought that the North Korean government, afraid of losing the edge in psychological warfare by losing the hearts and minds of its citizens, would often send party or state loyalists to participate in people-to-people exchanges with South Korea. According to the respondents from both the South Korean bureaucracy and civil society, while some North Korean participants were ordinary members of North Korean society, the majority of the participants are better described as officials rather than civilians (Interviewees B1, A2 and A5). Interviewee A5 said that while South Korean participants demanded to meet their journalist counterparts working for North Korean media, more often than not they would meet media representatives of the

Party (Worker's Party of Korea). This finding is in line with the literature on inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges at the Kaesong Industrial Complex, where North Korean workers' interactions are much more restricted in their exchanges with South Koreans.[103]

The North Korean government saw this alternative information source as dangerous and often asked South Korean government officials to take exchanges slowly, particularly when the exchanges were gaining momentum under the progressive Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun administrations (Interviewee B3). A former Undersecretary of Ministry of Unification referred to North Korea's request to slow down social and cultural exchanges as a significant indicator of them producing social change in North Korea (Interviewee B1). The North Korean government's fears are not unfounded given the information asymmetry and economic disparity between participants from the two sides. Defection is an almost one-way street from North to South. As of December 2021, 33,815 North Koreans had defected to South Korea,[104] while the number of South Koreans that have defected to North Korea is negligible.[105]

On the one hand, South Koreans had diverse personal motivations to participate in inter-Korean exchanges, which led them to act more flexibly in their interactions. Some interviewees mentioned that they were interested in the immediate goal of making contact with their counterparts in North Korea and contributing to reconciliation and peace in that capacity rather than pursuing a far-fetched, long-term goal of unification (Interviewee A9). Interviewee B1 believes that people-to-people exchanges help widen the domain of free and peaceful interactions between the two Koreas. Interviewee A3 suggested that 'the exchanges should be made in such a way that we can freely exchange with each other. I think there will be unification in the end. I do not think that unification itself is important.' The South Korean activists get to participate in these exchanges because of their personal and group motivations, a bottom-up demand from civil society and a will to push the authorities to allow them to interact with North Koreans.

North Koreans, on the other hand, have more red lines dictated by their state that they are not supposed to cross. This situation creates extra tension and barriers in interpersonal communications, since North Koreans try not to take risks, understood as willingness to accept the uncertainty of outcomes

---

103   E. Jung 2014.

104   Ministry of Unification 2021.

105   According to the information we received from the Ministry of Unification, there is no clear recording of how many people have defected from South to North, though a recent report suggested that there were only 55 North Korean defectors who went back to North Korea between 2010 and 2020 (Noh 2020).

in dialogic communication. Four interviewees speculated that North Korean participants might have been briefed before the exchanges and debriefed after their interactions with South Koreans to make sure their views regarding the state's ideology were intact (Interviewees A1, B1, B4 and A7). If the South Korean participants' observations are correct, this suggests that the dynamics of North Korean participation in people-to-people exchanges are quite different than those for South Koreans. The demand for North Korean individuals' participation seems to come from the top down, rather than the other way around, and are the result not of individual personal motivation but of government policies. The bylaws of the Workers' Party of (North) Korea explicitly refer to the top-down decision-making process even for civilian exchanges, which is quite different from the case in democratic South Korea.[106] These different dynamics of participation create barriers to establishing a level playing field for genuine people-to-people exchanges.

Some participants talked about the prejudices North and South Koreans have towards each other. Interviewee B1 suggested that due to anti-communist socialisation in South Korea since the administration of President Rhee Syngman (1948-1960), most South Koreans have antagonistic and dehumanised views of North Korea in general. Censorship and limited exchanges barred South Koreans from accessing real information about North Korea and left them with a distorted image of the North (Interviewees B1 and A9). Interviewee B4 talked about there being an impression of a strictly controlled society in North Korea. Interviewee A4 thought that 'there was an endless mistrust'.

Differences in socialisation rooted in different world views created huge divergences between the people of the two Koreas. According to Interviewee B1, even the understanding and function of the arts and sports are different in the socialist North and the capitalist South. However, meeting with each other helped facilitate mutual understanding between these two different worlds. Iterative communication-based interactions made North and South Koreans realise that their perceptions are biased and caused by a limited communication environment (Interviewees A1, A4, A5 and B1). Interviewee A1 recognised that North Koreans have very different values, ways of thinking and perspectives. He suggested that South and North Koreans were, figuratively, speaking two different languages despite literally speaking the same language,[107] but long-term exchanges facilitated his understanding of North Koreans' way of thinking and perspectives — which was 'a remarkable change' for him. It was

---

106   Misook Kim 2004.

107   For more on linguistics and the consequential world view differences between South and North Korea, see S. Kim 2005.

genuine dialogue that opened up both South and North Koreans' hearts to one another and alleviated their prejudices against each other (Interviewees B2).

For Interviewee A4, long-running projects allowed South and North Korean counterparts to become familiar with each other and overcome their suspicions and prejudices. In a similar vein, Interviewee A3 suggested that the main function of exchanges is facilitating intimacy and familiarity and, in turn, building trust between South and North Koreans. For Interviewee B3, long-term interpersonal exchanges created affection between the participants. Interviewee B3 suggested that rather than changing values or lifestyles per se, the iterative exchanges deepened familiarity and friendship and helped tear down walls between participants of the exchanges. As mutual trust is established, suspicions disperse and communication flows (Interviewee A5). According to Interviewee A10, participants in sports exchanges were allowed to stay in North Korea for long periods — sometimes months — whereas other types of social and cultural exchanges usually run for only a few days. He suggested that these opportunities to stay longer facilitated more in-depth exchanges, creating more mutual trust and mutual understanding. Interviewee A7, who has acted as a gatekeeper for many social and cultural exchanges between South and North Koreans, concluded that 'for improvement of North–South relations, we do not need any other conditions. We only need to meet often, very often, meet using different routes. On top of all, meeting each other is the most important.' Similar findings regarding the importance of long-term interactions were reported in inter-Korean youth sports exchanges.[108]

Interviewee A7 recalled that there were conservative South Korean participants who hated North Korea when they got involved in the projects — but they were involved for different reasons. They realised there was a humane side of North Korea through their North Korean counterparts and their attitudes towards North Korea changed following iterative exchanges.[109] There were also some who were previously very friendly towards North Korea for ideological reasons. In their first interactions with North Koreans, they would call them 'comrade', but the North Koreans would react with confusion and irritation at this imagined comradeship. In effect, Interviewee A7's comments suggest that interpersonal exchanges between Koreans across the border moderated extreme or superficial beliefs and attitudes towards one another which had been formed pre-interaction through mediated communication, for both conservative and progressive participants. Interviewee B4 suggested that the exchanges made the participants look at North Korea from their interlocutors'

---

108   Gil 2019.
109   Interviewee B3 talked about the same phenomenon.

perspective and facilitated empathy and better understanding of things that previously only seemed wrong. Similarly, Interviewees B2 and B3 talked about many South Korean participants having a chance to moderate their antagonistic feelings towards North Korea due to interpersonal exchanges, particularly following co-operation projects. Interviewee B3 added that 'the changes [in attitudes] are not one-way', as both sides developed affection [*jeong*] for each other.

Democratisation in South Korea made it possible for citizens to influence their government on issues involving inter-Korean relations.[110] Interviewee B2 suggested that, particularly under the Kim Dae-Jung administration, citizens were able to pitch ideas and take the lead in the organisation of exchanges with their counterparts in the North. According to him, this bottom-up process led to the diversification of inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges. For interviewee B3, the involvement of a diverse group of South Korean citizens in exchanges with North Korea during a period when there were virtually no relations between the two countries was very significant because it brought about a change in North Korea with a 'wind of freedom'. North Koreans view South Koreans as having flexibility and freedom and living financially stable lives. Interviewee B3 realised the 'scary power' of freedom and the importance of people-to-people exchanges after years of exchanges with the North. For him, South Korean civilian participants' genuine and natural experience of freedom is directly conveyed through people-to-people exchanges, and no government-directed symbolic messaging can replace its behavioural impact on North Koreans (Interviewee B3). Interviewee A1 suggested that, especially when exchanges take place in South Korea, North Koreans directly observe the freedom of people in their behaviours and thoughts, and they talk about this with them. He adds that when South Koreans go to the North, North Koreans also observe the 'scary and powerful change of habits' of South Koreans that have resulted from living in a free society. People-to-people exchanges make these observations possible for North Koreans (Interviewee A1). For them, these direct observations have the potential to reframe South Korea for North Korean participants (Interviewee B3).

An interesting theme that emerged in interviews was the role of informal occasions in facilitating sincere and intimate dialogue between Koreans from both sides and in turn reducing tensions, overcoming prejudices and effectively contributing to changes in beliefs about and attitudes towards one another. South Korean participants were able to recognise that their North

---

110   See also Kiwoong Jung 2019.

Korean counterparts are also human beings with similar anxieties and goals, mainly through informal meetings (Interviewees A1, A9, B1 and B3).

Interviewee B4 suggested that informal occasions such as meals and drinks were the best opportunities for 'natural contact' with one another. Interviewee A7 said that 'once the official talks are over and when we are off-the-record, we eat together, and alcohol is never missing during the meals. ... We never have enough of those dinners.' He shared that North Koreans also want to become friendly with their South Korean counterparts in informal settings. They talk about their anxieties, such as their children's education and problems with their spouses, coming to the realisation that 'they are the same as us' (Interviewees A1 and A7). In a similar vein, Interviewee A5 suggested that North Koreans also enjoy jokes, very much like South Koreans, particularly in informal settings.

Interviewee A7 observed that some North Korean participants talked as if they were tasked with communicating certain political messages to South Korean participants during official meetings. He recalled that on one occasion, 'after the meeting, the [North Korean] representative told me that "I think I talked a little bit harshly. Do not take it hardly and let's have a drink." I saw this and thought that their official role and personal minds were different' (Interviewee A7). Sometimes, when material interests were at stake in collaborative projects, there were disagreements during the official talks, which were later reconciled over drinks (Interviewee A7). In these scenarios too, it was at informal occasions that communication barriers were overcome. North Korean participants were also able to talk about their political views more sincerely and openly over drinks (Interviewee A7). Similarly, Interviewee B3 mentioned that they could talk about more difficult topics that they had been advised not to discuss after having become friendly; for Interviewee B3, this was what was special about people-to-people exchanges. For Interviewee B4, talks over drinks, particularly one on one, were fundamentally different from more formal talks among larger groups. These informal settings in a way helped to bring out North Korean participants' agency in the exchanges. This is despite the top-down nature of North Korea's organisation of the exchanges, as mentioned above.

The shared language and culture of the two Koreas play an important role in informal interactions. Participants directly experienced how much they have in common in terms of food tastes, preferences for alcoholic drinks, holidays, jokes, metaphors and many other things. All these social interactions happen through the medium of the Korean language. Interviewee A4 talked about how much South Koreans have in common with North Koreans in terms of

national characteristics and language despite a 70-year division. For her, the same language, similar cultures and similar physiognomy helped to overcome participants' tensions and suspicions and allowed them to become familiar with each other. Interviewee B4 shared how they would try to learn each other's dialects, for example, the Pyeongyang dialect for South Korean participants and the Gyeongsang-do dialect for North Korean participants, and everyone would enjoy and appreciate the efforts to that end. Interviewee A7 suggested that having no language barrier was critical in 'eliciting positive feelings such as emotional sympathy' towards one another. He shared an anecdote about a South Korean professor and their North Korean counterpart who argued over issues during the official talks, but later, over drinks, discovering they were the same age, dropped the use of honorifics and talked to each other as friends from that moment onwards. This was also facilitated by similarities in language and culture. He argues that while South and North Koreans have mutually antagonistic feelings towards each other because of ideological differences, direct communication and experiences bring out 'our fundamental compatriot (fraternal) love from the depths of our hearts'. Other participants too shared their realisation that North Koreans are the same people as South Koreans, 'with the same blood', 'same race and same family' and 'compatriots', despite previously having a distorted image of the North Korean as a 'commie or goblin' (Interviewees A1, B1 and B3).

Some participants highlighted the relatively non-political (or rather less ideological and less contentious) nature of people-to-people exchanges. Interviewee A3 suggested that 'people-to-people exchanges are not political or ideological. Therefore, it is possible to interact more freely.' Interviewee A4 suggested that North Koreans were able to overcome their suspicions of South Koreans mainly because the collaborative projects they completed were non-ideological in nature — for example, archaeological projects. The South Koreans involved in the archaeological project were only interested in technical aspects of the project and in learning from their North Korean colleagues, with no political implications. Collaborative projects facilitated trust and made them realise shared goals and the benefits of co-operation in attaining these goals (Interviewee A4). Interviewee A4 emphasised that due to the non-political nature of social and cultural exchanges, it was possible to maintain co-operative projects in this realm even when the two Koreas had tense relations. Religious exchanges between faith leaders in the two Koreas are seen as particularly free of ideology and therefore crucial in overcoming inter-Korean conflicts and filling the vacuum left by strained relations (Interviewee A1). Indeed, inter-Korean religious exchanges were occasionally allowed to take

place even during the most tense periods in inter-Korean relations under conservative administrations in South Korea while most other exchanges were halted during the same period.

The apolitical nature of exchanges was due in part due to deliberate attempts to avoid contentious issues such as criticising the political system of North Korea or talking about disputed historical accounts between the two countries or the Kim family (Interviewees A7 and B5). The South Korean government and experienced participants asked fellow South Korean exchange participants to avoid controversial issues, even shared historical events such as the March 1 Independence Movement, as there is disagreement between the two Koreas about Kim Il-Sung's role in it (Interviewees A5 and B5).

Another theme that emerged from the interviews is the obstacles that prevent inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges from gaining momentum. There is no way for South and North Korean counterparts to contact and communicate with each other directly while in their own countries. Instead, most communication takes place through third parties, including contacts in China via fax or email (Interviewees A1 and A3). This, in turn, creates communication barriers.

Another barrier is the legal framework. South Korea enacted the South–North Exchange and Cooperation Act, regulating inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, almost three decades ago. The Act has been slightly revised since then, but the foundation, which emphasises state-centric exchanges, remains intact (Interviewees A9, A10 and B4). Interviewee B4 suggested that the legal framework for inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges must be updated as it is no longer fit for purpose. Interviewee A9 believes the South Korean government's limits on exchanges are too restrictive as they require one to get permission from and/or inform the Ministry of Unification every time one gets in touch with a North Korean, even outside the Korean Peninsula. Interviewee A10 argued that even the name of the ministry that manages exchanges, that is, the Ministry of Unification, is a burden, while the emphasis should be on exchanges rather than unification per se.

7   Discussion and Conclusion

People-to-people exchanges are an integral part of South Korea's North Korea policy, particularly under progressive governments. Process evaluation shows consistent goals regarding these exchanges, from the Roh Tae-Woo government to the Moon Jae-In government, expressed in rhetoric, although actual policies have fluctuated between progressive and conservative governments.

Inter-Korean social and cultural exchanges were designed primarily to expand points of contact between the two Koreas to alleviate a sense of alienation and antagonism and increase mutual understanding and empathy between the two societies — and ultimately to reduce tensions and establish peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Inter-Korean exchanges remain extremely limited, mainly due to North Korea's very close control of its population's interactions with the outside world. Due to the small number of exchanges as well as radically fluctuating North Korea policies in the South, inter-Korean social and cultural people-to-people exchanges are yet to bear any tangible fruit at the intergovernmental level. However, this article was able to uncover some important insights regarding the outcomes of these exchanges at the individual level.

Participant interviews reveal parallel findings to the government's goals in these exchanges. The role of direct interaction in the re-categorisation of identities of participants is significant and confirms findings of previous conflict resolution studies.[111] Direct interpersonal interaction, particularly in informal and unscripted settings, helps facilitate friendship and mutual understanding between people from different groups. These interactions facilitate the realisation of a shared identity and the reconstruction of a discourse based on this identity, stimulating the cognitive and particularly the affective faculties of participants. This, in turn, reinforces the idea of a superordinate Korean group identity, however imagined it may be. The recognition of commonalities such as shared ethnicity, culture and language between the two Koreas plays a significant role in this re-categorisation, while ideological and socio-economic differences could strengthen South and North Korean identities as opposed to superordinate Korean identity. We can build on this insight to design experimental studies to test whether social and cultural exchanges do indeed lead to identity re-categorisation, in terms of a superordinate identity, between adversarial societies, and if identity re-categorisation, in turn, leads to other expected outcomes such as generating more empathy, trust and humanisation vis-à-vis the adversarial group. The findings of such studies would greatly contribute to public diplomacy studies, which remain relatively normative and descriptive. Furthermore, South Korean participants' insights on their direct interactions with their counterparts reflect outcomes similar to those conceptualised in works on face-to-face diplomacy, which was mainly conceptualised for official diplomacy, as well as in Track ii diplomacy and conflict resolution studies.

---

111   Çuhadar and Dayton 2011.

Another important finding in this article is that, despite the political goals behind inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, Seoul wants to keep the exchanges as non-political as possible to avoid irritating Pyongyang. According to the participant interviews, the actual exchanges remain politics-free to a great extent as they tend to focus more on the projects at hand during business hours and less controversial and more shared sentiments during their social interactions. However, some interviewees pointed out that North Koreans sometimes opened up and discussed their political perspectives in a candid way during social interactions over drinks. That is, social interactions based on no explicit political agenda help build trust and confidence between the participants from both sides that open the door for even previously avoided topics.

One thing to note is that our findings in the second part of this article are on the individual level. Transferring them from the individual level to the intergroup, social and inter-Korean governmental levels would require further analysis, which is beyond the scope of this article.

Considering that opinion-based policy recommendations and chronological descriptive studies dominate the literature on inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges, the empirical findings in this study help establish a basis for future studies. The interviews reveal significant insights, particularly regarding the role of informal interactions and the importance of direct experiential communication. The observation that interpersonal exchanges mitigate the mediated-communication-based extreme attitudes of both conservatives and progressives is of note. This effect can be tested through social experiments in future studies.

This study fills a gap in the knowledge of inter-Korean people-to-people exchanges by exploring and analysing them in depth. It is thus a significant contribution to the literature on inter-Korean relations in the English language, most of which has focused on military, in particular nuclear, issues.[112]

Furthermore, our study contributes to the literature on people-to-people diplomacy, particularly in the context of supplementing the home country's foreign policy objectives vis-à-vis an adversarial country. The first part of the article presented how a government has envisioned people-to-people diplomacy as a means to supplement its official diplomacy towards an adversarial country that falls short of achieving the former's desired outcomes. The second part of the article showed that, at least in the case of South Korea, the participants are not merely tools of governmental diplomacy; rather, these civil society actors claim agency in their exchanges with their counterparts. Yet the

---

112   Robertson 2019.

scrutiny of governments in these people-to-people exchanges means the actors fall short of becoming adversarial or disruptive diplomatic change agents. An example of such not-so-diplomatic social change agents can be found among North Korean defectors turned South Korean activists who send propaganda materials to North Korea via balloons, drones and bottles.

Bibliography

Ayhan, Kadir Jun. 'Inter-Korean People-to-People Diplomacy'. *CPD Blog — USC Center on Public Diplomacy*, 5 February 2018. https://www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/inter-korean-people-people-diplomacy.

Ayhan, Kadir Jun. 'The Boundaries of Public Diplomacy and Non-State Actors: A Taxonomy of Perspectives'. *International Studies Perspectives* 20 (1) (2019), 63-83. DOI 10.1093/isp/eky010.

Ayhan, Kadir Jun. 'A Typology of People-to-People Diplomacy'. *CPD Blog — USC Center on Public Diplomacy*, 12 March 2020. https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/typology-people-people-diplomacy.

Ayhan, Kadir Jun and Moamen Gouda. 'Determinants of Global Korea Scholarship Students' Word-of-Mouth about Korea'. *Asia Pacific Education Review* 22 (1) (2021), 15-29. DOI 10.1007/s12564-020-09648-8.

Ayhan, Kadir Jun and Yuree Kim. 'Ideas Matter in Inter-Korean Relations: Shifts in South Korea's Foreign Policy Interests and Behavior vis-à-vis North Korea'. In *The Future of the Korean Peninsula: Korea 2032 and Beyond*, eds. Mason Richey, Jagannath P. Panda and David A. Tizzard (Singapore: Routledge, 2021), 32-58.

Buhmann, Alexander. *Measuring Country Image* (Freiburg: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2016).

Byun, Hakmoon. 'Bug-han-ui gwa-hag-gi-sul gang-gug gu-sang-gwa nam-bug gwa-hag-gi-sul gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog' [North Korea's vision of 'a scientific and technical power' and the inter-Korean exchange and co-operation of science and technology]. *Journal of Peace and Unification* 10 (2) (2018), 81-113.

Castells, Manuel. 'The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance'. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (1) (2008), 78-93.

Cederman, Lars-Erik, ed. *Emergent Actors in World Politics: How States and Nations Develop and Dissolve* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

Choi, Eunjin. 'Tong-il-eul ba-la-bo-neun du gae-ui si-seon: <bom-nal-ui nun-seog-i>, <nam-nam-bug-nyeo>, <na-ui gyeol-hon-won-jeong-gi> leul jung-sim-eu-lo' [Two views of unification of North and South Korea: focusing on <Thaw of Spring Day>,

<Namnam Buknyeo>, and <Wedding Campaign>]. *The Journal of the Korea Contents Association* 9 (1) (2009), 238-245.

Constantinou, Costas M., ed. *On the Way to Diplomacy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

Çuhadar, Esra and Bruce Dayton. 'The Social Psychology of Identity and Inter-Group Conflict: From Theory to Practice'. *International Studies Perspectives* 12 (3) (2011), 273-293. DOI 10.1111/ j.1528-3585.2011.00433.x.

Cull, Nicholas J. 'Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories'. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (1) (2008), 31-54. DOI 10.1177/0002716207311952.

Davidson, William D. and Joseph v. Montville. 'Foreign Policy According to Freud'. *Foreign Policy* 45 (Winter 1981-1982), 145-157.

Gil, Eunbae. 'Nam-bug cheong-so-nyeon seu-po-cheu gyo-lyu-tbs hyeob-lyeog i-haeng sil-tae bun-seog' [A study on the decision-making factors of inter-Korean sport exchanges: searching for a framework]. *Life and Culture of South and North Korea Youth* 59 (2019), 5-34.

Gregory, Bruce. 'Mapping Boundaries in Diplomacy's Public Dimension'. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 11 (1) (2016), 1-25.

Ha, Seunghee. 'Bug-han sam-ji-yeon-gwan-hyeon-ag-dan bang-nam gong-yeon-e dae-han in-sig yu-hyeong yeon-gu: Q bang-beob-lon-jeog jeob-geun' [A study on perception types regarding North Korean Samjiyon Orchestra performances in South Korea]. *North Korean Studies Review Journal* 23 (2) (2019), 413-437.

Holmes, Marcus, ed. *Face-to-Face Diplomacy: Social Neuroscience and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Hyundai Research Institute, ed. *Nam-bug sa-hoe-mun-hwa hyeob-lyeog-ui bi-jeon-gwa gwa-Je* [Inter-Korean social culture co-operation vision and tasks] (Seoul: Hyundai Research Institute, 2018).

Jeon, Miyeong. 'Nam-bug sa-hoe-mun-hwa-gyo-lyu hwal-seong-hwa-leul wi-han gwa-je' [The tasks for activating inter-Korean social and cultural exchange]. *North Korean Studies* 6 (1) (2010), 21-39.

Jeon, Miyeong. 'Bug-han-ui oe-lae-mun-hwa su-yong sil-tae-wa mun-hwa-jeon-lyag: bug-han tel-le-bi-jeon bang-song bun-seog-eul jung-sim-eu-lo' [North Korea's accommodation of foreign cultures and its cultural strategy: a focus on the analysis of North Korean television broadcast]. *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* 23 (1) (2014), 129-155.

Jeon, Youngsun. 'Pan-mun-jeom seon-eon-eul gye-gi-lo bon nam-bug sa-hoe-mun-hwa gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog-ui bang-hyang-gwa gwa-je' [Inter-Korean socio-cultural exchange co-operation based on the Panmunjom Declaration]. *Korean Journal of Urban Studies* 16 (2019), 93-119.

Johnston, Alastair Iain. 'Treating International Institutions as Social Environments'. *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (4) (2001), 487-515.

Jönsson, Christer, ed. *Theorising Diplomacy* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012).

Jonsson, Gabriel, ed. *Towards Korean Reconciliation: Socio-Cultural Exchanges and Cooperation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

Jung, Changhyun. 'KimJongun si-dae bug-han-ui mun-hwa-yu-san-jeong-chaeg byeon-hwa-wa nam-bug-gyo-lyu' [Changes in North Korea's cultural heritage policy and inter-Korean cultural co-operation in the Kim Jung Un era]. *The Journal of the Humanities for Unification* 77 (2019), 363-395.

Jung, Eunmi. 'Gae-seong-gong-dan bug-han geun-lo-ja-ui jeong-che-seong in-sig-gwa haeng-dong yang-sig-ui me-keo-ni-jeum' [Recognition of identity and mechanism of behavior pattern of North Korean workers at the Kaesong Industrial Complex]. *North Korean Studies Review Journal* 18 (2) (2014), 123-146.

Jung, Juri and Eunseol Cho. 'Gang-won-do nam-bug-gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog-hyeon-hwang bun-seog mich bal-jeon-bang-an mo-saeg' [An analysis on Gangwon province inter-Korea exchange co-operation project, and development plan]. *Korean Public Administration and Policy Review* 9 (1) (2011), 29-52.

Jung, Kiwoong. 'Nam-bug-han seu-po-cheu gyo-lyu gyeol-jeong-yo-in yeon-gu' [A study on the decision-making factors of inter-Korean sport exchanges]. *Journal of International Area Studies* 23 (2) (2019), 37-60.

Jung, Kyojin. 'Nam-bug-han jong-gyo-gyo-lyu hwal-seong-hwa-ui dang-wi-seong yeon-gu' [A study on the justification of activating inter-Korean religious exchange]. *North Korean Review Journal* 36 (2011), 110-149.

Kelley, J. R., ed. *Agency Change: Diplomatic Action beyond the State* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).

Kim, Dongsun. 'Nam-bug-seu-po-cheu-gyo-lyu-twih-hyeob-lyeog-i han-ban-do gin-jang-wan-hwa-e mi-chi-neun yeong-hyang-e gwan-han del-pa-i yeon-gu' [A study on the Delphi-analytic about inter-Korean sports exchanges and co-operation influence on the easing of tensions on the Korean Peninsula]. *The Korean Society of Sports Science* 18 (1) (2009), 3-15.

Kim, Elaine H. and Hannah Michell. 'Other as Brother or Lover: North Korean in South Korean Visual Media'. In *South Korean Popular Culture and North Korea,* ed. Youna Kim (New York: Routledge, 2019), 135-148.

Kim, Heekyung. 'Bug-han-i-tal-ju-min-gwa-ui jeob-chog-i nam-han sa-lam-deul-ui sin-loe-wa su-yong-e mi-chi-neun yeong-hyang' [A qualitative study on contact experiences between North Korean defectors and South Koreans]. *Korean Journal of Psychology* 28 (2) (2016), 529-562.

Kim, Hwajong. 'Jong-gyo-hyeob-lyeog-un-dong-ui ji-sog-seong yo-in-e dae-han yeon-gu: han-gug-jong-gyo-in-pyeong-hwa-hoe-ui (KCRP) leul jung-sim-eu-lo' [A study

on the sustainability main factors of religious co-operation movement — focus on activity of KCRP]. *Won-Buddhist Thought & Religious Culture* 52 (2012), 71-105.

Kim, Ilhan. 'Jong-gyo-bun-ya-e-seo nam-bug-gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog-ui seong-gwa-wa gwa-je: jung-yo-do-seong-chwi-do (IPA) bun-seog' [Performance and future tasks of exchanges and co-operation between South and North Korea in religious circles: importance-performance analysis (IPA)]. *The Journal of Peace Studies* 1 (3) (2013), 195-214.

Kim, Misook. 'Bug-han-ui seu-po-cheu-i-nyeom-gwa nam-bug seu-po-cheu-gyo-lyu-ui han-gye-e gwan-han yeon-gu' [A study on North Korea's sports doctrine & limits of North–South Korea sports interchanges]. *Journal of the Korean Society for the Philosophy of Sport, Dance & Martial Arts* 12 (2) (2004), 343-361.

Kim, Myungjin. 'Bug-han-seo 'han-deu' bo-da cheo-hyeong sa-lye neul-eo. gong-gae-cheo-hyeong jang-so-do 300yeo-gos' [More execution cases for watching Korean dramas: public execution places increased to 300]. *Chosun Ilbo*, 17 June 2019. http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2019/06/ 17/2019061702479.html.

Kim, Seokhyang. 'Nam-bug-han eon-eo i-jil-hwa jeong-do-e dae-han jib-dan-byeol in-sig-ui cha-i go-chal: nam-bug-gwan-gye jeon-mun-ga jib-dan-gwa sae-teo-min bi-gyo-leul jung-sim-eu-lo' [How to perceive the language differentiation between the two Koreas]. *Review of North Korean Studies* 8 (2) (2005), 85-124.

Kim, Yeongjae. 'Bug-han gae-hyeog gae-bang si-dae-ui nam-bug ae-ni-me-i-syeon hyeob-lyeog jeon-lyag' [A strategy for inter-Korean animation co-operation in the era of North Korean reform and opening]. *The Korean Journal of Animation* 14 (4) (2018), 7-23.

Korea Institute for National Unification. 'Nam-bug gwan-gye yeon-pyo' [Inter-Korean relations timeline] (Seoul: Korea Institute for Unification, 2013).

Kroenig, Matthew, Melissa McAdam and Steven Weber. 'Taking Soft Power Seriously'. *Comparative Strategy* 29 (5) (2010), 412-431.

Kwon, Seokdo. 'Ji-bang-ja-chi-dan-che-ui ji-sog-ga-neung-han nam-bug-gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog-che-gye gu-chug-eul wi-han je-eon' [A proposal for local government to build sustainable inter-Korean exchange and co-operation system]. *Journal of Social Science* 36 (1) (2020), 243-262.

La Porte, Teresa. 'The Impact of "Intermestic" Non-State Actors on the Conceptual Framework of Public Diplomacy'. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 7 (4) (2012), 441-458.

Lee, Bong. 'Nam-bug-tae-gwon-do-gyo-lyu-ui seong-gwa-wa gwa-je' [Accomplishments and future tasks in the exchange of Taekwondo between South and North Korea]. *Korean Journal of Sport Management* 8 (1) (2003), 17-29.

Lee, Juchul. 'Nam-bug-bang-song-gyo-lyu hyeob-ui gwa-jeong-gwa jeong-chi-jeog ham-ui' [Consultation process of South–North Korean broadcasting exchange and political implications]. *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies* 75 (2015), 71-95.

Lee, Seokju and Heungtae Kim. 'Nam-bug-sa-hoe-mun-hwa-gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog-eu-lo-seo-ui che-yug-gyo-lyu-hyeob-lyeog hwag-dae-bang-an yeon-gu' [A study on how to magnify sports exchange and co-operation with social and cultural exchange and co-operation between South and North Korea]. *Korean Journal of Sports Science* 11 (1) (2002), 267-280.

Lee, Wooyoung. 'Bug-han-ui byeon-hwa-leul eo-tteoh-ge bol geos-in-ga' [How to look at changes in North Korea]. *Dangdae Bipyeong* [Contemporary Criticism] 12 (2000), 196-208.

Lee, Wooyoung and Gabwoo Gu. 'Nam-bug-han jeob-chog-ji-dae-wa ma-eum-ui tong-hab-i-lon:ma-eum-ui ji-jil-hag si-lon' [North–South contact zone and integration theory of minds: a theory proposal for geology of mind]. *Review of North Korean Studies* 19 (1) (2016), 269-310.

Lee, Yeongmi. 'Nam-bug-han a-dong-mun-hag pan-ta-ji-ui tong-il-dam-lon yeon-gu' [Uni-Korea discourses in fantasy novels for children in the two Koreas]. *The Journal of Peace Studies* 16 (1) (2015), 111-128.

Ministry of Justice. 'Gug-ga-bo-an-beob' [The National Security Law]. 6 January 2016. http://www.law.go.kr/%EB%B2%95%EB%A0%B9/%EA%B5%AD%EA%B0%80%EB%B3%B4%EC%95%88%EB%B2%95.

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [1998 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 1998).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [1999 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 1999).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2000 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2000).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2001 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2001).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2002 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2002).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2003 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2003).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2004 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2004).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2005 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2005).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2006 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2006).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2007 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2007).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2008 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2008).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2009 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2009).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2010 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2010).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2013 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2013a).

Ministry of Unification. 'Weolgan nambuk gyoryu hyeopryeok hyeonhwang: 9weolho' [Monthly South–North exchange co-operation situation: September issue]. Ministry of Unification (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2013b).

Ministry of Unification. 'Nam-buk-kyo-lyu-hyop-lyok-e kwan-han pop-lyul' [The Act regarding North–South exchanges and co-operation] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2014a).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2014 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2014b).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2015 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2015).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2016 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2016).

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2019 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2019).

Ministry of Unification. 'Inter-Korean Exchanges & Cooperation'. 1 June 2020. https://www.unikorea.go.kr/unikorea/business/statistics/.

Ministry of Unification. 'Tongil Baekso' [2021 unification White Paper] (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2021).

Murray, Stuart. 'Consolidating the Gains Made in Diplomacy Studies: A Taxonomy'. *International Studies Perspectives* 9 (1) (2008), 22-39.

Nadelmann, Ethan A. 'Global Prohibition Regimes: The Evolution of Norms in International Society'. *International Organization* 44 (4) (1990), 479-526.

Noh, Jiwon. '10nyeon-gan wol-bug 55myeong. 25myeong-eun da-si dol-a-wa' [55 North Koreans defected to North Korea in 10 years]. *Hankyoreh*, 6 November 2020.

Oh, Kisung. 'KimJongun si-dae bug-han-ui tong-il gwan-lyeon gyo-yug yeon-gu' [A study on the education related to the unification of North Korea in Kim Jong-Un's era]. *Journal of Education & Culture* 26 (2) (2020), 523-547.

Oh, Seungryeol. 'Nam-bug gyo-lyu chu-jin-gwa-jeong-e iss-eo-seo jeong-bu-wa min-gan-bu-mun-ui yeog-hal' [The role of the government and the private sector in the process of the South–North economic co-operation]. *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* 2 (2) (1993), 167-185.

Oh, Sooyong and Bangchul Kim. 'Mi-di-eo teg-seu-teu-leul tong-hae bon nam-bug dan-il dae-pyo-tim: jeong-chi-wa seu-po-cheu-ui hoe-jeon mu-dae' [An analysis of

media text on 'integrated Korean team': the revolving stage of politics and sports]. *Korean Journal of Sport Science* 31 (1) (2020), 128-142.

Oh, Wonhan. 'Tal-bug-ja-e dae-han mi-di-eo-ui dam-lon-jeog gu-seong' [Discourse composition of media about North Korean defectors]. In *Han-gug sa-hoe mi-di-eo-wa so-su-ja mun-hwa jeong-chi* [Korean social media and minority culture politics], ed. Jeon Gyuchan (Seoul: Communication Books, 2011), 209-255.

Onuf, Nicholas. 'Constructivism: A User's Manual'. In *International Relations in a Constructed World*, eds. Nicholas Onuf, Vendulka Kubalkova and Paul Kowert (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 58-78.

Pacher, Andreas. 'The Ritual Creation of Political Symbols: International Exchanges in Public Diplomacy'. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 20 (4) (2018), 880-897. DOI 10.1177/1369148118786043.

Popkova, Anna. 'Non-State Diplomacy Challenges to Authoritarian States: The Open Russia Movement'. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 14 (3) (2019a), 250-271. DOI 10.1163/1871191x-14401028.

Popkova, Anna. 'Transnational Non-State Actors as "Alt Agents" of Public Diplomacy: Putin's Russia versus Open Russia'. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 16 (1) (2019b), 70-79.

Risse, Thomas. '"Let's Argue!": Communicative Action in World Politics'. *International Organization* 54 (1) (2000), 1-39.

Robertson, Jeffrey. 'Is Pyongyang Different in Washington and Seoul? English and Korean Language Policy Discourse on North Korea'. *KEI Academic Paper Series* (2019).

Roh, Tae-Woo. '7·7seoneon Balpyo (Daebukjeoncheak 6gaehang Teukbyeolseonen)' [Special Declaration on National Self-Esteem, Unification and Prosperity]. 1988. http://theme.archives.go.kr/next/chronology/archiveDetail.do?flag=2&page=188&evntId=0049320197&sort=.

Scott-Smith, Giles. 'Mapping the Undefinable: Some Thoughts on the Relevance of Exchange Programs within International Relations Theory'. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (1) (2008), 173-195. DOI 10.1177/0002716207311953.

Sevin, Efe, Kadir Jun Ayhan, Won Yong Jang and Hyelim Lee. 'Assessing Propaganda Effectiveness in North Korea: A Limited Access Case Study'. In *Handbook of Propaganda,* eds. Paul Baines, Nicholas J. O'Shaughnessy and Nancy Snow (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2019), 205-222.

Shapiro, Ilana. *Training for Racial Equity and Inclusion* (Washington, DC: Aspen Institute, 2002).

Shapiro, Ilana. 'Theories of Change'. In *Beyond Intractability*, eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess Boulder (Boulder: University of Colorado, 2005). http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/theories-of-change.

Sharp, Paul. 'Making Sense of Citizen Diplomats: The People of Duluth, Minnesota, as International Actors'. *International Studies Perspectives* 2 (2) (2001), 131-150. http://doi.org/10.1111/1528-3577.00045.

Sin, Hyunwook and Yongbum Kim. 'Bug-jung mun-hwa-gyo-lyu-leul tong-hae bon hyeon dan-gye nam-bug-han mun-hwa-gyo-lyu-ui jin-dan-gwa pyeong-ga' [A diagnosis and evaluation of recent cultural interchange through Sino: North Korea's case — focus on the North–South collaborating dramatic arts]. *North Korean Studies Review* 15 (2) (2011), 195-216.

Tam, Lisa, and Jeong-Nam Kim. 'Who Are Publics in Public Diplomacy? Proposing a Taxonomy of Foreign Publics as an Intersection between Symbolic Environment and Behavioral Experiences'. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 15 (1) (2019), 28-37.

Wendt, Alexander, ed. *Quantum Mind and Social Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

Wiseman, Geoffrey, ed. *Isolate or Engage: Adversarial States, U.S. Foreign Policy, and Public Diplomacy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015).

Yang, Moonsoo, Wooyoung Lee and Hayeon Lee. 'Nam-bug-han ju-min-ui sang-ho in-sig-e gwan-han yeon-gu' [A study on mutual awareness of residents of North and South Korea]. *Unification Policy Studies* 28 (1) (2019), 105-133.

Yoon, Eunju. 'Nam-bug jong-gyo gyo-lyu gyeong-heom-eul tong-hae bon min-jog hwa-hab-ui ga-neung-seong-gwa gwa-je-e gwan-han yeon-gu-jong-gyo-gye dae-bug ji-won yeog-sa-wa teug-jing bun-seog-eul jung-sim-eu-lo' [A study on the possibility and task of the reconciliation of nation based on the experience of inter-Korea religious groups interchange]. *North Korean Studies Review Journal* 22 (2) (2018), 203-230.

Young, Dennis R. 'Complementary, Supplementary, or Adversarial? Nonprofit–Government Relations'. In *Nonprofits & Government: Collaboration and Conflict*, eds. Elizabeth T. Boris and C. Eugene Steuerle (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press, 2006), 32-67.

Yun, Seong-Hun. 'Do International Students' Direct Experiences with the Host Country Lead to Strong Attitude–Behavior Relations? Advancing Public Diplomacy Research and Beyond'. *International Journal of Communication* 8 (2014), 787-809.

Zaharna, R. S. 'Mapping Out a Spectrum of Public Diplomacy Initiatives: Information and Relational Communication Frameworks'. In *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, eds. Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 106-120.

Zaharna, Rhonda S. *Battles to Bridges: U.S. Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy after 9/11*. Studies in Diplomacy and International Relations (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

Appendix 1

TABLE 1   Interviewee list

Pseudonym	Identity	(Former) Position	Date of Interview	Gender
A1	Activist	Secretary General	18 May 2018	M
A2	Activist	Secretary General	15 June 2018	M
A3	Activist	Secretary General	3 July 2018	M
A4	Activist	Secretary General	1 August 2018	F
A5	Activist	Program Director	21 September 2018	M
A6	Activist	Secretary General	18 October 2018	M
A7	Activist	Secretary General	23 January 2018	M
A8	Activist	Chairperson	14 February 2018	M
A9	Activist	Director	19 February 2018	M
A10	Activist	Chairperson	18 February 2018	M
B1	Bureaucrat	Assistant Secretary	13 November 2018	M
B2	Bureaucrat	Director	27 November 2018	M
B3	Bureaucrat	Secretary General	7 December 2018	M
B4	Bureaucrat	Head of Division	17 December 2018	M
B5	Bureaucrat	Head of Division	20 February 2019	M

Appendix 2

TABLE 1   The number of approved Inter-Korean People-to-People exchanges

		Number of Visits			How to Visit
A1	1999-2019	More than 22 times	Pyeonyang: 4 days Gaesung, Mt Geumgang: 2 days	Pyongyang	by plane (direct flight from Incheon-Pyongyang or via China)
A2	2002-2015	More than 100 times	2 days on average		
A3	2007-2015	More than 5 times	4 days on average		
A4	2007-2018	Every year	8 days on average		
A5	1998-2015	28 times	7 days each		

TABLE 1   The number of approved Inter-Korean People-to-People exchanges (*cont.*)

		Number of Visits		**How to Visit**	
A6	1995-2015	More than 150 times	2 days on average	Gaeseong Mt	By car or bus
A7 A8	2003-2015	48 times	2 days on average	Geumgang	
A9	2004-2006	13 times	2 days on average		
A10	2006-2018	More than 5 times every year	-		

Kadir Jun Ayhan

is an Assistant Professor of International Relations, at Ewha Womans University Graduate School of International Studies. His main research interests include public diplomacy, power in world politics, international student mobility programs, and Korean foreign policy. Ayhan serves as the Editor-in-Chief for the *Journal of Public Diplomacy*. He regularly consults for governmental public diplomacy projects in Korea. Ayhan also served as a member of the National Unity Committee under the Korean President-elect in 2022. He holds a PhD (2016) and MIS (2010) from Seoul National University Graduate School of International Studies and a Bachelor of Commerce (2008) from the University of Auckland. Ayhan has published articles in *International Studies Perspectives*, *Korea Observer*, *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *Politics & Policy*, and *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, among others.

Siyeon Jang

is a PhD candidate at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS), Seoul, the Republic of Korea and majored in Media and Communications. She is currently a researcher at the Media Communication Research Institute at HUFS, and also works as a researcher in the field of AI analysis. She serves as the Managing Editor for the *Journal of Cyber Communication*. Her research interests include global communication, and image detection. She has published articles in *Asian Journal for Public Opinion Research*, *Media, Gender & Culture*, among others.