

# JUXTAPOSITION IMAGES OF TWO KOREAS PORTRAYED IN *CRASH LANDING ON YOU* AND ITS EFFECT ON THAI AUDIENCE'S PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the historical and political context of the two Koreas in terms of their ideologies that impact other elements of society, as well as the process and consequence of the global hit K-dramas: *Crash Landing on You* toward Thai audiences' perspective. Incorporating evidence from literature research, this study explores insights into two Koreas' backgrounds. While, in terms of content, the study focuses primarily on the scripts, visuals, and hidden agenda of *Crash Landing on You* by juxtaposing South and North Korea, as interpreted by the researcher, as well as a review of the literature on the production process and interviews to analyze how the two differ. In addition, a questionnaire of Thai viewers would be surveyed to assess the impact of the drama on the international perspective of the two Koreas through the eyes of foreigners. Each Korea achieves its newly formed ideological constructs, which play an important part in shaping areas of society such as the way of life, language, and social values. *Crash Landing on You* was designed to depict the contrasting visuals between South Korea and North Korea which outsiders never had experienced before. The juxtaposition pictures depicted in the drama do not focus on just one country but on both Koreas. As a result, the more they diverge, the more vivid their national images are. Even while the series focuses mostly on highlighting the differences between the two, what is also delivered is a story of the Korean Peninsula nowadays.

**Keywords:** South Korea, North Korea, Two Koreas, Korean Drama, Netflix

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## INTRODUCTION

Korea was a unified nation for centuries before the superpowers chose to split Korea between themselves along the 38th parallel, which roughly divided the peninsula in half. It led to the Korean War; a civil war that evolved into a proxy conflict between superpowers supporting communism and democracy (Rotondi, 2021). Because of that event, the two Koreas have developed their identities along with their main different constructions in ideology, which gradually separate one unified nation into two, not only geographically but sociologically. South Koreans in their 20s and 30s are more likely to express unfriendly sentiments about the North and are less inclined to perceive it as a part of the same country. They have a lower propensity to favor reunification (Work, 2018). In brief, they feel that they are all separated from the North by their social constructions which make it impracticable for them to be integrated. To ensure that belief and its sovereignty, some television series are used as a diplomatic tool to enlighten foreigners by portraying how similar and different the two Koreas are.

South Korean television dramas; so-called K-dramas, are scripted TV programs produced by the Republic of Korea. According to KOCCA, almost 18 million Americans watched K-dramas. Especially Netflix; one of the most prominent international online platforms, started making significant investments in Korean dramas and released its first Korean original series in 2019. Then 2020 occurred, which ended up being a watershed year for K-dramas. According to a Netflix representative, watching Korean materials in Asia climbed four times as much in 2020 as it did in 2019. Recently, more than 30 languages have been dubbed and subtitled for K-dramas on Netflix (R. Kim, 2021). It can be concluded that, lately, K-dramas on international platforms; such as Netflix, not only helps broadcast their South Koreanness to audiences all around the globe drastically but also ingeniously portray the similarities and differences between South Korea and North Korea to foreign eyes.

It is widely accepted that the entertainment sector of South Korea, especially K-drama, is powerful and successful, not only domestically but globally. To illustrate, *Crash Landing on You* had a final episode audience rate of 21.6%, breaking local records (Korb, 2021). In addition, the series amassed a record 1.75 billion internet views, demonstrating its enormous appeal worldwide (Schwartz, 2020). It was named one of the top international television shows of all time by Time, Variety, and Elle. The interesting part is the drama has deeply and profoundly juxtaposed the images of two Koreas. While watching the series, audiences do not only consume the rom-com narration, but the inside information about the two Koreas' situation and their tension nowadays. People can say South Korea and North Korea are different these days, but not many could point out where or how? Nevertheless, the more the series enlightens audiences about the similarities and differences between the two Koreas, the more vivid each Korea could be.

This study allows readers to explore the distinctions between the two Koreas that have been made through the series and its effects on Thai audiences' perspectives toward the countries. It should be noted that there are exceptionally few countries in the world that are separated from one to two, not to mention countries that had been separated before World War I (Ball), which makes Korea an exceptional case as a country with an already existing identity and separated into two in the Modern Age. As the selected drama is a globally big hit of K-dramas which could be projected as a representative of South Korean identity in the eyes of foreigners, it shows that South Korea epitomizes the power of soft power in promoting the national image and affirming identity and its sovereignty.

In line with such importance, the study, therefore, seeks to answer How does *Crash Landing on You* depict the distinctions between South Korea and North Korea, as well as How does that impact the international perception of the countries? The study attempts to explore the historical and political background behind the two Koreas in terms of their ideologies that

influence various aspects of societies. In addition, it strives to examine the process and outcome of the worldwide hit K-dramas: *Crash Landing on You*, as a diplomatic tool.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

### Background of Korea

The Korean War unexpectedly generated a gap that resulted in the Korean Peninsula's continued partition since originally, undivided Korea was thought to be united by nationalism and tradition, which would seem to allow for a smooth reunion (Barry, 2012). On the Korean Peninsula, however, this has not been the case. The gap may have been maintained by a split that predated the conflict. This has been perpetuated in part because some of the conversations in the two areas are based on concepts and ideals that have stood the test of time (Horton, 2020). Originally, the history and culture of the Korean Peninsula were dominated by Neo-Confucianism. Nevertheless, they were changed due to the separation. North Korea's Juche suggests that people ought to be able to support themselves on their own, without the need for outside help (S.-K. Kim, 2021). Its major goal is to protect its independence from foreign power, which is completely at odds with South Korea's capitalist ideology. South Korea is receptive to globalization and heavily influenced politically by the US. In addition to holding free and fair elections for the people to be in power according to their rights, the Republic of Korea is not a cult-of-personality state (Horton, 2020).

### Public Diplomacy of South Korea

Superficially, everyone knows North and South Korea are different. However, there are deeper layers of democracy in South Korea that separate itself from the North and embody it as the 'Republic of Korea.' To illustrate, nowadays, South Korean television dramas try to deconstruct and desystemize the severe education competition, democracy standpoint, and capitalism in the Chaebol empire. As a consequence, public diplomacy, as a nation-state's strategic efforts to advance its national interests, aims to change public perceptions of how a nation's foreign policies are developed and carried out through a variety of means, including ideas, practices, values, culture, art, food, music, media, language, and economic assistance (Nye Jr, 2008). The government has used the Korean Wave as a domestic and global diplomatic weapon to boost its economic diversification, export profile, and cultural and public diplomacy results as a result of the surge and overwhelming popularity of these items throughout the world (Lee, 2021). The Public Diplomacy Act defines it as "diplomatic actions by which the State promotes foreign nationals' awareness of and trust in the Republic of Korea directly or in collaboration with local governments or the business sector based on culture, knowledge, policies, and so on" in order to boost Korea's worldwide image and status "by establishing foundations to develop public diplomacy and increase its effectiveness by providing for issues required for public diplomatic operations" (*Public Diplomacy Act* 2016). Some nations, like South Korea, have branded themselves based on the public's opinion of their brands, which has had a tremendously positive impact on their economy and sense of self-respect (Anholt, 2011). The Korean Wave has become a showcase window exhibit that policymakers and media academics need to carefully examine when it comes to the changing role of the nation-state since the government has also directly sponsored the cultural sectors (Jin, 2016). In addition, it is important to note that the strategic frameworks for a country's cultural policy can be significantly influenced by the nation's brand (Kim, 2012). Nation branding; in the case of South Korea, is connected directly with the government's public diplomacy to strengthen the nation's identity and manipulate a better national image. Through *Crash Landing on You*, they juxtapose the differences between the two Koreas in order to highlight their South Koreanness.

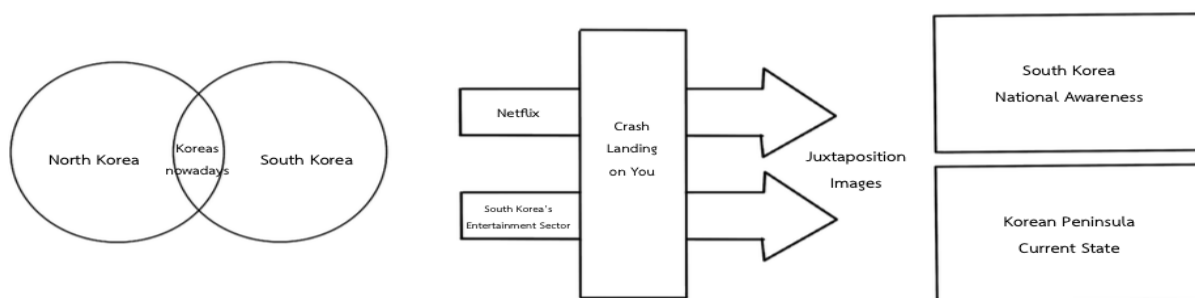
### Crash Landing on You

*Crash Landing on You* is a South Korean successful ground-breaking television series that premiered in 2019-2020 and was written by Park Ji-Eun, produced by Studio Dragon and

starred Hyun Bin and Son Ye-Jin. From December 14, 2019, through February 16, 2020, the series broadcasts on tvN in South Korea and on Netflix internationally (*Crash Landing On You*, 2020). It was named one of the "Best International Shows on Netflix" and the "Best International TV Series of 2020" in the United States by Variety (*The Best International Shows on Netflix*, 2020). It was also called "one of the top Korean dramas on Netflix" by Time (Moon, 2020). *Crash Landing on You* "is a program unlike anything you've ever seen. It features outrageous action scenes, lavish wealth porn montages, unflinching views of the miserable lives of ordinary North Koreans, and one of the most heartbreaking love tales in recent memory (O'Keefe, 2021). It is also labeled a Hallyu success. Despite being a work of fiction, the series has won praise from North Korean defectors for its portrayal of daily life there. A North Korean defector named Kwak Moon-wan served as the show's consultant and gave the creators information about North Korean official organizations and daily life to give the program more credibility. About 60% of how North Korea is portrayed in the program is realistic, according to Kang Na-Ra, a North Korean defector who provided advice to the production crew (Kasulis, 2020). It is formulaic but it "is a key work for analyzing the ongoing changes in how North Korea is depicted in South Korean popular culture. In fact, given the show's purposeful use of North Korean settings, the size of its viewership, and its international appeal, *Crash Landing on You* is maybe the most noteworthy South Korean popular culture representation of North Korea ever produced" (Green & Epstein, 2020). Moreover, Sarah A. Son, a lecturer in Korean Studies at the University of Sheffield, agrees, adding that the series addresses the "socio-cultural difference" between the North and South, which academic study identifies as one of the most significant barriers to eventual unification. She claims that the series, by re-framing preconceptions, albeit with some creative license, possibly humanizes the North for its audience in ways that inter-Korean communication has not in recent years. Despite its romanticizing of the political situation, it brings the division's sorrow to a personal level for a generation of Koreans who, unlike their grandparents, do not know what it was like to be a single nation" (Son, 2020). It is the same as how Yonsei University professor John Delury applauded the series for drawing connections between strong families in both the South and the North, as well as for humanizing North Koreans beyond stereotypes (Kim, 2020). A television show has concentrated on the bonds that link the two Koreas after the breakdown of discussions between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and as interest in the possibility of a formal inter-Korean peace deal has diminished (Son, 2020).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study attempts to empirically analyze data from literature research to explore insights into two Koreas. In cases where it is difficult to get the main information, secondary data will be supplemented. Also, it should be noted that the content of the various articles is used with consideration of fluidity and time limit. In terms of content, the study will first look at the content provided and the hidden agenda of the South Korean celebrated drama: *Crash Landing on You* (2019). This concludes the production, the narrative, the director's interviews, etc. Secondly, to survey the outcome and success of *Crash Landing on You* toward the international perception of two Koreas through the lens of outsiders, a questionnaire of Thai series watchers, by using Taro Yamane's statistical formula to get the appropriate sample size of 300 respondents, would be employed age range from 18 to more than 42 years old will be used as indicators and sources of information that understandably reflect the similarity and distinction of two Koreas through the eyes of foreigners such as Thais. Accordingly, this study consists of the introduction, literature review, methodology, research results, discussion & conclusion, and references, respectively. From the research methodology, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### The juxtaposition in the landscape

The first episode introduces the audience to the difference in the landscape of the two Koreas. It is a culture shock for Seri. Everything in that place is so strange that every element contributes to an uncanny sphere for her. Different landscapes are influenced by different ideologies of each Korea. In South Korea's landscape, everything is built to serve people's demands as well as everywhere is occupied by capitalism, which is opposite to North Korea's setting. The landscape is not corrupted by capitalism as expenditure circulates within the village itself according to Juche's ideology of self-reliance. As a consequence, the landscape there is purely for living-related matters, not for commercialization. Hence, a sense of community grows and intensifies. In Episode 4, the scene where Seri enjoys eating clam bulgogi & soju with her allies, then put beside the stressful dining scene back in Seoul, South Korea, is such a mood-shifting scene. North Korea's landscape could be the representation of the analog society while South Korea's landscape is the representative of the digital society. As a result of different landscapes, the people in the society are encouraged to interact with one another differently. In North Korea, people tend to use their landscape to meet up or gather up in real life. Oppositely, South Koreans prefer to use digital media as a medium to communicate with one another as according to their landscape it is more convenient to do so.

### The juxtaposition in language

Throughout the drama, the way of life has influenced language. Due to the different ways of life, South Korean and North Korean languages are gradually distinguished and sometimes can lead to misunderstanding. For example, in the scene where Seri and Captain Ri misunderstand the word ' (candlelight)'. Not only do these two Koreans have different backgrounds in their way of life that makes them perceive language differently, but the language itself served in different societies tends to be interpreted in different contexts as well. Moreover, the language they use to address others is different. In North Korea, regardless of one's status or gender, people address one another ' ' as a base which simply means 'comrade' to make everyone feels equal, following the communist regime. It is the opposite of the South Korean way of addressing others. Seri addresses others by their names and add ' ' or 'Mr.' Because in South Korea, people tend to address others according to their status. In addition, the history of division and perception of North Korea affect the language. From the expressions, audiences can also get a glimpse of the perception that South Koreans have about North Korea through the attitudes the characters show when talking about the North Korea (Joo, 2022). At the same time, social value affects the language. As South Koreans pay a lot of attention to appearance, there are many newly-formed words used to describe the beauty of people such as ' ' and ' ' in Episode 11, which Captain Ri never heard of it before. It is opposite to North Korean words which are mostly politically associated. Anyone entering and leaving North Korea is subject to tight controls. Lim Boseon asserts that language must be streamlined and made more effective for use in propaganda since North Korea views it as an instrument for

revolution and ideological instruction. Language in North Korea is not exempt from political influence. The fight to eradicate foreign influences from the speech is still ongoing (Jung, 2021).

### **The juxtaposition in self-expression**

Throughout scenes taking place in North Korea, freedom of people's expression is limited. The state tries to manipulate people to have the same understanding of the thing. Especially in Episodes 3 and 5 where there are controls over the human body. In Episode 3, it is stated that only foreigners or crazy women do not tie their hair up. Although it is not the law, it is something called 'ochlocracy:' a rule that is governed by the majority, that everyone should follow in order to be accepted as a part of society. Then, in Episode 5 there is the state controlling the populace's hair. To get a haircut in North Korea, people have to follow the hairstyle assigned by the government. The only reason the government forbids spiked hairstyles is that they are perceived as rebellious regulations (Simons, 2022). Seri coming with an unusual hairstyle at the beginning of episodes and how she has to change it later juxtaposes the difference in the self-expression between the two Koreas well. It is extremely contrasting to South Korea's democracy where self-expression could be exercised individually. Nevertheless, South Korea also has an ochlocracy; however, it is not as strong as North Korea's.

### **The juxtaposition in the way of life**

In Episode 15, how differently two Koreans react towards the same situation is primarily highlighted. In the scene where the train is unexpectedly out of service, Seri and Seung-Joon as South Koreans, and other North Koreans' reactions are obviously juxtaposed. South Korean society has a culture where everyone tends to do everything in a rush as time in their life fluctuates with the amount they would earn for a living. The lifestyle has emerged as a distinctive aspect of Korean culture and serves as one of the tenets of the Miracle on the Han River: the transformation into an economic powerhouse (Kjølstad, 2020). Unlike South Korea where everything runs mechanically perfect, North Korea tends to have more unexpected situations in the system which grooms their people to be more patient. They can kill time unbothered while unexpected situation occurs. In the scene, there are leisure activities such as singing as well as a fire camping where they can spend time and enjoy with companions while waiting. As a consequence, it contributes to different traits between the two Koreans. As they have been groomed by different environments and situations, they tend to have different reactions toward the same thing and manage the situation differently.

### **The juxtaposition in consuming behaviors**

In North Korea, food is mostly prepared within the household. So, people basically see all the ingredients and know exactly what they are going to put in their mouths. In brief, food is cooked and eaten by themselves. It is dissimilar to South Korea where instant food or prepared food are ubiquitous. People have no idea and no interest in what is the origin of that particular dish they are going to swallow. In Episode 6, it is ironic that Seri cannot stand watching a pig being killed and served as a meal when she is actually a big meat eater back in South Korea. It is because of the culture, South Koreans need to eat as fast as possible so that they do not waste much time on it. At restaurants, the food usually arrives on the table within a few minutes, and after a brief lunch, everyone moves on to the next duty. "Getting things done" appears to be the guiding principle of society as a whole (Kjølstad, 2020). Because of that, when it comes to picnics, they picture different things based on their culture and way of life. Again, in Episode 10 where North Koreans first encounter the way of consumption in the South. Everything is ready-to-eaten in the package. This does not reflect only its culture, but also the country's ideology of capitalism where customers are given a wide range of options in buying products and services.

### **The juxtaposition in perceiving other cultures**

Different ideologies result in the distinction in how people perceive other cultures. Because of South Korea's capitalism, the country is open and influenced by many countries and cultures. And that part plays a significant role in what South Korea is today. Is it opposite to North Korea, a closed country with Juche ideology, where people tend to refuse external power and embrace only internal dogma. As a consequence, people are not aware much about other cultures. To illustrate, Christmas Day takes place in Episode 8; however, it could be noticed that North Koreans are barely aware or recognize of it because Christmas is a holiday from Western culture, not from their Korean peninsula's roots. It could be said that Christmas does not exist in North Korea as Kim Jong-un and his family are revered as gods by North Koreans. Other religious leaders or ideologies are strictly prohibited because they could sway the people's unwavering allegiance to the Kim dynasty. However, there are festivities at the state-run churches, which exist mainly for the benefit of sightseeing foreigners. The majority of North Koreans have no idea what the festival is. Information is tightly controlled in North Korea, and the government is particularly hostile to all religions (Chang, 2021). As only southern Korea, as an open country, could realize what it is and celebrate it, Seri decorates Captain Ri's house with a Christmas tree and prepares a present for him as well as her companions.

### **The juxtaposition in social value**

In Episode 12 where Eun-Dong, the youngest soldier, goes to a PC bang to play games, a North Korean and an assumed-to-be South Korean name themselves in the game online differently. He names himself ' ' which means 'working hard to overcome the hard work with one's body and mind.' There is a strong sense of Juche's ideology of self-reliance in the name. The employment of 'hard labor' by the North Korean government, which is justified by ideological demands, is prevalent (Yoon, 2022). It is contrasting with his opponent whose name is ' ' which is translated as only 'droopy lake wolf.' There is no meaning or hidden agenda behind it. Apart from the game scene, this chapter also juxtaposes how two different social values are reflected in different ideologies of each Korea. The scene where Eun-Dong encounters a group of students around his age wearing a school uniform and singing freely says a lot. Because of the distinction in social values between two Koreas which is influenced by national ideology, the adolescents of each Korea live their youthful life and pursue their goals differently. In South Korea, education is a promising way to mobilize people's social status. Therefore, most people choose education as a pathway to be successful in life. While, in North Korea where, rooted in the Juche idea, military-first politics, and military-first ideology are everything. They pay a lot of attention to preparing the populace to protect the country's security from foreign forces. As a consequence, Eun-Dong's only choice is to bear arms and be a soldier at a very young age.

### **The juxtaposition in materialism**

In Episode 13, North Koreans are told to buy new clothes because they all dress out of fashion ( ). They go to the shop and come across a pair of ripped jeans then criticize its useless trait, without knowing that it is intentionally ripped to make it fashionable. North Koreans normally tend to prefer practical stuff rather than choosing it from appearance. Moreover, as North Koreans, it is better to look alike. It is not good to look outstanding because it means you do not belong to the group. As I mentioned, self-expression is not common in North Korean society. It is opposite to a capitalist society such as South Korea where fashion exists and dominates. People pay attention to how they look according to what they wear or use. They believe how they dress or what they use can tell what kind of person they are, hence they tend to choose things that help them express their styles. On the other hand, South Korea is also a society where people enjoy following trends; nevertheless, it has to be a trend they are interested in putting themselves in that category. To summarize, in a capitalist society, people

can purchase their identity through what they consume while it does not even matter in North Korea because the only trend people can follow is their ‘Suryong.’

### **The juxtaposition in the mode of production**

In closing, the scene exchanging prisoners between two Koreas on the borderline lastly juxtaposes their mode of production. South Korea is a democratic country with capitalism while North Korea is a socialist country with totalitarianism. According to Korean Cultural Center New York, as a result of adopting an open market economy, South Korea is negotiating with other nations to sign additional free trade agreements, allowing foreigners to invest freely while encouraging domestic enterprises to do the same (*The Korean Economy*). Because of its economic system, it is therefore not surprising that South Korea agrees to send North Korean soldiers back and get their people (back to circulate its market) in return. They had offered if North Koreans want to be a defector, meaning they were allowing foreigners to invest in the country freely; however, their answer was no so it is no use to keep them. At the same time, North Korea is a cult of personality, it is such a shame for them to let the son of a high-ranked person in the country be captured by the South. The overarching government policy of self-reliance or Juche ideology has always been connected to North Korea's economic objectives, as stated by Britannica (*Economy of North Korea*). As a result, Captain Ri, as a valuable resource of society, is worth the trade. Therefore, the bargain is a fair trade for both Koreas.

### **Survey results**

To summarize the survey, based on part I, the series is famous among females the most, and people aged from 23 to 27 and more than 42 years old are the main watchers. Most of them obtained bachelor's degrees. Most of their majors are business & administration and medical & health science. Their occupations mostly are government officers and officer workers where the salary lies between 15,000 to 24,999 THB. Next to part II, most of them often have heard about South Korea on a scale of 7 to 10 which is pretty good. On the other hand, how often they have heard about North Korea is sporadic. Nevertheless, they know the relationship between the two Koreas fairly on a scale of 5 to 8. However, when it comes to deep information such as an international security conflict, Korean War, GDP, relations with superpowers, or historical background, they barely know about them. Interestingly, more or less they roughly consume K- dramas around 3 to 6 hours per week and immensely get information about South Korea while moderately learning about North Korea. Still, K-dramas do convince them of the differences between the two which led to a conflict at some points. They mostly watch Romance, Comedy, and New Gen genres respectively which could answer why they chose to watch *Crash Landing on You* in the first place. Lastly in Part III, which says about the direct influence of *Crash Landing on You* on Thai audiences, people highly believe that capitalism is the main ideology of South Korea on a scale of 7 to 10. As a result, it also differentiates the two Koreans' way of life on a scale of 7 to 10. Some of them even notice the difference in the language they speak. Also, the two Koreas are more different than they expected and the series visualizes the differences they have never seen before. However, they are aware that it is not perfectly realistic. Nevertheless, South Korea hugely creates a national image through stories and makes foreigners absorb Koreanness. By watching the series, watchers understand the current situation between the two Koreas and better understand their differences. It also gently boosts the interest of watchers to learn the language, visit the country, consume food, and ultimately explore more about the differences between the two Koreas. Additionally, the success of a series gains the reputation of the director and guarantees that if there is a remake or a sequel, people tend to watch it. They are interested in the difference between the two Koreas and in the creative storyline produced by South Korea are two main reasons.



## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

One unified ideology has historically dominated the Korean Peninsula, according to Kim; however, after the

separation each Korea has developed its own different ones, which have gradually enlarged the gap between the two, as claimed by Barry and Horton. Consequently, to brand the nation with its substitutive identity, the government's role is to reinforce it. In this study, I propose a diplomatic way of soft propaganda used to inculcate South Koreanness, manipulate perspectives, and ensure its sovereignty by means of tv-series. A drama called *Crash Landing on You* broadcasted globally by Netflix was used to exclusively portrayed juxtaposed images that foreigners never perceived about the detailed similarities and differences between South Korea and North Korea before. Because it is both entertaining and educational at the same time, viewers are not only amused by the rom-com narrations but are also permitted to unknowingly learn an inside view of the two Koreas' situation through the perspective of South Koreans and North Korean refugees.

Nation branding has a direct connection to public diplomacy to reinforce the country's identity and manipulate a better national image, claim Kim, Anholt, Nye Jr., and the Public Diplomatic Act of South Korea. *Crash Landing on You* tends to have a hidden agenda behind promoting the nation's awareness towards foreigners by familiarizing audiences with South Koreanness which is different from another Korea in many aspects. The more audiences consume and be familiar with it through dramas, the more convenient South Korea could promote itself. Television drama is indeed one of the tools that help South Korea propagate and enforce its identity. Because of it, the South Korean language is accepted and standardized. Suppose that the North Korean leader even bans its brand-new words (Steinbuch, 2021), and some of them are put into Oxford Dictionary (Salazar, 2021). Most importantly, as the existence of the Republic of Korea has been internationally established on the screens, the South Korean Dream has been prevailing and Korean Studies was instituted. And I; a researcher, am a living proof who was inspired to thrive in a further study in Korean Studies because of South Korean dramas. It is true that North Korea is a closed country which makes it easier for South Korea to isolate its identity from the North; however, the creativity of South Korea's entertainment section and the vision of South Korea's government to groom and exercise its soft power through television dramas is crucial. As claimed by Lee and Jin, Korean Wave works both economically and politically. South Korean government uses the Korean Wave platform as a medium to communicate and deliver messages to outsiders. Consequently, South Korea could be a guideline to lead directions and methods for other developing countries, such as Thailand, to achieve economic and political plans through soft power as well.

*Crash Landing on You* is not only successful in its global hit, but it is also academically praised. Regardless of its fictional elements, O'Keefe, Kasulis, Green & Epstein, Son, and J. Kim unanimously consider it to be something fresh and new that could portray the humanistic images of North Korea and its social differences from South Korea admirably. Furthermore, it could be seen as a representative of North Korea from the current point of view of South Koreans. As could be seen in the survey's results, *Crash Landing on You* plays a significant role in delivering messages from South Korea to Thailand. It did gain positive feedback from the Thai people as well as is able to deliver the message to promote the Korean Peninsula successfully. However, North Korea is still on a longer way to persuading foreigners to explore more about its country, comparing South Korea who has always been trying to seduce outsiders to learn about South Koreanness through its public diplomacy in such a long time. In keeping with Kim & Denyer, the relationship between South Korea and North Korea could not be ameliorated solely by a tv-series; however, *Crash Landing on You* is a good start. In my opinion, the series is not only successful in promoting South Korea, but it can also pave the way to positively introduce North Korea to foreign eyes as well as strengthen the relationship

between the two Koreas. This study distributes an alternate way to approach K-drama through a diplomatic lens by analyzing not only a narrative of the selected drama but also an online survey of Thai consumer viewpoints. The effectiveness of soft power in the political realm is verified by this study.

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