

**North Korean Cultural Heritage Interpretation:  
Authenticity and Oral Testimonies in *Crash Landing on You***

by  
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## **Abstract**

This thesis situates itself in the larger discourse on authenticity and interpretation in architectural and heritage conservation by considering the role of oral testimonies as evidence used to valorize intangible heritage of a living and inaccessible culture through the medium of film. The investigation focuses on the representation of North Korean rural landscape and architecture in the drama *Crash Landing on You*, which was influenced by the testimonies of North Korean migrants. Although the drama is fictional, the oral testimonies used to create the setting and stories are authentic. Guided by the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* on authenticity, this thesis examines the presentation of contemporary North Korean built and intangible cultural heritage at multiple scales. The findings are used to consider the use of dramas as a platform through which the North Korean diaspora can share and communicate an otherwise inaccessible living heritage.

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## Notes on use of language

The term *North Korean defector* is the most commonly used English term in media to label North Koreans who have decided to leave the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Activist groups like HanVoice and Liberty in North Korea use the terms *refugee* and *escapee*.<sup>1</sup> The South Korean labels have shifted through the decades but according to Koo Sunhee, the Korean term "*chayu ichumin*" [자유 이주민], meaning free or voluntary migrant, is preferred by the North Korean community.<sup>2</sup> The term *migrant* will be used throughout this thesis.

I am not a native Korean speaker and have basic knowledge of Hangeul, the Korean alphabet. All romanization of Hangeul follows the revised South Korean standard, *Romanization of Korean*, developed by the National Institute of Korean Language.<sup>3</sup> Korean names are presented as Surname followed by Given-name(s). The two characters of South Korean names are hyphenated (e.g. Park Ji-eun) whereas North Korean names are not (e.g. Kim Il Sung). Exceptions are made for popularized spellings where the given names are not hyphenated or remain as two unhyphenated names and romanization of names that have been standardized in the English language; for example, 박 is known as Park, rather than Bak and 김 is Kim, rather than Gim. Names that have been romanized for publishing will maintain their published names.

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1 HanVoice, "Refugees - Meet Sam"; Liberty in North Korea, "Refugee Rescues".

2 Koo, "Reconciling Nations and Citizenship", 391. Note that Koo uses the McCune-Reischauer standard of romanization. The revised romanization of 자유 이주민 is *jayu ijumin*.

3 National Institute of Korean Language, "Romanization of Korean".

## **List of Abbreviations**

AFP - L'Agence France-Presse

CH - cultural heritage

CLOY - Crash Landing on You

DMZ - Demilitarized Zone

DPRK - Democratic People's Republic of Korea

ICH - intangible cultural heritage

ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites

IPCHS - Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites

K-drama - South Korean drama

K-pop - Korean pop music

KRC - Korean Red Cross

L - left

MBFC - Media Bias / Fact Check

MDL - Military Demarcation Line

MOU - Ministry of Unification

NAPCH - National Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage

NK - North Korea / North Korean

R - right

RL - Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

ROK - Republic of Korea

SK - South Korea / South Korean

UN - United Nations

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USA - United States of America

USL - List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding

USSR - Soviet Union

VR - virtual reality

WH List - World Heritage List

WHC - World Heritage Committee

WHS - World Heritage sites



## Introduction

The Korean drama, *Crash Landing on You*, illustrates that a drama can be a successful medium for the dissemination of cultural heritage (CH) because it contains authentic interpretations of North Korean culture that are based on living oral testimonies. It is an accessible medium through which the North Korean diaspora is able to share its cultural heritage and create a space to communicate a heritage that is largely inaccessible to the rest of the world.

One of the challenges of researching the architecture and heritage of North Korea (NK), officially the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), is the lack of credible information or access to it and, in particular, the daily lives and cultural heritage of average North Koreans and rural architecture beyond the limits of Pyongyang. Most mainstream coverage of NK discusses politics, ideology, and the lack of human rights in the Hermit Kingdom, so nicknamed for its isolation from the rest of the world. Popular topics include the Kim family dictatorship, the military and nuclear weapons, the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the abject poverty of their citizens, and “defectors”—those who risk their lives escaping NK in the hopes of finding a better one. Almost all positive portrayals of North Korean life are state sponsored and propagandistic. They show the lives of citizens in Pyongyang, the capital of the DPRK, engaged in military or artistic endeavors that worship the dictatorship and reflect the *Juche* ideology [주체사상 *juche sasang*] of “self-

importance” or “self-reliance”, a doctrine with Marxist-Leninist roots unique to North Korea.<sup>4</sup>

The same curation has been applied to tourism in the DPRK to show a prosperous façade of a happy socialist society. Tourists report that they are accompanied by two guides, or minders, for the entire duration of their visit; their itineraries are set and all movement and images captured are controlled.<sup>5</sup> Tourism agencies try to address and debunk the concerns of censorship and ideological brainwashing, some claiming that the government is not minding visitors; however, tourism websites do note that all guides work for the government and are clear about the harsh punishments that might follow if one breaks any of the DPRK laws, knowingly or not.<sup>6</sup>

With the dangers of travelling to the DPRK and the information chokehold implemented by the regime, there are few initiatives that document or interpret the cultural heritage of North Korea. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee (WHC) is a leading authority on cultural and natural heritage whose aims are to identify and protect world heritage. Sites are acknowledged through inscription to the World Heritage List (WH List) after going through a vigorous nomination process. There are currently two World Heritage sites (WHS) from the DPRK inscribed on the list with an additional five sites on a tentative list for consideration.<sup>7</sup> The two WHS are the *Complex of Koguryo Tombs* (Goguryeo [고구려] Kingdom)

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4 Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, 67.

5 Turtle, “Time Travel Turtle - Is North Korea the Best PR Agency in the World?”; DW Documentary, *Traveling through North Korea | DW Documentary*.

6 Beard, “Top 10 Myths about Tourism in North Korea”; Koryo Tours, “North Korea FAQ & Travel Info - Koryo Tours”.

7 UNESCO, “Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”.

and the *Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong* (Goryeo [고려] Dynasty). The tombs of the Goguryeo Kingdom date from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE while the monuments of the Goryeo Dynasty in Kaesong date from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries CE.<sup>8</sup> Both sites are part of the collective cultural history of the Koreas and while they were inscribed because they satisfied several selection criteria,<sup>9</sup> neither reflect the contemporary lives of North Koreans, whose culture and language have diverged from their southern counterpart when the two were divided after the Second World War almost 75 years ago. To learn about cultural heritage that is “traditional, contemporary and living at the same time” we can turn to UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Convention.<sup>10</sup> UNESCO recognizes that the world’s understanding of cultural heritage has evolved over the decades, and therefore introduced a convention for intangible heritage that includes oral traditions, social practices, and knowledge that is passed on through generations. It is through both intangible and tangible heritage that we can foster cultural exchanges, build empathy, and create understanding.

To have cultural exchange, diaspora communities should be able to freely express and practice their cultures, but those who leave North Korea often face discrimination and live in fear of the dire consequences of repatriation. When a community lives in hiding, it is unable to share its stories. As a result, what we can learn about North Koreans has primarily been written, interpreted, and disseminated by outsiders. It is only recently that several prominent North Koreans, after leaving the DPRK, have become public figures and YouTubers, thereby giving North Koreans

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8 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “Complex of Koguryo Tombs”; UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong”.

9 UNESCO, “The Criteria for Selection”.

10 UNESCO ICH, “What Is Intangible Cultural Heritage?”

a voice. The content often covers topics relating to NK and is created in the Korean language. For those who aim to target a wider audience, English subtitles are provided, or their videos are compatible with the auto-translate function provided by the platform. Documentaries and tourism footage that target Western audiences offer content created in English or with English subtitles, although it is important to acknowledge that this media is also created by outsiders. Many documentaries about the DPRK focus on stories about the regime, propaganda, and human rights issues. Tourism footage often shows scenes from Pyongyang, model factories and farms, the Mass Games, or well-rehearsed school children reciting English phrases or singing and dancing. Spliced in with the controlled footage are clandestine images or drive-by landscape photos layered with a narration acknowledging that the footage was taken without consent. Rarely are there images of, or interviews with, ordinary citizens outside of Pyongyang, until they have left the DPRK, but this is how South Korean screenwriter, Park Ji-eun, was able to create a drama with a large part of the plot set in a North Korean village. She gathered details of life in NK through interviews and sifted through the oral testimonies of North Korean migrants. The result of her efforts and creative writing is the drama, *Crash Landing on You* (CLOY) or 사랑의 불시착 [*salang-ui bulsichak*] in Hangeul.

South Korean dramas (K-dramas) are a mainstream medium on SK television networks and an individual drama may air over many weeks or months. They used to be made available to non-Korean speaking audiences, subtitled, through pirated DVDs and streaming sites but have since been made popular through globally available platforms such as Netflix. Often with 16 or more hour-long episodes and subtitled in multiple languages, K-dramas play a large role in shaping the perceptions of North Koreans through popular media. Perceptions are usually

molded by South Korean actors. Rarely are North Koreans played by actors from NK. Additionally, North Korean characters are often included in the narrative as spies or military personnel, as part of a plot dealing with north and south relations, or as tragic characters cast in an unfavourable light. What makes CLOY different from other K-dramas is the setting, which focuses on North Korea's rural area, a plot that shows the daily lives of the villagers and the humanity of their characters, and a set design that portrays North Korean cultural heritage in a detailed way. CLOY is a 16-episode drama that was aired on tvN, a South Korean television network, and launched on Netflix simultaneously in December 2019. It has garnered a worldwide viewership; over two years after its release, CLOY still ranks in the 86<sup>th</sup> percentile of demanded dramas on Netflix in Canada and between 80<sup>th</sup> to 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in other non-Korean speaking countries.<sup>11</sup> Outside of Korea CLOY is most popular in Japan, where it has a higher demand than 99.1% of all dramas on Netflix. In South Korea, CLOY is still the number 1 ranked drama on Netflix.<sup>12</sup> The final episode had the highest viewership of all dramas of all time in South Korea.<sup>13</sup>

CLOY's global reach has had a great impact on the awareness and understanding of North Korean cultural heritage in both foreign and Korean audiences. With such little information coming out of the DPRK and very little with which to compare, viewers may have wondered (myself included), *is this what North Korea is really like? Is this what a village looks like and is that how their houses are built? Do they really have no electricity or internet? Is this how they dress, speak, and interact?*

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11 Analytics, "Canada TV Audience Demand for Crash Landing On You". The statistics from Parrot Analytics consider the last 30 days from March 13, 2022. The rankings in other countries for consideration are: United Kingdom 80.3%; Germany 85.8%; France 88.3%; Brazil 89.9%; Italy 90.1%; United States 90.8%; Colombia 91.7%.

12 Analytics, "Japan TV Audience Demand for Crash Landing On You"; Analytics, "South Korea TV Audience Demand for Crash Landing On You".

13 Nielsen, "케이블 일일 - TOP 10 LIST FOR TV PROGRAMS".

*Is that what they really eat and is that how they live?* Journalists, YouTubers, and academics have reached out to NK migrants to determine how believable the details of the drama are. The question of authenticity became a prominent focus, considering the deluge of propaganda that surrounds the DPRK. Was the world to believe the nuances of the culture that was being presented through this South Korean drama?

CLOY has prompted varied reactions from the North Korean community, but what is key is that this very human and relatively positive portrayal of quotidian life in the DPRK has sparked conversation. Park was asked in an interview to divulge how she was able to attain such precious and unknown details of their northern neighbours. Simply put, she was able to do so because of her conscious and ethical decision that she was not able to write this drama without significant input from the North Korean community. Thus, Kwak Moon-wan, a NK migrant who had completed film studies in Pyongyang, was brought on as an assistant writer. Park also conducted many interviews with NK migrants and she found that their thoughts on North Korea were quite varied.<sup>14</sup> The multiple truths she discovered through collecting oral testimonies were used to inform decisions on the interpretation, construction, and representation of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage of North Koreans, which was then disseminated through the stories in a fictional drama.

This thesis will use *Crash Landing on You* as a case study and examine, through the lens of heritage conservation, the authenticity of the interpreted rural architecture and design, location and setting, and intangible heritage of contemporary North Korean culture. The details gathered from oral testimonies, the role they played

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<sup>14</sup> tvN insight, [Sub] [박지은] 콘텐츠, 이데올로기를 넘다#넥스트엔터테인먼트비저너리 | *Visionary* EP.2 | TvN 210119 방송.

in shaping the interpretation of cultural heritage, and the reactions from the NK community are sources that will be considered at every turn and will be supported by literature and multimedia reviews. This thesis will explore the use of dramas, a pop-culture medium, as a platform to disseminate the cultural heritage of the largely inaccessible living culture of the ordinary citizens of the DPRK.



## Historical Context: The Koreas

### Timeline of Relevant Events



15 Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, 9.

16 Lankov, 15.



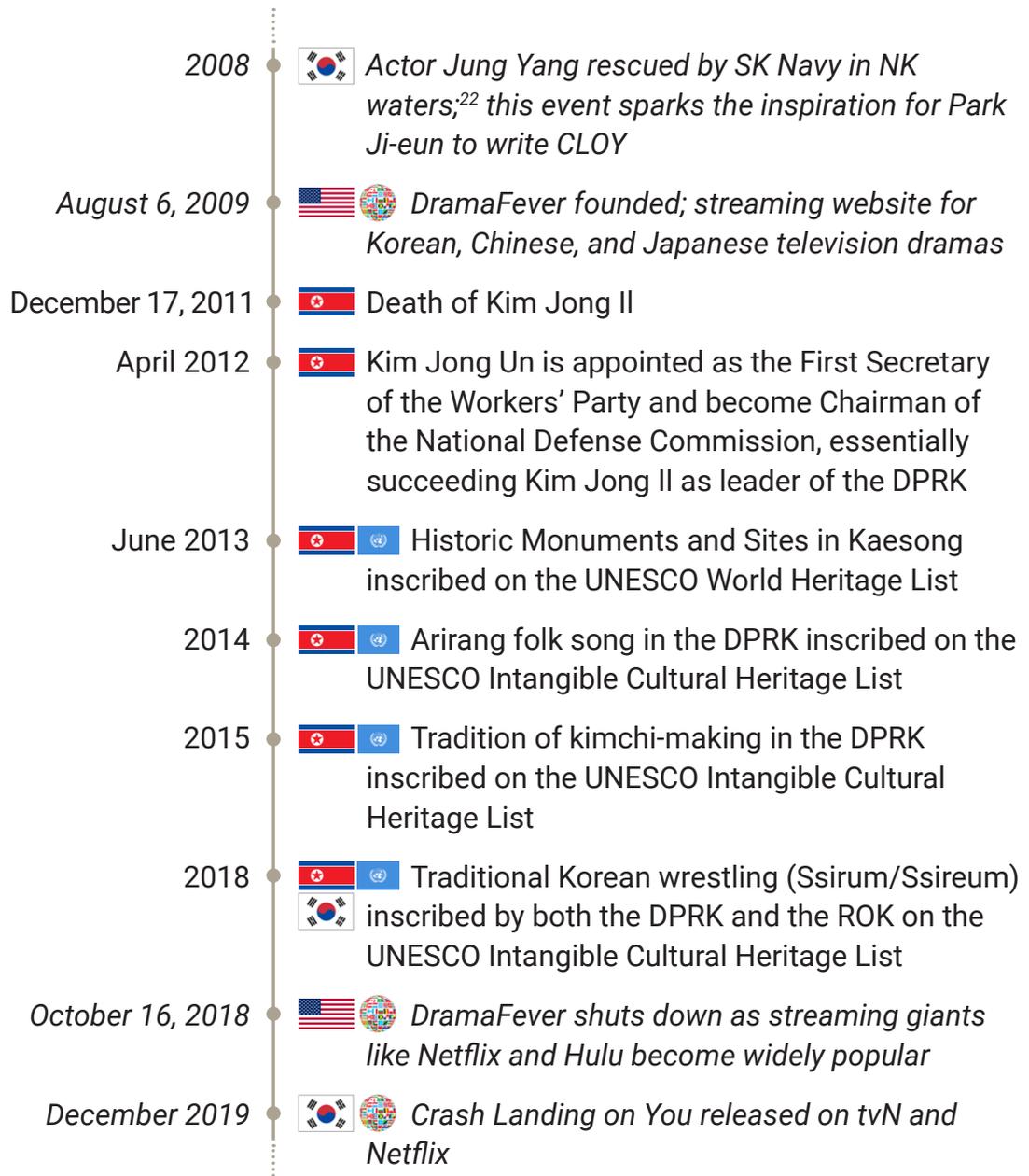
17 MOU, "Brief Information < About MOU".

18 Shin, *Korean History in Maps*, 152.

19 Cultural Heritage Administration, "Nomination Form: International Memory of the World Register, The Archives of the KBS Special Live Broadcast "Finding Dispersed Families"".

20 Shin, *Korean History in Maps*, 152.

21 Hosch, "Netflix".




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22 Kim, "Boat Carrying Actress Rescued Near Border".

## Dividing Korea

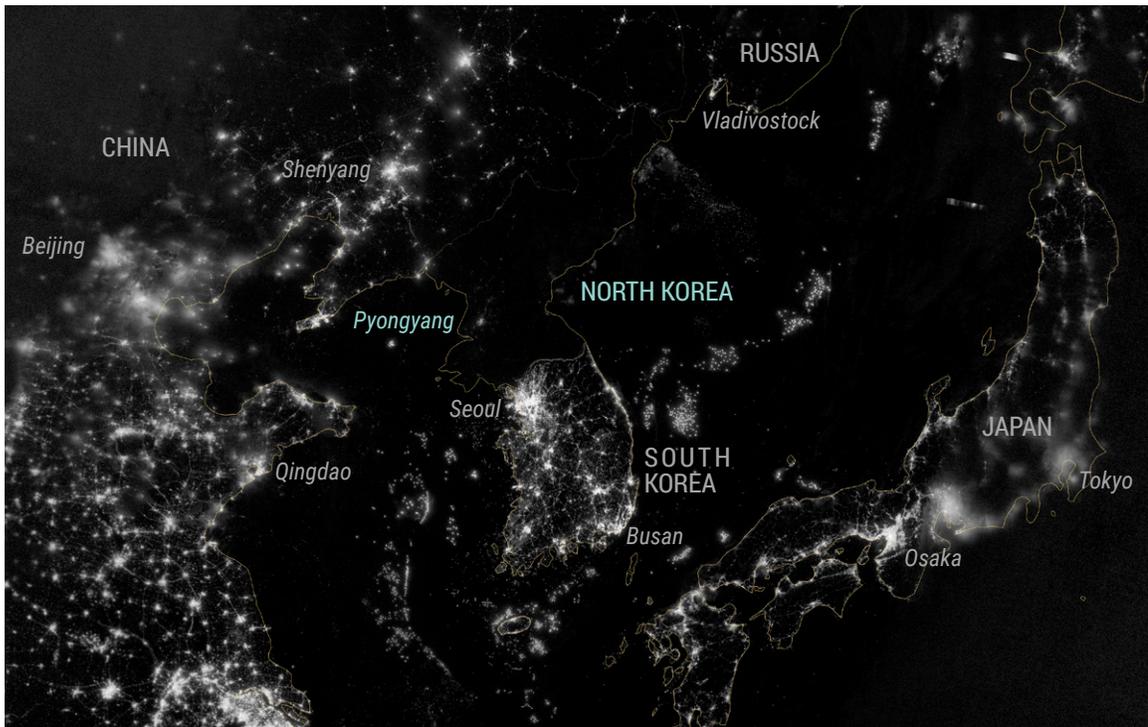


Figure 1. Satellite image of the Korean peninsula. Annotated by Michelle Duong. Source: NASA, "Korea and the Yellow Sea".

At the end of the Second World War the Koreans were liberated from the Japanese who had occupied the peninsula from 1910-1945, only to be occupied by two other superpowers. The Japanese soldiers north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel had surrendered to the Soviet Union (USSR) while the soldiers to the south surrendered to the United States of America (US). The liberation process took about three years until the establishment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in the north and the Republic of Korea (ROK) in the south. The US and the USSR each appointed leaders in their respective Koreas from factions who supported their political ideologies. Each republic claimed to be the true government for the entire peninsula.<sup>23</sup> Attempts at unifying the two halves failed and a civil war, known as the Korean War, broke out in 1950. After three years of warfare and millions of casualties from both the United Nations (UN) forces (US, ROK, Canada, United Kingdom, and others) and the communist forces (USSR, DPRK, People's Republic of China), the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed by the DPRK and the UN in 1953. The ROK did not sign the agreement and no peace treaty has ever been signed. The two Koreas have officially been at war since 1950 and both have laws that prevent the interaction of citizens from North and South.<sup>24</sup>

Just as Germany was left divided into East and West with the construction of the Berlin Wall, the wars left Korea divided at the 38th parallel. Instead of a wall, North and South are separated by a 250-km-long, 4-km-wide, heavily armed and

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<sup>23</sup> Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Government Document, “조선민주주의인민공화국 형법” [“DPRK Criminal Law”]; Lee et al., “DPRK Criminal Law”; Ministry of Justice, “National Security Act”. For DPRK, see 제 3장 반국가 및 반민족범죄 or in the unofficial English translation by Lee et al., CHAPTER 3 CRIMES AGAINST THE STATE AND THE NATION; for ROK, the National Security Act covers all “anti-government” behaviour such as Article 8 on correspondence with organizations or persons who threaten the security of the nation—this includes persons from the DPRK.

guarded buffer zone known as the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)<sup>25</sup>. The NASA satellite image above shows the darkness of North Korea, and serves as a metaphor for the darkness of isolation in which the citizens of North Korea now live in. Before the world wars, the Korean peninsula was united as one culture, with the same language, and the Koreans were one people. The two Koreas today have been divided for almost 75 years, and with very different governing bodies, ideologies, and exposure to or shelter from global influences, the nuances of language, food, and cultural practices have shifted accordingly. These differences were actively explored in *Crash Landing on You*.

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25 NASA, "Korean Demilitarized Zone".

## Unification



Figure 2. Reunion of a dispersed family, live broadcasted by KBS Television. Source: UNESCO, "The Archives of the KBS Special Live Broadcast "Finding Dispersed Families"". © Korean Broadcasting System

The South Korean Ministry of Unification (MOU) was formed in 1969 to handle all inter-Korean relations, that is, any matter that required communications between the DPRK and the ROK. Over the decades the MOU has evolved to include several mandates: providing humanitarian assistance to the DPRK, offering settlement support for NK migrants, advocating for human rights in NK, and engaging in continued inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. Not only was the peninsula divided during the wars, millions of families were also separated during the Korean War and displaced children were sent to orphanages. Partnering with the Korean Red Cross (KRC) uniting separated families has been an ongoing mission in South Korea.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ceasefire of the Korean War, KBS television network took on the task of reuniting families. The intended 2-hour special called “Finding Dispersed Families” turned into a 138-day live broadcast telethon that gained support from the KRC and the government of the ROK, and more significantly, reunited 10,189 families.<sup>26</sup> The event was recognized across the world as a massive humanitarian campaign and was also covered by foreign networks during the live broadcast. Its success and international impact was used to persuade North Korea to cooperate in future efforts of bringing families back together. In 1985, with the agreement of North Korea, the first cross-border family reunions took place. The global reach and potential of mass media coverage did not go unnoticed. The KBS archives of “Finding Dispersed Families” has since been listed

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<sup>26</sup> Cultural Heritage Administration, “Nomination Form: International Memory of the World Register, The Archives of the KBS Special Live Broadcast “Finding Dispersed Families””.

on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register as an important heritage moment for Korea and the world.<sup>27</sup>

The family reunion missions continued and in recent years, the MOU and KRC conducted surveys in 2011, 2016, and 2021 to gauge current interest. The 2021 survey found that fewer individuals preferred face-to-face reunions or hometown visits, citing age and the pandemic as main reasons, while the interest in phone calls, video messages, letters, and online reunions has increased.<sup>28</sup> With the advance of technology, digital reunions can become a reality, but for those who may not have the time to wait for unification, an interpretive experience may be the only option. The KRC enlisted Tekton Space, a virtual reality (VR) developer in South Korea, to help 83-year-old Hyun Mi recreate her home, digitally, based on her memories and oral testimony.<sup>29</sup> She had fled Pyongyang as a teenager during the Korean War. The VR experience brought back vivid memories for Hyun Mi as she virtually navigated her hometown of a long-forgotten Pyongyang—a version of Pyongyang that existed before the destructions of war. The founder of Tekton Space, Ahn Hyo-jin, hopes that they can continue to use VR to help more displaced individuals to virtually visit their hometowns, even if they are unable to see their families again.<sup>30</sup>

As the decades have passed, the enthusiasm for the unification of the Koreas has declined in South Korea. Younger generations no longer have close family connections with the North, or memories of the separation, and see unification as

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<sup>27</sup> UNESCO, "The Archives of the KBS Special Live Broadcast "Finding Dispersed Families"".

<sup>28</sup> MOU, "Findings of the 2021 Survey of Separated Families".

<sup>29</sup> CNN, "This Woman Left North Korea 70 Years Ago. Now Virtual Reality Has Helped Her Return".

<sup>30</sup> TEDx Talks, *How Can Virtual Reality Help Unite Countries?*

a costly endeavor that they should not have to pay for.<sup>31</sup> Ahn believes that VR can be used as a tool to educate post-war generations and contribute to the continued efforts toward unification. Tekton has created a VR experience that transports users to the past, to the day of the start of the Korean War, in attempts to convey the importance of peace and nationhood.<sup>32</sup> The effects of such an experience are yet to be seen, though VR experiences like Hyun Mi's and on the Korean War have a limited target audience and reach, unlike KBS's national television broadcast. Hyun Mi's VR experience was seemingly created with one truth—her truth. Could K-dramas like *Crash Landing on You*, which was created based on multiple narratives and multiple truths, and is available on a mass media platform, contribute to educating the global community and creating the empathy required to believe in a unified Korea?



*Figure 3. Hyun Mi visits her digital home in pre-war Pyongyang through a VR experience created by Tekton Space based on her memories. Source: CNN / Ministry of Unification.*<sup>33</sup>

31 Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, 161.

32 Tekton Space, "6·25전쟁 그날! VR 체험전 운영" ["The Day of the Korean War! VR Experience Exhibition"].

33 CNN, "This Woman Left North Korea 70 Years Ago. Now Virtual Reality Has Helped Her Return", pt. 1:58.



## What is *Crash Landing on You*?

### The Inspiration and Plot



Figure 4. Main characters of *Crash Landing on You*, (L-R) Yoon Se-ri and Captain Ri Jeong Hyeok. Source: tvN.

“그때 처음 깨달은 것 같아요. “북한이 그렇게 가까운 거야?””<sup>34</sup>

[“That’s when I first realized, “Is North Korea that close?””]

“가깝지만 갈 수 없는 곳.”<sup>35</sup>

[“It’s a place that’s close but forbidden.”]

- 박지은 [Park Ji-eun]

A boating incident in 2008 was the key event that inspired a K-drama about accidentally finding oneself in a North Korean village. The incident involved a small leisure boat with four passengers that set off from Incheon along the west coast of South Korea, just west of Seoul, to have lunch on a small island. On their way back they got lost and found themselves drifting in the fog. The group encountered a fishing boat and after speaking with the fisherman they realized they had drifted north because of his North Korean accent. In a panic, they turned around and were ultimately rescued by the SK Navy.<sup>36</sup> The incident was widely reported in the media in SK. It piqued the curiosity of South Korean writer Park Ji-eun, and like many citizens born after the Korean War, she had not realized just how close the forbidden NK really was.

With this possible plot planted in her mind, Park set out to find a relatively realistic way for her protagonist to land in North Korea—the fated event that would allow a story to unfold in a North Korean village. Preparation involved several years of planning, research, and production meetings.<sup>37</sup> In the very first episode of CLOY,

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34 tvN insight, [Sub] [박지은] 콘텐츠, 이데올로기를 넘다#넥스트엔터테인먼트비저너리 | Visionary EP.2 | TvN 210119 방송, pt. 2:35.

35 tvN insight, pt. 2:44.

36 Kim, “Boat Carrying Actress Rescued Near Border”.

37 정 [Jeong], ““사랑의 불시착” 제작진 “2008년 女배우 월북 사고 모티브에서 착안” [“Crash Landing on You Production Team Motif Inspired by “2008 Accident of a Female Actress to North Korea””].

female protagonist Yoon Se-ri, a CEO of a fashion company and conglomerate heiress, is swept up in a tornado while paragliding and as the title suggests, crash-lands in the DMZ where she meets Captain Ri Jeong Hyeok, a member of the Korean People’s Army, the military force of the DPRK.



Figure 5. Map showing the Northern Limit Line and the area where the boat drifted.  
Source: Korea Herald, redrawn by Michelle Duong.<sup>38</sup>

CLOY is a romantic comedy love story between Captain Ri and Yoon Se-ri. After landing in the DMZ she narrowly escapes the first encounter with Ri and his distracted company of soldiers. The storm had knocked down and disabled parts of the electric fence and the paraglider, an un-powered aircraft, went unnoticed. Se-ri runs in the wrong direction, passes over a fence, and by the next morning finds herself in a North Korean village at the gates of Ri’s home. Ri decides to hide her and with help from four soldiers of Company Five they try surreptitiously to get Se-ri back to the south. Following two failed attempts, she is eventually sneaked back into the heavily guarded DMZ in episode 9 and is escorted by Ri over the Military Demarcation Line (MDL). During her time in the village she goes by the name Cheo Sam Suk and gets to know the key women and social structure in the village. It is

<sup>38</sup> 김 [Kim], “The Reality of the Northern Limit Line”.

through her interactions with the villagers and character development that we are shown aspects of the daily life of North Koreans and experience the domestic and public spaces. It is a rare glimpse into a society that is rather unknown and the villagers were presented warmly and as individuals with worries and joys that are relatable. Park's intention was to create a drama that is relaxing and enjoyable to watch, rather than a drama with some grand message.<sup>39</sup> However, the impact of CLOY has been, perhaps, much grander than she anticipated.

Of course, the drama is purely fictional and although possible, such a fateful landing in the DMZ leading to hiding out in a North Korean village is unlikely. Nonetheless, Park wanted to ensure that throughout the drama the portrayal of North Koreans and their culture, both built and intangible, was as accurate and just as the storyline would allow. The problem was that as a citizen of the ROK, Park is not permitted to travel to the DPRK to conduct research for the drama. With very little documentation or evidence of contemporary life in NK, Park turned to oral testimony to help build her drama. She knew that this story could not be told without the voices and input of NK migrants. It is worthy to note that the main characters are from the most elite classes of the North and South, which explains some of the privilege and access throughout the drama. This does not change the overall setting and detailed production decisions that were based on oral testimonies of North Korean migrants and their lived experiences.

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<sup>39</sup> tvN insight, [Sub] [박지은] 콘텐츠, 이데올로기를 넘다#넥스트엔터테인먼트비저너리 | Visionary EP.2 | TvN 210119 방송, pt. 6:20.

## The Role of Oral Testimony and Multiple Voices

“가장 어려운건 가볼 수가 없는 곳이니깐 너무 궁금하더라구요. 인터뷰 정말 많이 있었어요.”<sup>40</sup>

[“The hardest thing was that it’s a place I can’t go, so I was so curious. That’s why there were so many interviews.”]

- 박지은 [Park Ji-eun]

Kwak Moon-wan [곽문완], a North Korean migrant, was brought on to the project as an assistant writer and the main adviser of all North Korean-related content. He studied film directing at Pyongyang University of Dramatic and Cinematic Arts before his time in the military, after which he served in the Supreme Guard Command protecting NK’s elite. He gained the trust of the Kim regime and was also sent to Moscow to work for a trading company. With his very unique set of experiences, when Kwak arrived in SK in 2004 he was given an opportunity to work with director Kwak Kyung-taek [곽경택] where he learned new methods of film direction, since he was only accustomed to making socialist propaganda films, and learned to work in a production team.<sup>41</sup> In 2018 he was introduced to Park and with his input she was able to navigate the cultural differences between North and South Korea in CLOY and present a realistic view of NK.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> tvN insight, [Sub] [박지은] 콘텐츠, 이데올로기를 넘다#넥스트엔터테인먼트비저너리 | Visionary EP.2 | TvN 210119 방송, pt. 3:45.

<sup>41</sup> Women’s Federation USA, GWPN Mini Talk-Show, pt. 24:00.

<sup>42</sup> Women’s Federation USA, pt. 27:15.

In addition to Kwak's input, Park understood that like all cultures, all North Koreans do not have the same lived experience. There are large social gaps in North Korea and migrants come from different walks of life. NK's extensive class system (*seongbun* [성분]) of over fifty categories can be placed into three broader groups: the loyal or core masses, the basic masses, and the complex (wavering or hostile) masses; one's classification impacts daily life from food rations to education and marriage opportunities, and affects multiple generations of families.<sup>43</sup> The migrants Park interviewed, although they were all from the DPRK, had very different thoughts on NK with multiple narratives and parallel truths. Park decided to find the common threads across their testimonies and used those details in the drama.<sup>44</sup> As reported by Chosun Media, Park continuously sought out NK migrants of various occupations and the interviews were followed by constant verification and extensive research efforts:

박 작가는 북한 전방부대 장교, 전방부대 사택마을에 거주했던 군관의 아내, 보위사령부 간부, 장마당 상인, 꽃제비, 밀수꾼, 무역상, 운전공, 의사, 연구원, 유학생 출신의 피아니스트, 영화감독, 해외파견 음식점 종업원 등 수십 명에 이르는 다양한 직업군의 탈북인들을 지속적으로 취재해 북한의 생활상에 대한 조사에 주력했다.<sup>45</sup>

[Writer Park focused on investigating the daily lives of North Koreans by continuously interviewing dozens of North Korean defectors from various occupational groups [such as] North Korean front officers, the wife of a military officer who lived in a front unit's private

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43 Kim et al., *White Paper on Human Rights in North Korea, 2011*, 219–23; Demick, *Nothing to Envy*, 27–28.

44 tvN insight, [Sub] [박지은] 콘텐츠, 이데올로기를 넘다#넥스트엔터테인먼트비저너리 | *Visionary EP.2* | TvN 210119 방송, pt. 3:56.

45 정 [Jeong], ““사랑의 불시착” 제작진 “2008년 女배우 월북 사고 모티브에서 착안” [“Crash Landing on You Production Team Motif Inspired by 2008 Accident of a Female Actress to North Korea”].

residence, a security command officer, market merchant, homeless children [known as swallows or *kkochjebi*], smuggler, trader, driver, doctor, researcher, foreign student, native pianist, movie director, overseas dispatched restaurant employee, and so on.]



Figure 6. (L) South Korean screenwriter Park Ji-eun [박지은], (R) North Korean assistant writer Kwak Moon-wan [곽문완]. Source: Han Cinema, BBC.



Figure 7. North Korean migrants interviewed as advisors for CLOY. (L-R) Kang Nara [강나라], Kim Geum-hyok [김금혁], Kim Cheol-woong [김철웅]. Source: Han Cinema, Liberty in North Korea, Character Media.

As noted in the credits of the drama, other NK Advisors included: Lee Sang-hyeon, CEO of Taein Co., Ltd. [이상현 (주)태인 대표], Jeong Min-wu [정민우], Kang Mi-jin [강미진], Seung Seol-hyang [승설향], Heo Yeong-chal [허영철], Na Min-hui [나민희], Kang Jin [강진], and Choe Jeong-hun [최정훈].

Equipped with the perspectives of numerous NK migrants, coupled with Kwak's experience, Park set out to show a detailed, realistic, and humane view of NK that subtly, and at times blatantly, highlighted the cultural differences and similarities in language, food, social hierarchies, built spaces, and landscapes. What Park and Kwak decided not to include was just as important. They had agreed on three things: not to insult the leadership of NK, not to address human rights, and not to talk about nuclear issues.<sup>46</sup> By avoiding these topics they were able to focus on an authentic view of the lives of North Koreans without worrying about the optics of an overtly political or ideological agenda. It is this authenticity that propelled the drama into popularity and caught the attention of the international community.

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46 Women's Federation USA, *GWPN Mini Talk-Show*, pt. 1:12:00.

## Reaction to CLOY

The fascination with the authenticity of the culture, setting, and daily lives of North Koreans portrayed in CLOY, and concerns that the drama glorifies the DPRK, prompted a flurry of coverage from Asian and Western media including articles from major news sources like the BBC and YouTube reaction videos, some featuring well-known North Korean migrants. With headlines like, “Amid lockdown binge watching, U.S. viewers savor story that puts a human face on North Korea”, “How K-drama ‘Crash Landing on You’ was brought to life with help from a North Korean defector”, and “Cross-border love story crashes South Korea TV ratings” journalists all seemed to start with the same premise as NK News: “[*Crash Landing on You*] has proven a smash-hit for South Korean and international audiences. But how accurate is it?”<sup>47</sup> To answer this question journalists and social media creators alike turned to interviews with North Korean migrants, including Kwak, and experts on NK. A simple search on YouTube of “North Koreans reacting to *Crash Landing on You*” yields dozens of video results.

Many articles and videos discussed larger themes like the structure of the army, whether the plotlines were plausible, the depiction of the *jangmadang* [장마당] (NK’s unofficial/illegal markets) and *kkochjebi* (homeless children known as “swallows”),

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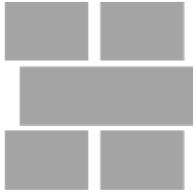
<sup>47</sup> Kim and Denyer, “Amid Lockdown Binge Watching, U.S. Viewers Savor Story That Puts a Human Face on North Korea”; Lau, “How K-Drama “Crash Landing on You” Was Brought to Life with Help from a North Korean Defector”; Kim, “Cross-Border Love Story Crashes South Korea TV Ratings”; Kim, “Crash Landing on You: The Inter-Korean Love Story Touching a Chord in the South | NK News”.

but the interviewers also questioned the details such as refrigerators being used as shelving because of the lack of electricity, the selection of state-sanctioned hairstyles, and noted that North Koreans also make kimchi and drink soju. All the NK migrants who were interviewed responded that many of the portrayals were reminiscent of their lives in the DPRK. Kang Ha-na, for example, affirmed that, "... yeah, I also made kimchi out of seawater and showered in a makeshift steam bath under plastic sheets," referring to scenes in episode 2 of CLOY, but also pointed out that during very difficult times when survival was the only focus, there was no room left for the neighbourly support we see portrayed in the drama.<sup>48</sup>

As a student of architecture and conservation, I was specifically drawn to the setting of the rural North Korean village, the domestic and communal spaces, and the social implications of interactions within these spaces. The plotlines allowed long scenes to play out where one gets a glimpse of the day-to-day activities at home and within the village, like food preparation and preservation, and hear the conversations that reveal social structures and ritual. These are essentially the intangible and tangible cultural heritage of contemporary North Koreans. The reactions from NK migrants and experts to the depictions of their cultural heritage is varied but overwhelmingly positive and shows the importance of oral testimonies and multiple truths. With oral testimonies front-of-mind, in the following chapters I will take an in-depth look at the interpretation of the village setting and landscape, the architecture and domestic spaces, the intangible heritage, and the spirit and feelings that emerged from what is shown in the drama.

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<sup>48</sup> Kim and Denyer, "Amid Lockdown Binge Watching, U.S. Viewers Savor Story That Puts a Human Face on North Korea"; Lee, "Crash Landing on You [사랑의 불시착]", pt. 24:40 and 30:40 respectively.



## **Methodology**

Before diving into the analysis, this chapter will detail the research methods and doctrine on which I have based this thesis. I will preface this by noting that I am not a native Korean speaker and have basic knowledge of Hangeul, the Korean alphabet. I acknowledge that this has limited my access to resources. Where relevant, I have trusted the translations of subtitles and have cross-checked meanings with online sources, translation applications, and native Korean speakers. All participant-facing text of the thesis' study survey was translated by native Korean speaker, Shim Hyeseung.

### **Article 82 of the Operational Guidelines: a guide to authenticity**

The concept of authenticity has evolved over the decades and there is no one global definition or understanding, which is discussed in the next chapter, so that adhering to any one definition of authenticity can be problematic. Using a heritage conservation approach, I turned to Article 82 of the “Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention” that was developed in 1977 by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. It includes, “precise criteria for the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List and ... is regularly revised by the Committee to reflect new concepts, knowledge or experiences,” including those that emerged from the 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity.<sup>49</sup> There are eight

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<sup>49</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”; ICOMOS, “The Nara Document on Authenticity (1994)”.

articles regarding authenticity in section **II.E Authenticity and/or integrity** of the guidelines. This thesis considers four of the criteria listed in Article 82:

**82.** Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- **form and design;**
- materials and substance;
- use and function;
- traditions, techniques and management systems;
- **location and setting;**
- **language, and other forms of intangible heritage;**
- **spirit and feeling;** and
- other internal and external factors.<sup>50</sup>

Although these criteria were intended for application to properties nominated for the WH List, I am applying the concept to the portrayal of cultural heritage (CH) in dramas to consider whether drama is an effective medium for CH dissemination. In the case study, CLOY, I will focus on **form and design** of the rural architecture, the **location and setting** of the village, the representations of **intangible heritage** including some observations on **language**, and the **spirit and feelings** evoked through the portrayals in the drama. From Article 83, it is important to consider that, “[a]ttributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to

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<sup>50</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, 31.

practical applications of the conditions of authenticity, but nevertheless are important indicators of character and sense of place, for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity.”<sup>51</sup>

## **The Analysis**

Using Article 82 as a starting point, I analyze the authenticity of North Korean cultural heritage portrayed in CLOY through literature and multimedia reviews of academic and journalistic sources, reviewing the public testimonies given by North Korean migrants, drawing plans to understand the key spaces, and considering the responses to a study survey disseminated to publicly known NK migrants.

### ***Credibility of News Sources***

Given the topic, the credibility of news agencies and the awareness of media bias is a concern for this thesis. Media Bias / Fact Check (MBFC) is a website that analyzes the bias, factuality, and credibility of media outlets. They aim to keep their own bias in check by their choice of funding mechanisms.<sup>52</sup> News sources about the DPRK can be questionable so I checked the credibility of all news outlets from which I gathered articles about CLOY (see table below). I have included the ranking of Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea (DPRK), but as expected there were no articles regarding CLOY in this newspaper; South Korean media is prohibited in the DPRK. Also included for comparison are two Canadian news agencies.

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51 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, 31.

52 Media Bias Fact Check LLC, “About”.

LAST CHECK	NEWS AGENCY	COUN-TRY	BIAS (extra left, left, left-centre, least bias, right, extra right)										FACTUAL REPORTING (very low, low, mixed, mostly factual, high, very high)							CREDIBILITY (QUE = questionable)			
			EX-TRA LFT	LFT	LFT-CTR	LST BIAS	RT-CTR	RT	EXT RT	VERY LOW	LOW	MIX	MST FCT	HI	VERY HI	QUE	MED	HI					
01-09-2022	AL JAZEERA	QATAR			X								X						M				
02-02-2022	BBC	UK			X													X				H	
02-04-2022	BUSINESS INSIDER	USA			X													X					H
02-10-2022	CBC NEWS	CANADA			X													X					H
03-22-2022	CNN	USA		X														X					M
03-23-2022	DAILY NK	S KOREA			X																		M
03-23-2022	FOX NEWS	USA								X								X					M
03-23-2022	INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES	USA			X													X					M
03-23-2022	NK NEWS	USA				X												X					H
03-24-2022	NPR	USA			X													X					H
03-28-2022	OTTAWA CITIZEN	CANADA					X											X					H
05-06-2022	PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER	PHILIPPINES			X													X					
05-24-2020	RODONG SINMUJUN	DPRK	X									X											Q
06-02-2021	THE ASAHI SHIMBUN	JAPAN			X													X					H
08-08-2020	THE CHOSUN ILBO	S KOREA						X															M
11-04-2020	THE KOREA TIMES	S KOREA			X													X					H
11-18-2020	THE NATIONAL	UAE					X						X										Q
11-24-2021	THE STRAITS TIMES	SINGAPORE					X											X					H
12-02-2021	WASHINGTON POST	USA			X													X					H

Figure 8. Table showing bias and credibility of news agencies according to the Media Bias / Fact Check website.

## The Survey: "A Study on the Authenticity of North Korean Culture in Crash Landing on You"

Recruiting NK migrants as participants in a survey about NK culture in CLOY proved to be difficult. Once I connected with a reliable source who was willing to forward a study to their NK contacts, I started the research ethics clearance process and had a survey approved by the Research Ethics Board in both English and Korean. All participant-facing Korean content was translated by native Korean speaker, Shim Hyeseung, who has a background in heritage conservation.



Figure 9. Screenshot of the Korean online survey from the Microsoft Forms platform.

With the limitations of the pandemic, my inability to converse in Korean, and considering that many North Korean migrants prefer not to identify themselves, the best option was to conduct an online survey that could be emailed out to public NK figures, which could be completed at the participant's leisure. Additionally, since I was not able to personally verify identities, the study was not disseminated on far-reaching platforms like social media, but rather invitations to participate in the survey were emailed out to individuals in SK, USA, and Canada who have publicly identified as NK migrants. To protect the identity of all participants, Microsoft Forms and Miro were used, both of which allow anonymous submissions.

The objective of the survey was to examine the portrayal of the North Korean village, setting, and culture in CLOY. The survey had three parts: the first included basic questions about the participant to determine the overall geographic, emigration date, and age coverage of the study participants and whether or not the participant has watched the drama, *Crash Landing on You*; the second part asked participants to draw from memory the layout of their home and neighbourhood or town; the third part asked participants to identify objects, settings, and activities from *Crash Landing on You* through images taken from the drama. Although the survey participation was low, the responses have been considered throughout this thesis paper. All participants have been anonymized.

*The survey can be found in the appendices.*



## Cultural Heritage

The South Korean Cultural Heritage Administration's Cultural Heritage Charter states that "[c]ultural heritage is the root of human life and a source of creativity. It is a common asset shared by all humanity. We have both a right and a duty to identify, understand, and care for cultural heritage and thus further enhance its value,"<sup>53</sup> but what is cultural heritage?

### Understanding Heritage

According to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) for the purposes of the World Heritage Convention, CH includes monuments and groups of buildings that have "outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science" and sites "which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view," but CH goes beyond the tangible.<sup>54</sup> According to the Getty Research Institute, CH includes,

... belief systems, values, philosophical systems, knowledge, behaviors, customs, arts, history, experience, languages, social relationships, institutions, and material goods and creations belonging to a group of people and transmitted from one generation to another. The group of people or society may be bound together

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53 Cultural Heritage Administration, "Cultural Heritage Charter".

54 ICOMOS, "Glossary - International Council on Monuments and Sites".

by race, age, ethnicity, language, national origin, religion, or other social categories or groupings.<sup>55</sup>

A group's cultural heritage can also include natural elements but ultimately it includes both tangible and intangible elements that a community, or individual, has deemed important enough to pass on to the next generation.<sup>56</sup> A place of worship can be conserved but the knowledge of the building techniques and craftsmanship skills can also be taught to younger generations. Oral traditions in Korea such as the knowledge of making kimchi [김치], a fermented side dish that is a staple in Korean cuisine, is just as important to pass on as the large ceramic urn in which kimchi is fermented, *onggi* [옹기], and the knowledge of crafting them known as *onggijang* [옹기장]. Each culture feels a sense of ownership of their heritage because the chosen elements of their heritage are valuable enough to pass on. Heritage is a societal construct that transcends all cultures; it is selective and thus, inherently has value that "attests our identity and affirms our worth," because "a heritage that is clearly ours is worth having."<sup>57</sup> We understand cultural values to be the "meanings, functions, or benefits ascribed by [our] communities to something [we] designate as heritage, and which create the cultural significance of a place or object,"<sup>58</sup> and these valuable cultural assets must be protected. The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites (IPCHS) tells us that "every act of heritage conservation... is by its nature a communicative

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55 Getty Research Institute, "cultural heritage".

56 Silverman and Ruggles, *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights*, 34.

57 Lowenthal, "Fabricating Heritage", 8, 18.

58 "Nara + 20", 147.

act,” and the charter provides guidelines on how to interpret and present CH, thereby protecting it.<sup>59</sup>

Heritage though, should not be conflated with history. Lowenthal clarifies that “[h]istorians aim to reduce bias [whereas] heritage sanctions and strengthens it.”<sup>60</sup> Historians generally agree that their task is to lay bare all that has happened and from all perspectives. Heritage practitioners do not. In fact, heritage could very well include “cherished myth” and it “mandates *misreadings* of the past,” to update and align heritage with modern views.<sup>61</sup> The biases in heritage are a product of an era’s values, but as Darlington cautions, “bending the evidence or denying other narratives is at best self-delusional, and at worst morally bankrupt, sometimes criminal.”<sup>62</sup> This idea is reflected in the propaganda of the NK regime. Their narrative ignores the reality of many and denies heritage that does not align with the ideologies or desired image of the regime. The reality is that heritage of a collective often has multiple narratives and multiple truths. To protect and conserve cultural heritage is to dutifully communicate multiple perspectives.

The process of interviewing NK migrants and extracting parallel truths to better understand and represent NK culture in the drama CLOY, is one way of communicating multiple narratives. The use of oral testimonies gives a community a sense of ownership of the resulting content that is created from them. In a way, the screenwriters and directors of CLOY and all the NK migrants who gave their testimonies have become stewards of NK culture through its portrayal in the drama.

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59 ICOMOS ICIP, “The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites”, 1.

60 Lowenthal, “Fabricating Heritage”, 8.

61 Lowenthal, 9, 16.

62 Darlington, *Fake Heritage*, 197.

Kwak in particular has stated that his goal is to share both the authentic views of his native home, but also to show unification through drama and emphasize that the Koreans are united in culture and language, not separated based on ideology and politics.<sup>63</sup> As more people believe this and an authentic NK culture is presented globally, Kwak and other NK migrants can start to believe that their culture, which is solely theirs, is worth sharing and that their stewardship is important because “[w]ithout public support, ... heritage atrophies.”<sup>64</sup>

### **Understanding Authenticity**

Within the discourse of heritage conservation, Western concepts of authenticity have evolved over the decades. These are aptly discussed in Cameron and Inaba’s article on “The Making of the Nara Document on Authenticity” and thoroughly covered in Cameron and Rössler’s book, *Many Voices, One Vision: The Early Years of the World Heritage Convention*. They point out that the concept of authenticity was first introduced to the WHC as “unity and integrity of quality” and was subsequently changed to the term “authenticity” as suggested by architect Raymond Lemaire.<sup>65</sup> Based on European conservation thought stemming from the 1964 Venice Charter and centuries of masonry heritage, authenticity initially only applied to material and tangible attributes. Since its inclusion in the 1977 “Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, concepts of authenticity have met with controversy and have since been challenged, specifically for the “varying degrees of vigor” with which European ideals of authenticity were inconsistently

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63 Women’s Federation USA, *GWPN Mini Talk-Show*, pt. 1:12:00.

64 Lowenthal, “Heritage Stewardship and the Amateur Tradition”, 9.

65 Cameron and Inaba, “The Making of the Nara Document on Authenticity”, 31; Cameron and Rössler, *Many Voices, One Vision*, 39.

applied to sites being nominated for inscription onto the WH List.<sup>66</sup> According to the 1977 report, nominated properties should be authentic “in design, materials, workmanship and setting; ... consideration ... includes all subsequent modifications and additions, over the course of time, which in themselves possess artistic or historical values,”<sup>67</sup> but this criteria failed to consider what it means to be authentic in non-European cultures. That is not to say the WHC was not aware of its Eurocentricity. On universal value the committee acknowledged in the same report that:

The definition of “universal” in the phrase “outstanding universal value” requires comment. Some properties may not be recognized by all people, everywhere, to be of great importance and significance. Opinions may vary from one culture or period to another. As far as cultural property is concerned, the term “universal” must be interpreted as referring to a property which is highly representative of the culture of which it forms part.<sup>68</sup>

This varying of opinions and cultural differences manifested in a rehabilitation project in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, where the conservation techniques of dismantlement and reconstruction used by the Japanese delegation were questioned. According to Cameron et al., however, Michel Parent (former president of ICOMOS) had the foresight over a decade earlier to consider that “authenticity is relative and depends on the nature of the property involved. [For example, a] wooden temple in Kyoto which has been perfectly maintained, and whose timbers have been replaced regularly as and when they decayed - without any alteration of the architecture or of the look of the material over ten centuries - remains

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66 Cameron and Inaba, “The Making of the Nara Document on Authenticity”, 32.

67 UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, para. 9.

68 UNESCO, para. 6.

undeniably authentic.”<sup>69</sup> Such a temple would also be exemplary of the continuity of an intangible cultural heritage such as the knowledge of wood temple construction. The disputes that arose from the Kathmandu project and other dismantling projects like Kizhi Pogost propelled a deeper discussion on universal concepts of authenticity, which resulted in the 1994 Nara Conference on Authenticity.

One of the key takeaways from the Nara meeting came out of a simple question that was posed to the participants by the chairperson: what does authenticity mean in your country and in your language? In an oral interview with Cameron, Henry Cleere recalled that many responded that in their language, there was no word for authenticity. The responses ultimately made them realize, “There’s no absolute. ... Authenticity is culturally dependent. It really is as simple as that.”<sup>70</sup> In fact, in Shim Haeree’s thesis on the food culture of North Korean migrants, she clarifies that,

The Korean translation of authenticity, [*jinjeongseong* 진정성], is restrictively used in politics and art criticism. However, [her] research has shown that ... Koreans do not have an exact notion/term for authenticity, [but] if they were alienated and marginalized from the context of their homeland, they become quite obsessed with things that authentically represent “homeness”.<sup>71</sup>

Even without a clear understanding of “authenticity” the feelings of “homeness” discussed in Shim’s study would satisfy the redefined notions of authenticity from the Nara+20 meeting in 2014, in that they “evoke[d] among individuals the social

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69 UNESCO, “Principles and Criteria for Inclusion of Properties on the World Heritage List”, 19; Cameron and Rössler, *Many Voices, One Vision*, 85; Cameron and Inaba, “The Making of the Nara Document on Authenticity”, 31.

70 Cameron and Rössler, 88.

71 Shim, “The Paradox of Recreating ‘the Authentic Taste of Home’ : Critical Heritage Perspectives on North Korean Immigrants in New Malden”, 12.

and emotional resonance of group identity.”<sup>72</sup> The definition from Nara+20 also says that authenticity is a “culturally contingent quality associated with a heritage place, practice, or object that conveys cultural value [and/or] is recognized as a meaningful expression of an evolving cultural tradition,”<sup>73</sup> which can be applied to both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. I would like to emphasize that the thing which is being evaluated for its authenticity should convey cultural value; authenticity is not a value in its own right, but rather “the attributes carrying related values are “authentic”, that is, genuine, real, truthful, credible.”<sup>74</sup> As Herb Stovel said, “authenticity doesn’t exist in a vacuum, you can’t just talk about authenticity of design [for example] without saying well, design of what? ... What story is being told? ... and once you understand that then you can say relative to that conception of ... a value, are these designs authentic carriers of that [value]?”<sup>75</sup>

The definitions and understanding of authenticity are still being debated by scholars in the field of heritage today, especially within the realm of reconstruction,<sup>76</sup> and have been debated since antiquity by philosophers like Plato who questioned whether Theseus’ ship remained the same if old planks were continually replaced over time as they decayed.<sup>77</sup> The search for truth does not only belong in the domain of philosophers and experts; authenticity also derives its significance from the general public. It is only a meaningful concept in so far as the public subscribes to it because the search for authenticity has “the power to touch members of the public who seek to find meaning in their cultural environment. In fact, the public is

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72 “Nara + 20”, 146.

73 “Nara + 20”, 146.

74 Stovel, “Origins and Influence of the Nara Document on Authenticity”, 10.

75 Stovel, Interview with Herb Stovel, pt. 2:53.

76 See for example, Kelley et al., “The Paradox and Dilemma of Reconstruction”.

77 Plutarch, *Theseus*, chap. 23.1; Plato, *Parmenides*, 139.

no less discerning than the professionals and no less interested in experiencing cultures and cultural manifestations in their fullest authenticity.”<sup>78</sup> It is no wonder so many North Korean migrants were interviewed and questioned about the settings, storylines, idioms, food, and so many other details, about what was real to them in CLOY and what aligned with their own lived experiences. In the chapter *On the Drama* we will consider what part of the story and what interpretations in the drama portray cultural heritage that is authentically North Korean.

### **Storytelling and Interpretation**

“Counsel woven into the fabric of real life is wisdom.”<sup>79</sup>

- Walter Benjamin

The stories of North Koreans are worth telling, and Park Ji-eun and Kwak Moon-wan are storytellers through CLOY. Walter Benjamin suggests that “the storyteller takes what [they] tell from experience—[their] own or that reported by others. And [they] in turn make it the experience of those who are listening to [their] tale,” which is an experience that goes beyond the realm of entertainment because “every real story... contains, openly or covertly, something useful. ... In every case the storyteller is a [hu]man who has counsel for [their] readers.”<sup>80</sup> Park was diligent in listening to stories of NK migrants and strategically weaved their lived experiences into the larger narrative of a modern-day Romeo and Juliet, where the DPRK and the ROK are the Montagues and Capulets—at least this is what the story appears to be until the last episode when one realizes that their story is more akin to the Korean folk

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78 Stovel, “Origins and Influence of the Nara Document on Authenticity”, 16.

79 Benjamin, “The Storyteller”, 86–87.

80 Benjamin, 86–87.

story of the lovers Gyeonwu and Jiknyeo.<sup>81</sup> This story of a separated couple that is reunited annually is alluded to by Se-ri in episode 5 as an embedded narrative that foreshadows her future with Captain Ri. The wisdom or moral messages are not explicitly spelled out in CLOY, but rather, the viewer is prompted to think about the implications of this or that as the stories unfold. As Kwak has repeated in his interviews, he would like his contribution to CLOY, and K-drama generally, to be largely about convincing the Korean viewership of the importance of unification by showing that there are more similarities than differences between north and south, and that North Koreans are humans with the same worries and hopes as the rest of us.

Park intended to create a relaxing drama that would be enjoyable to watch and would entice viewers to return episode after episode. According to Benjamin, “in the art of storytelling[, the storyteller’s] task [is] less to increase its didactic content than to refine the tricks with which the attention of the listener [is] captured,”<sup>82</sup> which Park successfully does if we consider the viewership and popularity of CLOY, but that is not to say the drama lacks didactic content. At the minimum it prompted some non-Korean viewers to educate themselves more about Korean culture, like a family in Utah, USA who devoted an entire month to learning about Korean culture, both North and South, by borrowing books from the library and trying Korean food.<sup>83</sup> A teacher from Virginia, USA spoke about the “remarkable soft-power of K-dramas” in a reaction video about CLOY, likening its effect to K-pop

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81 Kwon, *Gyeonwu and Jiknyeo*. An English version of the Korean folk story was narrated on KBS World Radio. Ultimately, after years of hardship and separation, and with a little help from the magpies and crows, the two lovers are eventually reunited annually on July 7<sup>th</sup>. Yoon Se-ri and Ri Jeong Hyeok face a similar fate.

82 Benjamin, “The Storyteller”, 101.

83 하이채드 Hi Chad, *Crash Landing on You Biggest Super Fan Family?*, pt. 16:42.

(Korean pop music) and the influence of world-renowned K-pop group, BTS.<sup>84</sup> The art of storytelling, manifested in CLOY, shows that “the relationship of the storyteller to [their] material, human life, is ... a crafts[person’s] relationship, ... where their task [is] to fashion the raw material of experience, [their] own and that of others, in a solid, useful, and unique way.”<sup>85</sup> This is interpretation and presentation.

The purpose of the ICOMOS Charter for the IPCHS is “to define the basic principles of Interpretation and Presentation as essential components of heritage conservation efforts and as a means of enhancing public appreciation and understanding of cultural heritage sites,” but it is a useful guide to consider the interpretation of cultural heritage, generally. To apply the language of this charter to CLOY as a case study:

Definition shortened from the IPCHS charter <sup>86</sup>	What it means for CLOY
<p><b>Interpretation:</b> the full range of potential activities intended to heighten public awareness and enhance understanding of cultural heritage site. These can include ... on-site and directly related off-site installations, educational programmes, ... and evaluation of the interpretation process itself.</p>	<p>The drama itself is used to enhance understanding of North Korean culture.</p>

<sup>84</sup> 우물 밖의 개구리 The Frog Outside the Well, *Six Americans React to “Crash Landing on You (해외에서도 대박난 사랑의 불시착 미국반응! 미국인이 본 북한은?)*, pt. 13:25. Laura Huffman’s responses to questions posed by Prof. Mark Peterson.

<sup>85</sup> Benjamin, “The Storyteller”, 108.

<sup>86</sup> ICOMOS ICIP, “The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites”, 2.

<p><b>Presentation:</b> the carefully planned communication of interpretive content through the arrangement of interpretive infrastructure at a cultural heritage site. It can be conveyed through a variety of technical means, including ... multimedia applications and websites.</p>	<p>The presentation mechanisms are the television network, tvN, and the streaming application, Netflix.</p>
<p><b>Interpretive infrastructure:</b> physical installations, facilities, and areas at, or connected with a cultural heritage site that may be specifically utilised for the purposes of interpretation and presentation.</p>	<p>The infrastructure used are the filming sets representing North Korean spaces, including the village and houses.</p>
<p><b>Site interpreters:</b> staff or volunteers at a cultural heritage site who are permanently or temporarily engaged in the public communication of information relating to the values and significance of the site.</p>	<p>The interpreters here would be the screenwriters and North Korean advisors (migrants).</p>
<p><b>Cultural Heritage Site:</b> a place, locality, natural landscape, settlement area, architectural complex, ... that is recognized and often legally protected as a place of historical and cultural significance.</p>	<p>The site is mainly the North Korean village, including the houses and public spaces.</p>

Within the framework of the IPCHS charter, CLOY aligns with most of the seven cardinal principles by: (*Principle 1: Access and Understanding*) facilitating intellectual access to NK culture and increasing public respect and understanding; (*P2: Information Sources*) incorporating oral testimonies and basing the construction of the set on well-researched oral sources and consultation with experts; (*P3: Context and Setting*) including sufficient context with the

geographical setting and presentation of intangible cultural elements like food and dance; (*P4: Authenticity*) respecting the dignity and authenticity of the North Korean community; (*P6: Inclusiveness*) consulting a range of NK experts and community members; (*P7: Research, Training, and Evaluation*) providing collaboration opportunities for members of the NK community in the production of the drama, inspiring them to continue the storytelling tradition.<sup>87</sup> A claim to align with Principle 5, Sustainability, may be a bit of a stretch, but presenting NK through a drama does prevent any physical impact on NK villages. Realistically, it is because rural areas of the DPRK are highly inaccessible. Additionally, the economic, social, and cultural benefits of the drama to the NK community are quite difficult to evaluate and not within the scope of this paper.

Principles 2 and 6, which discuss oral testimony and inclusion of community, are key objectives that enhance the storytelling within CLOY. Heritage represents the continuity of a culture, and it is through the memories of the community that “the chain of tradition” can pass on from generation to generation. Benjamin reminds us that “storytelling is always the art of repeating stories, and this art is lost when the stories are no longer retained.”<sup>88</sup>

### **Heritage & Culture of North Korea**

The “official” discourse on North Korean cultural heritage includes tangible sites and intangible elements that are inscribed on lists sanctioned by UNESCO and were submitted for consideration officially by the State Party of the DPRK through their National Authority for the Protection of Cultural Heritage (NAPCH). On the WH List are two cultural sites: the *Complex of Koguryo Tombs* was inscribed in

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<sup>87</sup> ICOMOS ICIP, 3–8.

<sup>88</sup> Benjamin, “The Storyteller”, 91, 98.

2004 and the *Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong* were inscribed in 2013. Both sites have undergone conservation efforts in partnership with UNESCO since their inscription. Neither are on the List of World Heritage in Danger. An additional five sites remain on the Tentative List from 2000, which include cultural, natural, and mixed sites.<sup>89</sup> The Tentative List is a place for States Parties to indicate sites that they are considering for nomination; they have not yet gone through the nomination process.

Inscribed on the ICH List are three elements that fall under the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (RL). The RL include elements that “help demonstrate the diversity of this heritage and raise awareness about its importance.” If an element requires “urgent measures to keep them alive,” they are put on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (USL).<sup>90</sup> The RL elements and inscription dates are: *Arirang folk song in the DPRK* (2014), *Tradition of kimchi-making in the DPRK* (2015), and *Traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum)*, (2018).<sup>91</sup> It is no surprise that the ROK has inscribed the same three elements on the ICH List since these oral traditions have been passed down from generations long ago, before the wars. Officially: *Arirang, lyrical folk song in the ROK* (2012), *Kimjang, making and sharing kimchi in the ROK* (2013),

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89 UNESCO, “Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”.

90 UNESCO ICH, “Purpose of the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and of the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices”.

91 UNESCO ICH, “Arirang Folk Song in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”; UNESCO ICH, “Tradition of Kimchi-Making in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”; UNESCO ICH, “Traditional Korean Wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum)”.

and *Traditional Korean wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum)* (2018), which are just 3 among the ROK's 21 elements.<sup>92</sup>

Several parts of the kimchi-making process are shown in CLOY while characters are engaged in conservation. We will visit these scenes in the film analysis, but what else can we find out about the “unofficial” heritage of North Korea?

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<sup>92</sup> UNESCO ICH, “Arirang, Lyrical Folk Song in the Republic of Korea”; UNESCO ICH, “Kimjang, Making and Sharing Kimchi in the Republic of Korea”; UNESCO ICH, “Traditional Korean Wrestling (Ssirum/Ssireum)”; UNESCO ICH, “Republic of Korea and the 2003 Convention”.



## On the Drama

*Title:* Crashing Landing on You  
[사랑의 불시착 (*salang-ui bulsichak*)]

*Runtime:* 16 episodes and 22 ½ hours of drama

*Director:* Lee Jeong-hyo [이정효]

*Screenwriter:* Park Ji-eun [박지은]

*Assistant Writers:* Kwak Mun-wan [곽문완], Seo Su-min [서수민],  
Park Eun-yeong [박은영]



Figure 10. Cover image for *Crash Landing on You*. Source: Netflix.

All images with black bars going forward are sourced from CLOY on Netflix.

## Relevant Characters and Spaces



Figure 11. Main characters. (L) Ep. 5, 1:08:00; (R) Ep. 7, 46:33.

### Main and Co-Main Leading Characters (L-R)

Yoon Se-ri / Cheo Sam Suk (*village alias*) [윤세리 / 최삼숙]

Captain Ri Jeong Hyeok (son of the Director of the General Political Bureau)  
[대위 이정혁 (총정치국장아들)]

Gu Seung-jun (SK man in hiding in NK) [구승준]

Seo Dan (Ri's fiancé - arranged marriage) [서단]



Figure 12. Supporting characters. (L) Ep. 9, 1:20:54; (R) Ep. 16, 1:43:07.

### Members of Company Five [5 중대] and the wiretapper (L-R)

(Master Sergeant) Pyo Chi Su [(상사) 표치수]

(First Lieutenant) Park Gwang Beom [(하사) 박광범]

(Staff Sergeant) Kim Ju Meok [(중급 병사) 김주먹]

(Private First Class) Geum Eun Dong [(초급 병사) 금은동]

Jeong Man Bok (known as the Ear or the Rat) [정만복]



Figure 13. Supporting characters. (L) Ep. 13, 45:57; (R) Ep. 13, 46:12.

***The Village Women, "Ahjummas" (from left to right)***

Ma Yeong Ae (wife of Sr. Col. Se Dae Ju) [마영애]

Na Wol Suk (head of village) [나월숙]

Hyeon Myeong Sun (wife of Jeong Man Bok) [현명순]

Woman who sells SK products at the *jangmadang* [장마당] market

A village woman, played by actress Kim Ah-ra, a NK migrant living in Seoul

Yang Ok Geum (hair dresser) [양옥금]

***The Village***

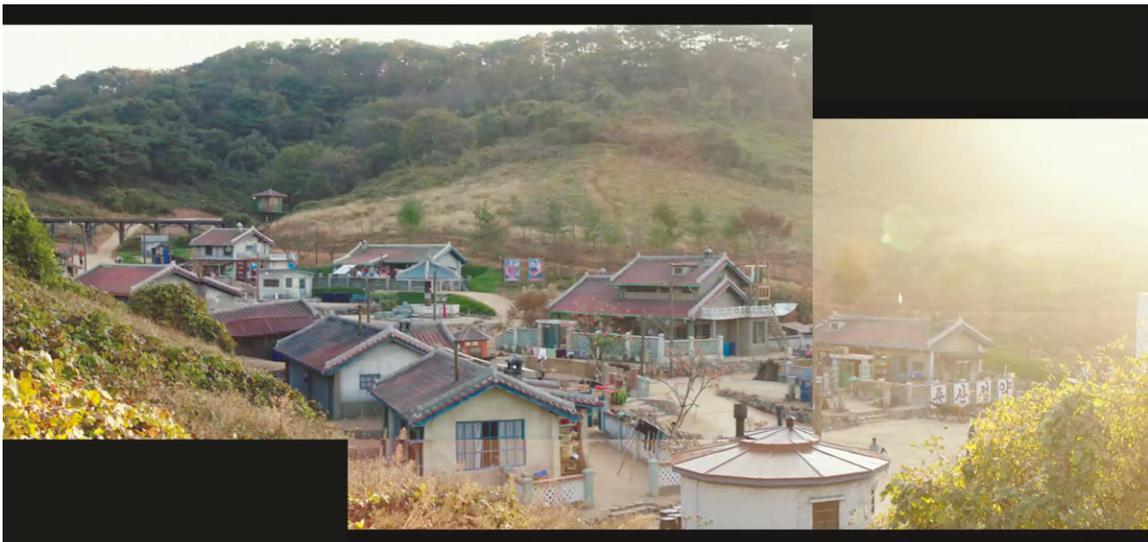


Figure 14. View of village from above. Ep. 2, 24:00.

*House of Ri Jeong Hyeok*



*Figure 15. Front of Captain Ri's house. Ep. 16, 1:20:35.*

*House of Ma Yeong Ae*



*Figure 16. Ma Yeong Ae's house from top of neighbour's stairs. Ep. 9, 1:03:55.*

*House in the DMZ*



*Figure 17. Abandoned house in the DMZ. Ep. 9, 1:07:55.*

## Location & Setting

Much of the rural landscape in North Korea was built and shaped after the devastating damages of the Korean War and were greatly influenced by the writings and direction of Kim Il Sung. Kim wrote extensively about the rural question and published the “Theses on the Socialist Rural Question in Our Country”, known widely as the “Rural Theses”.<sup>93</sup> Although socialist ideologies and support from the USSR initially influenced the urban and rural planning of the state after key de-Stalinization policy changes implemented by Nikita Khrushchev, Kim soon realized that he had to manage and organize agricultural and rural places “as a tool to sustain the totalitarian dictatorship.”<sup>94</sup>

Kim had grand plans to socialize all the rural spaces in NK by building agricultural cooperatives, abolishing agricultural taxes, and decreeing that all housing and infrastructure construction in rural areas were to be paid for by the state.<sup>95</sup> He believed that,

It is the solemn duty of the working class to help the peasants and ensure a bountiful life for them, and it accords with the interests of the whole state and the whole of society. The more efficiently the peasants raised crops with the all-round assistance given them, the stronger the food and raw-material bases for the urban population

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93 Kim, “Theses on the Socialist Rural Question in Our Country”.

94 Shin and Jung, “Socialising Rural Space in North Korea”, 5.

95 Kim, 209–15.

and for industry will be laid, and the further the building of socialism will be promoted.<sup>96</sup>

With that mentality, Kim set out to build model villages, like the Chongsan-Ri Cooperative Farm, that could be emulated across the state. They were supposed to be large villages that housed thousands of families and included everything that an urban setting would have, except their sole purpose was to be agricultural machines for the state. Essentially, Kim had “sought to create a city-like countryside,”<sup>97</sup> but he soon realized that his grand plans were not feasible. They had to adapt to the mountainous geography and cold climate of the north, and the traditional lifestyles of the Korean people. What resulted was “the opposite of what the North Korean regime intended. ... Unlike the huge settlements that the Soviet Union and China organised as a labour unit, North Korea’s rural space featured scattered small villages that were connected [with service networks].”<sup>98</sup> This is not surprising considering the mountainous topography and limited amount of arable land. Kim had also written that,

Above all, you should in no case violate farmland. As you all know, our country has an extremely limited area of farmland. Therefore, towns and villages should be built at the foot of mountains or in land unfit for farming whenever this is possible, refraining from intruding on farmland. Roads, too, should be built on the same principle.<sup>99</sup>

The village in CLOY also sits at the foothills, but we should be mindful that the setting in CLOY is a front-line military village rather than a large agricultural

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96 Kim, 214.

97 Shin and Jung, “Socialising Rural Space in North Korea”, 9.

98 Shin and Jung, 11–12.

99 Kim, “On Strengthening Land Management”, 148.

cooperative. The main difference in terms of setting would be proximity to arable land but the approach and building of the village would follow the same guidelines as all rural areas.



Figure 18. Illustration from the North Korean Chollima movement showing a large model village. Imaged titled “평야 지대 농촌 부락 계획 초안” [“Draft Plan for Plains Rural Villages”]. Source: Shin and Jung.<sup>100</sup>

Although the first part of the drama takes place in several locations in NK and later in Seoul, SK, the focus here will be the fictional North Korean village and some of the surrounding landscapes. There are also some flash-back and ending scenes in Switzerland, which will not be analyzed. All place names mentioned in this paper are located on the following map.

<sup>100</sup> Shin and Jung, “Socialising Rural Space in North Korea”, 11. Note that “마을” is more commonly used for “villages” than “부락” in South Korea according to the Naver Korean Dictionary in reference to the Standard Korean Language Dictionary. (Hyeseung Shim, note to author, 9 May 2022.)

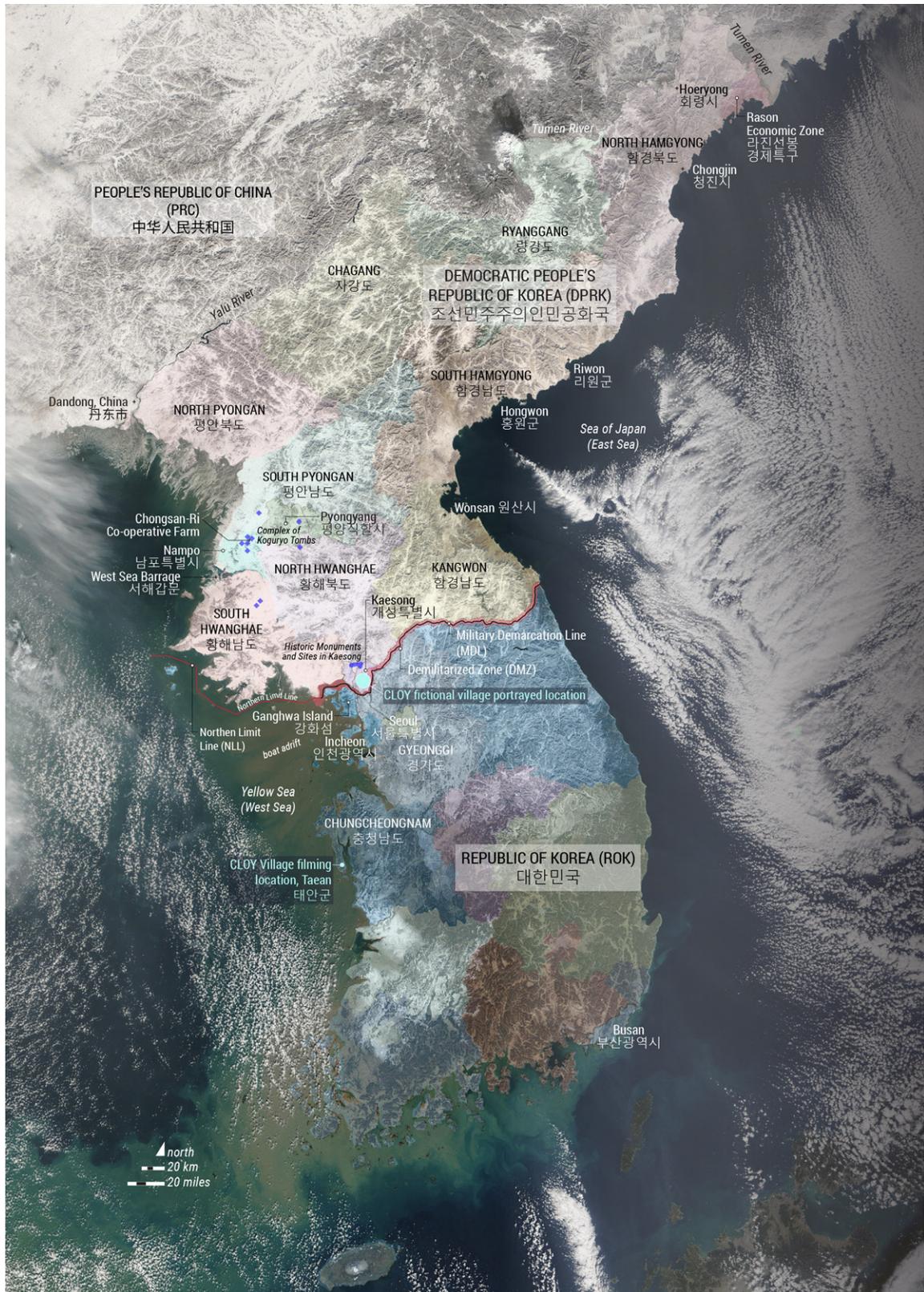


Figure 19. Map of the Korean peninsula. Base map: NASA. Annotated by Michelle Duong.

The NK military village in which Yoon Se-ri finds herself is located at the foothills of a rural location, potentially south of Kaesong in North Hwanghae Province. According to the dialogue, the village is about a 2-hour drive from Pyongyang (episode 5, 30:50). It is in a valley sheltered by hills and the first glimpse of it in the drama is when Se-ri is shown coming over a hill to discover the village, thinking she had made it back to South Korea. She quickly realizes her error when she encounters an oxen-drawn wooden cart and hears the village women conversing with a NK accent, addressing each other as comrades.



*Figure 20. (L) Se-ri sees the village for the first time at night thinking she has returned to the south and then realizes her error when she sees elements of NK life. Ep. 1, 1:02:06.*

The village features one main artery that connects all the houses to the public square. It is essentially a small cluster of houses and public space with the entrances of the houses facing a north-south orientation. In the common spaces, where there is a communal laundry pit, an obelisk, and a gathering area surrounded

by propaganda slogans and posters, scenes include the villagers engaging in their morning callisthenics to the tune of an upbeat song blaring through the speakers. Children line up to do their morning head count before parading off together to school singing a song and swinging their arms. Women are seen doing their laundry in the pit with large plastic tubs and wooden sticks. A man distributing tofu or eggs draws his cart down the main artery exchanging his goods for food tickets. Persimmons are skewered on large racks and left to dry in the sun while children attempt to catch a dragonfly in a net made of cobwebs. Each home is surrounded by a low and perforated, semi-private, concrete brick fence, and just outside of the partition some homes have small garden plots.



Figure 21. (R) An ox-drawn cart in the fictional North Korean village. Ep. 1, 1:03:25.

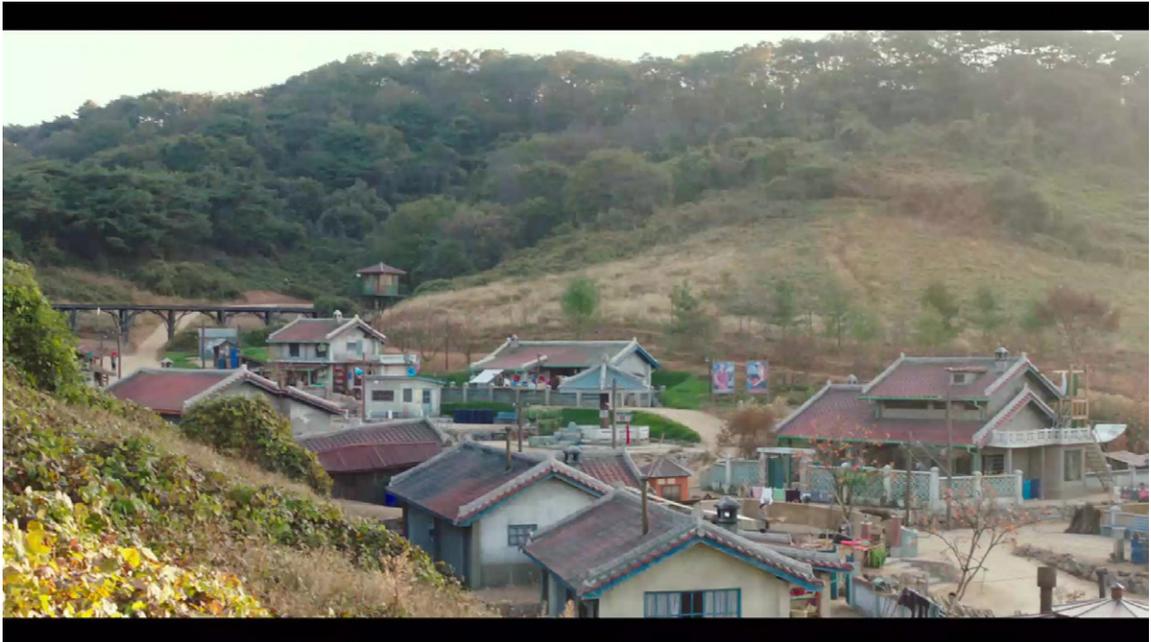


Figure 22. Birds-eye view of the fictional village. Ep. 2, 0:23:57.



Figure 23. The public square with a central obelisk. A communal laundry pit is seen at bottom right. Ep. 2, 0:24:13.



Figure 24. Villagers head to the square for early-morning callisthenics. Ep. 1, 1:04:44.



Figure 25. Propaganda posters on set. Ep. 1, 1:04:00.



None of these scenes were filmed in the DPRK. Instead, an entire village set was built in Taean, South Korea behind a resort called Moseokwon [모석원], about 125 km south of the DMZ along the west coast.<sup>101</sup> The site was likely chosen because its topography is similar to areas just north of the DMZ. North Korea is a relatively hilly peninsula with mountainous regions in the northeast. Travellers flying into Pyongyang from either Beijing or Shenyang will pass over the emerald rolling hills, a landscape dotted with small villages and cut by rivers and waterways, but largely natural and untouched since the Korean War. The placement of the village at the foothills was quite convincing. In fact, the entire village set was quite accurate. Kang Nara, one of the NK advisors, proclaimed in an interview that throughout the drama she would think, “Oh what’s this? Is this my hometown? It really is [that accurate]. As for the village it was almost indistinguishable [from my own].”<sup>102</sup> Kim Ah-ra, a NK migrant and supporting actor in CLOY, had a similar reaction to the set, but she experienced it in-person before seeing it on the screen. She told Kim Noel, a NK migrant who was interviewed about CLOY, that the set looked so much like NK that it gave her goosebumps.<sup>103</sup> Kim played the role of one of the village women, which is eerily like stepping back into a former life, especially if she was so convinced of the setting. Interestingly, both Ah-ra and Nara are from North Hamgyong Province located in the northeast region of the peninsula. Ah-ra is from Hoeryong, a border town across from China and adjacent to the Tumen River. Nara is from Chongjin, a coastal town facing the Sea of Japan. Their similar emotive responses to the familiarity of the set could be an indication of the cookie-

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101 Mee in Korea, *Crash Landing On You Filming Location - North Korean Village | Mee in Korea*.

102 DKDKTV, *N.Korean Defector Spills Truth about Crash Landing on You*, pt. 1:48. The interview was in Korean with English subtitles provided by the interviewer.

103 Liberty in North Korea, *North Koreans React to K-Drama ‘Crash Landing on You’ Part 3*, pt. 2:02.

cutting approach with which Kim Il Sung vigorously rebuilt the state after the Korean War. Generally, Nara was very impressed that the production team took note of all the details they had discussed during their consultation for the drama and according to her lived experience, the overall representation of NK in CLOY is 60-70% accurate.

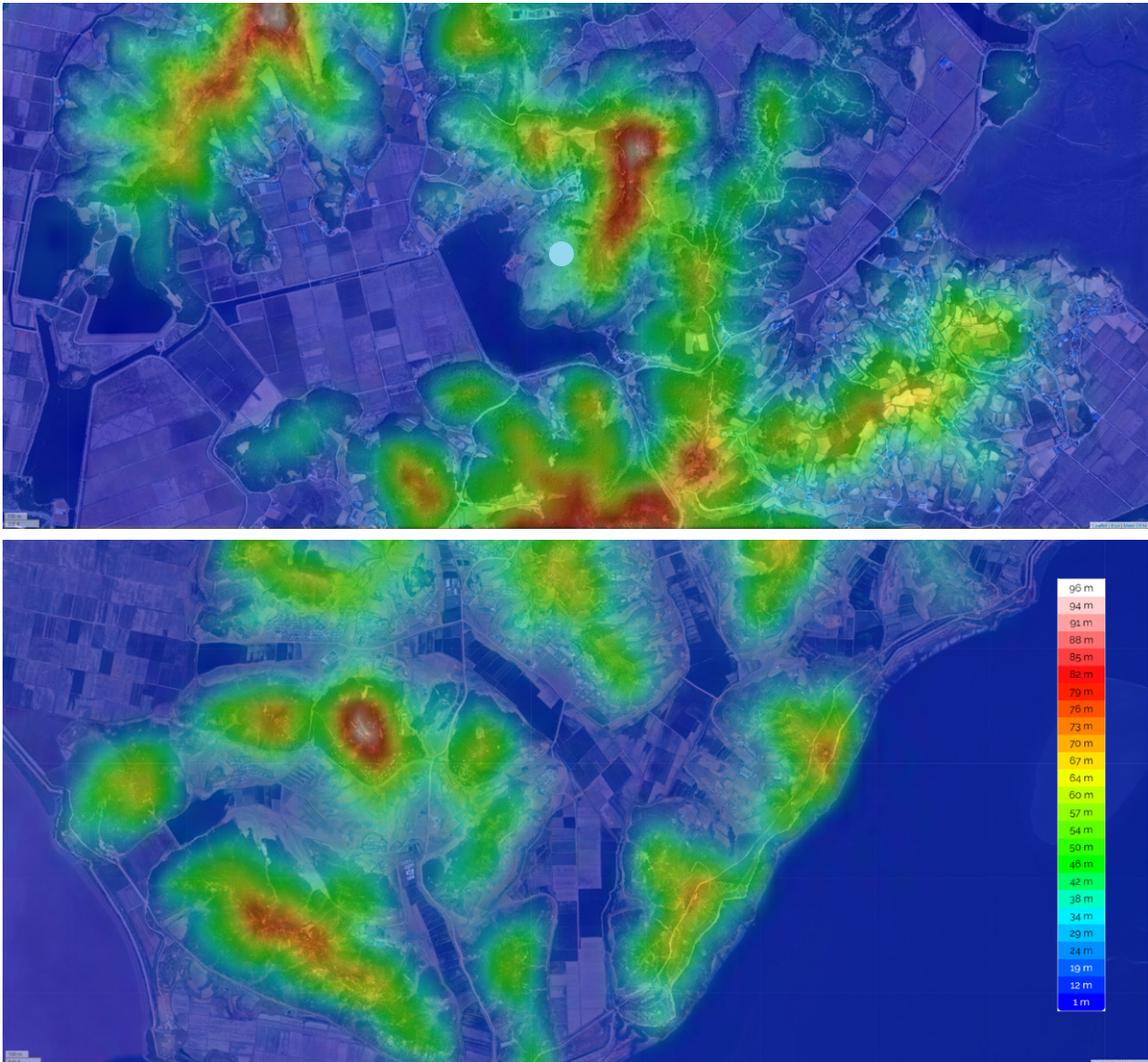


Figure 27. Topography of (top) location of filming set in Taeon, South Korea and (bottom) area north of the DMZ and plausible location of portrayed village in CLOY. Source: [topographic-map.com](http://topographic-map.com).<sup>104</sup>

104 "South Korea Topographic Map, Elevation, Relief".



Figure 28. Landscape of North Korea as seen from an airplane flying into Pyongyang from Beijing. Source: wocomoHUMANITY.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> wocomoHUMANITY, *Daily Life in North Korea - "My Brothers and Sisters in the North"* (Full Awarded Documentary), pt. 2:29, 2:40.



Figure 29. Interview with Kang Nara; she is astonished about the resemblance of the set to her hometown. Source: DKDKTV.<sup>106</sup>

Turning our attention to the west coast to an area just north of the DMZ, the long-distance images taken by Ed Jones serve as evidence of a village closer to the intended location of the fictional village. Taken from Ganghwa Island, SK, Jones has captured a rural landscape at the foothills of the Kaesong countryside. Although much larger, there are similar structures, including an obelisk standing beside a, presumably, public building or space. It may be an example of an agricultural cooperative structured on Kim Il Sung's model villages. In an extraordinary book called *Nothing to Envy, Ordinary Lives in North Korea*, in which journalist Barbara Demick interweaved the lives of six North Koreans who she followed over 15 years, one of the women, Mi-ran, grew up in such a village.

In fact, the village where Mi-ran grew up was not such a bad place in the 1970s and 1980s. It was a cookie-cutter North Korean village

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106 DKDKTV, *N.Korean Defector Spills Truth about Crash Landing on You*, pt. 1:48.

of about one thousand people, stamped out by central planning to be indistinguishable from other such villages, but its location was fortuitous. The East Sea (the Sea of Japan) was only six miles away, so locals could occasionally eat fresh fish and crab.<sup>107</sup>

Proximity to the sea on either coast had advantages, especially during times of extreme famine. We will revisit the coast in a later chapter on food culture.

In the same region as Jones' photos from Google platforms, small clusters of houses or little satellite villages that very much resemble the fictional village in CLOY line the foothills. The houses are neatly aligned with one road in or out of the area. Some houses front the road while others face each other but they all aim to have a north-south orientation when possible.



*Figure 30. A general view of fields and buildings of the North Korean countryside outside Kaesong, seen across the DMZ from the South Korean island of Ganghwa on April 23, 2020. Ed Jones/ L'Agence France-Presse (AFP) via Getty Images. Source: Business Insider.<sup>108</sup>*

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<sup>107</sup> Demick, *Nothing to Envy*, 13.

<sup>108</sup> Mark, "23 Photos Show What Life in North Korea Is like during Its Coronavirus Lockdown".



Figure 31. A detail of the previous photo of the Kaesong countryside. Ed Jones/AFP via Getty Images. Source: Business Insider.<sup>109</sup>



Figure 32. Aerial view of countryside just north of the DMZ along the west coast. Highlighted area shown in next image. Source: Google Maps.

<sup>109</sup> Mark, "23 Photos Show What Life in North Korea Is like during Its Coronavirus Lockdown".



Figure 33. Closer view of small villages similar to the fictional village portrayed in CLOY. Source: Google Maps.



Figure 34. From another perspective, showing clusters of housing at the foothills. Source: Google Earth.





CLOY village has been accurately portrayed according to testimonies. Let us now zoom in to some of the details within the village.

Jun-sang and Mi-ran were both from Chongjin, North Hamgyong. They dated, clandestinely, and often went on long walks in the night. Their memories paint an image of the layout of their village:

There was only one road, running through town and heading up to the mountains. They walked as briskly as they could without appearing to be running away from something. They didn't speak as they walked past the billboard of a smiling Kim Il-sung, the signposts urging, "If the Party Decides, We Do" and "Let's Protect Kim Jong-il with Our Lives." A large colorful billboard of soldiers with bayonets was on one side of the street, where the road passed under a wide archway painted with blue flowers. Where the slogans petered out, the town ended and they could relax into the darkness. ... Overgrown trees lined both sides of the road leaning, across to one another so that they formed a tangled canopy overhead.<sup>115</sup>

It is almost as if the memories of their youth came to life on the set of CLOY, although this paragraph could describe many small North Korean villages. The overgrown trees lining both sides of the road is also the backdrop of the budding romance between Se-ri and Captain Ri where a grove of pines lines the road at the threshold of the village. The pine is the national tree in both North and South Korea (red pine specifically in the South), and symbolizes values like faith, integrity, devotion, and honour.<sup>116</sup> The pine was integral in the cultural heritage of the Korean peninsula. It sustained agrarian societies for centuries, it was used to build castles and ships, it was burned in kilns to create *onggi* and other ceramics, and it was

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115 Demick, *Nothing to Envy*, 83.

116 "Pine, National Tree of Korea"; Chung, "Pine Culture Behind Korean Civilization".

the primary structure for vernacular Korean architecture.<sup>117</sup> However, it appears that the preferred structural building material for rural housing in North Korea after the Korean War included brick, cement, and saprolite blocks, depending on the housing typology. Cement was declared an essential building material by Kim Il Sung and cement factories were prioritized in post-war revitalization efforts.<sup>118</sup>



*Figure 36. (L) Captain Ri and Se-ri bike along a road lined with trees in the night. Ep. 4, 0:38:45.*

*Figure 37. (R) Captain Ri and Se-ri leave the village at night through the pine grove. Ep. 3, 0:59:45.*

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117 Chung, "Pine Culture Behind Korean Civilization"; Park, *An Introduction to Korean Architecture*.

118 Shin and Jung, "Socialising Rural Space in North Korea", 13; Kim, "On Some Measures to Develop the Building-Materials Industry", 41.

## Form & Design

Without access to the DPRK, I had wrongly assumed that I could study the vernacular architecture of existing South Korean villages to assess the architecture presented in CLOY. I had not yet considered the extent of the damage caused by the Korean War. The war lasted three years but amounted to a comparable number of casualties as the Vietnam War, which lasted twenty years.<sup>119</sup> The effects on the land and those who survived were serious and long lasting. Koh tells us that in terms of physical damage, “more than 8,700 industrial plants [were] destroyed; ... approximately 906,500 acres of farmland damaged; 600,000 homes, 5,000 schools, 1,000 hospitals and clinics, and 260 theaters destroyed.”<sup>120</sup> Most of North Korea had to be rebuilt and it was the task of the state leader, Kim Il Sung. “Out of the wreckage of a country that had lost almost all of its infrastructure and 70 percent of its housing stock in the war, [he] created what appeared to be a viable, if Spartan, economy.”<sup>121</sup>

By the time Kim had published his Rural Theses in 1964, new housing typologies had emerged that were a blend of Soviet ideas, which were adopted directly after the war, with Korean vernacular traditions. Individual house plots were designed at 350-450 m<sup>2</sup> with space for service facilities or vegetable gardens that were

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119 Shin, *Korean History in Maps*, 133

120 Koh, “The War’s Impact on the Korean Peninsula”, 59.

121 Demick, *Nothing to Envy*, 11.

intended for private use only.<sup>122</sup> Shin and Jung provide a thorough explanation of one of the housing typologies that were created in 1957 to adapt to NK climate and topography:

... each house in the village was designed to have identical orientation, access, and size. A conventional and traditional heating system, the *ondol*, was considered and treated as a major factor in the spatial layout. With this in mind, the kitchen was placed in the centre of the house. Normally, annexes were located on one side of the kitchen, and two *ondol* rooms were located on the other side of the kitchen. The traditional gabled roof with large eaves blocked both sunshine and rain. Windows were typically small because the winter is cold in North Korea. Wooden floors called *toetmaru* [툃마루] were annexed to the front of bedrooms for the sultry summers. These plans all came from existing vernacular houses.<sup>123</sup>

The testimonies of Demick's characters tell a similar tale of Soviet-Korean designs for apartments as well, but the loud-speaker propaganda machines usually posted in the middle of the village were now brought into the home.

The architectural designs for many of the post-war apartments came from East Germany with adaptations for Korean culture. Between the stories, extra space was provided for the Korean underfloor heating system, and apartment buildings were equipped with loudspeakers in the individual units to broadcast community notices.<sup>124</sup>

The Soviet-Korean housing designs appeared to be a compromise between state efficiency and cultural traditions. The *ondol*, for example, is a traditional, underfloor heating method that was incorporated into every housing design, even multi-story

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122 Shin and Jung, "Socialising Rural Space in North Korea", 6.

123 Shin and Jung, 7.

124 Demick, *Nothing to Envy*, 40.

buildings. This housing typology was also shown in CLOY and the character Gu Seung-jun, who is from SK, was incredulous to learn that one would burn wood in an apartment building kitchen to warm the rest of the unit. Carrying this heating tradition over to single homes was logical but it was also a fortuitous decision considering the lack of readily available electricity across the state, even today.

At the start of post-war modernization when Kim Il Sung took on the massive building campaign, his architects designed seven houses that were to be mass produced across the state in rural areas. They were a merging of Soviet building methods with Korean vernacular elements. Plans no. 2 and no. 7 shown below are two of the seven plans, both of which are rectangular with an exterior chimney for ventilation for the *ondol* heating system. Also shown below are examples of plot designs that included service or gardening spaces and house plans for both one- and two-households.

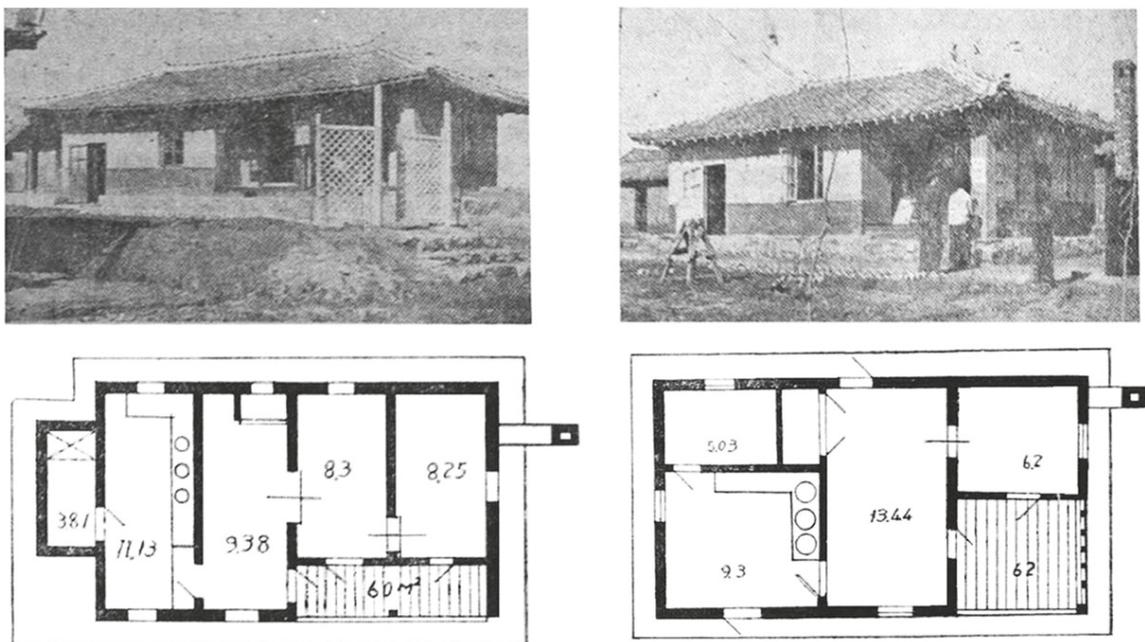


Figure 38. Plans no. 2 and no. 4 from the seven housing typologies published in 1958. Source: Geonchukgwa geonseol, p.9 (1958). As published by Shin and Jung, p. 8.

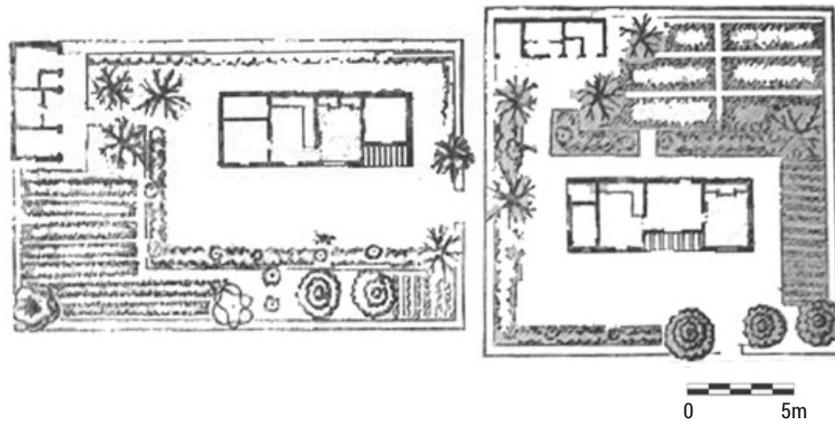


Figure 39. Individual plot plans. Source: Joseon-Soviet Goodwill Agricultural Cooperative [Josso chinseon burak] from Geonchukgwa geonseol, p.8 (1958). As published by Shin and Jung, p. 7.

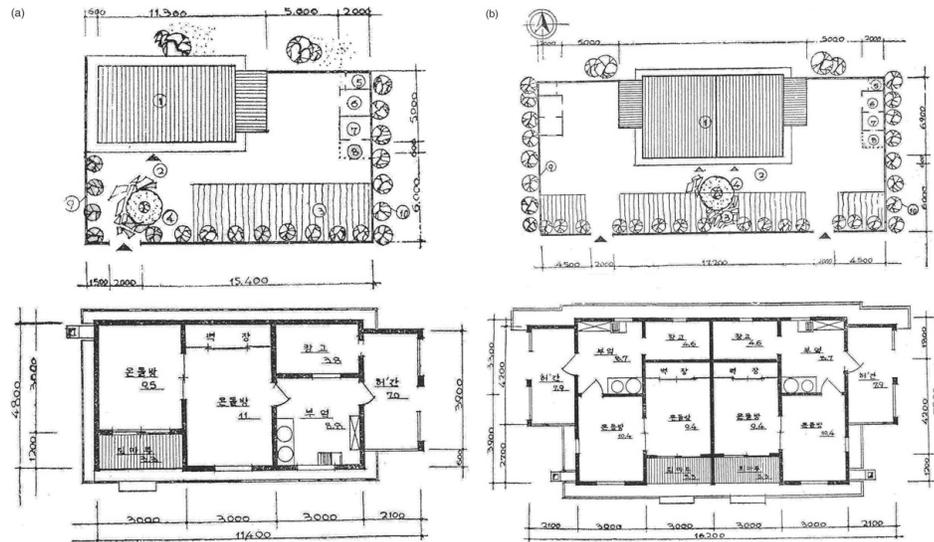


Figure 40. Plot and house plans for both one- and two-households published in 1962. Source: Geonchukgwa geonseol, p. 1 (1962). As published by Shin and Jung, p. 15.

In the vernacular housing example below there are similarities in plot design to the post-war designs but the vernacular L-shape plan has been simplified into a rectilinear plan for mass production across the state. It was Kim’s goal to provide “modern rural housing at state expense” to everyone.<sup>125</sup> He had told the people that

125 Kim, “Theses on the Socialist Rural Question in Our Country”, 213.

all North Koreans will “eat boiled rice and meat soup, dress in silk and live in houses with tile roofs.” Lankov notes that “this promise ... does not sound too ambitious, but we should remember that for centuries the Korean farmers could not afford to eat rice every day..., that a meat soup was a meal reserved for a special holiday occasion, and that only landlords could afford a tile roof rather than the thatched roof of the majority.”<sup>126</sup> Thus, tiled roofing became the standard in the form of the traditional hipped or half-hipped roof, as preferred by local peasants.<sup>127</sup>

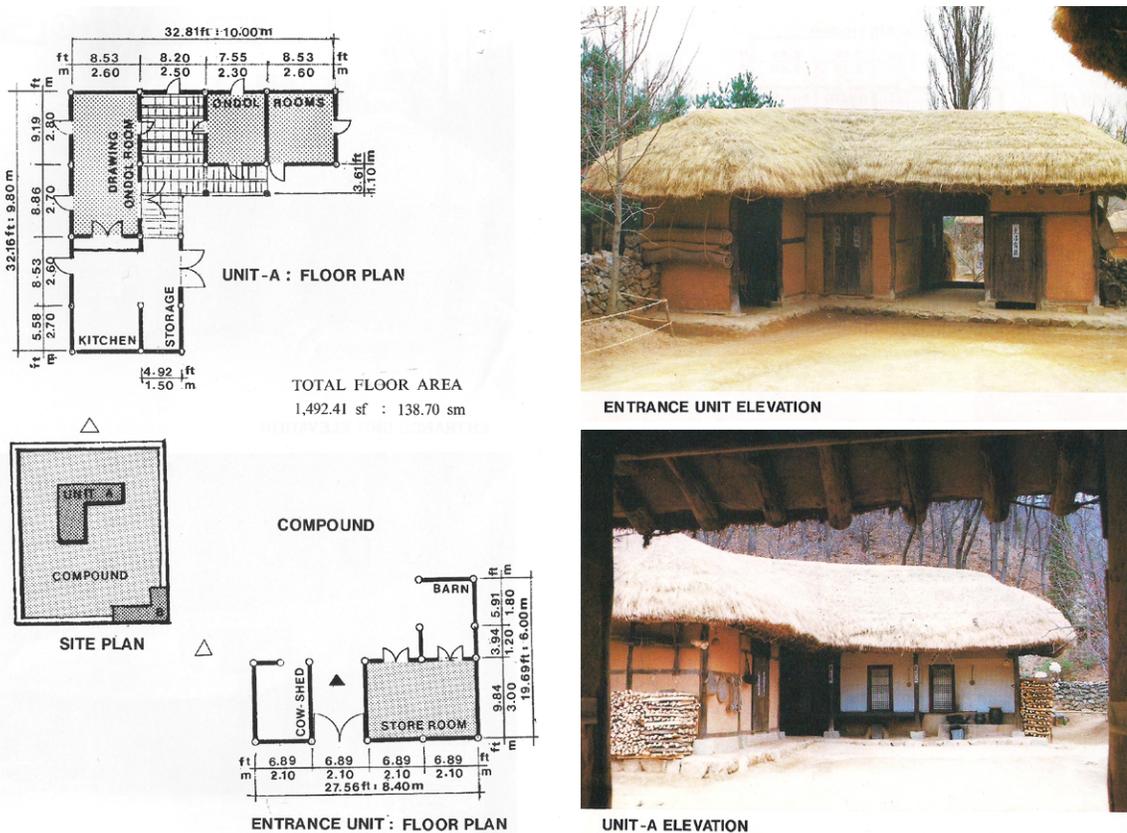


Figure 41. Vernacular folk village housing example from Gyeonggi Province, an area just south of the DMZ. Source: Park, *An Introduction to Korean Architecture*, pp. 57-58.

126 Lankov, *The Real North Korea*, 17.

127 Shin and Jung, “Socialising Rural Space in North Korea”, 18.

In addition to the single home examples, the state also designed row housing known as a harmonica house. Although on paper Kim's housing proposals appeared to be a great equalizer for their socialist state with a certain promise of prosperity, Demick describes the reality for many lower status citizens, including Mi-ran:

The houses are simple, utilitarian, and monochromatic. ... Most of the housing stock was built in the 1960s and 1970s from cement block and limestone, doled out to people based on their job and rank. In the cities there are "pigeon coops," one-room units in low-rise apartment buildings, while in the countryside, people typically live in single-story buildings called "harmonicas," rows of one-room homes, stuck together like the little boxes that make up the chambers of a harmonica. Occasionally, door frames and window sashes are painted a startling turquoise, but mostly everything is whitewashed or gray. ...

[Mi-ran's family] lived in a single unit of a harmonica house, befitting [her] father's status. The entrance led directly into a small kitchen that doubled as a furnace room. Wood or coal would be shoveled into a hearth. The fire it produced was used both to cook and to heat the home by means of an underfloor system known as ondol. A sliding door separated the kitchen from the main room where the entire family slept on mats that were rolled up during the day.<sup>128</sup>

A family's status determined the size and type of housing they received from the state, but the base building materials and colour palette seemed to remain the same. Splashes of colour on monochromatic cement block and limestone buildings with Soviet-Korean design influence, topped with tiled roofing. Keeping this in mind let us visit the housing portrayed in CLOY.

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128 Demick, *Nothing to Envy*, 11, 13.

A large part of the CLOY narrative happens in and around the house of Captain Ri Jeong Hyeok, thus the analysis will focus heavily on this house with references to others. Captain Ri is the son of the Director of the General Political Bureau, which means his family is part of the elite class of the DPRK. His own rank, as Captain, is the highest Company-grade officer rank, though he does not have the highest rank of the military personnel in this village. That privilege belongs to the husband of Ma Yeong Ae, Sr. Col. Se Dae Ju. It is expected that the homes they are provided with are some of the higher quality housing units in the rural area.

*All images with black bars are screenshots taken from the drama on Netflix. Supporting images of the site will be used for clarity. These images were taken by a tourist who goes by Mee in Korea. She visited the built set in Taean in February, 2020. The site has since been demolished.*

### **Exterior Spaces**



**Figure 42.** Back of Captain Ri's house showing extended living space and storage building. Ep. 6, 1:07:55.

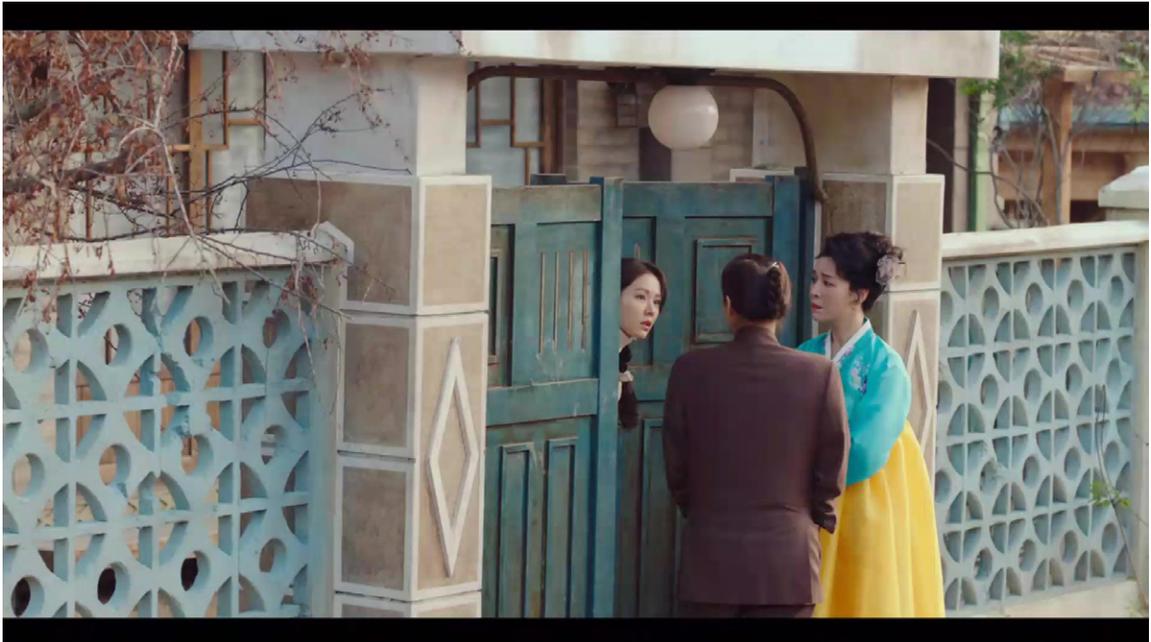


Figure 43. Ri's front gate. Ep. 4, 21:27.



Figure 44. Ri's back sliding doors, used as the main entrance. Ri is sitting on the toetmaru. Ep. 4, 50:32.



Figure 45. Ri's exterior living space; traditional pyeongsang [평상] shown (multipurpose wooden platform). Ep. 3, 47:00.



Figure 46. Kimchi cellar. Ep. 2, 26:50.



Figure 47. Exterior kitchen. Ep. 6, 1:07:58.



Figure 48. Large pot in use. Storage building behind. Ep. 4, 48:35.



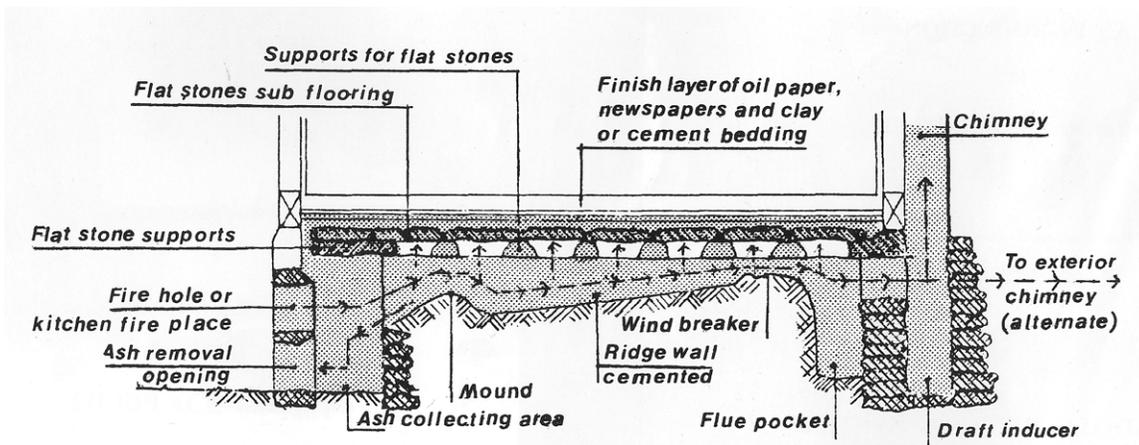
Figure 49. Front of Ma Yeong Ae's house. Ep. 4, 26:18.



Figure 50. Yeong Ae's covered porch. Ep. 4, 35:20.

Both Captain Ri's and Yeong An's houses appear to be built with brick, tiled roofing, and wooden doors. Yeong An's bricks have a layer of cement parging plastered across every façade while Ri's bricks were left exposed. Their status and ranking is reflected by the additional floors and spaces added, whereas most of the other houses in the village are single storey homes. The perforated concrete wall surrounding Ri's plot and the metal gate are painted a "startling turquoise," like the windows of the harmonica houses mentioned by Demick above. In the context of the drama set, the colours are less jarring and complement the terracotta tiles, minty green eavestrough, and the warmth of the wood and earth colour palette. Traditional Korean vernacular elements have been incorporated into the design including a *toetmaru* (covered wooden platform), an area to store *onggi* (large ceramic food storage urns), sliding wood panel doors, and the addition of a kimchi cellar or *gimchium* [김치움] within the extended living space. This outdoor space is used extensively in the drama for food preparation and storage while making good use of the *pyeongsang* [평상], a moveable, multipurpose, wooden platform.

The outdoor stove used by Ri appears to be similar in design to traditional Korean outdoor kitchens that serve as the heat source for the *ondol* system, but this stove is located at the edge of the plot, at the furthest point away from the house. It is unlikely that there are underground channels funneling the heat toward the house and I did not notice any place to burn wood indoors. The *ondol* in the village were not portrayed inside any of the houses, unlike the one shown in the apartment experience for Gu Seung-jun, but a wood-burning heating source was implied when Na Wol Suk wheeled a barrow of firewood to Yeong An's house in episode 12 (1:10:00), imploring her to stay healthy by keeping her room warm.



SCHMATIC SECTION of FLOOR HEATING SYSTEM

Figure 51. Section of an ondol floor heating system. Source: Park, An Introduction to Korean Architecture, p. 42.

### Interior spaces

The first seven images are from Ri's home, followed by images from four other houses in the village.



Figure 52. Central living room with view to extended exterior space. Ep. 2, 19:16.



Figure 53. Living room showing door to the kitchen. Ep. 5, 30:15.



Figure 54. View from den and front of bathroom door through the living room to the kitchen. Ep. 2, 39:11.



Figure 55. View from bathroom to den. Ep. 2, 30:45.



Figure 56. Bathroom and water basin. Ep. 2, 04:50.



Figure 57. Kitchen. Ep. 6. 1:08:08.



Figure 58. Kitchen with view to stairs leading up to storage space. Ep. 4, 48:39.

Interiors from other houses:



Figure 59. Birthday gathering in living room of Ma Yeong Ae. Ep. 4, 28:42.



Figure 60. Living room of Ma Yeong Ae. Ep. 10, 29:00.



Figure 61. Living room of Ma Yeong Ae, facing the kitchen. Ep. 9, 22:04.



Figure 62. Living room of village member. Ep. 2, 1:06:50.



Figure 63. Living room of Hyeon Myeong Sun and Jeong Man Bok. Ep. 2, 39:40.



Figure 64. Living room of Na Wol Suk. Ep. 2, 43:10.

The forms and elements like sliding panels, partitions, and windows are modular and designed for mass production. If the finishes and curtains were stripped from all the housing shown in this village, like many suburbs across Canada, it appears that the houses used standardized parts and designs. The finishes within Ri's house are of comparatively higher quality, like the tiles in the bathroom and kitchen and the light fixtures above the kitchen counter. According to a NK migrant who goes by BJ Lee Pyeong, the furnishings in Ri's house shows that he is very well off.<sup>129</sup> The "startling turquoise" has been brought into the home of Ma Yeong Ae, perhaps as a distinguishing feature for the purposes of storytelling.

Ri uses the back entrance that opens up to the extended living space as the main entrance whereas most others use a door that fronts the road. Taking a closer look at Ri's floor plan it somewhat resembles the rectilinear standardized plans created by the state, perhaps a version of plan no. 2 published by *Geonchukgwa geonseol* shown above, but the exterior wooden platform, *toetmaru*, has been centralized. An interesting decision made by the set designers was that they built the massing of Ri's house to fit in to the context of the rest of the houses in the village, but the interior portrayals must have been filmed in a studio. A floor plan based on the exterior of the house does not align with a floor plan that is based on the perceived spaces as seen from the interior. This decision presented a more authentic village setting with houses that are contextual, while the interior layout maintained its authenticity by portraying side by side spaces with sightlines from one end of the house to the other, implying a rectangular floor plan without corridors.

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129 0 | [Lee], *North Korean Defector's 'Crash Landing on You' Real Review Time*, pt. 5:10.

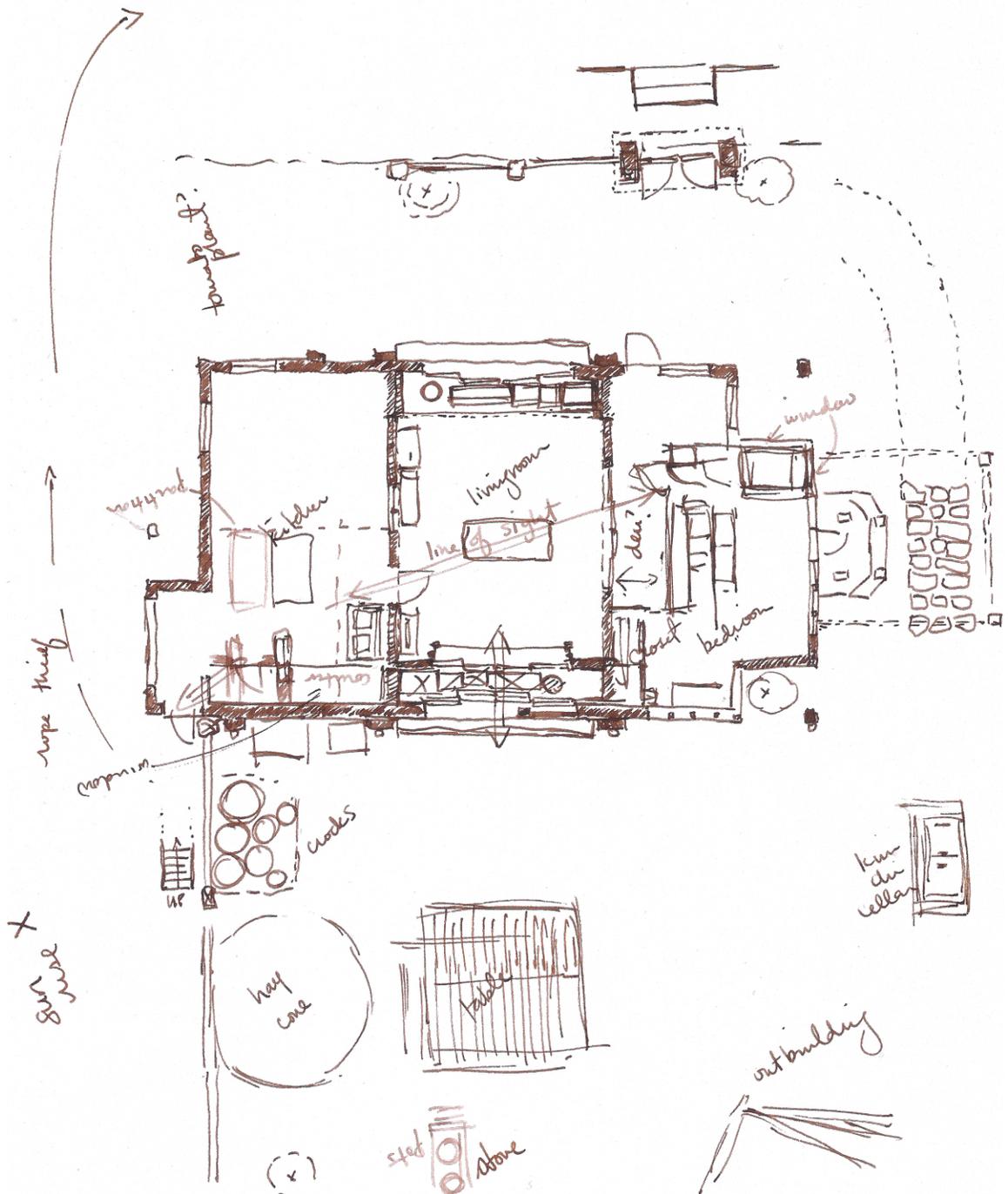


Figure 65. Initial sketches of the floor plan of Ri's house, a process that revealed the discrepancies of portrayed spaces based on the exterior scenes versus the interior scenes.



Figure 66. Ri's house: deduction of floor plan using scenes showing the exterior.



Figure 67. Ri's house: deduction of floor plan based on scenes of the interior.

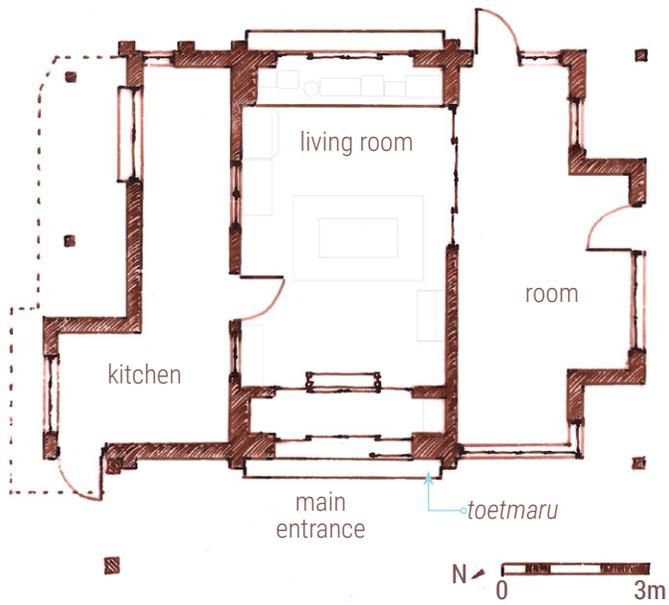


Figure 68. Floor plan created based on the exterior spaces depicted in the drama.

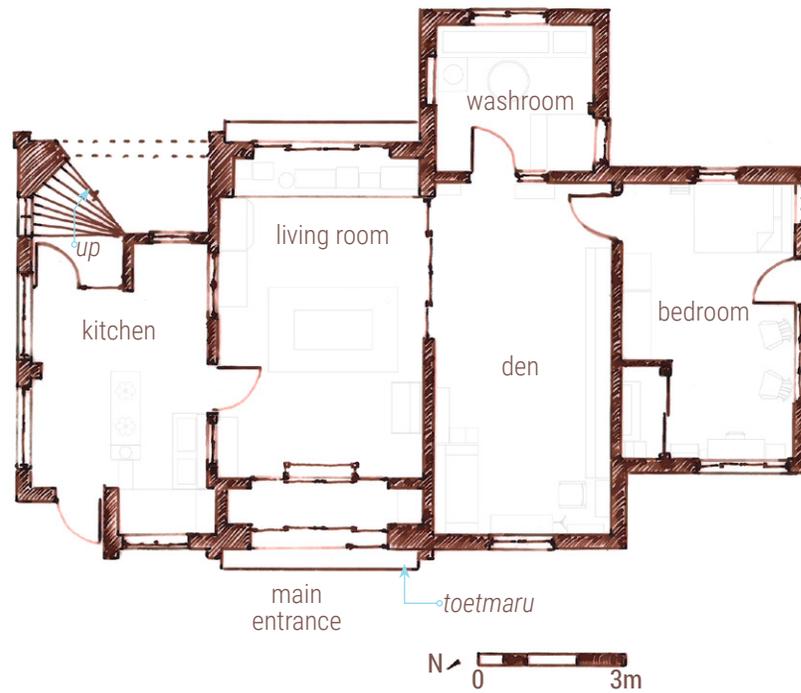


Figure 69. Floor plan created based on the interior spaces depicted in the drama.

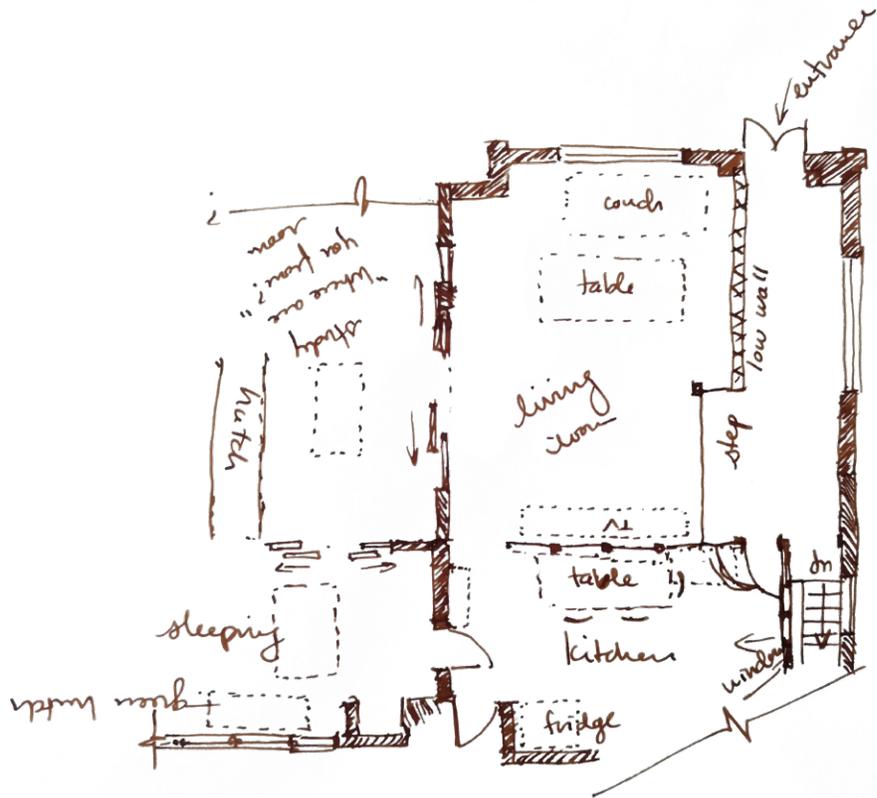
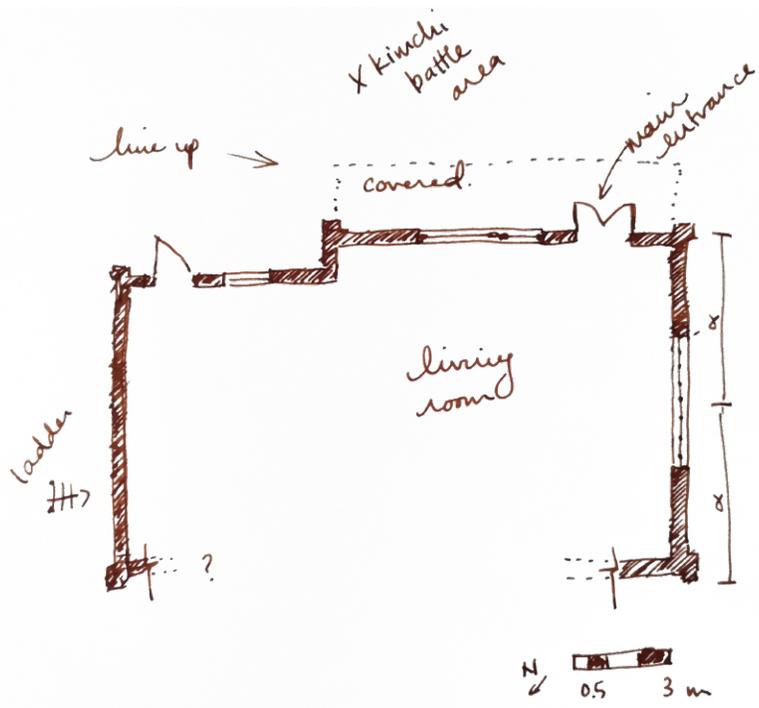


Figure 70. Sketches of partial plans of Ma Yeong Ae's house. The plan above is based on exterior scenes. The plan below is based on interior scenes.

Comparing the set to reality, covert photos taken from tourists to the DPRK reveal some similarities to CLOY in rural areas visible by train. The image by Jones below shows the use of similar materials, a low concrete fence surrounding the plot, extended living spaces including a small garden, and tiled roofing. This example appears relatively well maintained. The image below by Turtle shows a very different situation. Firstly, the floor plan is not rectangular but instead is L-shaped like vernacular designs, likely taking orientation and local climate into consideration. There is one house in the CLOY village with this layout. The building material appears to be stone or blocks covered with cement with wood framing openings that may be glazed or covered over time. The standardized tile roofing is seen but this house, and likely the residents within, seem to be awaiting a better future.



*Figure 71. "Corn is hung out to dry over a door on a house between Hongwon and Riwon on North Korea's northeast coast (Ed Jones/AFP)"<sup>130</sup>*

<sup>130</sup> Sim, "Bleak Photos of Daily Life in Poverty-Stricken Rural Villages in North Korea".



*Figure 72. Photo taken by tourist Michael Turtle as he passes by a town. "As we passed through the small cities along the way you could see they remained true to the communist architectural style of concrete with concrete." Source: Time Travel Turtle.<sup>131</sup>*

I include the abandoned house in the DMZ from CLOY as an example of known, vernacular Korean architecture. The characters are seen in the living space outdoors, one sitting at the *pyeongsang*. It is built of wood with an L-shaped plan and wood shingled roofing. If this house was not located in the DMZ it may have already been used for parts, or inhabited. Although Kim wrote in his Rural Theses that all rural housing would be funded by the state, he delivered a speech only months later saying:

Needless to say, we must continue the rural construction envisaged in the state plan. You should mobilize farmers for the construction

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131 Turtle, "Time Travel Turtle - Life in North Korea".

of the country areas, instead of expecting only the state to build their houses. You should ensure that from now on farmers will also build their houses for themselves by using locally available materials and wood from old houses. Scattered houses should be moved to one place and electricity installed where it is not yet supplied. While building new houses you should also repair old ones.<sup>132</sup>

This speech was given in 1964. If any vernacular buildings survived after the war, hopefully the spirit of conservation encouraged citizens to save some of these buildings. Even without the awareness of authenticity or modern conservation concepts, heritage is inherently within us and valued aspects are always saved and brought forth for the next generation.



*Figure 73. Front of abandoned house in the DMZ shown in CLOY. Ep. 9, 1:08:08.*

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132 Kim, "On the Ten Major Tasks of South Phyongan Province", 377.



*Figure 74. Wooden shingled abandoned house in the DMZ in CLOY, seen from above. Ep. 9, 1:09:40.*

## Intangible Cultural Heritage

ICH is defined in the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* as:

... the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.<sup>133</sup>

ICH elements can be thought of as belonging to concepts, like food or family, and falling under certain categories or domains. The Convention officially recognizes five domains. They are:

- (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- (b) performing arts;
- (c) social practices, rituals, and festive events;
- (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- (e) traditional craftsmanship.

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<sup>133</sup> UNESCO, “Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage”, 5.

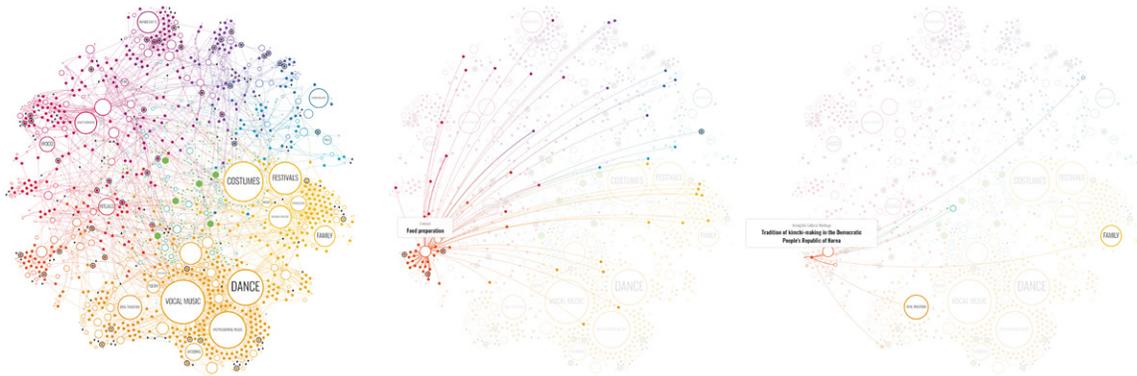


Figure 75. Example of the ICH constellation featuring “Tradition of kimchi-making in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”. Source: UNESCO ICH.

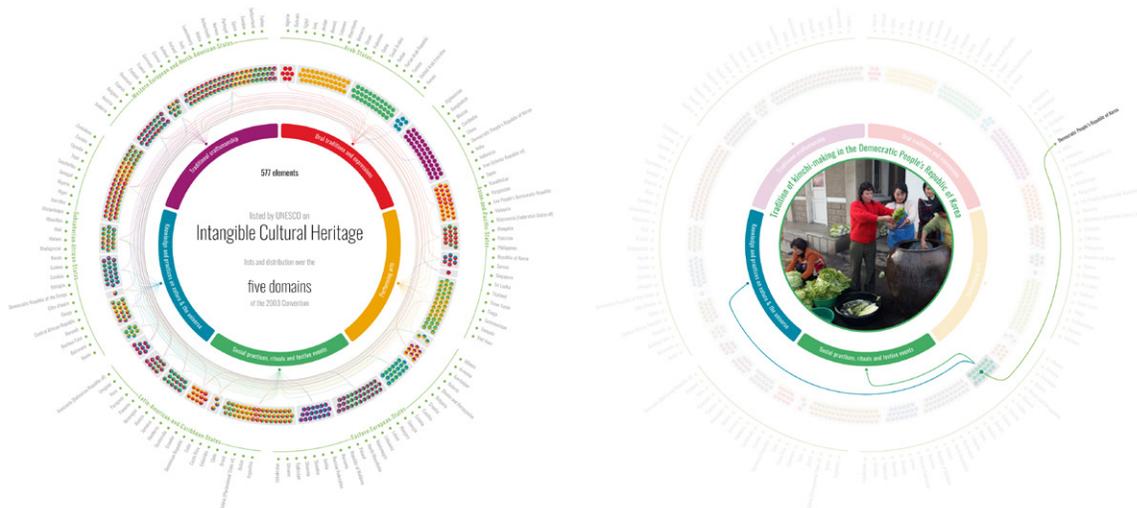


Figure 76. The five domains of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Source: UNESCO ICH.

Elements often fall into overlapping domains and are conceptually connected to multiple aspects of heritage. Within UNESCO’s interactive constellation of ICH elements online, one can find all the concepts, as defined by UNESCO, that an inscribed element is linked to and view that element in different contexts like Biomes, Threats, Domains, and Sustainable Development Goals.

Kimchi-making, for example, is connected to multiple food-related concepts like *food preparation, fermentation, meat, vegetables, salt*, but this ritual is also

connected to *seasons, sea fishing, homemaking, family, oral tradition, and everyday life*.<sup>134</sup> It falls under the domain of *social practices, rituals, and festive events* because of its nation-wide seasonal celebration and role as a necessary food provision for families to survive long winters. Kimchi-making also falls under the domain of *knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe* because the knowledge required to prepare the multitude of ingredients is closely linked to seasonal cycles like agrarian practices, husbandry, and sea fishing.

The ICH Convention is a relatively recent development and way to understand cultural heritage holistically. Just like the WH List, the ICH List is populated officially by States Parties through a nomination process. Ethically and according to the Convention, “communities, groups and, where applicable, individuals should have the **primary role** in safeguarding their own intangible cultural heritage.”<sup>135</sup> If we were to survey the people of the DPRK, what elements would be nominated for an intangible cultural heritage list? Let us examine which official ICH elements were portrayed in CLOY and what other elements were portrayed or might be missing from the drama that is representative of North Korean intangible heritage. I will focus on elements that fall under at the concepts of food, song, and language.

### ***Food Culture***

One of the well-known dishes in Korean cuisine is a side dish called kimchi [김치], which has existed since the Three Kingdoms Period (57 BCE – 668 CE).<sup>136</sup> It is a fermented vegetable side dish, often spicy, that is seasoned with spices, fruit,

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134 UNESCO ICH, “Tradition of Kimchi-Making in the DPRK Constellation”.

135 UNESCO, “Basic Texts of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage”, 113.

136 “History of Kimchi,” KCCArt.

meat, fish, or fermented seafood.<sup>137</sup> It is best known for its cabbage variation but is also made with other vegetable bases like radish, eggplant, and cucumber, and there are hundreds of varieties in existence. The ritual of making kimchi, known as *kimjang* [김장], “boosts cooperation among families, villages and communities, contributing to social cohesion,” and is listed as an ICH in both North and South Korea.<sup>138</sup> Kimchi is said to be eaten daily but also enjoyed during special occasions and holidays.



Figure 77. The women in the community gather to make kimchi. © Korea National Heritage Preservation Agency, 2013<sup>139</sup>

The kimchi-making process is not a one-day activity. It involves many steps that happen over the year depending on the ingredients that will go into the seasoning. The village women in CLOY are seen rinsing and salting cabbage and radish by the seaside using seawater. Ma Yeong Ae, as the wife of the highest-ranking officer in town, supervises and provides orders while tasting the fresh radish but she fully participates when it comes time for the “kimchi battle” [김장 전투]—this is the act of

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<sup>137</sup> UNESCO ICH, “Tradition of Kimchi-Making in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”.

<sup>138</sup> UNESCO ICH; UNESCO ICH, “Kimjang, Making and Sharing Kimchi in the Republic of Korea”.

<sup>139</sup> UNESCO ICH, “Tradition of Kimchi-Making in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea”.

seasoning or pickling the cabbage and other vegetables and placing them into their vessels for fermentation. This term is not used in SK where it is simply called *kimjang*.



Figure 78. The village women salting the vegetables at the seaside. Ep. 2, 25:07.



Figure 79. A group of women participating in the "kimchi battle" seasoning the cabbage. Ep. 3, 29:23.



Figure 80. Underground kimchi cellar, gimchium [김치움]. Ep. 2, 27:14.



Figure 81. Conical hay covers an underground cellar, gimchium, shown beside large ceramic food vessels called onggi. Ep. 8, 1:19:23.

Examples of kimchi cellars for fermentation and food storage are shown in Ri's exterior living space. They are known as *gimchium* [김치움]. One of the soldiers, Kim Ju Meok, explains its function to Se-ri in that it provides the perfect conditions for beautifully fermented kimchi. With the urbanization of much of South Korea and the availability of special kimchi fridges, SK citizens have become less familiar with these traditional storage methods. Se-ri concluded that the *gimchium* was "organic" and "hip" for a bit of comic relief as Ju Meok looks confused about these new words he does not understand.

In a video about North Korean *kimjang* Kang Nara describes what is inside the *gimchium*. A large hole is dug in the ground, sometimes only big enough to bury one large kimchi pot, or if there is enough space a larger area would be dug out. She explains that if the pots are directly exposed to the elements the kimchi would freeze in the winter and ferment too quickly in the summer, so the hay cones provide the perfect temperature for fermentation.<sup>140</sup> However, not all North Korean families could afford to make kimchi and if they did the ingredients used revealed the family's financial situation.<sup>141</sup> If salt was not affordable or unavailable, families would use seawater as the women did in CLOY, according to NK migrant Kang Ha-na, who was interviewed by the Washington Post. Other migrants have had similar experiences of lacking ingredients, like Park Jong-hun who currently lives in New Malden, UK. It was not until he left NK that he could make kimchi with all the

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140 한반도N, *North Korean Kimchi Tastes 'Jjung'?*, pt. 0:45.

141 A survey participant noted that their family could not afford to make kimchi as they were barely surviving. In the video noted above, Kang Nara explains the grades of seafood that could be used, depending on your means.

ingredients he was taught to use. He spent over a decade in NK without access to key ingredients. He too, used seawater instead of salt.<sup>142</sup>



Figure 82. (L) Grilled meat with kimchi and side dishes, a meal shared by Se-ri and the soldiers. Ep. 2, 28:25.

Figure 83. (R) The village women gathered around a traditional low dining table drinking beer and eating dried pollack and other snacks. Ep. 5, 25:00.

Beyond kimchi, food was generally an indicator of status and wealth. Nara revealed that during her consultation sessions for the drama she was asked very specific questions about family dinners, varieties of side dishes, snacks, and so on and these elements were accurately portrayed throughout the drama.<sup>143</sup> Nara was from a family of higher status in NK. A study participant revealed that snacks, like dried pollack, were only available if you had money. In fact, for this participant, rice was not affordable either and meat was out of the question. Nara explained that meat was expensive and only eaten during holidays. This aspect was alluded to in the drama when Jeong Man Bok was told to buy meat for his son as a special treat and was given cash by his superior.

Alternatives to meat that were not highlighted in the drama but should have been, according to NK migrant Kim Noel, are *dububap* [두부밥], which is made of tofu and

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142 Shim, "The Paradox of Recreating 'the Authentic Taste of Home' : Critical Heritage Perspectives on North Korean Immigrants in New Malden", 22.

143 DKDKTV, *N.Korean Defector Spills Truth about Crash Landing on You*, pt. 2:13.

rice, and *injogogibap* [인조고기밥], which is rice with artificial meat made of dregs from soy production. These are meatless foods that have historically been eaten for survival but have since been improved and eaten simply because they taste good.<sup>144</sup>



Figure 84. (L) Clam bulgogi lit with petrol. Ep. 4, 39:05.

Figure 85. (R) A shot of soju following the clam in the same shell. Ep. 4, 40:00.

Another popular snack for those who could afford, or perhaps harvest, is clam *bulgogi* [불고기] or clam barbeque lit with petrol paired with soju, a distilled rice alcohol popular in Korean drinking culture. In CLOY, Se-ri experiences the clam-lighting ritual for the first time with the soldiers then enjoys an evening of drinking games, a familiar activity for her. Soju is popular in both North and South Korea while clam *bulgogi* is a well-known snack along the coasts of NK, especially for tourists. Jones, who was visiting the southwest coast of NK, captured an image of the moment a hostess fed the fire and clams with petrol in the image below. This ritualistic snack is so popular that travel agencies have blogged about it. Young Pioneer Tours touted the snack as part of the top seven snacks in the DPRK while Koryo Tours dedicated a whole post informing tourists on how to acquire “Nampo

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<sup>144</sup> Liberty in North Korea, *North Koreans React to K-Drama ‘Crash Landing on You’*, pt. 1:40.

Petrol Clam BBQ” and then how to carefully enjoy the delicacy while reassuring potential tourists of the safety of the dish.<sup>145</sup>



Figure 86. (L-R) Cooking clams using petrol at the West Sea Barrage beach outside of Nampo, southwest of Pyongyang. Photo: Ed Jones/AFP. Source: *International Business Times*. Clam BBQ on the west coast of North Korea. Source: *Young Pioneer Tours*. Open clam ready to eat. Source: *Koryo Tours*.<sup>146</sup>

Other than the meatless alternatives pointed out by Noel, one famous North Korean dish that was not portrayed is *naengmyeon* [냉면] or *raengmyon* noodles, the popular buckwheat cold noodle that Kim Jong Un shared with then-President Moon Jae-in at the 2018 Inter-Korean summit. The gesture created such a craze in SK that food establishments carrying this dish on their menu faced “Complete De-Noodlisation” as it sold out restaurant after restaurant.<sup>147</sup> This dish is well known and widely available in Pyongyang but outside of the capital few citizens have ever tried it. As discovered by Haeree in conversation with several NK migrants, one woman did not have *naengmyeon* until she was able to afford the ingredients and recreate it herself in the UK, based on everything she had heard about it. In fact, a SK woman present mentioned that she was able to try the famous dish when she went to Pyongyang. The group continued to discuss the authenticity of the dish

<sup>145</sup> Johnson, “Top 7 Street Foods of North Korea”; Koryo Tours, “Nampo Petrol Clam BBQ”.

<sup>146</sup> Sim, “Inside North Korea”; Johnson, “Top 7 Street Foods of North Korea”, 7; Koryo Tours, “Nampo Petrol Clam BBQ”.

<sup>147</sup> AFP, “Complete De-Noodlisation”.

and had disagreed about specific ingredients, which garnishes were acceptable and which seasonings should not be used.<sup>148</sup> So perhaps it was purposeful and realistic that *naengmyeon* was omitted from the rural food experience portrayed in CLOY. *Pyongyang Raengmyon* has been nominated for the ICH List and is currently under consideration.

All in all, the food items portrayed in CLOY were some of the best examples of North Korean staples during more prosperous times and for those who could afford it. Since the airing of CLOY, the online Asian food community has become saturated with posts about the various dishes. A Korean-American mother and food blogger who runs the site *Korean Bapsang* has covered some of the dishes episode by episode in her post, “Korean Drama Food – Crash Landing on You”, links to her recipes included.<sup>149</sup>

### ***Song and Dance***

The Arirang folk song is the only official musical element on the ICH List for the DPRK but it was not portrayed in CLOY and neither were the Mass Games (the meticulously executed, state-sponsored, over-the-top artistic performances). There were two scenes in which song or dance is presented. The first is during Se-ri’s first encounter with the villagers who had gathered in the square for their routine, daily callisthenics. Everyone seemed familiar with the choreography as the music blared a lively song through the community speakers. At the same time the

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148 Shim, “The Paradox of Recreating ‘the Authentic Taste of Home’ : Critical Heritage Perspectives on North Korean Immigrants in New Malden”, 27.

149 Ro, “Korean Drama Food - Crash Landing on You”.

children headed off to school, singing a song and waving their arms, led by their fellow classmate holding a red flag.



*Figure 87. The villagers gather for their daily morning callisthenics. Ep. 1, 1:05:20.*



*Figure 88. The children start their marching song as they head off to school. Ep. 1, 1:05:45.*

The exercise routine that the villagers were doing is an actual routine popularized by Kim Jong Il in the 1990s and based on exercises from the era of Kim Il Sung. Entitled 대중 룰동 체조 [Popular Rhythmic Gymnastics], the video opens with a message from Kim Jong Il:

《 대중체육사업을 강화하  
여 사회적으로 누구나 다  
운동을 하는 분위기를 세  
워야 하겠습니다. 》

김 정 일 <sup>150</sup>

“Strengthening the work of  
mass sports to be socially  
who you are. We need to  
set the tone for exercising.”

Kim Jong Il

This video was remade recently with a modern production using the same music. This version includes an English title within the production, *Public Eurhythmics*. It was posted on YouTube as *How North Koreans Start their Morning* and is captioned as *North Korea's public physical exercise*.<sup>151</sup> In practice, this routine is used at factories for midday breaks to stretch the body. In an intimate documentary made by a South Korean woman using a German passport, workers at a clothing factory are called to action with the trumpeting intro of the soundtrack. The women line up, do their exercises, and then silently and eerily return to their sewing machines and put their heads down for the rest of their shift.<sup>152</sup>

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150 *North Korean Exercise* 北朝鮮 大衆律動体操 북한 대중룰동체조.

151 NORTH KOREA NOW, *How North Koreans Start Their Morning*.

152 wocomoHUMANITY, *Daily Life in North Korea - "My Brothers and Sisters in the North"* (Full Awarded Documentary), pt. 1:26:00.



Figure 89. Factory workers taking a break by doing the Public Eurhythmics routine. Source: wocomoHUMANITY, pt. 1:26:35.



Figure 90. Inside the Patriotic Clothing Factory in Wonsan, Kangwon Province. The sign reads "가는길 험난해도 웃으며 가자!" [Let us go forward with a smile even if the path is hard!]. Source: wocomoHUMANITY, pt. 1:28:19.

The second scene portraying NK music culture was on the train from the military village to Pyongyang. The sales staff sang a lively tune as they made their way through the train while one member played the accordion. They were followed by a person pushing a sales cart.



*Figure 91. The sales team sing a song and play the accordion as they walk through the train. Ep. 5, 58:00-59:00.*

From episode 5 starting at 57:20, the lyrics to the tune are as follows:

Korean lyrics	English interpretation (Netflix subtitles)
<p>(판매원들)                      여행하는 손님들 안녕하세요                      무엇이든 좋으니 요구하세요                      판매차도 가벼이 밀고 나가면                      차 칸마다 웃음꽃 활짝 핀다오</p>	<p>(Sales people)                      Hello travelling customers                      Ask for anything you want                      As the handcart passes                      Smiles fill every carriage</p>
<p>(chorus:)                      아 아 아                      우리들은 열차 판매원                      행복한 사랑을                      싣고 간다오, 싣고 간다오</p>	<p>(chorus:)                      Ahh                      We are salespeople of the train                      Happiness and love                      Those are what we offer</p>
<p>이 고장의 특산물 들어 보세요                      향기로운 과일도 맛 좀 보세요                      가슴마다 흐뭇이 안겨 드리는                      여행길에 더없는 기쁨이라오                      (repeat chorus)</p>	<p>Hear about the specialties of this region                      Taste the fragrant fruits                      We leave in your arms                      The joy you can find on the road                      (repeat chorus)</p>
<p>가리에만 매대가 있다던가요                      철길 위의 매대는 더욱 좋아요                      손님에게 정성을 바치어 가는                      판매원의 이 영여 끝이 없어요                      (repeat chorus)</p>	<p>Stores aren't only on the street                      Stores in the train are better                      We do our best for the customers                      That's what the salespeople do                      (repeat chorus)</p>

The song seems to be an elaborate announcement of food service, something very difficult to find information about. Regardless of the mundane content, the

salespeople sang with a similar fervour and vibrato common across some of North Korea's revolutionary music. NK News writes about the accordion being the state's instrument "as a tool to coordinate work and maximize indoctrination, rather than entertain."<sup>153</sup> On an online Korean forum, it is written that according to NK migrants this is a real song that was broadcasted over the speakers on the train when lunchboxes were distributed or if salespeople were walking around. It was not a live performance, but it was a common tune heard until the 1980s. It had disappeared some time in the 1990s due to extreme poverty across the state.<sup>154</sup> Of note are the lyrics that were changed for the drama: the line 행복한 사랑을 [Happiness and love] were originally 수령님의 사랑을 [The Leader's love] referring to the Great Leader Kim Il Sung. The screenwriters of CLOY had refrained from mentioning the leadership of the DPRK by name in the dialogue throughout the drama. Their presence was shown through the propaganda slogans and mandatory portraits hung inside the homes and at all public places. The propaganda aesthetics are a reality of the DPRK that cannot be omitted in an authentic portrayal of daily life.

### **Language**

In every country and culture there are regional differences in language, dialects, and accents. In Canada, certainly the accents from the east to the west coast are unsurprisingly different, but even in a single region or state like New York, USA, a Manhattan accent would be different from a Bronx or Long Island accent.<sup>155</sup> On the Korean peninsula, this is no different, but another layer of circumstance

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<sup>153</sup> Choy, "In North Korea, the Accordion Plays the Soundtrack of the State | NK News".

<sup>154</sup> "[자유] 북한 열차에서 판매원들이 부르는 노래" ["(Freedom) A Song Sung by Salespeople on North Korean Trains"].

<sup>155</sup> Netflix Is A Joke, *Fred Armisen Does Every North American Accent | Standup For Drummers | Netflix Is A Joke*. In a comical take on accents across America, Fred demonstrates multiple New York accents starting at 0:50.

pushes the differences of language in the North and South much further apart. Citizens in the DPRK have been sheltered from global influences while South Koreans have drastically evolved over the decades, bringing in a lot of borrowed words from the English language. For example, in SK “juice” is commonly known as 주스, pronounced *ju-seu*. In NK, they use the word 단물, pronounced *dan-mul*, which means sweet water. The NK government has a purification policy in place to discourage foreign influence on the Korean language, maintaining the simplest language possible for ideological education across the state. NPR has reported on inter-Korean efforts to compile a joint dictionary to show the differences and similarities between the two Koreas.<sup>156</sup> The lexicographers on both sides see this as an apolitical project, but nonetheless, the ongoing political tensions have deterred the completion of this dictionary.

The accents and idioms used throughout CLOY have frequently been questioned and reacted to by viewers and NK migrants, respectively. These differences were cleverly and explicitly included in the dialogue, often for comedic effect. In episode 2, the characters discover that North and South Koreans have different phrases to express the same meaning. In one heated conversation, the expressions 후라이 까지 마라 [*hurai kkaji mara*], translated as “Don’t tell no porky” and 뺱치지마 [*bbeongchijima*], translated to “Don’t kid yourself” essentially both mean, “Don’t lie to me”. Explanations of north and south differences were given, in dialogue by the characters, about curse words, methods of defection, technology, and so on. The common thread between differences in the language is directly related to daily life experiences that neither side would be familiar with. The term 빠다치기

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<sup>156</sup> Kuhn, “That’s “Comrade” To You! North Korea Fights To Purge Outside Influences On Language”.

[*bbadachigi*] is a boat-to-boat smuggling method of defecting, for example, a term that Se-ri was unfamiliar with.



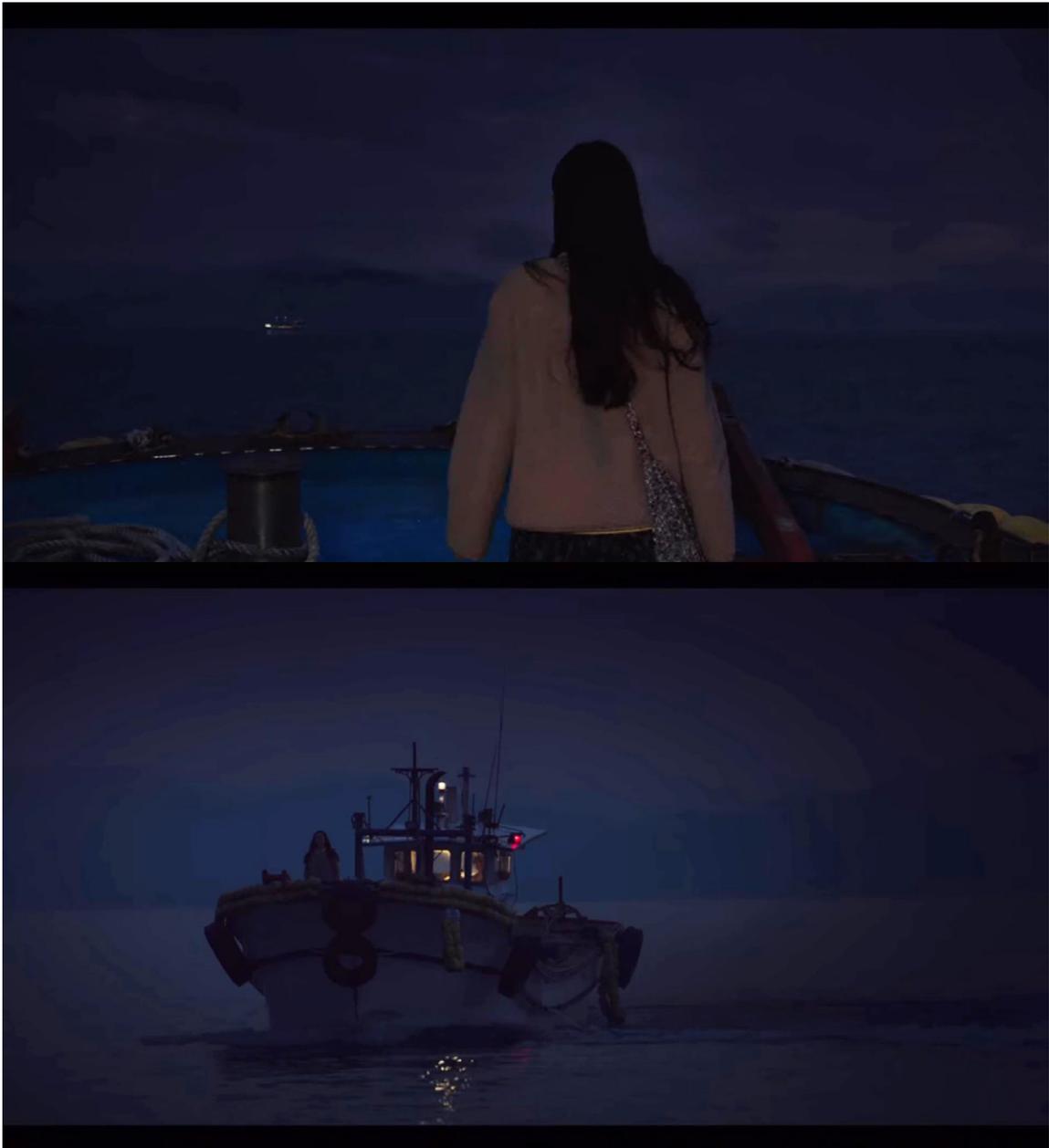
Figure 92. Conversation about idioms of the same meaning. Ep. 2, 21:15.

One of the experts involved with the drama was Baek Gyeong-yun [백경윤], an expert on North Korean language who was brought on as a consultant and coach. Historically, SK actors did not impersonate North Korean accents very well, according to a survey participant and other NK migrants. The coaching was mostly successful as some NK migrants were quite impressed by the accents, particularly that of soldier Pyo Chi Su. Some of the characters missed the mark though, including the lead actor who played Captain Ri, according to Kang Nara who ranked the main actors from best to worse.<sup>157</sup> Another NK migrant, Pyeong, was quite frank about not being able to assess the accents, not even that of Pyo Chi Su's who most agreed had the most accurate accent. He noted that there were too many provincial dialects to determine accuracy, pointing out that even within SK the accent from the capital of Seoul is different from the southern city of Busan.<sup>158</sup> He did confide to his viewers that the language in the drama made him realize how much of the NK accent and phrases he has lost since he defected over

157 DKDKTV, *N.Korean Defector Spills Truth about Crash Landing on You*.

158 이 [Lee], *North Korean Defector's 'Crash Landing on You' Real Review Time*, pt. 7:50.

15 years ago. NK migrants who have watched CLOY feel a sense of homeness through the dialogue and depictions of the characters and are reminded of the family and communities they left in search of a better life.



*Figure 93. Se-ri misses her opportunity to escape by bbadachigi, boat-to-boat smuggling. Ep. 4, 3:45.*

## Spirit & Feeling

“Attributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical applications of the conditions of authenticity, but nevertheless are important indicators of character and sense of place, for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity.”<sup>159</sup>



Figure 94. (L) Se-ri assembles the plastic sheet after filling a round plastic tub with hot water and then (R) enjoys the rudimentary steam bath. Ep. 2, 31:10.



Figure 95. Captain Ri walks Se-ri to the Military Demarcation Line. Ep. 9, 1:23:00.

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<sup>159</sup> UNESCO World Heritage Centre, “The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention”, 31.

Spirit and feeling are often linked to a sense of place and familiarity, even nostalgia. To assess the authenticity of the drama through these attributes we must rely on the oral testimonies of members of the cultural community, North Korean migrants, keeping in mind that their responses or assessment of truth in CLOY could be contradictory but they are nonetheless true. There will always be parallel truths and multiple narratives when we are listening to stories of lived experiences.

Kim Noel reminisced about her childhood when she saw the scene of Se-ri pouring hot water into a tub, then pinning up a plastic sheet around it to keep the steam in and the water warm. It was a daily routine for her as a child and reminded her of her mother and bath time.<sup>160</sup> Kang Ha-na, whose family used seawater to salt kimchi, also bathed under plastic sheets.

After moving to SK, Ha-na used to avoid watching dramas that depicted NK because they were “so dark” but with CLOY she was glad to see a drama that portrayed different kinds of North Korean people in a real way.<sup>161</sup> The storylines threaded together the lives of the very elite from Pyongyang with the most underprivileged, the homeless children called *kkochjebi*, meaning “swallows”, often found in the open markets or at train stations. In reality, *kkochjebi* are in much worse conditions than the way they were depicted in CLOY. Pyeong tells us that they are completely blackened with dirt, their hair is shaggy like a Korean Sapsali Dog, fingers or toes are sometimes missing, they wear rags, or sometimes do not have any clothes at all. If you saw a *kkochjebi* in real life you would be heartbroken.<sup>162</sup>

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160 Liberty in North Korea, *North Koreans React to K-Drama ‘Crash Landing on You’*, pt. 4:55.

161 Kim and Denyer, “Amid Lockdown Binge Watching, U.S. Viewers Savor Story That Puts a Human Face on North Korea”.

162 0 [Lee], *North Korean Defector’s ‘Crash Landing on You’ Real Review Time*, 6:15.



Figure 96. A homeless child, *kkochjebi*, caught stealing. Ep. 3, 49:45.

The scene that had the greatest effect on Pyeong was the moment when Captain Ri sends Se-ri over the MDL and back to South Korea. He described it as so sweetly sorrowful yet endearing, but it hit him very hard. When Se-ri asks Ri to walk her a little bit further, he responds, “여기서부터 한걸음도 못간다고” [“I cannot take another step from here”].<sup>163</sup> In Pyeong’s video, his sorrow is palpable as he questions how it came down to just this one line.

Not far from the MDL and within the DMZ, CLOY also portrayed evidence of the lives that were greatly affected by the Korean War and the hopes that once existed through the image of a broken, white prayer bowl that once held purified water, *jeonghwasu* [정화수].

*Jeonghwasu* is fresh water that has been fetched from a well early in the morning.

Water, being an indispensable substance for sustaining human life, has throughout civilization served as an object or medium of religious worship.

It is the women in the family who generally fetch a bowl of clean water at the crack of dawn as an offering to pray for their wishes. *Jeonghwasu* carries symbolic significance as a sacred offering in its purest form, prepared with devotion during the day's first hours. Rituals that offer *jeonghwasu* take place in women's spaces in the house, including the well or the sauce jar terrace in the backyard and the kitchen.<sup>164</sup>

This broken bowl sits in front of an abandoned village house, likely one of many in the DMZ, and is sometimes visited by the soldiers. Pyo Chi Su explains to Se-ri that the mother likely had a son who went to war. His final words in this scene are impactful, explaining that they never touch the bowls because “우리도 다 오마니는 있으니까” [“All of us have a mother”].



Figure 97. An abandoned prayer bowl *jeonghwasu* [정화수]. Ep. 9, 1:08:47.

164 Im [임], “Fresh Water from Well”.

## Conclusion

“Only a heritage ever-reanimated stays relevant.”<sup>165</sup>

- David Lowenthal

The Korean drama, *Crash Landing on You*, was created with the voices of the North Korean community and their input was evident throughout many of the scenes portraying life in the DPRK. Diligent interpretations of the oral testimony were used to tell the stories of North Korean lives through a drama that clearly presented their cultural heritage authentically. When created ethically, with the voice of the community, and with authentic vigor, K-dramas are a successful medium for the dissemination of North Korean cultural heritage. It is an accessible medium through which the North Korean diaspora can share its culture and create a space to communicate its largely inaccessible heritage. The success of this drama can encourage more North Korean writers and creators to contribute to content that shines a different light, a more humane light, on North Korea than the propaganda often shown in popular media. This drama has the power to educate, the power to change perceptions, and potentially, even the power to persuade for a unified Korean peninsula.

The overwhelming authenticity of the presentation of North Korean heritage in CLOY is undeniable. So much so that if the drama infiltrates the NK border, Kim

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<sup>165</sup> Lowenthal, “Fabricating Heritage”, 19.

Geum-hyok reasons that North Koreans will be confused by the realistic details and think that the drama was filmed in North Korea. Kang Nara suggests that North Koreans would be intrigued because their daily lives were made into a drama and seeing their own tactics on screen would fascinate them.<sup>166</sup> Nara is referring to scenes like using a refrigerator as a bookshelf because of the lack of electricity, surreptitiously consuming South Korean media and getting away with it, or hiding in a kimchi cellar. The realities of daily life and culture that were portrayed in CLOY included “things that authentically represented “homeness””<sup>167</sup> to members of the NK community. It is the spirit and feeling of the NK community that is most important in understanding what is authentic and what aligns with their lived experiences, which can then be supported by deeper analysis of other attributes listed in Article 82 of the Operational Guidelines.

The small realities of NK lives presented in CLOY have become fascinating topics of discussion for South Koreans. “It has made the people interested in North Korea. It gets my friends to ask me about North Korea and I’m really grateful for it,” says Chun Hyo-jin, a NK migrant interviewed by the BBC. CLOY has even brought her family closer together. Each time it aired the family would call each other on the phone and discuss the drama.<sup>168</sup> Awareness and conversation about the NK culture is important for the NK diaspora because “heritage sharing strengthens heritage.”<sup>169</sup>

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166 Liberty in North Korea, *North Koreans React to K-Drama ‘Crash Landing on You’ Part 3*, pt. 1:55; DKDKTV, *N.Korean Defector Spills Truth about Crash Landing on You*, pt. 9:34.

167 Shim, “The Paradox of Recreating ‘the Authentic Taste of Home’: Critical Heritage Perspectives on North Korean Immigrants in New Malden”, 12.

168 BBC, “Crash Landing on You: The Defector Who Brought North-South Korean Romance to Life”.

169 Lowenthal, “Heritage Stewardship and the Amateur Tradition”, 9.

From another perspective, NK migrant Lee Unggil said in conversation with the Hudson Institute that,

... when I talk to [my friends] about my experience or ... about the reality of what's going on in North Korea, they are really surprised to hear my story or hear about what I tell them about North Korea... [they would say things like] Really, there was no internet in North Korea?" So that sort of question that I get clearly shows the lack of knowledge, awareness, especially among the young people...<sup>170</sup>

He goes on to say that he believes students in the west show more interest in the human rights issue of NK than people in SK and he hopes that will change. Dramas like CLOY could play a role.

Heritage is about people and there has been a paradigm shift in the field of heritage conservation over the last couple of decades to give value to the people and communities to which a heritage belongs. Voices that are usually not heard, especially if they are silent out of fear, need to be given a platform or at least a place to start. A drama like CLOY that has prompted research like this thesis is a start toward valourizing North Korean cultural heritage beyond the regime and ideologies of the state. I hope this thesis adds another perspective to the cultural heritage sector or gives creators insight on the impact of an authentic and well researched presentation of a culture. This thesis aimed to emphasize the importance of oral testimony and the realities of multiple narratives and parallel truths. Truths can be contrary.

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170 Cronin, "Crash Landing into Freedom".

## Caution

Although widely popular, CLOY was not well received by all parties in South Korea. The Christian Liberty Party took issue with the positive portrayal of North Koreans and claimed that CLOY is “peddling propaganda for the North” and glorifying the enemy state.<sup>171</sup> The producer has defended the drama by saying it is fictional and pure fantasy and a police agency has stated that “[f]iction-based dramas have rarely been punished for breaking the security law,” and did not see the drama as violating the National Security Law.<sup>172</sup> Granted, misinterpretations of an unfamiliar culture are inevitable.

There are dangers in taking everything at face value, if one believes that everything portrayed in CLOY is 100% true. Those with little knowledge of the Koreas, or who did not know that there are two Koreas until they watched CLOY, could conflate North and South. One American viewer exclaimed, “I knew nothing and now I feel like these are my people. Now I feel like, an affinity toward them and I love them. And I want to go and get to know people of South Korea... My friends... Yes, my comrades!”<sup>173</sup> Being unaware of the connotations of the term “comrade” in a communist or socialist context is problematic and indicative of potential misunderstandings or conflation. However, CLOY had such a great impact on this viewer that she encouraged many others to watch it, used the drama as an opportunity to educate her family, and helped to disseminate this story to many others.

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171 Kim, “Cross-Border Love Story Crashes South Korea TV Ratings”.

172 Dong, “Drama “Crash Landing on You” Accused of Glamorizing North Korea”.

173 하이체드 Hi Chad, *Crash Landing on You Biggest Super Fan Family?*, pt. 6:17.

## Further research

The villages and housing in the rural areas of the DPRK, including the abandoned villages within the DMZ, will one day become designated heritage sites and even sites of conscience, in my opinion. Being able to access rural areas of North Korea and potentially document the current culture or state of abandoned housing in the DMZ would provide a strong base for later conservation efforts. Documentation could include photography, other digital means, or recordings of oral interviews, for example.

The rural landscape of North Korea, the unique merge of Korean and Soviet architecture, and the intangible cultural heritage of North Koreans are all areas that merit in-depth research. To do this effectively an intimate knowledge of the Korean language is a good start. Certainly academic, and more importantly, conversational Korean would provide better access to resources hitherto unavailable and provide opportunities to engage with more of the North Korean diaspora. This would be my very next step.

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## Appendix A: The Survey

### Invitation to participate



#### Email Invitation – February 25, 2022

**Subject:** Invitation to participate in a research project on the Authenticity of North Korean Culture in *Crash Landing on You*

Hello,

My name is Michelle Duong and I am a Master's student in the Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism at Carleton University. I am working on a research project under the supervision of Prof. Stephen Fai and Prof. Mario Santana Quintero.

I am writing to you today to invite you to participate in a study entitled "A Study on the Authenticity of North Korean Culture in *Crash Landing on You*". This study aims to explore the authenticity of the interpretation of North Korean built and cultural heritage in the drama, *Crash Landing on You*, to determine if dramas, a pop-culture medium, is an effective platform to disseminate cultural heritage.

This study involves examining the portrayal of the North Korean village, setting, and culture through the opinions of emigrants from North Korea using a 3-part survey: the first will include basic questions about the participant to determine the overall geographic, chronological, and age coverage of the study participants and whether or not the participant has watched the drama, *Crash Landing on You*; the second part will ask participants to draw, from memory, the layout of their home and neighbourhood, or town; the third part will ask participants to identify objects, settings, and activities from *Crash Landing on You* through images taken from the drama. All participants will be anonymized with pseudonyms, or will be identified only as Emigrant A, Emigrant B, etc.

While this project does involve some emotional risks, care will be taken to protect your identity. This will be done by anonymizing all responses and allowing you to request that certain responses not be included in the final project if you choose.

You will have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, up until March 18, 2022. If you choose to withdraw, all the information you have provided will be destroyed.

All research data, including submitted images, will be encrypted/password-protected. There will be no hard copies of the data. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher.

This research has been cleared by Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (Clearance #117151).

Should you have any ethical concerns with the study, please contact the REB Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (by phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 4085 or by email: [ethics@carleton.ca](mailto:ethics@carleton.ca)). For all other questions about the study, please contact the researcher.

If you are a North Korean emigrant and would be interested in participating in this study, please go to <https://forms.office.com/r/w6njsG3fE2> (EN) or <https://forms.office.com/r/22jJtzMTRN> (한국어) where you will find additional information, the consent form, and the survey. If you have any questions, please email me at [michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca) or call 613-520-2600 x 7853.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Duong

2022년 2월 25 일

제목: ‘사랑의 불시착(한국 드라마)’에 나타난 북한 문화의 진정성에 관한 연구를 위한 실험 피험자 모집 공고

안녕하세요.

저는 칼튼대학교 아즈리엘리 건축 및 도시계획 학과(Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism, Carleton University)의 석사과정 학생인 미셸 두옹(Michelle Duong)입니다. 저는 현재 스테판 파이 교수님과 마리오 산타나 퀸테로 교수님의 지도 아래 연구 프로젝트를 진행하고 있습니다.

저는 “사랑의 불시착에 나타난 북한 문화의 진정성에 대한 연구”에 참여할 피험자를 모집하고자 이 이메일을 보냅니다. 본 연구는 ‘사랑의 불시착’이란 드라마에서 나타난 북한의 건축물 및 문화유산에 관한 해석의 진정성을 탐구하는데 그 목적이 있습니다. 이를 통해, 대중 문화 매체인 드라마가 문화유산을 보급하고 향유할 수 있는 플랫폼으로서의 유효성을 검증하고자 합니다.

본 연구는 북한의 마을, 배경(예, 건물들의 배치, 구조, 풍경 등) 및 문화에 대한 묘사나 그것을 서술하는 내용에 대해 조사하는 것을 포함합니다. 이를 위해 본 연구는 3개의 영역으로 구성된 설문조사지를 활용하여 북한 출신 이민자분들의 의견을 수렴할 예정입니다. 첫 번째 설문지는 실험 참가자들의 인구통계학적 정보(예, 참가 연령, 출신 지역, 사랑의 불시착 드라마 시청 여부 등)에 관한 질문을 통해, 참가자들의 전반적인 특성을 파악하는데 그 목적이 있습니다. 두 번째 설문지는 참가자들에게 본인들의 기억 속에 남아 있는 출신 고향에서 거주 했던 거주지 또는 이웃집, 마을 배치 등에 대해서 그림으로 묘사하도록 요청할 예정입니다. 마지막으로 세 번째 설문지에서는 ‘사랑의 불시착’이란 드라마 장면을 담은 사진 자료를 활용하여, 동 자료에 나타나는 물건이나 건물의 배치 및 풍경 등에 대한 질문을 드리고자 합니다. 모든 실험참가자들은 모두 익명처리하거나, 이민자 A, 이민자 B 등으로만 식별할 예정입니다.

본 연구는 약간의 감정적인 위험을 수반할 수 있지만 참가자의 개인정보를 보호하기 위해 주의를 기울일 것입니다. 실험 참가자들의 응답은 모두 익명으로 처리되며, 원하는 경우 참가자의 특정 응답을 최종 연구에서 제외하도록 요청할 수 있습니다.

본 실험의 참가자는 2022년 3월 18일까지는 언제든지 실험 중단을 요청하실 수 있습니다. 만약 실험 중단을 결정 한다면, 실험 참가자의 응답과 관련된 모든 자료는 폐기될 것 입니다.

제출한 이미지를 포함한 모든 연구 데이터는 익명처리하고, 비밀번호로 보호 됩니다. 본 실험 데이터의 복사본(출력본)은 보유하지 않을 것이며, 실험 데이터에는 오직 연구자만 접근할 수 있습니다.

본 연구는 칼튼대학교 연구 윤리위원회-B의 승인(#117151)을 받았습니다.

본 연구 관련 실험에 윤리적 문제가 있을 경우, 칼튼대학교 연구 윤리위원회-B의 REB 의장(전화: 613-520-2600 x 4085 또는 이메일: [ethics@carleton.ca](mailto:ethics@carleton.ca)) 에 문의하시기를 바랍니다. 그 외의 연구 관련 모든 다른 질문은, 본 연구의 연구자들에게 문의하시면 됩니다.

귀하가 북한 이민자 출신으로 본 실험에 관심이 있을 경우 이 웹페이지(<https://forms.office.com/r/w6njsG3fE2> (EN) <https://forms.office.com/r/22jJtzMTRN> (한국어))를 방문하시면, 실험에 관한 세부 내용, 실험 동의서, 설문조사 내용을 확인하실 수 있습니다. 만약 상기 내용 관련 궁금한 사항은, 저한테 이메일([michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca))이나 전화(613-520-2600 x 7853)를 통해 문의해 주시면 감사하겠습니다.

감사합니다.

미셸 두옹 올림

Michelle Duong

## The Online Survey

*Introduction: English-priority version*



English (United States) ▾

### A Study on the Authenticity of North Korean Culture in *Crash Landing on You*

**Researchers**

My name is Michelle Duong. I am a Master of Architecture Student at the Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism, Carleton University, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

My contact information:

Email: michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca

Tel.: 613-520-2600 x 7853

My supervisors and their contact information:

Dr. Stephen Fai (sfai@cims.carleton.ca, 613-276-3744) &

Prof. Mario Santana Quintero (mario.santana@carleton.ca, 613-520-2600 x 7468)

**Carleton University Project Clearance**

This research has been cleared by Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (Clearance # 117151); Date of Clearance: February 25, 2022

**Objectives of the Study**

My thesis research focuses on the use of oral testimony to recreate and disseminate cultural heritage, specifically the architectural and intangible heritage of North Korea. My case study looks at the drama *Crash Landing on You* because of the role that oral testimony plays in helping to create the sets and details of the drama. Although the drama series is fictional, the authentic oral testimonies, multiple truths, and lived experiences that were sourced to create the setting of the drama are not conjecture. The aim of this study is to explore the authenticity of the interpretation of North Korean built and cultural heritage in the drama, *Crash Landing on You*. The findings will be used to explore the use of dramas, a pop-culture medium, as a platform to disseminate the cultural heritage of a largely inaccessible living culture.

...



\* Required

## The Survey

To examine the portrayal of the North Korean village, setting, and culture, I would like to gather the opinions of emigrants from North Korea. The survey has three parts: the first will include basic questions about the participant to determine the overall geographic, chronological, and age coverage of the study participants and whether or not the participant has watched the drama, *Crash Landing on You*; the second part will ask participants to draw, from memory, the layout of their home and neighbourhood, or town; the third part will ask participants to identify objects, settings, and activities from *Crash Landing on You* through images taken from the drama. I estimate that the survey will take around 30 minutes to complete, depending on your familiarity with the content shown from the drama. Your participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may choose not to take part, or not to answer any of the questions. If you decide to withdraw after you submit the survey, I will remove your responses from survey data if you notify me by email by March 18, 2022. I expect to survey a total of 5-7 people. All participants will be anonymized with pseudonyms, or will be identified only as Emigrant A, Emigrant B, etc.



1

### Invitation to Participate

We are asking you to complete this survey because you are North Korean emigrant. This survey is being conducted by Michelle Duong of the Carleton University Azrieli School of Architecture & Urbanism ([michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca), 613-520-2600 x 7853) working under the supervision of Dr. Stephen Fai ([sfai@cims.carleton.ca](mailto:sfai@cims.carleton.ca), 613-276-3744) & Prof. Mario Santana Quintero ([mario.santana@carleton.ca](mailto:mario.santana@carleton.ca), 613-520-2600 x 7468).

### Risks & Benefits

There may be mild emotional risk while participating in the drawing activities, but not more risk than you might experience when reflecting in your daily life.

There is no direct benefit to the participant, but the findings could be of value to the North Korean diaspora generally, anyone involved in the cultural heritage sector, or academics and architects looking at historical reconstructions and cinema.

2

### Confidentiality and Data Storage:

We will treat your personal information as confidential, although absolute privacy cannot be guaranteed. No information that discloses your identity will be released or published without your specific consent. Research records



may be accessed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board in order to ensure continuing ethics compliance.

The results of this study may be published, but the data will be presented so that it will not be possible to identify you, unless you give consent. All research data will be encrypted [or password-protected] and there will be no hard copies of the survey data.

Your data will be stored on an encrypted USB drive at the home of the researcher with a backup copy on an encrypted OneDrive folder protected by Carleton University, on servers located in Ottawa, Canada, but may be disclosed via a court order or data breach.

We will encrypt [or password protect] any research data that we store or transfer. Your data will be retained for a period of 1 year and then securely destroyed.

Please note that data cannot be saved while filling out this survey and your input will only be saved once you submit the form.

3

#### **REB Review and Contact Information:**

This project was reviewed and cleared by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board. If you have any ethical concerns with the study, please contact the Carleton University Research Ethics Board by phone at 613-520-2600 ext. 4085 or by email at [ethics@carleton.ca](mailto:ethics@carleton.ca). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Research Ethics Staff are working from home without access to their Carleton phone extensions. Accordingly, until staff return to campus, please contact them by email.

#### **Implied consent:**

By completing the online survey, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study.

I agree to participate in this study by completing and submitting this form.

귀하는 동 설문을 작성하여 제출함으로써 연구 참여하는 것에 동의합니다.

\*

Yes / 예

Next

Page 1 of 8

*The survey questions will follow after the Korean-priority version of the Introduction.*

## ‘사랑의 불시착 (한국 드라마)’ 에 나타난 북한 문화의 진정성에 관한 연구

### 연구원

저는 캐나다 온타리오주 오타와에 위치한 칼튼대학교 아즈리엘리 건축 및 도시계획 학과(Azrieli School of Architecture and Urbanism, Carleton University) 의 석사과정 학생인 미셸 두옹입니다 (Michelle Duong). 제 연락처는 다음과 같습니다.

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### 칼튼 대학교(Carleton University) 연구 승인

본 연구는 칼튼대학교 연구 윤리위원회-B의 승인(#117151)을 받았습니다. 승인 날짜: 2022년 2월 25 일

### 연구 목적

본 학위 논문 연구는 북한의 건축 및 무형 유산과 같은 문화유산을 재창조하고 보급하는 데에 구술 기록의 활용 가능성에 대해서 탐구해보고자 합니다. 동 드라마의 세트장을 자세하고 세세하게 구성할 수 있도록 도움을 준 구술 증언의 역할을 고려하면, ‘사랑의 불시착’이란 드라마는 본 연구의 사례로써 연구해 볼 수 있을 것으로 기대됩니다. 물론 드라마는 허구나 가상의 이야기입니다. 하지만, 믿을만한 (진실된) 증언, 다수의 사실적 정보, 실제 경험들이 실질적으로 드라마 세트의 배경을 만들어 내는데 중요한 요소로 활용되었으며, 이는 추측하거나 짐작한 정보가 아닙니다. 본 연구의 목적은 ‘사랑의 불시착’이란 드라마에 나타난 북한의 건축물과 문화유산 해석에 관한 진정성을 논의하는 것입니다. 본 연구의 결과는 대중 문화 매체인 드라마가 접근하기 어려운 살아있는 문화(Living culture)를 보급하고 향유할 수 있는 플랫폼으로서의 유효성 여부를 검증하는데 활용할 예정입니다.

...



\* 필수

## 조사연구

북한의 마을, 배경(예, 건물들의 배치, 구조, 풍경 등) 및 문화에 대한 묘사 또는 서술한 내용에 대해 조사를 진행하기 위해서 북한 출신 이민자분들의 의견을 수렴하고자 합니다. 본 조사연구는 3개의 영역으로 구성되어 있습니다. 첫 번째 설문지는 실험 참가자들의 인구통계학적 정보(예, 참가 연령, 출신 지역, 사랑의 불시착 드라마 시청 여부 등)에 관한 질문을 통해, 참가자들의 전반적인 특성을 파악하는데 그 목적이 있습니다. 두 번째 설문지는 참가자들에게 본인들의 기억 속에 남아 있는 출신 고향에서 거주 했던 거주지 또는 이웃집, 마을 배치 등에 대해서 그림으로 묘사하도록 요청할 예정입니다. 마지막으로 세 번째 설문지에서는 ‘사랑의 불시착’이란 드라마 장면을 담은 자료를 활용하여, 동 자료에 나타나는 물건이나 건물의 배치 및 풍경 등에 대한 질문을 드리하고자 합니다. 드라마의 내용에 대한 익숙한 정도에 따라 본 실험의 설문조사를 완료하는데, 약 30분 정도 소요될 것으로 예상됩니다. 본 조사에 대한 참여는 자발적으로 이루어지며, 참가를 철회할 수도 있고, 제시 된 질문에 대해서 답변을 거부할 수 있습니다.

본 설문조사에 대한 답변을 제출한 이후에 혹시라도 참여를 철회하기로 결정한 경우, 2022년 3월 18일까지 메일로 알려주시면 실험 참여자의 답변 관련 모든 자료는 삭제하도록 하겠습니다. 본 실험의 참가자 규모는 총 5~7명으로 모든 참가자는 가명을 사용하여 익명처리하거나 이민자A, 이민자 B등으로 식별 됩니다.



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### 실험 참여 모집:

귀하께서 실험에 참가하기를 희망하는 북한 이주민인이라면, 이 설문조사를 작성하시기를 요청 드립니다. 본 실험 조사는 스테판 파이 박사님(sfai@cims.carleton.ca, 613-276-3744) 및 마리오 산타나 쿨테로 교수님(mario.santana@carleton.ca, 613-520-2600 x 7468) 두 분의 지도 아래 칼튼대학교 아드리엘리 건축 및 도시계획 학과의 미셸 두옹(michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca, 613-520-2600 x 7853) 이 진행합니다.

### 위험 및 혜택:

그림을 통해 묘사하는 활동에 참여하는 동안에 약간의 정서적인 위험이 있는 경험을 할 수도 있습니다. 하지만, 이는 일상생활에서의 경험할 수 있는 위험보다 그 위험이 크지 않을 것입니다. 실험 참가자에게 직접적인 혜택이 있는 것은 아니지만, 본 연구의 결과는 북한주민의 이주, 문화유산 분야의 관련 종사자 또는 학계, 역사적 재건을 연구하는 건축계 종사자, 영화계 등에 유용할 수 있습니다.

2

### 비밀보장 및 데이터 보관:

절대적 개인 정보 노출 위험을 보장할 수는 없지만, 본 연구의 연구진은 귀하의 개인 정보를 기밀로 취급합니다. 실험 참가자의 동의 없이 참가자의 신원을 공개하거나



공표되지 않습니다. 지속적인 윤리 규정을 준수하기 위한 목적으로 실험 연구 관련 기록은 칼튼대학교 연구 윤리위원회가 열람할 수 있습니다.

이 연구의 결과는 공개될 수 있으나, 제시되는 데이터는 귀하의 동의 없이 귀하를 식별할 수 없습니다. 모든 연구 데이터는 익명으로 처리되거나 암호로 보호 됩니다. 또한, 본 실험 데이터의 물리적 복사본(예. 인쇄본)은 존재하지 않습니다.

귀하의 데이터는 연구원 자택에 있는 암호화 된 USB 드라이브에 저장되며, 데이터의 백업본은 암호화된OneDrive 폴더로 캐나다 오타와에 위치한 칼튼대학교 서버에 저장됩니다. 다만, 법원의 명령이나 데이터 유출로 인해 공개될 수 있습니다. 연구 데이터를 저장하거나 전송할 시 모든 데이터는 암호화(또는 비밀번호로 보호)됩니다. 귀하의 데이터는 1년동안 보관된 후 안전하게 폐기됩니다.

참고로 설문조사를 작성하는 동안 귀하의 응답은 저장되지 않으며, 동 설문조사 양식을 제출한 경우에만 귀하의 응답이 저장됩니다.

### 3

#### REB 검토 및 연락처:

본 연구는 칼튼대학교 연구 윤리위원회가 검토하고 승인하였습니다. 본 연구 관련 윤리적 문제가 있을 경우, 관련 문의 사항은 전화(613-520-2600 x 4085) 또는 이메일(ethics@carleton.ca)을 통해 칼튼대학교 연구 윤리위원회로 연락을 주시기 바랍니다.

코비드-19 대유행 기간 동안 연구윤리 담당자는 재택근무 중이므로, 칼튼대학교 내선 전화를 통한 응대가 불가능합니다. 따라서, 담당자들이 현장으로 복귀할 때까지는 이메일로 문의 부탁드립니다.

#### 실험 참가 동의:

귀하는 동 설문을 작성하여 제출함으로써 연구 참여하는 것에 동의합니다.

\*

예 (Yes)

다음

1/8 페이지

## The Survey Questions

The remainder of the survey was offered in both English and Korean. The English-priority version is included in this appendix. The Korean-priority version reverses the order of the languages.



**A Study on the Authenticity of North Korean Culture in *Crash Landing on You*** ...

\* Required

The Participant  
피험자

**4**  
Please enter your name.  
귀하의 이름을 입력하세요.  
\*

Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

**5**  
Which region, city, or town of North Korea are you from?  
귀하는 북한의 어느 지역(예. 함경북도) 또는 도시 출신인가요?

Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

**6**  
In which year did you leave North Korea?  
귀하는 북한의 어느 지역(예. 함경북도) 또는 도시 출신인가요?

Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.



7

Please select your age group.

귀하가 속한 연령대를 선택해주세요.

- 0 - 20
- 21 - 40
- 41 - 60
- 60+

8

Have you watched the South Korean drama, *Crash Landing on You*?

귀하는 한국 드라마인 '사랑의 불시착' 을 시청한 적이 있습니까?

- Yes, I have watched the whole drama. (예, 전체드라마를 시청한 적이 있습니다.)
- Yes, I have watched some of the drama. (예, 드라마의 일부를 시청한 적이 있습니다.)
- No. (아니오.)

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## Drawings

### 도면/그림

The responses to the next part of the survey will be accepted through the Miro platform. You will be asked to draw an image on a piece of paper, or digitally if you prefer, and upload your drawing to a Miro board.

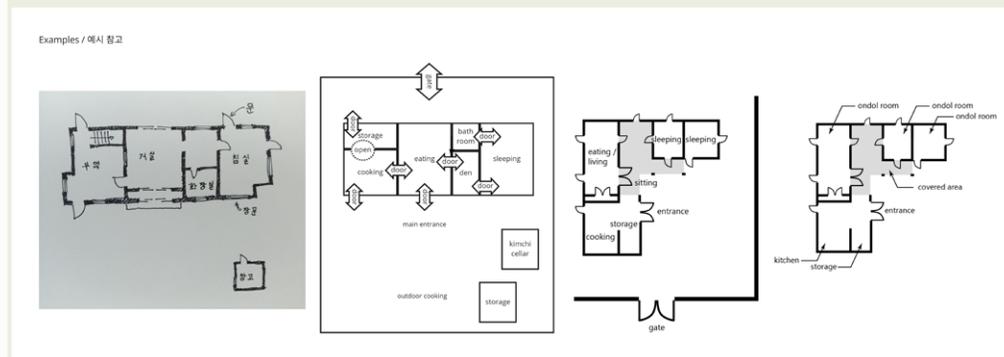
Miro 플랫폼을 통해서 다음 실험에 대해 응답할 수 있습니다. 귀하는 선호하는 방식에 따라 종이 또는 디지털로 이미지(그림)를 그린 후 그 이미지를 Miro 보드에 업로드 하시면 됩니다.

Please email me at [michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca) for your unique link to a Miro board to upload your images. You also have the option to digitally create your layout on the Miro board. If you prefer to email the drawings to me directly, please use [michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca) with the email subject "CLOY Survey" and include the pseudonym you entered in Section 1, Question 2. Your email will be deleted as soon as I have downloaded the images to a secure folder. Please name the file "home.jpg" or "neighbourhood.jpg", for example.

귀하의 이미지를 Miro보드에 업로드 하기 위해서는 귀하가 접속할 수 있는 개별 Miro 보드 링크를 제공할 예정이니, 상기 링크와 관련하여 저한테 이메일 ([michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca)) 을 주시면 감사하겠습니다. 만약 이메일을 통해서 이미지(도면)를 보내기를 원하신다면 "CLOY Survey"라는 제목으로 두 번째 섹션의 설문지 2번 질문에 입력한 가명을 표기하여 제게 메일 ([michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:michelleduong@cmail.carleton.ca)) 을 보내 주시면 됩니다.

Once you have completed the drawings, please click next to continue to: The drama set of *Crash Landing on You*.

You will see the following questions on the Miro board:





### The drama set of *Crash Landing on You*

#### '사랑의 불시착' 드라마 세트

The next questions will show images from the drama, *Crash Landing on You*, and you will be asked to comment on similarities to your own experience. These images are also available on the Miro board for you to zoom in.

다음 질문에서 드라마 '사랑의 불시착' 장면을 담은 이미지를 보여줄 예정입니다. 귀하의 경험과 유사한 점에 대한 질문을 할 예정입니다. 상기 이미지들은 Miro 보드에서 확인할 수 있으며 확대해 볼 수 있습니다.

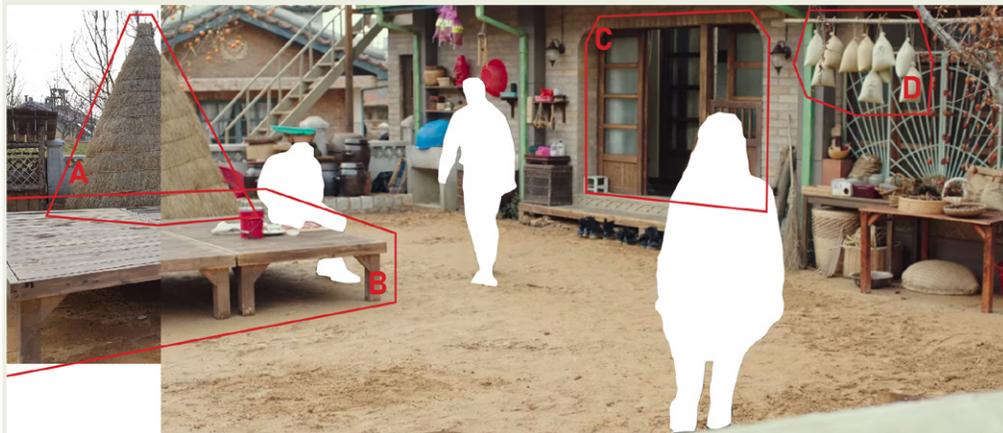
The first three questions relate to the built set. Please comment on your familiarity with any of the elements depicted in the following images, including similarities or differences with your own experience while you were in North Korea.

첫번째 세 가지 질문은 건축적 구성 요소들과 연관이 있습니다. 귀하가 북한에 있었을 때 경험과의 유사한 점 및 차이점을 포함하여 아래 보이는 이미지들에 대해 얼마나 친숙하게 알고 있는지 말씀해주시면 됩니다.

10

Please identify and comment on the use of the items labelled (A, B, C, D), including similarities or differences with your own experience while you were in North Korea.

아래 이미지에서 보시는 바와 같이 A, B, C, D 라고 표기된 물건의 용도/활용과 관련하여 귀하의 경험에 대해서 말씀해주세요. 귀하의 북한에서 거주지 경험과 유사한 점과 차이점은 무엇인지 말씀해주시면 됩니다.



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

11

Please identify and comment on the use of the elements labelled (E, F), including similarities or differences with your own experience while you were in North Korea.

아래 이미지에서 보시는 바와 같이 E, F 라고 표기된 물건의 용도/활용과 관련하여 귀하의 경험에 대해서 말씀해주세요. 귀하의 북한에서 거주지 경험과 유사한 점과 차이점은 무엇인지 말씀해주시면 됩니다.

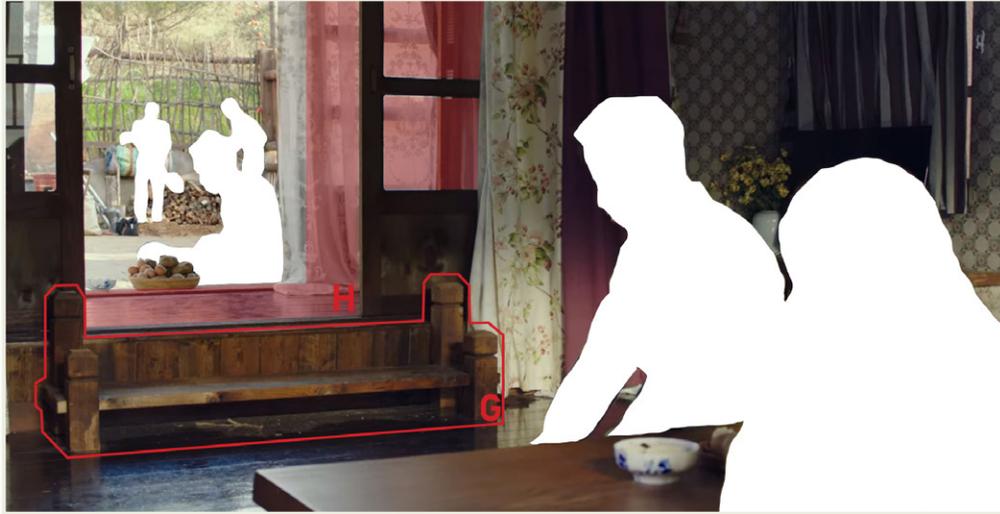


Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

12

Please identify and comment on the use of the elements labelled (G, H-the space between the doors), including similarities or differences with your own experience while you were in North Korea. Is there any significance in the living room being lowered from the entrance?

아래 이미지에서 보시는 바와 같이 G, H(문 사이의 공간) 라고 표기된 물건의 용도/활용과 관련하여 귀하의 경험에 대해서 말씀해주세요. 귀하의 북한에서 거주지 경험과 유사한 점과 차이점은 무엇인지 말씀해주시면 됩니다. 아래 이미지에서 문에서 집 안으로 들어올 때, 한 계단 내려와야 거실 공간으로 이어지는데, 이런 구조를 가지는 이유가 무엇인지 궁금합니다.



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

13

Please comment on the use of any of the building materials seen in image I in North Korea (concrete, brick, terracotta roofing tiles, paint, etc.)

아래 이미지 I에서 보이는 건설 재료의 사용과 관련하여 의견을 말씀해주세요. (예를 들면, 콘크리트, 벽돌, 테라코타 타일, 페인트 등)



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

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The next questions relate to the village and landscape.

다음 질문은 마을과 경관에 관한 질문입니다.

Please comment on your familiarity with any of the landscapes depicted in the following images, including similarities or differences with your own experience while you were in North Korea.

아래 이미지들 속에서 나타나는 경관(풍경)을 귀하가 북한에서의 경험과 비교해볼 때 유사한 점과 차이점은 무엇인지 말씀해주세요. 아래 이미지에서 나타나는 경관은 귀하에게 친숙한 경관인지 설명해주세요.

14

Organization of Village (마을의 구조)  
[J] Episode 2회



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

15

Public Space (공용 공간)  
[K] Episode 8회  
[L] Episode 2회



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

16

Landscape / Train (경관(풍경) / 철도)  
[M/N] Episode 5회



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

17

Landscape / DMZ with house (경관(풍경) / 집이 위치한 비무장지대)  
[O] Episode 8회  
[P] Episode 9회



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

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The next questions relate to intangible cultural heritage.  
다음 질문은 무형문화유산에 관한 질문입니다.

18

In image 1 (from Episode 2), the women are preparing cabbage on the shore in preparation for making kimchi. In image 2 (from Episode 3), the women are making kimchi together in the yard. Please comment on Kimjang in North Korea and how it is practiced by your family/community, if at all.

1번 이미지 (2회 장면)를 보면 여성들이 모여 김치를 담그기 위해 해안가에 모여 배추를 준비하는 중입니다. 2번 이미지(3회 장면)에서는 여성들이 마당에서 함께 김장을 하고 있습니다. 북한의 김장 문화에 대해서 말씀해주시면 감사하겠습니다. 귀하의 가족이나 친척/귀하가 속한 공동체 등에서의 김장 방식, 경험에 대해서 설명해주세요.



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

19

In Episode 4, a birthday celebration is held. Please comment on the gift-giving customs in image 3 and the meal together at the table in image 4, compared to what you were accustomed to in North Korea.

4회에서 생일 축하 행사가 열립니다. 귀하가 북한에서 경험했던 생일 축하 행사와 비교하여, 3번 이미지에서 나타나는 선물을 주고 받는 풍습이나 4번 이미지에 나타나는 식사 장면에 대해서 어떻게 생각하시는지 말씀해주세요.



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

20

In Episode 2, the characters discover that North and South Koreans have different phrases to express the same meaning. In this case, the expressions 후라이까지마라 and 뽕치지마 both mean, "Don't lie to me". Please comment on your opinion of the language and accents, generally, used by the actors portraying North Koreans.

2회에서는 드라마의 인물들이 남한과 북한이 사용하는 언어의 이질성을 발견하게 됩니다. 즉, 같은 의미를 지니지만 다른 표현방식이 존재하는데, 드라마에서 '후라이까지 마라' 와 '뽕치지마'는 모두 거짓말하거나 부풀리지 말라는 의미를 가집니다. 드라마에서 북한사람들을 묘사하기 위해서 배우들이 일반적으로 사용한 언어와 억양에 대해서 어떻게 생각하는지 말씀해주세요.



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

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This final set of images relate to food culture.

본 설문의 마지막 질문은 음식문화에 관련된 것입니다.

Please identify and comment on your personal experience with any of the food (while in North Korea) in the next set of questions. Please refer to the [image number] in your description.

다음 질문에서 음식과 관련한 개인적인 경험(북한에 있었을 때)에 대해서 말씀해주시면 감사하겠습니다. 귀하의 설명에서 아래 [이미지 번호]를 참조하세요.

21

Snacks (간식/주전부리)

[6] Episode 6회

[7] Episode 5회



Enter your answer / 답변을입력하세요.

22

Seafood (해산물)

[8] Episode 4회

[9] Episode 6회



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

23

Noodles (국수)  
[10] Episode 3회  
[11] Episode 9회



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

24

Food Preservation (식사 준비)  
[12] Episode 2회  
[13] Episode 2회



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

25

Meals (식사)  
[14] Episode 2회  
[15] Episode 8회



Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

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### A Study on the Authenticity of North Korean Culture in *Crash Landing on You* ...

Final thoughts?

추가로 하실 말씀이 있으십니까?

26

Thank you for taking the time to share your knowledge and memories of North Korea. If you have any final comments about the architecture, landscape, or cultural heritage of North Korea, you are welcome to share here.

귀하의 북한에 대한 경험, 지식과 기억을 공유해 주셔서 감사합니다. 북한의 건축, 경관 또는 문화유산에 대하여 추가로 하실 말씀이 있을 경우 여기에서 말씀해주시면 감사하겠습니다.

Enter your answer / 답변을 입력하세요.

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## Appendix B: The Defence

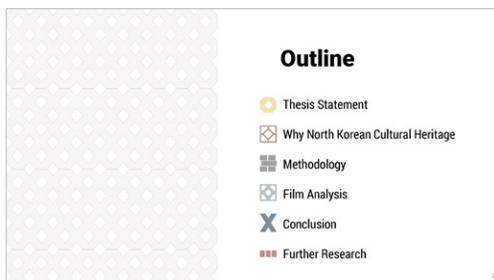
The thesis defence took place online through Zoom on Wednesday, May 4, 2022. The examination committee included:

Supervisor: Dr. Stephen Fai  
Co-supervisor: Dr. Mario Santana Quintero  
External Examiner: Dr. Thomas Garvey  
Internal Examiner: Prof. Susan Ross  
Chair: Prof. Piper Bernbaum

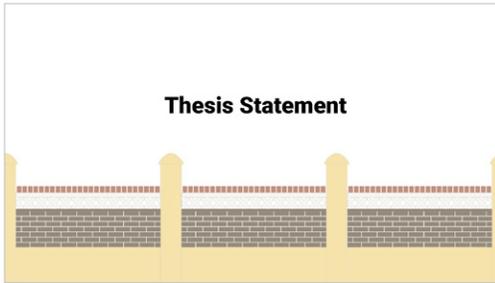
The Chair began the session and welcomed everyone, after which the candidate gave a 20 min. presentation. A round of clarification questions from the External and Internal examiners followed, and then a period of questions relating to the content of the thesis, which led to an open discussion. The Co-supervisor asked one final question before the committee entered a breakout room on Zoom for deliberation. The candidate and others in attendance remained in the main room. Upon the return of the committee, the Chair announced that the candidate passed with some very minor revisions that will be emailed to the candidate after the defence from her supervisor. Also in attendance were friends and colleagues. The transcript of the presentation is below.



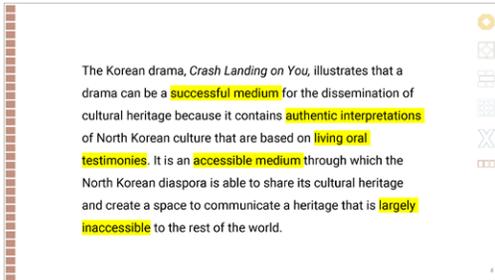
Slide 1. Good afternoon everything, thank you so much for joining me today.



Slide 2. In today's presentation I will go over my thesis statement and explain why I've chosen this research topic. Then I'll briefly talk about the methodology and dive right in to the film analysis, before wrapping up with some thought about further research.



Slide 3. The Thesis Statement



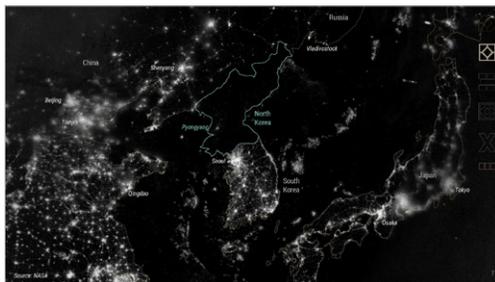
Slide 4. The Korean drama, *Crash Landing on You*, illustrates that a drama can be a successful medium for the dissemination of cultural heritage because it contains authentic interpretations of North Korean culture that are based on living oral testimonies. It is an accessible medium through which the North Korean diaspora is able to share its cultural heritage and create a space to communicate a heritage that is largely inaccessible to the rest of the world. I will elaborate further on the highlighted terms throughout the presentation to support this thesis, starting with “a heritage that is largely inaccessible”.



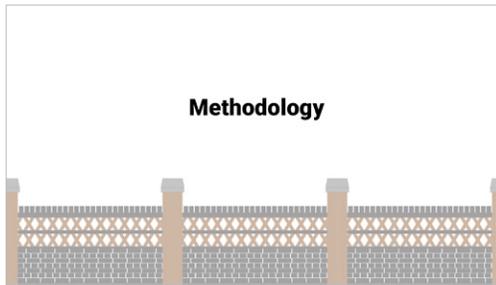
Slide 5. So Why North Korean cultural heritage?



Slide 6. On Amateur Heritage Stewardship, David Lowenthal suggests that without public support, heritage atrophies. This is one reason why I wanted to look deeper into North Korean cultural heritage, because I believe it is one of the cultures we know very little about because North Korea is such an isolated place. Without knowledge, comes misunderstanding.



Slide 7. This NASA satellite image of the Korean peninsula with surrounding countries shows the darkness of North Korea, and not just darkness because of the lack of electricity, but this image is a metaphor for the darkness of isolation in which the citizens of North Korea live in. There is an information chokehold implemented by the Kim regime and the citizens are being kept in the dark about what goes on in the rest of the world. Popular media, especially anything from South Korea or the US are banned. Inversely,



"The Korean translation of authenticity, [*jinjeongseong* 진정성], is restrictively used in politics and art criticism. However, [Shim's] research has shown that ... Koreans do not have an exact notion/term for authenticity, [but] if they were alienated and marginalized from the context of their homeland, they become quite obsessed with things that authentically represent "homeness"."

Source: Shim, "The Paradox of Escaping the Authentic Taste of Home": Critical Heritage Perspectives on North Korean Immigrants in Her Exile", 12.

**From the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention on authenticity**

"Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- **form and design;**
- materials and substance;
- use and function;
- traditions, techniques and management systems;
- **location and setting;**
- **language, and other forms of intangible heritage;**
- **spirit and feeling;** and
- other internal and external factors."

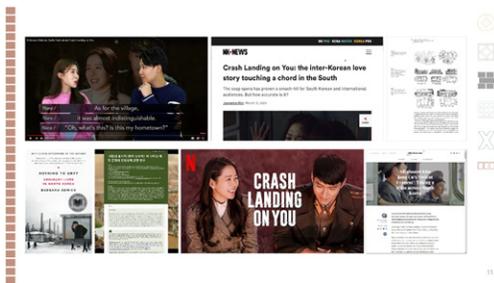
Source: UNESCO, July 31, 2001

there is little information coming out of North Korea about daily life and culture of North Koreans beyond the limits of Pyongyang. What we see in the media from NK is usually propaganda. North Korean migrants who chose to leave, often known as defectors, live in fear of repatriation and are often feel discriminated against if they reveal that they are North Korean. Therefore, they don't really have a space to share their heritage. Without that space there is no cultural exchange and it is difficult for the rest of the world, without knowledge, to build empathy and understanding. I'm proposing that Korean dramas can provide that space and platform for cultural exchange, or at least it's a start.

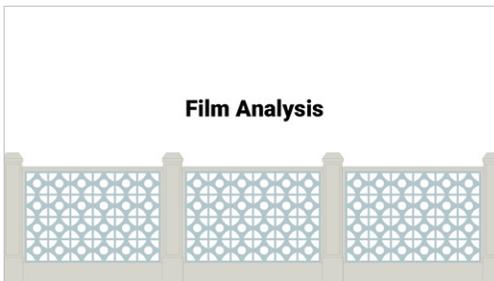
Slide 8. In looking for a way to evaluate the success of the drama, Crash Landing on You, I decided to consider the authenticity of the portrayed cultural heritage elements, both tangible and intangible, and the reaction from the North Korean community.

Slide 9. There is no one definition or trans-cultural understanding of authenticity. In the Korean language, according to Haeree Shim, the translation for authenticity is restrictively used in politics and art criticism, but in her study on North Korean food culture in the UK, Shim discovers that even without knowing exactly what authenticity means, the migrants she met were still quite obsessed with things that authentically reminded them of home.

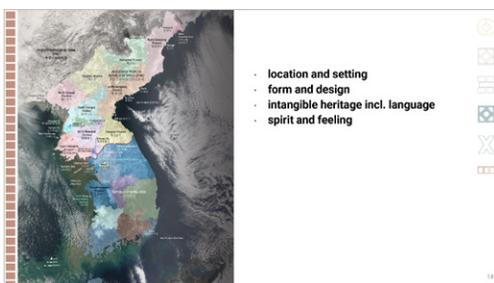
Slide 10. So without a globally accepted definition of authenticity, I decided to use UNESCO's list of attributes to help evaluate authenticity. Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to



meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values ... are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including the 8 you see here. Although these criteria were intended for application to properties nominated for the WH List, I have applied the concept to the portrayal of cultural heritage in dramas to consider whether drama is an effective medium for CH dissemination. In the case study, CLOY, I focus on form and design of the rural architecture, the location and setting of the village, the representations of intangible heritage including some observations on language, and the spirit and feelings evoked through the portrayals in the drama. Article 82 is the baseline of the analysis.



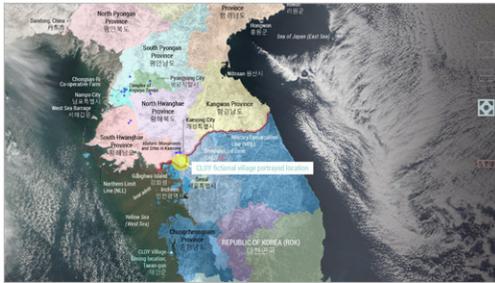
Slide 11. And on top of the usual academic literature review I also supported the analysis with a lot of testimonies from NK migrants through YouTube videos, interviews in news articles, memoirs, and a study survey available in both English and Korean I had emailed out to several publicly known NK migrants.



Slide 12. So let's dive in to the film analysis of Crash Landing on You.

Slide 13. For those who have not watched the drama, Crash Landing on You is a 16 episode, 22 ½ hour Korean drama produced and written in South Korea by a South Korean screenwriter, Park Ji-eun, and team that included a North Korean assistant writer, Kwak Moon-wan, and a group of at least 9 North Korean advisors who were thoroughly interviewed about details of North Korean life.

Slide 14. It's about a South Korean woman named Yoon Se-ri, who gets caught in a storm while paragliding and ends up in



the demilitarized zone and ultimately in the North Korean village and the house of Captain Ri. I will be analyzing the location and setting of the village where Se-ri finds herself, the form and design of Captain Ri's house, some of the intangible heritage elements portrayed throughout the drama and I will briefly touch on spirit and feeling. These relate to 4 of the attributes from Article 82.



Slide 15. The portrayed fictional village is located south of Kaesong City, just north of the DMZ, but the filming location and the set was actually built in South Korea in Taean, about 125 km south along the west coast. Zooming in to the area where the village was intended to be, highlighted in yellow...



Slide 16. I was able to find these small clusters of villages that was similar to the Crash Landing village. The bottom image is a detail of the image above. Zooming in even further...

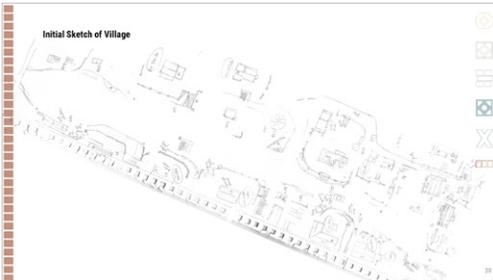


Slide 17. take note of these clusters. I want to now show you the same area from a different view...

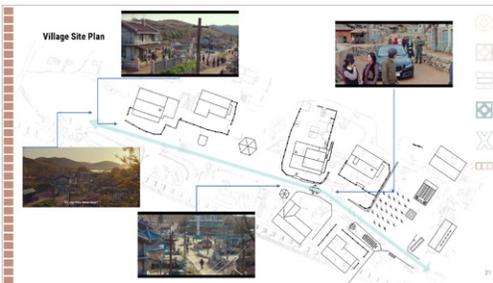
Slide 18. So you can have a better sense of these villages sitting at the foothills with a single road or two going through them. A few more clusters are visible from this angle. Some houses front the road while others face each other but they all aim to have a north-south orientation when possible. Some brief context: The Korean peninsula was divided after the second world war but the Korean War in 1953 solidified that division and the north was heavily bombed and destroyed during that civil war. Almost all the infrastructure was destroyed and about 70% of the housing



stock. Kim Il Sung had grand plans to build large socialist co-operatives but they quickly had to adapt the plans to the very mountainous geography, like you see here, and consider that they had very little arable land. Villages were being built at the foothills in order to maximize agricultural area.

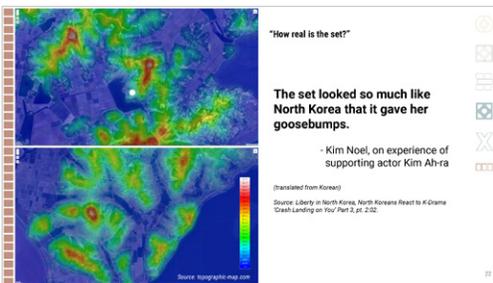


Slide 19. This is the village portrayed in Crash Landing. You can see that it is a small cluster of houses built at the foot of a hill with one main road in or out of the village. The entrances are also in a north-south orientation. This is Captain Ri's house.

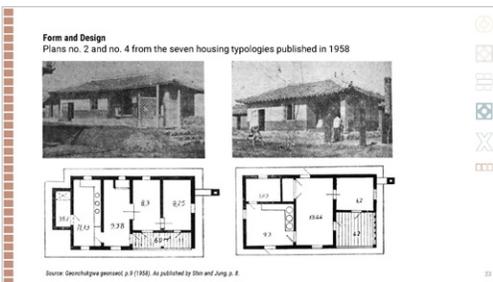


Slide 20. Based on the scenes in the drama I tried to sketch out what the plan might be.

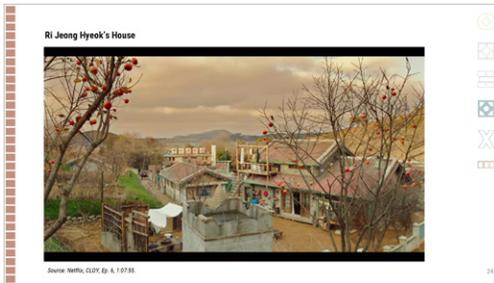
Slide 21. And then I turned to AutoCAD to really get the scale and spacing down using known dimensions of objects and people. This is in progress but will be added to the final submission. So the question is how real is the location and setting?



Slide 22. Although filmed in South Korea, the topography and setting is quite similar to the area where the village is intended to be. But what's more telling is that one of supporting actors of the drama, who is also a North Korean migrant, said that the set looked so much like NK that it gave her goosebumps. Let's now turn to form and design.

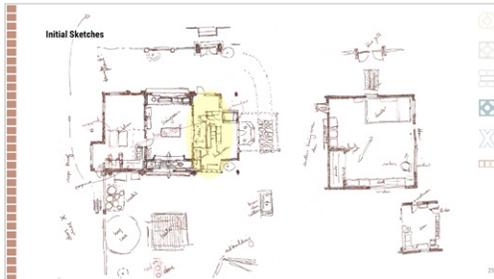


Slide 23. When Kim Il Sung took on the massive post-war building campaign, his architects designed 7 houses that were to be mass produced across the state. They were a merge of Soviet building methods with Korean vernacular elements. These are two of the 7 plans, which are

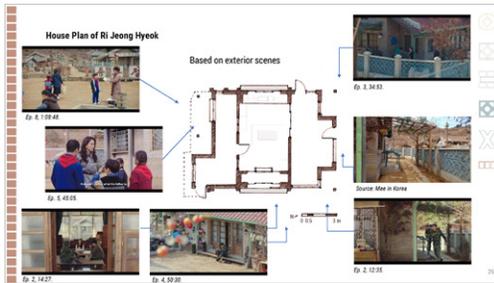


both rectangular with an exterior chimney for ventilation for the ondol, a Korean underfloor heating system.

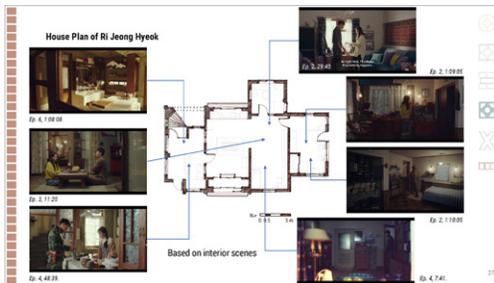
Slide 24. This is Captain Ri's house, as seen from the extended living space, or backyard. Ri is the son of a very high-ranking official and is part of the elite class of citizens so it's not surprising that he could afford to add a half storey to his house, but you can see the house beside it is a single story, rectangular house.



Slide 25. I tried to figure out the floor plan and realized that something wasn't quite jiving in this bedroom / den area so I tried to figure out each of those spaces on their own because they didn't quite fit. I realized that the built set and a plan based on the exterior of the house is different than a floor plan drawn based on the portrayed interior spaces.



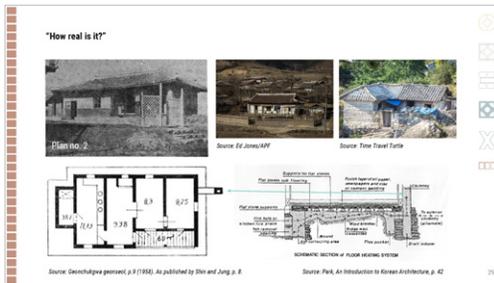
Slide 26. This is the house based on the exterior only. I've included some screenshots to give you an idea of the bits and pieces of house that the drama gives you access to in order to figure this out.



Slide 27. And here is the floor plan based on scenes from the interior. Clearly it was filmed in a studio because when you add the spaces together side by side you get a much wider house. And yes, from what I could gather, the stairs that are portrayed are for visual effect only to imply that there is an upper floor.

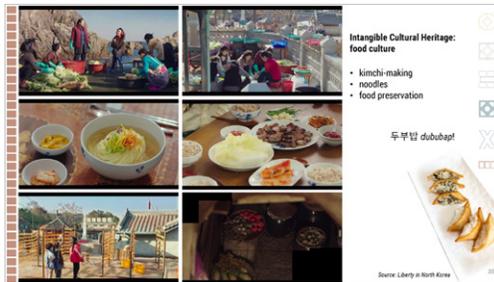


Slide 28. Here are the plans side by side. Although they are different from one another, I believe that the decision to build the house smaller on set was so that it would authentically fit contextually with the rest of the houses in the village. And the

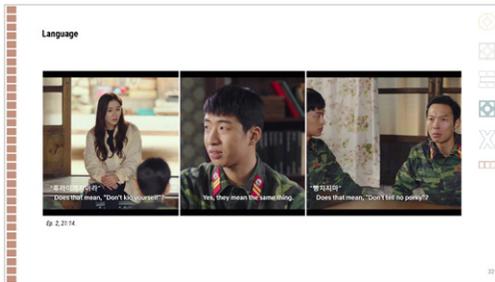


spaces portrayed in the studio set showed sightlines that went across the length of the house, giving the impression of side by side rooms, no corridors.

Slide 29. Which is actually quite similar to Plan no. 2 that I showed earlier. If I hadn't tried to draw a floor plan, I actually wouldn't have noticed immediately that all the rooms portrayed wouldn't fit in that house. One crucial design element that stood out to me was the missing ondol system. The narrative did not point out the ondol system in any of the village housing, strangely, because they did incorporate an apartment ondol into the narrative. That may have been because it is unlikely you'd find that design anywhere else in the world, where there is a wood-burning heating system between apartment floors. In any case, I wanted to show a couple of tourist photos showing houses that were similar in form or design, with some differences. The brown house is similar in rectangular form and although it has a tiled roof, it has a traditional hipped gable roof with the slight curvature. The grey house on the right uses the same roof tiles but it is L-shape in plan. Only one of the houses in the drama is L-shaped. This house is also much more rudimentary in its construction but both have extended living spaces in which you might find a small garden plot or kimchi cellars for food preservation.



Slide 30. Like the image in the bottom right. Let's talk about some of the intangible heritage elements portrayed in the drama. Kimchi-making, known as kimjang, is inscribed on the UNESCO ICH list for both north and south Korea. In the drama you can see the village women salting the cabbage and radish by the sea and



then marinating the vegetables together in preparation for the long fermentation period. The drama shows a variety of foods that can be found in North Korea. During Kang Nara's interviews with the drama screenwriter, she recalls that they asked about the kinds of dishes that would be set at the table for dinner, for snacks, and so on, and Nara thinks these items are portrayed very accurately. One of the survey participants did note that meat and snacks were only available to those with money, or the elite class. Meat is only eaten during special occasions so North Koreans invented meatless alternatives one migrant noted was NOT highlighted in the drama. Dububap shown here, is a tofu and rice dish that used to be eaten as a meat alternative and now eaten simply because they are delicious.

Slide 31. Jumping to another intangible cultural element, there were only 2 North Korean songs that I noticed in the drama, one was sang on a train and the other is this public exercise / callisthenics tune created by Kim Il Sung and continuously supported by the regime. This is a scene from the drama, the moments leading up to Se-ri realizing she had run north instead of south. This real public exercise is routinely done to break up your work day as seen in this clothing factory. This was the only documentary I found where a South Korean person, using a German passport, was given permission to film and interview folks in North Korea. They were fascinated by her South Korean accent but the older generation welcomed it and her, and talked about hopes of unification.

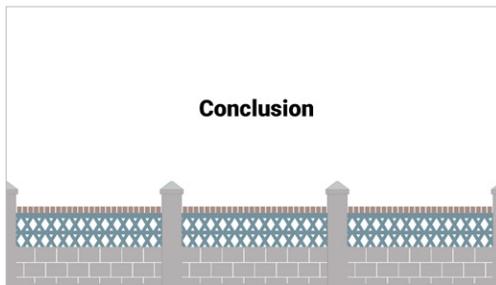
Slide 32. I do want to touch on language briefly and it is such an integral part of



one's culture. The drama does a great job highlighting divergences in idioms or words between north and south. They are cleverly incorporated into the dialogue. An expert on North Korean language was brought on to the team as a coach and consultant. According to most NK migrants, previously made dramas with SK actors playing NK roles would never use the correct accents, but in this drama, they perform much better. Most say that the actor who plays Pyo Chi Su, on the right, has the most accurate accents, but one migrant did point out that it was impossible for him to know because there are so many dialects across the provinces, just like in South Korea, that he couldn't accurately assess the accents.

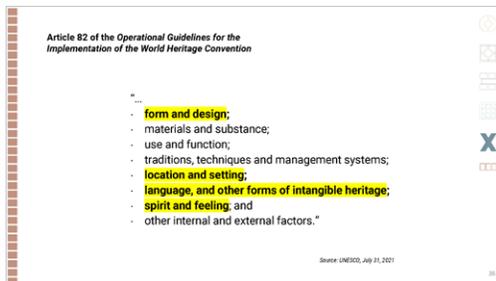
Slide 33. And finally, I'd like to address Spirit and Feeling in the drama. Ultimately, this can only be assessed based on the oral testimonies of North Korean migrants because spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical applications of the conditions of authenticity, as noted in Article 83 of the UNESCO Operational Guidelines. The testimony of Kim Ah-ra always comes to mind, when she mentioned to Kim Noel that the set gave her goosebumps because it reminded her so much of North Korea. Unfortunately I couldn't find an interview with Ah-ra to find out more.

Slide 34. One testimony that I watched that really moved me was from Lee Pyeong. The scene in the drama that struck him the hardest was the moment Captain Ri walked Se-ri back to the Military Demarcation Line. She asks him to walk her just a little bit further and he says, I cannot take another step from here, over this line. Lee Pyeong, in his video, paused and his pain was

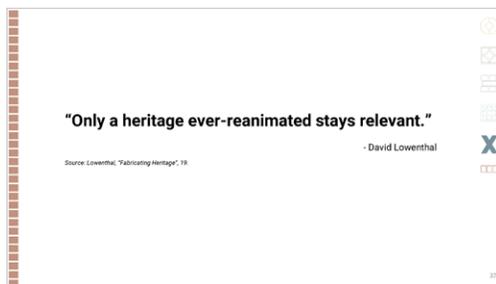


palpable, as he wondered, how did it come down to just this one line? He was very familiar with that sentiment.

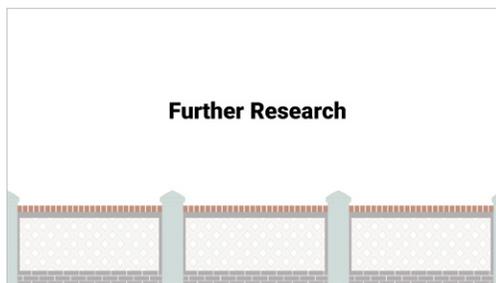
Slide 35. --



Slide 36. I believe that the portrayal of the village's setting, the overall form and design of the houses, the representations of food, song, and language, and the spirit and feeling are overwhelmingly authentic and align with the parallel and multiple truths of different North Korean migrants. One of the advisors, Kim Geum-hyok, stated that the drama is so real to him that if it makes it across the border, North Koreans will think that it was filmed in North Korea. But more importantly is the impact that the drama has had on South Koreans and others across the world. It has prompted conversations, curiosities, and interest in North Korean culture. Hopefully the success of the drama, and the fact that there was so much North Korean input given, will encourage more North Koreans to come forward and be stewards of their heritage. Increased stewardship will foster cultural exchange and build empathy through understanding. Authentically and ethically created content that includes the North Korean community will hopefully create that space to share their heritage.



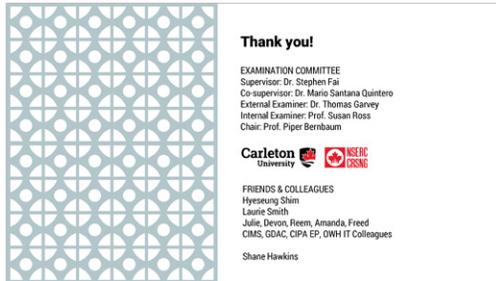
Slide 37. As Lowenthal says, only a heritage ever-reanimated stays relevant. Perhaps more North Korean stories can be told through drama.



Slide 38. To wrap up I want to point out possible areas for further research.

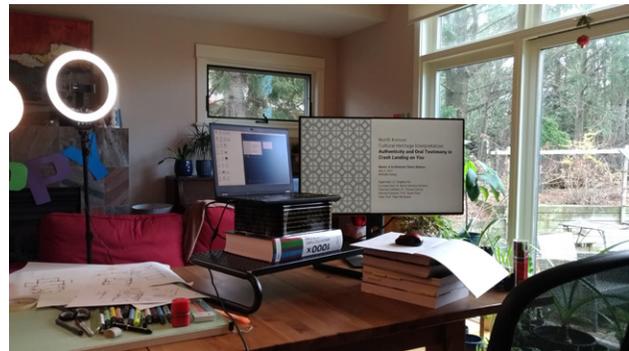


Slide 39. I believe I just scratched the surface with my analysis. Rural landscapes in North Korea, Korean-Soviet architecture,



and intangible heritage are all areas that warrant a deeper study. I also think that the rural areas, especially abandoned villages in the DMZ, the natural heritage across North Korea, and some exemplary villages will become designated heritage sites or sites of conscience or sites of memory. Being able to document any of the above would provide a beneficial foundation for further study. But since North Korea is not yet accessible, first and foremost, conversational and academic grasp of the Korean language will open so many doors, enable communication with the North Korean diaspora, and will open access to many resources, so that would be where I'd start.

Slide 40. Thank you!



*Set-up to stand for an online thesis defence!*