Parahyangan Catholic University
Faculty of Social and Political Science
Department International Relations

Accredited A
SK BAN-PT NO: 3095/SK/BAN-PT/Akred/S/VIII/2019

Initiative in the Making of Peaceful Reunification in the Korean Peninsula

Undergraduate Thesis

By
Aurelia Anjani
6091801121

Bandung
2022

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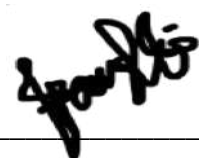Department of International Relations

Thesis Approval Indication

Name   :   Aurelia Anjani
Student Number   :   6091801121
Title   :   Initiative in the Making of Peaceful Reunification in the
                            Korean Peninsula

Has been examined in Final Examination
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And hereby declared **PASSED**

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I, the undersigned,

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Title	:	Initiative in the Making of Peaceful Reintegration in the Korean Peninsula

Hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own scientific writing and is not a work that has been submitted for an academic degree by other parties. The works or other opinions quoted are written in accordance with the applicable rules of scientific writing.

I declare this statement with full responsibility and willing to accept the consequences according to applicable rules if this statement is proven invalid.

Bandung, January 5, 2022

Aurelia Anjani

ABSTRACT

Name	:	Aurelia Anjani
NPM	:	6091801121
Title	:	Initiative in the Making of Peaceful Reunification in the Korean Peninsula

The Korean peninsula have been separated for a long time. Despite various commitments and efforts, North Korea and South Korea fail to implement promises to reunify the peninsula. This thesis used the theory of constructivism and social identity theory for in-depth analysis on the identity that form North Korea and South Korea, which makes it different compare to other research lingering the issue of Korean reunification. This research aims to analyze the reason behind insignificant progress of reunification. Data are obtained from official statements, the script of inter-Korean declarations, and official government websites. The qualitative method analyses the peace initiatives and how it encourages peaceful reintegration in the Korean peninsula. Contrary to what has been often assumed, the identities of the Koreans are a double-edged knife. It can play as the stimulant for reunification, yet on the other side, be the one to exhaust it. Findings indicate that the Koreans are far from reintegration as long as they cannot intertwine their identity, ideas, and interest altogether. Nonetheless, North Korea and South Korea have interacted through cooperation. The latter part of this thesis elaborates the identity, ideas, and interest of two Koreas to the social process among them.

Keywords: Peace, Reunification, Commitments, Interest, Inter-Korean relation

ABSTRAK

Nama	:	Aurelia Anjani
NPM	:	6091801121
Judul	:	Inisiatif Terkait Reunifikasi Damai di Semenanjung Korea

Semenanjung Korea telah dipisahkan untuk waktu yang lama. Terlepas dari berbagai komitmen dan upaya, Korea Utara dan Korea Selatan gagal mengimplementasikan janji untuk menyatukan kembali semenanjung. Skripsi ini menggunakan teori konstruktivisme dan teori identitas sosial untuk analisa mendalam tentang identitas yang membentuk Korea Utara dan Korea Selatan, yang membuatnya berbeda dibandingkan dengan penelitian lain yang berkutat pada isu reunifikasi Korea. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis alasan di balik tidak signifikannya kemajuan reunifikasi. Data diperoleh dari penyataan resmi, naskah deklarasi Konferensi Tingkat Tinggi antar-Korea, dan situs web resmi pemerintah. Metode kualitatif akan digunakan untuk menganalisa inisiatif perdamaian dan bagaimana hal tersebut mendorong reintegrasi damai terjadi di semenanjung Korea. Berbanding terbalik dengan asumsi yang seringkali dikemukakan, identitas dalam kaitannya dengan reunifikasi Korea, adalah pisau bermata dua. Di satu sisi identitas dapat menjadi pendorong terjadinya reunifikasi, namun di sisi lain justru dapat bertindak sebagai penghambat dan penghancur. Temuan dalam skripsi ini mengindikasikan bahwa Korea masih jauh dari kata reintegrasi selama kedua negara belum berhasil menjembatani perbedaan identitas, ide, dan kepentingan secara bersamaan. Meskipun begitu, baik Korea Utara dan Korea Selatan telah melakukan kontak kerjasama. Bagian akhir dari skripsi ini mengelaborasi identitas, ide, dan kepentingan kedua Korea terhadap proses sosial di antara kedua negara.

Kata Kunci: Kedamaian, Reunifikasi, Komitmen, Kepentingan, Hubungan antar-Korea.

PREFACE

Praise and gratitude to God Almighty because of His greatness and kindness, the author was able to complete the thesis writing with the title "Initiative in the Making of Peaceful Reunification in the Korean Peninsula." The author would like to express her gratitude for all the lessons, struggles, and obstacles that strengthen the author. *What does not kill you makes you stronger*.

The past five months working on this thesis were a roller-coaster ride. It was fun, thrilling, frightening, yet reliving simultaneously. Despite all the struggles, the author managed to finish this thesis on time in the end. The author felt grateful for all the help and support from many parties involved in this thesis's writing process.

The author gained many new insights while working on this thesis. Through this research, the author hopes that readers could gain much knowledge and insights on the issue of Korean reunification as the author gained and poured out through chapter by chapter inside this thesis. The author acknowledges that this research is still far from perfect. The author will be grateful and willing to hear any comments, suggestions, and constructive criticism for the advancement of research on this topic.

Bandung, January 18, 2022

Aurelia Anjani

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To the United Arab Emirates delegate, Blandina Christina Valerie, thank you for being the author's partner for the last group project in this college life.

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To Parahyangan Catholic University, thank you for the opportunity for the author to develop her skills, friendships scope, and knowledge.

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ABBREVIATIONS

DNO	Denuclearization and Opening
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
KIC	Kaesong Industrial Complex
KINU	Korea Institute for National Unification
MDL	Military Demarcation Line
NCNK	The National Committee on North Korea
ROK	Republic of Korea
SIT	Social Identity Theory
THAAD	Terminal High Altitude Area Defense
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Research Background

For more than seven decades, the Korean people have strived for a unified Korea. Ever since the establishment of North Korea – officially the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and South Korea – officially Republic of Korea (ROK), the Korean peninsula has been split into two standing governments. Although efforts to reunify have been undertaken, the peninsula remained divided.

The North Korean and South Korean presidents met in the first inter-Korean summit that happened in 2000. This summit was the first presidential-level meeting between the two Koreas since the end of the Korean War in 1953. Prior to the conference, contacts between North Korea and South Korea were made in terms of humanitarian assistance from the North to the South. The first inter-Korean summit was held in Pyongyang. Kim Dae-jung, the president of South Korea at that time, crossed the Military Demarcation Line to attend the conference in North Korea and was welcomed by the supreme leader Kim Jong-il. The meeting resulted in the June 15th North-South Joint Declaration.

Through the declaration, North Korea and South Korea agreed on the mutual understanding on the issue of reunification, the establishment of peace, exchange and cooperation, and reunion of separated families. The two Koreas committed to strive for peaceful reunification on the basis of mutual understanding

and trust. The Koreans also agreed on a sustained dialogue between relevant authorities of each country to discuss further the reunification and its mechanisms. To show the seriousness of the two Koreas in undertaking the reunification, South Korean President Kim Dae-jung invited North Korean Chairman Kim Jong-il to visit Seoul. The agenda was to continue on the talks to reunify the Korean peninsula.

The commitments seem firm at first. The underlying assumptions for successful reunification are Korean people's shared history, values, and shared experience. With all the attention and appreciation to North Korea and South Korea for successfully pulling the first inter-Korean summit, the declaration was a promising venture towards reunification. However, as time goes by, the effectiveness and implementation of the commitments are questioned. The fact that the Korean peninsula remains separated until today proved that the pledges were not strong enough to tie the vow between North Korea and South Korea. Over the past few years, enthusiasm for reunifications has slowly faded. It is an unfortunate trait, especially considering the importance of reunification towards creating a peaceful Korean peninsula.

Within this context, this thesis will examine the ongoing reintegration process and appraise the significance of strategies that the Koreans have made. Further, it will discuss the reasons behind little progress of reunification, considering the commitments that have been made between North Korea and South Korea. The approach in this research will be made by looking at the interaction between the two Koreas to determine the factors that burden the commitments and hinder reunification.

1.2   Problem Identification

As the two Koreas have made the commitments in the 15th North-South Joint Declaration, North Korea and South Korea relations were expected to run closer to reunification. The reality, however, is sometimes not as pretty as the expectation. Despite sharing the mutual understanding, North Korea and South Korea failed to reach a collective interest against reunification. It is ironic, considering that commitments were not only declared in 2000. There is more than one attempt to strengthen the promises made in 2000. Attempts are made several times in the bilateral dialogue, inter-Korean summits, and even other declarations to support the one made in 2000. Despite all the efforts, the Korean peninsula remains separated. Since the inter-Korean summit that was held in 2000, other four meetings were conducted throughout 2007-2018, although by looking at the status-quo, it did not bring something new to the ongoing efforts. Ideally, reunification can be achieved way more easily should the two Koreas stick to their commitments to strive for any efforts possible to achieve reunification.

Besides the stagnant vows on Korean reunification, other issues emerge in the Korean peninsula, notably the unstable security between the two Koreas. Relations between North Korea and South Korea got injured multiple times over weapons mass destruction development. As North Korea kept deploying its nuclear weapons, South Korea was in a security dilemma. Disputes between South Korea and North Korea regarding weapons of mass destruction have happened several times. The current nuclear clash between both countries occurred in 2016 when North Korea conducted missile tests, and South Korea installed an anti-nuclear

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weapon.[1] The development of the North's nuclear weapons and the installation of the South's THAAD was each country's security measures. Although nuclear weapons are being discussed and tension is reducing little by little, the topic remains a shaky matter in the sense that wrong steps or decisions might lead to a more severe conflict.

Instead of increasing will for reunification, the inter-Korean relations indicate the reverse. The growing mistrust, heated tensions, and unfriendly traits among North Korea and South Korea show the depression of the reunification effort. The underlying assumptions of shared history, values, and experiences are not enough to cater to the two Koreas' interest in successful reintegration. For the reunification, North Korea and South Korea shall be willing to understand and have a good perspective.

This research sees the gap of expectation and reality related to North Korea and South Korea reunification. North Korea and South Korea have established particular identities based on national development. In this case, identity plays an essential part in determining the perspectives and interests possessed by the two Koreas. The link that connects identity, ideas, and interest with the Korean reunification effort encourages this research. The analysis will focus on the reunification efforts that have been done to see the significance and progress of ongoing commitments. The study will expand to explore the social interaction and social process of North Korea and South Korea. Then, it would elaborate the social

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[1] Bruce W. Bennet, "Why THAAD Is Needed in Korea," RAND Corporation, August 7, 2017, accessed Arpil 22, 2021, https://www.rand.org/blog/2017/08/why-thaad-is-needed-in-korea.html.

process with the identity, ideas, and interests of the two Koreas. By reflecting on the focus above, this thesis would emphasize South Korea's hurdles to strive for reunification. As North Korea and South Korea have their interests that need to be pursued, it might be hard to make both states agree on the same reunification terms. Both countries' identities, ideas, and interests should be considered in the peaceful reintegration of the Korean peninsula.

1.2.1 Research Problem Limitations

This thesis will focus on the peace initiative initiated by the South Korean government. Research on peace initiatives will lean on government documents regarding the inter-Korean summit and policy on North Korea initiated in each presidential regime. The analysis would point out the progress that has been made along the reintegration process. The thesis would highlight the hurdles in designing the reunification proposal that South Korea and North Korea would favor.

Realizing that Korean reintegration is a comprehensive issue, this thesis will focus on the impact of identity on interests and intentions, especially in Korean reunification. Even though several summits were held between South Korea and North Korea, it seems that there was an 'invisible wall' that restricted both states to take tangible action. The Koreans used to share similar cultures and values supposedly encouraged the reunification process, but that is not what happens in the status quo. By focusing on state identity, state interests, and state intentions in the middle of the reunification process, this thesis strives to explain the hindrance behind the event.

Research would highly focus on the dynamics that happened from 2000 to 2019. In 2000, two Koreas held the first inter-Korean summit. North Korea and South Korea discussed the possibility of reunification for the first time at the elite level. Dialogue upon the reunification happened for years, so the political dynamics lingered around the issue. The recent summit was held in 2018. The research is conducted until 2019, so analysis could also assess the Panmunjom Declaration's outcome. By looking back to the first counter between South Korea and North Korea up to recent events, hopefully, we could examine the reunification process entirely and find the adversity to the issue.

1.2.2 Research Question

Reflecting on the research background, problem identification, and research problem limitations, the research question that this thesis proposes is: **why there is no significant progress on reunification although the two Koreas had their commitments in 2000?**

1.3 Purposes and Usage of the Research

1.3.1 Purposes of the Research

This research aims to analyze North Korea's and South Korea's commitments to pursue reunification. By understanding that the ties between South Korea and North Korea are socially constructed, this thesis will identify why a shared value is not enough to become the common ground in reunifying the Koreans.

1.3.2 Usage of the Research

Through this research, the author has the opportunity to apply the theories and concepts learned regarding peace initiatives in promoting peaceful reunification on the Korean Peninsula. The author hopes this writing can be considered a reference for those interested in studying the Korean peace initiative.

1.4 Literature Review

The topic of Korean reunification has been a scholar's attention for years. Debates lingered around the possibility, the perspective, and the political process proceeding the reunification. The author offers several articles regarding Korean reunification to help this thesis with a more thorough and objective analysis.

Shang E. Ha and Seung-Jin Jang set two hypotheses in their paper about how identity sets South Korean minds in responding to North Korea. These hypotheses were based on the idea that people who have a strong sense of ethnic identity would most likely give negative responses to immigrants or other individuals coming from outside their groups. On the contrary, people with a robust civic identity do not necessarily respond negatively to immigrants. Build upon this idea, the paper called *National Identity in a divided nation: South Koreans' attitude toward North Korean defectors and the reunification of two Koreas*[2] seeks to examine how identity shapes South Korean people's perspective towards North Korean immigrants. As South Korean and North Korea had a history as 'one single

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[2] Shang E. Ha and Seung-Jin Jang, "National identity in a divided nation: South Koreans' attitudes toward North Korean defectors and the reunification of two Koreas," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* Vol. 55 (2016): 109-119, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2016.10.003

nation' for a long time, it is expected that the idea of shared identity would drive the acceptance of North Korean immigrants. If this is the case, then South Koreans with a strong sense of Korean ethnicity would most likely accept their long-lost brother immigrants and thus support the idea of reunification. However, due to the long division that the meaning of sameness had dim, South Koreans with a stronger sense of ethnic identity would most likely resist the existence of North Korean immigrants as they see the newcomers as someone with a different identity. This group later would counter the idea of unified Korea. A survey was conducted to prove these hypotheses. Later, this paper finds that identity sameness is no longer relevant to South Koreans as they see North Korean immigrants as someone from a different ethnic group. With that being said, it is most likely that the division of Korea has driven the South Korean into a belief that North Korea is no longer the long-lost brother. Instead, they are seen as an outsider coming to South Korea. Thus, based on this finding, the South Korean majority denied the idea of reunification.

Virginie Grzelczyk argues in her paper that for the Korean to reach reunification means that it could go as far as building a "new nation." Using the top-down approach, she claims that for South Korea and North Korea to reach reunification, it is necessary to have both countries under one central state system, from governmental structures down to the civil order. Understanding Korean identity might be more complex than experiencing general national identity since the Koreans are divided into the South and the North. It is unavoidable that their political construction influences the identity constructed in both countries. The growth of civil society in South Korea bolsters the chance for globalization to take

a booming toll in the country, which became a turning point for South Korean politics and national identities. On the other hand, the socialist identity influenced by the Soviet Union bolstered the development of North Korea. While South Korea identity focused on the nation, North Korea focused on people. Despite having different identities, North Korea and South Korea belong to the same ethnic government. *New approaches to North Korean politics after reunification: The search for a common Korean identity*[3] finds that national identity both in South Korea and North Korea is governed by the government while still considering the changes from external and internal forces. How the Koreans look at each other is one of the obstacles, as the North still holds on to its communist belief and the South proceeds with its anti-communism policy. Grzelczyk offers a solution to this issue: the start-over of the Korean Peninsula, in which South Korea and North Korea agree to forget their past and therefore construct a new nation.

Jai Kwan Jung and Chad Rector determine a strategic way for Korea reintegration by analyzing Yemen and Germany's reunification process. Their paper demonstrates a reunification process that could be done either through a confederation agreement or a unilateral absorption. When discussing the confederation agreement process, the authors look to Yemen reunification. German reunification was an example case for the unilateral absorption process. Each process would then be examined to see which strategy best fitted to explain the

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[3] Virginie Grzelczyk, "New approaches to North Korean politics after reunification: The search for a common Korean identity," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* xxx (2014): 1-12, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.postcomstud.2014.04.008

Korean reunification. The *Pathways of National Reunification* [4]concluded that the Koreans could reunify through unilateral absorption through a thorough investigation. Unilateral absorption seems like the best option available considering the political instability between South Korea and North Korea, making it impossible to have a confederation agreement. Moreover, by looking through the South Korea reunification approach and North Korea military expenditure, Jung and Rector find that elites in both countries are leaning towards the idea of the unilateral absorption model. The article then culminated in the notion that it seems like the government in both South Korea and North Korea are acknowledging the scheme where there shall be reunification, which would be done through absorption.

The author sees Korean reunification as something possible to become true in the future, but not exempt from obstacles such as political differences. Agreeing with the second and third literature, the author recognizes that the reunification process lies in the South Korean and North Korean governments' hands. It is based on both countries' elite willingness and promotion that determine reunification progress. However, identity also plays an essential role in establishing Korean reunification. Identity – on the issue of Korean reunification – acted as a double-edged knife. Depending on the utilization, identity could construct the reunification or vice versa could frustrate unified Korea.

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[4] Jai Kwan Jung and Chad Rector, "Pathways of National Reunification in Germany, Yemen and Korea," *Pacific Focus Inha Journal of International Studies* 29 no. 2 (2014): 211-236, doi: 10.1111/pafo.12027

1.5   **Theoretical Framework**

Research on Korean reunification is part of the effort in explaining the conflict resolution happening in the Korean peninsula. The conflicting parties here are North Korea and South Korea, each with their interest. As demonstrated in the earlier part, the Koreans were once united under the same governance and thus shared the same identity. Identity in this context becomes crucial as it defines the conflict resolution means. This thesis strives to explain South Korea strategy in designing a peaceful peace initiative regarding achieving Korea reunification. A theoretical approach to this research will emphasize identifying identity using Alexander Wendt's constructivism and strengthen it through Michael Lund's stages of peace and conflict. This thesis will use Johan Galtung's conflict triangle about peace and conflict research. The reintegration process should be done positively to enhance the system in the Korean peninsula.

1.5.1   **Alexander Wendt's Constructivism**

While neo-realist explains the formulation of national interest based on anarchy in the international system, constructivist emphasize identity as the driving factor to determine national interest.[5] Constructivists argue that the global system is constructed through interaction between each actor and based on shared ideas rather than nature. Wendt, in his book, explained the concept that *'anarchy is what states make of it*.' Constructivism portrays the international system through holism

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[5] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 2.

and idealism approaches. In terms of the relationships among actors, constructivists identify three roles based on Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian culture.[6]

Wendt's constructivism emphasizes the importance of identity, ideas, and actors' interest in constructing the international system. Identity is defined as 'whatever makes a thing what it is.' It is a property of actors that generate motivational and behavioral dispositions. Identity is constructed depending on the actor self-understanding of itself. Ideas refer to the knowledge shared among parties. The creation of knowledge includes both the belief and desire of the actors. Knowledge plays an essential role to determine how actors interact with each other. Interest, in this sense, talks about the will that drives actors to do something. Interest is the beliefs or interpretations about what actions should be taken to achieve the end goals. Actor behaviors are influenced by its interest, which is deeply rooted in its identity. Wendt's national interests are physical survival, autonomy, economic well-being, and collective self-esteem. Economic well-being means more than economic growth, as it refers to the maintenance of production and the state's resource base.[7] Collective self-esteem explains a group's need to feel good about itself. A key component here is whether the image of collective self-esteem is positive or negative, which depends partly on relationships with others. Positive self-images emerge from mutual respect and cooperation. Negative self-images, in contrast, develop from perceived disregard or humiliation by other states. This self-image is vital for the states in designing their policy and determining action. The

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[6] Alexander Wendt, *Op. cit.*, 43.
[7] Ibid, 236.

state needs to secure their interests, and in doing so, it is natural for them to act according to what they believe are the best measures to preserve national interest.

Concerning Korean reunification, identity plays an important part. The Koreans, who were once unity was challenged with the separation. It is debatable how the Koreans would embrace an identity as their primary basis for reunification. On one side, identity can be the unifier of the Korean peninsula. In contrast, it can ruin the process due to the separated ideology between North Korea and South Korea.

1.5.2 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (SIT) is a psychology theory that focuses on intergroup behaviors by looking at the conflicts and differences among them. The term was coined by Henri Tajfel and John Turner around the 1970s to 1980s. SIT highlights identity as a person's sense based on their group membership,[8] to which individual response is relevant to their group situations. This creates the feeling of 'in-group' and 'out-group.' The belief of social change implies relations as characterized by marked stratification, making it harder for the 'Self' to invest itself as a member of an unsatisfactory group. Stratification happens based on the unequal division of source resources, such as power, prestige, or wealth. The subordinate group seems to see themselves as the inferior class, and in responding to the stratification, these groups intensify antagonism toward the higher-ups. This

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[8] Henri Tajfel and John Charles Turner, "An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict," in *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, ed. William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel (Monterey: Brooks/Cole, 1979), 35.

scheme occurs when a conflict of interest leads to hostility. Hence, unequal distribution of resources creates antagonism between dominant and subordinate groups. In this regard, Tajfel and Turner introduced the three processes of SIT to explain the idea of intergroup conflict further.

The first is social categorization. This stage is the first step in categorizing themselves and determining where individuals belong. Categorization is done under specific external and internal criteria, which varies depending on the context of classification. Once individuals understand their position as a particular group member, they are biased in precepting the out-group as their perception is centred on in-group views. Thus, it is worth noting that conflict is not merely happen based on discrimination of interest sources but might be affected by a factor such as favoritism point of view.

The second stage is social identification, where the individual ties deeper connections with their group. In this sense, the conceptualization of social group is a "conceptualization of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category, share some emotional involvement in common definition, and achieve some degree of social evaluation."[9] Through the identification, individuals invest emotionally and change behavior following the membership of one's groups. In this sense, social groups are understood to provide their members with some degree of identification. Individuals strive to achieve a positive identity through their membership in a particular group. Relate to this, SIT's assumptions suggest that the in-group must be perceived as positively different from other out-groups.

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[9] Henri Tajfel, *Op.cit.*, 40.

When the expected positive identity is failed to be fulfilled, individuals will leave their group and join other groups or make the new one. Determining the identity of one's group is done by comparing it to reference from other groups, which will bring us to the third stage of SIT, the social comparison.

Comparison is carried out to differentiate the in-group from the out-group. For comparison to being conducted, individuals must internalize the group membership as an aspect of self-concept. It should run in a situation where comparison can be made. Issues like skin color or physical appearance are more salient in the United States, whereas language becomes a salient issue in Wales and Belgium.[10] By this saying, a comparison should adjust to the issue comparable between in-group and out-groups. Furthermore, the out-group that become the subject of contrast should be seen as mutual in that it is perceived as a relevant comparison group. The differentiation aims to achieve or maintain the superiority of the in-group over the other out-group.

In international relations, the state is visualized as the individual and social group, which in their development conducted comparison to see its worth compare to other out-groups who in this sense is different states. National elites will compare their state qualities, situations, and achievements with the reference state. Before comparison, the state will categorize itself first and determine their position and idea based on its identity. After going through these processes, it can be determined how the assessed state feels about itself by comparing it with other states.

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[10] Henry Tajfel, *Op.cit.,* 41.

1.6   Research Methods and Data Collection Technique

1.6.1   Research Methods

This thesis will use qualitative methods in its research method. Qualitative methods focus on the searching for meanings of social or human problems rather than on their quantification.[11] As it seeks meanings, qualitative methods rely on the importance of non-numeric data. The qualitative approach emphasizes the importance of interpretation to understand social phenomena. This thesis will seek the meanings of identities in Korean reunification through qualitative methods.

1.6.2   Data Collection Technique

As qualitative methods search for meanings, they rely more on the data gained through documents than mathematical data. Based on that, this thesis will collect the data from document-based and internet-based methods. Cristopher Lamont categorizes the documents into primary, secondary, and tertiary.[12] Primary source documents for this thesis would be obtained through official documents published by the Korean government. Aside from that, an internet-based method would also be conducted to collect the data for this thesis. Internet-based documents would be used to access governmental websites, news portals, and online journals. Using the document-based method and internet-based method would this thesis provide enough information on the condition of Korean reunification.

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[11] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (California: SAGE Publication, 2014), 63.
[12] Christopher Lamont, *Research Methods in International Relations* (California: SAGE Publication, 2015), 80.

1.7   Research Structure

This thesis will be divided into four chapters arranged as follows.

The first chapter consists of a brief background explanation of Korean reunification. Moreover, it also provides problem identification. Limitations of this research are explained in the first chapter. Research questions, purposes and the usage of this research are also presented in this chapter. Aside from that, this chapter will consist of a literature review, theoretical framework, and research method.

Entering the second chapter will explain the ongoing initiatives to Korean reunification. The chapter is divided into three sub-chapters that defines the inter-Korean relation, South Korea policy regarding North Korea, and the analysis of the ongoing initiatives to highlight the progress of the reunification effort. This sub-chapter highlight the commitment between the two Koreas and the dynamics of reunification throughout the years.

The third chapter talks about the foundation of Korean reunification based on constructivism, identity, ideas, and interest. Each respective point is discussed from the North and South point of view. Elaboration on the foundation and the reintegration process is provided in the following sub-chapter. The last part of this chapter will examine the inter-Korean relations and their effect on the reunification commitment pledged between two countries based on social identity theory.

Last but not least, the fourth chapter will give a conclusion to every data and theory being discussed in this thesis and the answer to the research question. The conclusion is obtained through a qualitative method to get new meaning from the initiatives carried out by South Korea regarding Korean reunification, namely that

these ideas are closely related to the identities, ideas, and interests of each state on the Korean peninsula, which is discussed in detail in Chapter II and Chapter III.