

4. THE CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE KOREAN DIASPORA AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY OF SOUTH KOREA. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ARGENTINA AND MEXICO

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INTRODUCTION

South Korea has stable relations with Latin American countries since the end of the Korean War and the consolidation of the Republic. The ties are not only political, economic and cultural, but are also linked to migration.

The Republic of Korea has an important diaspora abroad, conformed by migratory currents that traveled in different historical periods. In Latin America, the countries that received the largest number of immigrants of Korean origin were Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. These communities grew and began to design an institutional system through their own civil associations, which provided a structure for the migratory group and established a way of insertion in the host society.

Considering that currently South Korea is facing a process of international positioning as a middle-power and a bridge between the countries of East Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, it has promoted public diplomacy as a primary element of its external agenda. Public diplomacy refers to relationships between non state actors such as organizations, companies, and individuals.

In this scenario diasporas and their civil organizations have gained importance, given their ability to act as a link between the South Korean Government and host societies. They are mediators that facilitate communica-

tion between societies, helping to change perceptions and deconstruct cultural stereotypes. Hence they are able to implement the South Korean Government's policies in the host societies. These characteristics are essential for the creation of an efficient soft power by means of public diplomacy.

The present paper tries to analyze the actions of civil organizations of the Korean diasporas in Argentina, a non APEC country, and Mexico, an APEC country, in order to determine its potential to constitute an effective diaspora diplomacy and their influence in the conformation of South Korea's soft power. It will also examine the possibilities to increase cooperation between diaspora organizations and the South Korean Government, with the aim to promote and improve its public diplomacy.

To understand the role of diaspora civil organization in the development of South Korean diplomacy, first we must consider the history of South Korea's relations with both nations and the characteristics of immigration in each country. In addition for the theoretical frame we will take the conceptualization of soft power and public diplomacy.

HISTORY OF BILATERAL RELATIONS

ARGENTINA-SOUTH KOREA

Since XIXth century, Argentinean foreign policy has established as a priority its relations with the countries of Latin America, Europe and United States. With Latin American countries because they share the same cultural identity, while European countries and the United States were the most important trading partners. But little was the attention paid to the most distant nations, such as South Korea.

The first approaches between Korea and Argentina took place at the beginning of the XXth century, when Argentina started to design its diplomacy that little knew about the Asian continent and was focused on trade with Europe. Korea was still unified and under a dynastic system, within a regional structure centered in a process of modernization, led by Japan, and trying to insert itself into a world dominated by the European powers.

Later during the period of Japanese colonialism, the relations with Argentina were implemented through Japan, since Korea foreign policy was

subordinated to the interests of the dominant state, and therefore was unable to implement its own policy. This led to Argentina to have limited information about the Korean situation and, as a consequence, it wasn't incorporate into the diplomatic agenda.

Once Korean independence was obtained, in an international system based in the East-West conflict, the ties between both countries were strengthened. In 1949 South Korean Ambassador in Washington, John Myon Chang, wrote to the Argentine Ambassador in Washington, to ask for Argentinean official recognition of the new South Korean Government; considering that in 1948 the Argentinean delegate in the United Nations General Assembly had recognized the Republic of Korea as a sovereign and legal government.

In this period Argentina increased its knowledge about South Korea, motivated by the new foreign policy of the third position, entering in a gradual process where decided not to be aligned to any superpower and became more interested in Asian politics from an inclusive perspective.

South Korea had a legitimized government, aligned with the United States, and expressed a friendly foreign policy, proposing the development of ties with several Latin American States, aiming for political or military support, in the face of the constant threat from the North. It was then when the first attempt to strengthen relations took place. The Argentinean government showed a passive attitude to the proposal, due to the maintenance of its non-alignment policy, the low importance of Korea in commercial issues and the possibility of an upcoming conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

During the Korean War, despite having maintained a distant position, the government of General Peron took sides with South Korea, abandoning its neutrality and sending food aid to Busan. This decision was promoted by the international pressure given in response to the Argentinean ratification of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. (Chaure, 2015)

Later, the Argentinean Governments during the period of the Liberation Revolution maintained their approach to South Korea, for example through the United Nations Commission, Argentina received refugees from the Korean War, who would be the first members of the diaspora.

Since the 1960s Latin America experienced changes in the foreign policies of certain countries that were focused on improving their relations with

the USSR and China, and participating in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which also corresponded with the emergence of governments related to socialist ideology, such as the Allende Government in Chile and Cuban Revolution. Considering the defensive position against the communist North Korea, South Korea pursue the establishment of relations with various of these countries in Latin America, for example Mexico and Argentina in 1962 and Brazil the following year. During this period, the South Korean developmental economy also observed benefits from the new relations with Latin American countries, as they represented new markets for the growing industry of the Han River Miracle.

For Argentina the recognition of the Republic of Korea and the establishment of diplomatic relations with it expressed a pro-western position in the context of the Cold War, and was made in response to the demands of alignment to the United States, sustained by the military forces which controlled the Argentinean Government at the time. From 1962 to 1973 Argentina exclusively recognized the Republic of Korea as the only representative of the Korean State. In 1966 the first cultural cooperation agreement was signed and in 1972 the investment patent protection agreement.

During a brief period in the Campora presidency, diplomatic relations were established with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or North Korea, by signing a trade agreement in 1972. This foreign policy was promoted in an attempt to return to the peronist third position and to approach the eastern axis under the orbit of the USSR. The double recognition ended in 1977 with the abrupt withdrawal of the staff from the North Korean Embassy in Buenos Aires.

The Korean economic advance and the arrival of liberalism in the 1980s, boosted South Korea to fostered ties with Latin America, and in particular with Argentina, for commercial purposes, as it considered the region as the gateway to the subsequent entry into the United States market. Later trade was centered on the importance of the availability of natural and energy resources of Latin American countries that have complementary with economies such as that of South Korea. (Oviedo, 2016, p. 8)

In recent years, South Korean investment in Argentina has increased, particularly in the electronic sector, with the presence of assembly factories of chaebols such as LG, Samsung and Daewoo; and the mining and fishing

sector. Although investments do not represent a significant number compared to Chinese investment in Argentina or compared to South Korean investment in other Latin-American countries, like Mexico where the automotive industry has been consolidated by the creation of automotive plants and therefore generated an increase in the employment. For its part the South Korean Government, by means of the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) has expressed that there are structural difficulties when investing in Argentina, since policies and regulations are not implemented on the long term, which provokes fiscal uncertainty and instability.

In 2006 the Korean Cultural Center was created in Buenos Aires, with the objective of promote and spread Korean culture in Argentina. Among its objectives, it aims to strengthen ties of friendship and dialogue between South Korea and Argentina through the dissemination of quality content. The main activities are focus on K-pop music, film, food, language, Hanbok (traditional clothing), Hanok (traditional houses), Hanji (traditional paper), Manwha (comics), and video games. (Korean Cultural Center in Argentina)

The ties between the two nations also relay on multilateral cooperation, such as joint participation in the group "Uniting for Consensus", which seeks to reform of the UN Security Council. The Argentina's participation as a non-permanent member of the Security Council was positive, where the issue of the Korean Peninsula conflict was treated recurrently.

Argentina maintains a position of condemnation of North Korea's actions, such as the launching of missiles, the North Korean nuclearization process, the violation of human rights and crimes against humanity committed during different Governments of North Korea.

Both Mexico and Argentina are members of the Forum of East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC), an inter-regional cooperative organization established in 1999 and formed by Latin American and East Asian countries, including among them South Korea. It aims to increase political dialogue, cooperation and mutual understanding, to establish new partnerships between the two regions and set a common position on global issues. It also seeks to strengthen bi-regional cooperation in areas such as politics, economy, investment, tourism, culture and sustainable development.

MEXICO- SOUTH KOREA

The first contacts between Korea and Mexico took place in the late XIXth century, when the Empire of Korea attempted to negotiate a friendship agreement similar to the one signed with the Austria-Hungarian Empire.

Subsequently, contact was re-established since Mexico needed to increase the labor force for the extraction of raw materials, especially henequen in the Yucatan region. Given the difficulties of entry of workers coming from China and Japan, with whom Mexico had closer ties, in 1905 the Government decided to promote the arrival of Korean workers.

Despite the migration policy of the early XXth century, formal relations were established in 1962. The Embassy of Mexico in Japan acted as concurrent in South Korea from 1967 to 1978, with the creation of a Business Office.

As mentioned previously in the case of Argentina, one of the main reasons for the South Korean Government to establish relations was based on the need to obtain international recognition during the tension situation and the possibility of permanent conflict with North Korea. On the other hand Mexico tried to maintain a position away from the authoritarian and anti-communist regimes supported by the United States, but at the same time it had to insert itself internationally under the western orbit given its proximity to the superpower, that is why it was interested in maintaining ties with South Korea.

Bilateral relations have remained stable and there has been an intensification in economic and commercial issues. Like the case of Argentina, the economies are complementary, Mexico exports raw materials to South Korea, and South Korea manufactures to Mexico. In 1988 the Agreement for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation was signed, starting an investment process on behalf of South Korea, through the arrival of chaebols, such as Samsung, LG and Daewoo. The same companies have invested in Argentina, but later and on a smaller scale.

Likewise, Mexico represents a privileged access to other markets, especially the one of United States, owing to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). For its part, South Korea has tried since 2008 to sign an FTA, such as the one Mexico has with Japan, but negotiations have been stalled.

In 2012 the Korean Cultural Center was created in Mexico City, with objectives similar to those proposed in the Center established in Argentina, namely to strengthen cultural exchange by means of Korean language, traditional music, food, traditional architecture, and costumes, emphasizing on cultural industries, tourism and sports. (Korean Cultural Center in Mexico)

South Korea and Mexico signed the Strategic Association Agreement for Mutual Prosperity in 2005, having in common their identity as middle-powers in the international system, as both joined the OECD in the mid-1990s and are members of the Forum of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Moreover, both nations are part of the MIKTA, an informal partnership that includes Indonesia, Turkey and Australia, created in 2013 in the context of the UN to address issues of effective global governance. Its role is to strengthen bilateral ties between its members, as well as the promotion of cooperation and coordination in global issues of common interest. (SRE)

Mexico has diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea since 1980, for which reason the latter opened its Embassy in Mexico City in 1993. Its relations are based on trade, being Mexico one of North Korea's most important partners in Latin America. Also, they have signed several bilateral cooperation agreements related to tax evasion, customs policy, health and agriculture. Despite the limited but stable relations in recent times, they have suffered an increase in tension due to the Mexican position in favor of nuclear disarmament. The last nuclear tests and the violation of the UN Security Council resolutions committed by North Korea, led to the declaration of persona non grata of the North Korean Ambassador Kim Hyong Gil, even though it didn't imply a break of diplomatic relations under the Vienna Convention.

To sum up, the diplomatic relations of South Korea with Argentina and Mexico began in 1962 and remained stable; their economies are complementary but they are not important trading partners. In Mexico trade and investment are more developed, while in Argentina cultural exchange has increased. Foreign policies of both Latin American nations towards South Korea show a lack of interest in strengthen the ties, mainly because of the poor information received about the Asian region and in particular about South Korea. That is why we consider it is essential to improve the quality and access of information about Korean history, politics, economy and culture, provided to the political and business sector, and to citizens in general.

IMMIGRATION AND CONFORMATION OF THE KOREAN DIASPORA

According to Mera (2009), modern diasporas are ethnic minority groups originated from migration, who reside and act in the host countries, while maintaining strong emotional and material ties with their country of origin. They are formed by a migrant population that moves according to the structure of migratory chains that link them with those already installed in the host country. There is not a complete assimilation with the host culture, but they integrate preserving a strong identity from the country of origin and a collective memory developed by the institutions of the community. Also diasporas are geographically dispersed but have relations of mutual exchanges between them and the country of origin. Likewise, these diasporas are built on social practices that strengthen the union between their members, and change in relation to the social-economic position of each one of them. The concentration of the diaspora in a city or neighborhood collaborates in shaping frames of belonging to a collective identity.

Identity can be described as the narrative construction of a world view, which is apprehended and shared by a particular historical group. Belonging to a country and nationality is seen as a de-territorialized experience, where a person belongs to a certain nation regardless of the geographical place where he or she has grown up or born.

Alfredo Romero (1997) states that there are “Three Koreas”, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and the Korean communities disseminated throughout the world. These diasporas, despite their differences in size and form of connection with the host society, maintain a strong Korean identity. We should note that South Korea does not accept dual citizenship, only those born in South Korea or those of legal age born after 1998 who are children of a South Korean mother or father can apply for nationality.

Korean population displacements date back historically to the Choson Dynasty (1210-1910) when, as a consequence of droughts and famines in Korea, the population moved to China or Manchuria, searching for a better quality of life. Later the Japanese occupation (1910-1945), the Korean War and

the post-war industrialization, with the transition from traditional rural society to a modern urban one, caused a migratory wave of Koreans towards the rest of the world. This process increased in the 1960s and 1970s with the application of an aggressive emigration policy promoted by the Korean Government, in response to the problem of population growth.

In 1960 the Korean Government started the planned migration to Latin America, promoting the migration of a group of families to rural areas, with the objective of establishing agricultural settlements. This project was unsuccessful as most migrants had never carried out agricultural tasks and the settlement places lacked infrastructure, as well as educational and health system that responded to the needs of Koreans. That is why progressively they moved to urban areas and began to engage in trade and began to establish Korean diaspora's organizations.

Recent changes in telecommunications and the emerge of Internet have allowed a rapprochement and ease of connection between States and their diasporas, even more as the latter are considered a useful tool for public diplomacy.

In order to observe the potential of diasporas as diplomacy actors we must identify the characteristics of each community and their interaction with the host country.

ARGENTINA

Korean migration to Argentina began in 1965 when the Korean Overseas Development Corporation (KODCO) acquired land in Campo Lumarque in the province of Rio Negro, where several Korean families settled down to work in agricultural production. Between 1970 and 1978, five hundred families arrived to other Argentinean rural areas. In 1971, KODCO bought land in Lujan in the province of Buenos Aires, where a chicken and pig breeding farm was established, as well as a vegetable crop. In 1977 another sixteen families established in Colonia Campo Isca Yacu in the province of Santiago del Estero. Despite the efforts these families finally moved to the city in search of a better living conditions and public services.

In 1985 Argentina and South Korea signed the Procedure Act for the entry of Korean immigrants to Argentina. As a consequence, between 1984

and 1989 more than 11,000 permits were issued to Korean families, representing the entry of more than 30,000 people. These migrants had different characteristics from the first wave, they came mainly from Seoul and had investment capital, so the community became more prosperous and developed new activities. In 1990, the South Korean migrant population reached its maximum growth point with 42,000 people.

From 1970s to 1990s decade, Korean civil associations, churches, newspapers and shops were created and consolidated. They were located mainly in "Once" neighborhood and "Avellaneda" street in the City of Buenos Aires and in "Ciudadela" neighborhood in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. Currently a large part of the Korean diaspora lives in "Flores" neighborhood in the City of Buenos Aires, where there are many supermarkets that sell Korean food, craft shops, churches and restaurants, plus textiles businesses. The locals have named this neighborhood the "Korean neighborhood".

The Korean community has a strong identity and a social network that allowed them to successfully insert into Argentinean society.

MEXICO

The first Korean immigrants arrived to Mexico in 1905, 1,033 Koreans traveled to work on the haciendas of henequen of Yucatan, being exported as cheap labor, under irregular contracts and in conditions of slavery. Henequen is a strong yellowish or reddish hard fiber obtained from the leaves of a tropical American agave and used especially in making twine and rope

Due to a series of social-political events, such as the Japanese colonization of Korea and the Mexican revolution, Koreans were unable to return home once their employment contracts ended. Consequently, they decided to move to other Mexican states, such as Campeche, Tijuana, Tamaulipas and Mexico City, and even in 1921 a group of 300 people traveled to Cuba. This geographic dispersion and the fact that most of the immigrants were men led to rapid cultural assimilation and even miscegenation with the Mayan population, losing their identification with Korean culture. Immigration has not continued since 1905 and wasn't restarted until 1962 with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the consequent elimination of the Asian immigration ban imposed in Mexico after the end of the First World War.

In the late 1980s, Korean migrants living in Mexico City and Guadalajara ascended to around 60 families, many of its members were university students, martial arts teachers, employees of Korean companies, and merchants. In 1990s decade a new migratory flow occurred as a result of the signing of two agreements, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which represented an opportunity for South Korean foreign trade, since it could expand its companies in Mexico and consequently in United States, and the Visa Waiver Agreement of 1979 that became effective in the 1990s, which facilitated the entry of Korean citizens. In this period South Korean re-migration or migration from communities in Argentina, Ecuador, Paraguay and Colombia increased, sharing the same mechanism of economic insertion through trade, mainly textiles and traditional food restaurants.

As a result of the different waves of migration members of the Korean diaspora in Mexico can be classified into three main groups: the third and fourth generation descendants of Korean immigrants who arrived in 1905; entrepreneurs and employees of large South Korean transnational companies, such as Posco, Kia Motors and Samsung, that have invested in Mexico since the 1990s; and expats who have emigrated to reunite with their family or looking for better working conditions given by new business and commercial opportunities. The community itself makes a distinction between descendants and newcomers, therefore the interaction between the groups is limited and they have formed their different associations.

According to data from the Embassy of South Korean in Mexico, in 2016 there were around 14,000 Koreans resided in in the country, of which approximately 5,000 resided in Mexico City. (Gallardo García, 2018) The number not only include those born in South Korea and holding a South Korean passport, but also naturalized Mexicans born in South Korea, the children of Korean parents, and the various generations of descendants of Korean immigrants since the beginning of XXth century.

The diaspora has established in Mexico City, forming the neighborhood called “Little Seoul” in Rosa neighborhood, and also in cities where South Korean plants and companies were installed, such as Guadalajara, Pesquería and Monterrey. Mexicans who are Korean descendants have settled mainly in the center of Mexico City, and the cities of Mérida, Chiconcuac, Querétaro, Ecatepec, Tlaxcala and Puebla.

The Korean diasporas in Argentina and Mexico have been integrated into the host country, without fully assimilating. According to Mera (2009), diasporas in Latin America are concentrated in neighborhoods marked by cultural particularities, that pass through a process of integration by areas, in the first case hand the commercial and economic area that has been successful, and in the second case the cultural and recreational one that had showed difficulties because bicultural models haven't been installed yet in the host societies. Korean communities are an emblematic case because they have managed to adapt to different societies, but always maintaining tradition and identity from their homeland.

DIASPORA CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS

A civil society organization can be understood as the “expression of the initiative of citizens to achieve common welfare, advocate for public good and assume responsibilities towards the whole of society. In Argentina they are also known as non-governmental organizations, non-profit organizations and the third sector”. (AFIP)

According to Mera (2006) “the different associations and institutions of the Korean community have a leading role in the construction of the group's cultural identity. The reinterpretation of the collective history, as support for this new diaspora identity, operates as an autonomous action of the group, insofar the past is a fundamental element in the affective re-signification of the present. The process of production and reproduction of stories and cultural symbols strengthens the existence of the ethnic network, at the same time it is the key point of the concept of “identity” insofar as it implies a dynamic and relational historical construction.

From the analysis of the Korean diaspora's organizations in Argentina and Mexico, it is possible to classify them into four large groups based on their main objectives: 1) Community-based, are the first associations created to assist the needs of the diaspora members; 2) Cultural, that promote and teach Korean language, dance, music and cuisine, among others; 3) Sports, that promote and teach Korean sports, mainly Taekwondo; and 4) Religious, created to profess beliefs, they are mostly Christian, Evangelical and Presbyterian churches, and to a lesser extent Buddhist temples.

The community-based organizations are extremely necessary for the integration of the diaspora to the host society, since they provide assistance and support to the new migrants that incorporate to the Korean community. While cultural organizations help to conserve the homeland culture and also introduce their traditions, customs and values to the local people. Sports organizations are similar to cultural regarding the maintenance of traditions, but the fast proliferation, acceptance and participation of the local community in them gives them enough relevance to be classified separately. Finally religious organizations give a space to share Korean beliefs. Particularly in Argentina and Mexico, Korean churches find a great acceptance since societies are mostly catholic and evangelical.

The expansion of Christianity in South Korea is a phenomenon that emerged in the end of Japanese colonization and the beginning of the United State's intervention, when the social feeling of patriotism and modernity grew in the population in response to the emotional vacuum left by the vexations suffered during the war. In this period churches began to proliferate, carrying a message of equality among all beings created by God and of spiritual salvation, ideas that spread also to the countries where diasporas migrated.

Beyond the religious rituals that they perform, diaspora churches are a place of cohesion and socialization of the members of the community, since they form an identity consciousness based on the transmission of language and of cultural customs. After the mass or religious service, Korean food is shared among the attendees and Korean language is spoken, creating a favorable space to establish new contacts, relations and networks that helps them to adapt to the host country. At church meetings comfort and security are provided, while information is exchanged about job opportunities, the educational system, and even business deals are carried out. Consequently they have been transformed into multidimensional institutions that involve religious, ethnic, economic, and cultural practices. While the churches are in charge of the internal relations of the community, the associations work with different actors. Networks allow the reproduction of cultural patterns and collaborate in the positive insertion of migrants in the new context.

It is relevant to mention that there are connections between the Korean diasporas in Latin American and their civil associations, there are links

and exchanges between Korean communities in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Mexico.

ARGENTINA

In 1966, a few months after the first wave of Korean immigrants, the Korean Union Church "Han In" was founded in the Korean community located in Buenos Aires, the first evangelical Presbyterian church of the diaspora, and four years later the Korean Catholic Church was established.

From the beginning, churches were the axis of the community structure, and currently there are around 30 evangelical churches, one Catholic and two Buddhist temples. Many of these organizations also provide Korean language courses for local people and invite them to participate in diaspora activities related to religion.

The Civil Association of Koreans in Argentina was also created in 1966 and its main task was to help members of the diaspora, collaborating on issues such as housing, health service or immigration documentation. This organization worked together with local authorities of the neighborhood *Comune N°7* and the Police Station of "Flores" neighborhood, to deal with security and infrastructure problems of the Korean community. And also coordinated the organization of the Korean Day festival every year with the Government of the City of Buenos Aires and the Migration Directorate of the National Government. (*Asociación Civil de Coreanos en Argentina*)

Related to the Civil Association of Koreans in Argentina, the Korean Women's Association was recently created, formed by female members of the diaspora and deals mainly with gender issues and the role of women in society.

The introduction of Taekwondo as a sport in Argentina started in 1967, led by the Korean migrants Kim Han Chang and Choi Nam Sung, who funded several schools of the Korean martial art. Nowadays it is the most popular martial art in the country, where the number of people that have practiced it ascend to 500,000, and has generated more than 20 world champions. (*Diario La Cancha*) All the schools are part of the Argentine Taekwondo Confederation.

In the '80s, a large number of organizations were established, such as the Association of Korean Merchants, the Association of Korean Professionals

(APCA), the Association of Korean University Students in Argentina, the Integral Korean Medicine, and the Chamber of Korean Businessmen (CAEMCA), which gathers more than 800 stores of the textile industry in the country, which are located mainly in “Flores” neighborhood in the city of Buenos Aires. (Biblioteca Virtual Universal)

The Argentinean-Korean Institute was also established, which began as a “Saturday school” where Korean children learned the language and culture, later it became a trilingual primary school incorporated into the official curriculum of Argentina. It also offers Korean language classes open to the general public.

In Argentina, members of the diaspora are linked to all kinds of activities to promote Korean culture, from institutes that teach language courses, to religious centers with Korean characteristics and restaurants with typical foods.

MEXICO

The first organization of the Korean diaspora was created by migrants workers who arrived to Yucatan in 1905. Since there were no diplomatic relations between Korea and Mexico, the Koreans didn't have a representation that could protect their interests, so they decided to create their own organization, supported by the Korean National Association (KNA), an organization of Korean immigrants located in San Francisco, United States. In 1909 they founded a KNA chapter in Mérida, which actively participated in the promotion of the independence movement during Japanese colonialism. In 1915 it started to act as an informal Korean Consulate in Mexico.

The most important civil organization is the Association of Koreans in Mexico, created in 1996, which take cares any query or problem of the Korean who reside in Mexico City. It even has a group of lawyers that assist Korean compatriots, tourists or merchants.

One of the main problems is that to be part of this association it is an requirement to possess exclusively Korean nationality, which preclude the participation of the descendants of the Korean migrants. Therefore the descendants decided to create the Association of Korean Descendants of Mexico, which carry out activities to bring the Korean and Mexican community

closer, for example by means of tequio: unpaid community work, and sporting events.

Both associations of Korean residents and descendants are supported by the Embassy of South Korea in Mexico and are very active. Korean companies based in the country often participate in their activities.

In the city of Merida of the state of Yucatan, several civil associations of the diaspora have emerged. The main one is the Korean Association of Yucatan, formed by descendants of Koreans, to preserve Korean culture and promote its history.

This organization has built a Memorial Museum of Korean Immigration, which is located in the former premises of the Korean Association. Since 2007 it has functioned as a museum exhibiting photographs, books, documents, newspaper clippings and traditional clothing of the first Korean migratory wave to Mexico in 1905, together with the history of the creation of the association and the exchanges with the Mexican society. They are also visited by Korean officials and participated in the celebration of the centenary of Korean immigration to Mexico.

In 2005 the Association of Korean Descendants of the state of Campeche was created, to bring together the descendants of Korean immigrants in the region and to share cultural activities. The Association of Young People of Korean Descent of Campeche was recently created to carry out similar tasks but focused on young people.

Currently Korean diaspora in the city of Mexico has 27 Christian churches, one Catholic and two Buddhist temples. And there is a Korean School founded in 2010, thanks to funds donations from local Korean companies and individuals. It is a "Saturday school" where Korean children or learn Korean language and culture. On weekdays, the school offers extracurricular language courses to the local community.

The promotion of taekwondo in Mexico began with the courses of Master Dai Woon Moon in 1968, who moved to Mexico and acquired Mexican nationality in 1975. Nowadays the sport is considered one of the most important in the country, having gained several medals in the Olympics Games. The Mexican Federation of Taekwondo was established by more than thirty schools. (BBC Mundo, 2014)

Salmulnori México Oficial is a Korean traditional music group that participates in musical and cultural events, fairs, contests and festivities. It was established officially as a group in 2007, and the following year was able to compete in the International Samulnori Festival in South Korea.

In Mexico it is possible to observe a greater participation and support of the South Korean government in the diaspora civil organization's activities, while in Argentina there is some cultural promotion and some financial support. For example, Korea Day is celebrated in several Mexican cities, and even the Republic of Korea Day was institutionalized as a holiday every 4th of May, by means of the approval in the Yucatan State Congress. On the other hand, in Argentina the Korea Day is celebrated in the city Buenos Aires only as part of a city government program that includes all foreign cultures in the city.

SOUTH KOREA'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND SOFT POWER

Nowadays the international system is governed by multilateral relations between States, international organizations, and non-state actors, such as civil organizations, religious groups, companies, and diasporas. In this context public diplomacy refers to the relations among the State and foreign societies, in order to inform and influence the audiences according to the objectives of the state policy. It can be understood as the extension of traditional inter-state diplomatic practice, and as an essential tool for governments to increase their soft power.

Soft power is a concept elaborated by Joseph Nye (2004) to describe the power of attractiveness that a State possesses, which allows it to influence the opinion and conduct of others to fulfill its objectives. It's the opposite of hard power, which refers to the use of coercion and economic means to achieve the desired ends. Soft power is constituted by culture, ideology and state policies, which are seen as legitimate by foreign States. As a result the most powerful countries are those with the ability to impose the world agenda, whose ideas and values prevail in international norms and whose credibility is reinforced by their internal actions.

The notion of public diplomacy was constructed during the Cold War when the two superpowers sought for alternative options to increase their

power, such as control of information and persuasion campaigns. This diplomatic practice re-gained importance from 2001, when foreign perceptions of the image of the United States had a direct impact on their national security. The most important elements of public diplomacy is the establishment of long-term ties, the practice of intercultural dialogue, the media, and the emphasis on the importance of social actors as interpreters and recipients. To accomplish this policy, States currently perform activities such as cultural festivals, student exchanges, language courses, exhibitions, seminars, and tourism promotion activities.

An example of public diplomacy are the renowned athletes and artists who serve as honorary ambassadors, in the case of South Korea we can mention the members of the band BTS, who have been declared official ambassadors of Seoul for three consecutive years, as an action to promote tourism. (Koreaboo, 2019)

To Asian States that have a developed economy, as is the case in South Korea, public diplomacy is indispensable as a way to extend their economic influence. In addition, the Republic of Korea is internationally positioned as a middle power and needs to strengthen its soft power to compensate for the relative deficit of its hard power, since is lower in comparison with other States in the region, such as China and Japan. On the other hand, one of the advantages of South Korea, unlike Japan and China, is that it doesn't possess an imperialist historical image.

By means of public diplomacy, the image and role of South Korea in the international system is being reinterpreted and restructured. Starting in 2003, the Government of President Roh Moo-hyun implemented a strategy to promote the image of South Korea as a regional mediator that could bring peace and prosperity. Despite the efforts the motto was criticized as too ambitious for a middle power, so it was decided to change the image of the nation as a bridge to foster cooperation in the region.

Later in 2008, during the administration of President Lee Myung-bak, the South Korea government began to promote a stronger foreign policy linked to soft power and public diplomacy. It was focused on enhancing the image of international responsibility and commitment for the solution of underdevelopment problems, environmental pollution and human security. South Korea tries to shows itself as a model to follow based on its economic

development, its democratic stability and a culture that mix tradition and modernity.

This soft power can be increased by means of public diplomacy in developing countries, such as Mexico and Argentina in Latin America.

DIASPORA AND CIVIL ORGANIZATION'S DIPLOMACY

Public diplomacy can increase its effectiveness by establishing stable relationships between state and non-state actors, which can be archived by means of the diversification of diplomatic actors, such as civil society organizations that share the same values and objectives of the State.

The image and positive reputation of a country is built by means of the information that reaches foreign audiences. In this process the diaspora gain special importance by having an active role in society, where it shows itself as a representative of its culture.

Diaspora diplomacy is a new term that emerged from multidimensional foreign affairs. It is a process where a government re-conceptualizes diaspora members as informal ambassadors in their place of residence, as they collaborate with the diplomatic efforts of their homeland.

Diasporas are a natural tool of public diplomacy, since they act as local support in the dialogue with the host country identity, shaping networks with various groups within the community. They fulfill diplomatic functions like communication, representation, mediation and negotiation.

Diaspora diplomacy is implemented through their civil organizations. These actors represent the institutionalization of the community, and possess a high credibility within the community, based on the fact that they can act autonomously, unlike governments, they can represent various positions, are public opinion makers, and have extensive experience with local networks.

Diasporas contribute to the construction of the national image through cultural interactions, since they share the cultural heritage and express it through art, music, movies, literature, cooking, sport and dance. The promotion of these traditions and values can be considered a form of cultural diplomacy, because it generates an approach with the local community, generating

greater interest in the history, politics and economy of diaspora's home country.

Diaspora organizations, especially those that promote the national image of the country of origin, play a crucial role in promoting bilateral relations, being an indispensable tool for public diplomacy.

To Kishan, there are various ways of linking governments with their diasporas and these relations tend to occur progressively. The first approach of the State to its diaspora is by taking advantage of it in order to participate in social activities in the host country that provide a direct benefit to the foreign policy. The next step is when the State begins to comprehend the motivations and interests of their diaspora, such as the need of access to a visa and citizenship, or the improvement of the quality of life. At last when a two-way networks is established between both actors, diaspora agree to act as a public agent, as this action gives a positive image and visibility to its homeland.

It is important to notice that the linkage strategy between a government and its diaspora will be effective as long as the latter feels that during the process there will be gains for both parties. It is necessary that diasporas members and their organizations must be interested in the promotion of the culture, politics and economy of its homeland, and obtain benefits from a successful result. Therefore relationship of commitment and mutual control must be forged.

Diasporas are made of cultural elements from their homeland and the host country. This characteristic gives them greater potential for creativity and innovation, and at the same time provides more independence and capacity to act pursuing homeland national interest or diaspora self-interest. That is why States must carefully analyze their policies towards diasporas and develop initiatives with their governmental structure that deal with migration issues.

Also it must be taken into consideration that the efficiency of diaspora diplomacy will depend on the degree of openness of the host country, if the local Government accept, reproduce and encourage foreign culture activities or if it limit and prohibited them. In the cases of Argentina and Mexico, both governments promote cultural development and allow the free expression of

their citizens, including migrant communities. This policy is helpful for an efficient development of public diplomacy.

Following the guidelines, the South Korean government has a structure that cooperates with its diasporas, the Overseas Korean Foundation (OKF) oversee by of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This organization collaborates with diasporas abroad to maintain their national identity and to promote the formation of solid communication networks.

Technological advances and social networks have facilitated communication between governments and their diasporas around the world, as well as within the migrant community and its members. For example, the actress and TV host Jini is a member of the Korean community in Argentina who has gained popularity using her YouTube channel “Jinichannel” to reckon about South Korean culture, from language to kpop music and cooking recipes. (JiniChannel, 2019)

In the case of Korean diaspora organizations, the expansion of the Hallyu wave had improved the opportunities for rapprochement with the local community, since the interest in Korean culture had increase, especially among young people. Some organizations have taken advantage of this context, managing to increase their activities, for example by means of various courses on Korean culture, from language to cooking and dance. At the same time South Korean foreign investment and the presence of South Korean companies generate a greater participation from local Government and authorities.

In a report presented in 2005 by the Mexico-Korea XXIth Century Commission of the General Directorate for Asia-Pacific of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, it was informed that the Korean diaspora in Mexico could play a catalytic role in the rapprochement and promotion of the bilateral relationship between South Korea and Mexico. It also argued that "countless channels for exchange and cooperation between the two countries have been created at both official and private levels. However, in almost all cases, the dialogue lacked depth and sense of purpose, particularly at a civil society level, including non-governmental organizations and young people". (SRE, 2005)

Both in Mexico and Argentina, organizations linked to Korean culture are mainly conformed by diaspora members, being the most important exponent of Korean idiosyncrasy, after the Embassy and the Sejong Cultural Center, which are government entities. Therefore diaspora civil organizations are the most important actor in host country, since they built and reproduce the image of the Korean nation, despite they don't receive enough support from the South Korean Government.

Mexico, unlike Argentina, has a newly arrived Korean diaspora, made of businessmen and students, who maintain a high interest and close family ties with the homeland, allowing them to build more effective diplomacy.

In the case of Korean organizations in Argentina, there are two that clearly express the interest of the government, the case of the Association for Korean Unification and the Association of Korean Ladies that deal with the issue of comfort women.

For example, the Civil Association of Koreans in Argentina is in contact daily with the leaders of Commune N°7 and the Police Station of the Barrio de Flores to discuss security and maintenance issues of the Korean neighborhood, with whom, like the Government of the City of Buenos Aires and the Migration Directorate of the National Government, coordinate the celebration of the Korean Day festival every year.

Unlike the case of other diaspora organizations that express the interest of the Korean Government, like the Association for Korean unification and the Association of Korean Women, there are ones that don't summon much official interest.

It is possible to exemplify this situation with the case of two religious organizations in Buenos Aires city, Buddhist and Evangelist. These organizations propose activities, such Korean language courses, to raise funds and attract religious follower, but at the same time they construct an image about Korea in the social imaginary of the local students enrolled in the courses. The main problem they have is the lack of professional language teacher and class structure, which avoid them from granting an language certificate recognized by the Korean authorities.

CONCLUSION

The current international system is complex and interdependent, in consequence the States need to act strategically to improve their power in the changing scenario. The diversification of diplomatic actors has increased as well as their interactions, whereby the domestic and the external realities are intertwined.

Diaspora diplomacy acts as a bridge between nations and collaborates in the development of relations between States. Korean Government has resources with great potential, as the diaspora and their civil organizations, since they are indispensable non-state actors that cooperate with the host States and their citizens into the formation of an efficient soft power. They are mediators, who facilitate communication between the two societies, help to change perceptions and to deconstruct cultural stereotypes.

Korean diasporas in Mexico and Argentina are the largest in Latin America and have civil organizations with the potential to carry out public diplomacy policies.

In Mexico diaspora conformation began more than fifty years earlier than in Argentina, and their members increase day by day, as a result of the arrival of South Korean businessmen and workers of big companies that invest in the country. Argentina has a more integrated diaspora, where members of diverse origin and professions participate together with local people, but they don't reach such a high number as the Korean community in Mexico, as both countries have much more stable economic relations, and are part of organizations such as APEC and MIKTA

For Golan (2013) public diplomacy can be divided in three categories based on the duration of the relations between the State and the foreign audiences. The short-term that includes connections with individuals and groups; the medium-term that refers to the actions in media and social networks; and the long-term strategy that take place when the State can influence in its national reputation constructed abroad.

Diasporas and their civil organizations can be framed within the classification proposed by Golan, since they cooperate with the Korean government in the formation of public diplomacy. On the short term diaspora's organizations can relate with the local community and individuals in particular,

through activities such as the Korean Day festival, language and dance courses, religious events or Taekwondo classes. On medium-term, referred to the media, diasporas have famous community representatives and its civil organizations promote their activities on diverse networks, such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter, and they even have official websites. Finally on long-term the collective action of diasporas collaborates in the construction of a national image in the host society, by presenting themselves as representatives of the Korean nation.

The potential of diaspora and civil organization's diplomacy in Mexico and Argentina has increased, especially since the Hallyu wave, which has generated a greater interest in Latin American youth about South Korean culture.

Therefore it is of interest to promote cooperation between the Korean government and its diaspora, through an adequate awareness of its civil organizations actions with the purpose of engaging them to collaborate in the foreign policy agenda. It is necessary that strong commitment and mutual control exist, together with the involvement of the government and its diaspora. This strategy will be effective as long as the diaspora feels interest and can foresee gains in the process and the outcomes.

ANNEX

OVERSEAS KOREANS BY THEIR RESIDENTIAL STATUSES

Source: Overseas Korean Foundation

Countries with many overseas Koreans

Region		Korean national			Foreign	Total	
		Korean citizens with permanent residency in foreign countries	General	International	Sub	Citizens	
			Visitors	Students	Total		
Total		1,043,210	1,354,220	260,284	2,672,052	4,758,528	7,430,659
Northeast	Japan	379,94	57,718	15,438	453,096	365,53	818,626
Asia	China	6,602	275,338	62,056	349,404	2,198,624	2,548,030
	Sub total	386,542	333,056	77,494	802,5	2,564,154	3,366,656
South Asia Pacific		104,071	343,346	46,115	496,462	61,185	557,739
North	America	416,334	546,144	73,113	1,035,591	1,456,661	2,492,252
America	Canada	57,137	28,861	25,396	111,394	129,548	240,942
	Sub total	473,471	575,005	98,509	1,146,985	1,586,209	2,733,194
Latin America		52,412	15,234	563	68,209	38,585	106,784
Europe		30,258	56,243	36,172	122,673	508,062	630,73
Africa		2,342	7,534	816	10,692	157	10,854
Middle East		114	23,802	615	24,531	176	24,707

No	Country	Number of overseas Koreans
1	China	2,548,030
2	United States	2,492,252
3	Japan	818,626
4	Canada	240,942
5	Uzbekistan	181,077
6	Australia	180,044
7	Russia	169,68
8	Vietnam	124,458
9	Kazakhstan	109,132
10	Philippines	93,093
11	Brazil	51,534
12	Germany	40,17
13	United Kingdom	39,934
14	New Zealand	33,403
15	Indonesia	31,091
16	Argentina	23,194
17	Thailand	20,5
18	Singapore	20,346
19	Kyrgyz Republic	19,035
20	France	16,251
21	Malaysia	13,122
22	Ukraine	13,07
23	Mexico	11,673
24	United Arab Emirates	10,852
25	Cambodia	10,089
26	India	10,388
27	Taiwan	6,293
28	Guatemala	5,312
29	Paraguay	5,09
30	Spain	4,52
Etc.		87,458
Total number of overseas Koreans		7,430,659
(in 194 countries)		

Source: Overseas Korean Foundation

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