Preparing for Rainy Days:

Swedish and South Korean Narratives on the Sunshine Policy

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'On the days like today, where thin rain falls

I am reminded of your shadow

Our memories, which secretly lie in the drawer

I get them out again and alone I remember

Why didn't I know the weight

of break-up and sadness?

If it's not too late

Will we be able to go back to what we were?'

Kwon Ji-yong

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the correlation between national role conceptions, national identities and sensemaking processes among South Korean and Swedish policy influencers during the Sunshine Policy years of 1998-2003. The study relies on in depth semi-structured interviews with 10 policy influencers who work with North Korea policies. Starting from Holsti's (1970) national role conceptions and Weick's (1995) sensemaking processes, this thesis found that South Korean policy influencers experienced national role conceptions of regional subsystem collaborator, active independent and a role conception named 'reunifier.' Swedish interviewees experienced role conceptions of mediator-integrator and bridge. The contested national identities among South Korean citizens led to stronger narratives and was the explanation among South Korean policy influencers for the limited success of the Sunshine Policy. For the Swedish policy influencers, party political identity took precedence over national identity in how policy influencers acted in relation with North Korea. Furthermore, a shift in national role conceptions among the South Korean policy influencers from active independent to reunifier had correlation with stronger beliefs in the effects of the Sunshine Policy, whereas a strengthening of Swedish national role conceptions of mediator-integrator and bridge had a correlation with fatigue and disbelief in the effects of the Sunshine Policy.

Keywords: *Sunshine Policy, Foreign policy, Sweden, South Korea, National role conceptions, Sensemaking, National identity.*

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ABBREVIATIONS AND VOCABULARY

EU: European Union

DPRK: Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)

NNSC: Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (containing Sweden and Switzerland), part of regulating relations between North and South Korea

North-South Joint Declaration: Often referred to as the June 15th Agreement or June 15th Declaration, a declaration signed by North and South Korea on 15 June 2000 highlighting the ultimate goal of reunification

KDJ: Kim Dae-jung, late President of South Korea and the maker of the Sunshine Policy

ROK: Republic of Korea (South Korea)

South-South conflict (남남갈등): Name for the general domestic debate regarding how South Korea should position itself against North Korea

UN: United Nations

A NOTE ON KOREAN NAMES

There are many possible ways to write Korean names in English. This thesis generally follows the most common romanisation of the late North Korean leader Kim Jong Il (instead of other possible romanisations such as Kim Chung Il). As to the late South Korean President Kim Dae-jung (rather than Kim Dae Jung) and other South Korean names, they are written according to the ALA-LC Romanization Table (ALA-LC, n.d., pp.12-13). As to geographical names, there is no romanisation system that has been agreed upon at the United Nations conferences on the standardisation of geographical names (United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, 2004, p.20). Therefore, geographical names are written as they were written in source material or as they are most often written in daily use.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

On 25 February 1998, late President Kim Dae-jung took the highest office in South Korea. At the core of his politics was the Sunshine Policy (햇볕 정책), which presented a three-stage approach to reunification of the Korean Peninsula. The largest achievement of the Sunshine Policy was the summit between North and South Korea in June 2000, which was the first meeting between two leaders of the countries since the Korean War. (Oberdorfer and Carlin, 2013). During this summit, the countries reached an agreement on five points: 1) to settle the issue of reunification, 2) to encourage peaceful reunification, 3) to solve humanitarian problems, 4) to encourage cooperation and economic exchange, and 5) to maintain a dialogue between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. The conclusions of the meeting were put to print in what was called the North-South Joint Declaration, often referred to as the June 15th Agreement or June 15th Declaration. (United States Institute of Peace, 2000). A meeting between the United States and North Korea was also planned at the time, but later cancelled (Oberdorfer and Carlin, 2013).

Since these historical events, extensive research has been made on the Sunshine Policy and also South Korean national role conceptions during the Sunshine Policy years (see Levin & Yong-sup, 2003; Karim, 2018 and Jonsson, 2006) as well as Swedish national role conceptions in foreign policy in a more general context (Holsti, 1970). However, in-depth analysis of policy influencers' narratives on the Sunshine Policy is lacking in literature and research. By understanding the sensemaking processes and perceptions of individuals who create, destroy, develop and affect peace-making processes on the Korean Peninsula we can further understand the directions policies and actions regarding North and South Korea have taken.

1.1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The Sunshine Policy was not the first nor the last time DPRK, ROK and the United States moved towards warmer relations. Attempts to negotiate aid in exchange of disarmament deals with North Korea previous to the Sunshine Policy failed and steps towards each other have often occurred juxtaposed to hostile actions between the countries. For example, in

1983, a proposal from DPRK for three-way talks with the United States and ROK coincided with an assassination attempt against the South Korean President Chun Doo-hwan, leading to a failure in engagement. However, after DPRK's Red Cross sent emergency supplies to ROK after severe floods in 1984, talks resumed and resulted in the first ever reunification of separated Korean families in 1985, only to dissolute with the United States-South Korean military exercise, Team Spirit, in 1986, which antagonised DPRK. (Oberdorfer & Carlin, 2013).

In 1994, apprehension over North Korea's nuclear program eventually led to the Agreed Framework between the United States and DPRK. The Agreed Framework called upon Pyongyang to stop the operations and constructions of nuclear reactors that were suspected to occur by the United States. In exchange, the United States would supply North Korea with fuel oil pending construction of the reactors. (Arms Control Association, 2018). Yet, the most notable attempt of achieving peace on the Korean Peninsula occurred when late South Korean President Kim Dae-jung announced his today famous Sunshine Policy towards North Korea. This eventually led to the first Inter-Korean summit, which occurred between Kim Dae-jung and late leader of DPRK Kim Jong Il in June 2000. The summit was followed in August the same year by a reunion of Korean families separated by the border and in September, the North and South Korean teams marched together at the Sydney Olympics to mark their intentions of reunification. (Oberdorfer and Carlin, 2013). Trade between the countries increased, and South Korea became North Korea's largest trading partner. To ease this process, the Kaesong Industrial Region was founded with the aims of allowing South Korean businesses to invest in the North in 2003 (Chang, 2017).

The Sunshine Policy was unique for its time in that it was a shift in attitude from the South Korean side from suspicious to peaceful and warming. Scholars and politicians have long debated whether the Sunshine Policy was a success or failure and discussed the potential of the 2010's South Korean administrations' policies toward North Korea. (Kwon, 2014). However, less research has been done on policy influencers' reasonings in executing the policy. Being able to understand reasonings and perceptions behind policies can bring further insights to how they came to exist and why they were received the way they were.

Sweden has a long history of respectable relations with both South and North Korea and has played an important part in negotiations between the United States and North Korea as the representative of consular interests of Australia, Canada, the Nordic Countries and the United States. In 2009, Sweden celebrated 50 years of diplomatic relations with South Korea (the Swedish Government, 2018). Additionally, Sweden has been a neutral observer in North and South Korea for over 50 years through the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) (Försvarsmakten, 2019) and has, through various activities, played an active role in the peace process (Kim, 2000). Although research has been made about the relations between Sweden and North Korea the information about Sweden and South Korea relations, particularly politically, is very limited. This thesis provides another piece of information of how the relations between Sweden and South Korea have been perceived by policy influencers in a conflict context by analysing perceptions of Sweden's role on the Korean Peninsula by both South Korean and Swedish policy influencers.

1.2. STUDY AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION

The thesis is a study of policy practitioners' sensemaking of the Sunshine Policy and the national role conceptions that influenced sensemaking processes in Sweden and South Korea during 1998-2002. International relations theorists have long discussed national role conceptions as potential causal variables for explaining foreign policies of nations (Holsti, 1970, p.234). Learning about how role conceptions and sensemaking processes interact during one major policy shift could teach us something about how current events on the Korean Peninsula are viewed, as sensemaking processes as well as role conceptions function over a long period of time as well as within organisations as a whole. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to map out prominent national role conceptions that were influential for South Korean and Swedish policy influencers during the Sunshine Policy years and investigate the sensemaking processes that were affected by these. The research question for this thesis is:

- How do perceived national role conceptions and identities relate to and affect policy influencers' narratives of Swedish and South Korean foreign policy toward North Korea between 1998-2003?

To answer this question, the analysis is divided into two main sub-questions:

- What were the national role conceptions and identities of South Korean and Swedish policy influencers during the Sunshine Policy years?

- How do the national role conceptions relate to the policy influencers' sensemaking processes of the Sunshine Policy?

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The expected outcomes, importance and significance of the research are to find deeper explanations to what national role conceptions and identities within the Swedish and South Korean policy influencers in the situation on the Korean Peninsula look like. This will be useful in outlining the narratives that affect the way policy influencers think about and address the North Korean issue. As national role conceptions prevail over time (Holsti, 1970, p.297) and the Sunshine Policy was a shift of national role conceptions in South Korea while strengthening national role conceptions in Sweden, these role conceptions are useful in present time as well as for explaining history. Thus, this research is an insightful addition to the scarce literature on national role conceptions in a Sunshine Policy context and on how sensemaking processes affect policy influencers, which can be used in the fields of, for example, foreign policy and organisational studies.

In his extensive book about the two Koreas, Don Oberdorfer (Oberdorfer and Carlin, 2013, p.856) made last remarks that are staggeringly similar to what could be written about the Koreas in present time.

> It seems clear to me the two sides have reached a historical turning point in their relations, but it is not possible to forecast with any assurance the nature or even the direction of further change, whether toward greater cooperation or intensified hostility. I believe, however, that the future of their relationship is likely to be different from that of the past. To a greater degree than before, the two Koreas appear to have taken their fate into their own hands. Nonetheless, the impact of the outside powers continues to be extensive.

By reviewing and analysing similar events from the past, we can gain insight about the present, although the similarities should of course not be exaggerated. Through analysing the policy influencers' reasonings through the lenses of national role conceptions and

sensemaking processes, it is possible to gain a deeper insight to the way the Swedish and South Korean governments deal with the North Korea issue as well as how correlating the perceptions are.

1.4. THESIS DISPOSITION

This thesis is divided in six main chapters. Following this introduction, chapter 2 outlines the theories of national role conceptions, national identity and sensemaking. Chapter 3 reviews relevant literature on the Sunshine Policy in relation to South Korea and Sweden, Swedish and South Korean national identities as well as a brief mention of the current Moonshine Policy to provide context for the study. Following this, chapter 4 presents procedures of the research methodology. In chapter 5, the main findings and analysis of these are presented. Lastly, the 6th chapter offers conclusions based on the findings and analysis and provides an answer to the research question.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTS

This chapter introduces the concepts of national role conceptions, national identity and sensemaking and contextualises these for the case of Sweden and South Korea.

2.1. NATIONAL ROLE CONCEPTIONS

When bridging the gap between identity and foreign policy in empirical research projects, some researchers have turned to the study of national role conceptions. The theory of national role conceptions combines the bigger picture with a more agency-focused perspective, which is appropriate when reviewing the perceptions of individual foreign policy influencers. A role conception is defined as a set of norms that express expected foreign policy behaviour and action orientation, which foreign policymakers use to simplify and facilitate an understanding of a complex political reality. (Aggestam, 1999).

Roles differ from policy actions in important ways; whereas policies are discrete responses to a domestic or foreign issue, roles are 'ideational constructs which, consciously or unconsciously, inform leaders how to respond to external situations in accordance with a certain identity, set of values, or standards and norms' (Walker, 1987; Aras and Goerener, 2010; Breuning, 2013). K.J. Holsti (1970) developed a theoretical framework on national role conceptions to assist the analysis of foreign policy. He aimed to find out how states can take on different roles and thus behaviours in the international political system (Cantir and Kaarbo, 2012, p.6). Additionally, Holsti (1970, p.246) states that 'a national role conception includes the policymakers' own definitions of the general kinds of decisions, commitments, rules and actions suitable to their state, and of the functions, if any, their state should perform on a continuing basis in the international system or in subordinate regional system'. Thus, policymakers will shape foreign policies according to the ruling role conceptions of the policymakers and the state. A state can construct these roles for itself, but roles can also be shaped from the external environment or be imposed by other states (Holsti, 1970, p.240). The framework of National Role Conceptions is still being widely used today, although theories of national role conceptions have developed in a post-cold war structural manner and has been used with new, individualized categories according to findings in various specific studies. (see Pehlivantürk, 2016; Han 2017; Ifantis, Triantaphyllou and Kotelis, 2015). However, using Holsti's basic national role conceptions gives a basic understanding of the possible role conceptions, and as these are still being widely used it is considered an acceptable basis for this research to develop its owns findings from.

Holsti (1970, p.293) identifies two main categories of role conceptions for a state, namely those of conflict and collaboration. In the category of conflict, Holsti places liberator supporter, anti-imperialist agent, defender of the faith, bastion of the revolution and regional protector. In the category of collaborator, Holsti identifies the role conceptions of regional subsystem collaborator, mediator-integrator, developer, active independent and bridge. Small states tend to offer mediation or peace-keeping services in conflict situations due to their lack of direct involvement in crisis areas, making the collaborative roles applicable for Sweden. (Holsti, 1970, p.242). Due to this as well as the nature of the Sunshine Policy, this thesis focuses on the collaborative national role conceptions. However, differing types of role conceptions for one nation are not mutually exclusive. National role conceptions that seem conflicting or incompatible must be separated by relating each role conception to a

certain set of relationships. It is only when incompatible national role conceptions are expressed within the context of a particular relationship that predicting foreign policy decisions becomes challenging. (Holsti, 1970, p.304).

The role of mediator-integrator is defined as the perception of having a capability of or responsibility of fulfilling or undertaking certain tasks with the aim of solving conflicts between other states (Holsti, 1970, p.265). The role of regional subsystem-collaborator differentiates itself from the mediator-integrator category in that regional subsystem-collaborators indicate quite far-reaching commitments towards cooperation with other states to build greater communities (ibid., p.265). The developer, however, is permeated by the perception of having a duty or obligation to assist underdeveloped countries, often enforcing this perception by referring to certain skills or advantages that justify these actions (ibid., p.266). The role conception of bridge is often vaguely defined and result in vague and no policies. The themes of the bridge include possessing a communicative function and conveying messages between various cultures Lastly, the active independent role implies suggestions of active efforts to manage and take care of relations with as many states as possible and interposition into bloc conflicts in certain exceptional situations. States with this role conception see both independence and self-determination as well as mediation and activities that extend diplomatic and commercial relations to various states in the world as necessary. (ibid., p.262).

When studying national role conceptions, role theory is applied from social psychology onto the relationships between states. A role in this context is understood as a comprehensive pattern of attitudes and behaviour, which when united create a strategy for coping with a set of situations. In the context of foreign policy, this includes policy-makers' conception of the signifier of the nation in the international domain. (Aras and Gorener, 2010). One critique of Holsti's theory is that it is not always sufficient; there could be many contested roles among elites, as well as contested roles between elites and public. These can in turn affect the national roles and the state's foreign policy behaviour. (Cantir and Kaarbo, 2012, p.5). Despite the critique against Holsti's theory, it is still useful as a broad theoretical framework for understanding the perceptions of a state's national role conceptions if one keeps in mind new findings on national role conceptions. Brummer and Thies (2014, p.290) discovered in

their study of contested national role conceptions that party political identities can take precedence over national identities. Moreover, in coalition governments (such as Sweden 1998-2003), no conflict within cabinets was found based on ideological differences among parties in the coalitions. Holsti (1970, p.296) identified Swedish national role conceptions as those of mediator-integrator, regional subsystem-collaborator and as an active neutral country within various contexts of foreign policy. Moreover, Holsti (1970, p.294) could not find sufficient material to apply any national role conceptions to South Korea in his original study.

2.2. NATIONAL IDENTITY

According to post-structural theories of identity, national identities are specific types of discursive social identities. These are produced, reproduced, transfigured and dismantled by semiotic systems (De Cillia et al. 1999, p.153). Additionally, according to these theories, a single national identity does not exist for any nation. Rather, various identities are constructed by discourse depending on its contexts, social field, situation and topic. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that national identities often are dynamic, brittle and inconsistent. (Ibid., p.154). Furthermore, studying national identities in specific international context becomes useful to understanding a country's action in that specific context.

The discursive features of national identity not only allow for the possibility of the existence of different identities at different points in history, but also enable coexisting identities at any given point of history. Identity is a relational context that requires an 'other' that the notion of a collective self can be articulated against. National identity is connected to conceptions about sovereignty and statehood in many ways. Foreign policy is therefore framed when a political community is recognised as a sovereign state in the international system. (Aggestam, 1999). Furthermore, national identity determines national interests, which in turn produce policies (Hall, ref. in Heo and Jung, 2007), rendering the analysis of national identities useful for this thesis. According to Howell (1997, p.26), foreign policy is central to people's sense of national identity as well as their understanding of the own nation's justification, role and values.

2.3. SENSEMAKING

Sensemaking is the process of individuals constructing meaning around decisions and change based on their previous experiences, beliefs and identity (Weick, 1995). Sensemaking as a theory has primarily been used to study organisational change, but has also been applied to the study of other situations that involve uncertainty. Sensemaking is defined by Weick (1995, p.17) as the following:

[…] a process that is 1. grounded in identity construction 2. Retrospective 3. Enactive of sensible environments 4. Social 5. Ongoing 6. Focused on and by extracted cues 7. Driven by plausibility rather than accuracy.

These characteristics of sensemaking were outlined as a rough guideline for the understanding of sensemaking, the way it works and the aspects of sensemaking that are basis of risk of failure. Additionally, sensemaking often occurs in cases of ambiguity and uncertainty. In situations with ambiguity, individuals engage in sensemaking to weed out the many possible interpretations of the situation, and in cases of uncertainty, sensemaking processes occur due to individuals being unheeding to any existing interpretations. It is important to note that sensemaking is not the same thing as interpretation: interpretation regards processes where individuals attend to cues and interpreting, externalising and linking these cues, whereas sensemaking regards rationalising an event that has already occurred. (Weick, 1995, p.19).

At the foundation of sensemaking lies taking either a belief or an action, whichever is clearer to the individual, and linking the new belief or action with whatever is perceived as less clear using existing beliefs. When sensemaking derives from beliefs, it is done so through either arguing or expecting. In cases of arguing as the primary form of sensemaking, the individual amplifies and strengthens previously weak definitions of the situation using new information. In cases of expecting as the principal sensemaking process, meaning is formed when the individual connects a cue to an expectancy, which they then use to test different associations of the cue. If the expectations match reality to a satisfactory

level, the sensemaker can gain confidence in their appraisal of a situation. Expectations are usually more impactfully held than arguments, which means that expectations filter the input of information more heavily. This increases the risk of social constructs becoming more inaccurate, filled with mistakes and limits their scopes. Expectations are met when individuals combine selective attention with direct influence of a sensegiver (a person using their influence to implement a sensemaking process in others). In addition to this, self-fulfilling prophecies are a common element of expectations in sensemaking processes. These are often said to derive from false preconceptions, rendering the question: false for whom? (Weick, 1995, p.34).

According to Weick's (1995) theory of sensemaking, when complexity increases the perception of uncertainty often also increases due to a variety of diverse elements interacting in an interdependent manner. This affects what individuals notice and what they choose to neglect. It is of importance to acknowledge that individuals take notice of what they believe and do not see what they do not believe in. Thus, the more beliefs are put into a repertoire, the more a situation will be noticed and solutions will be identified, causing a higher chance to deepen knowledge of the situation. (Ibid). Accordingly, for a sensemaking process to occur, individuals must isolate a question. Isolation in the context of sensemaking is a process in which individuals focus their attention on a specific question or event. Isolation principally occurs when events affect the individual cause interruption, i.e. extraordinary events with either positive or negative connotations (von Platen, 2006).

As the Sunshine Policy introduced a significant change in how North and South Korea relations were dealt with, sensemaking can be a useful lens to analyse these changes through. Due to the findings that there were changes of national identity and national role conceptions in South Korea and strengthening of old national identity and national role conceptions in Sweden, explaining the sensemaking processes of the policy influencers shows how these dealt with the changes of policies and why the outcomes in terms of attitudes and conceptions differentiated between the countries.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review focuses on the works examining the Sunshine Policy in general and South Korea's and Sweden's roles in the Sunshine Policy in particular. In the first section,

the Sunshine Policy is presented and discussed. As existing literature has a heavy focus on the domestic-centric perspective, an emphasis is put on the domestic views of the Sunshine Policy. Within the context of this, as the Sunshine Policy was compared by many interviewees to the current South Korean government's North Korea policies, the current so-called Moonshine Policy (named after South Korean President Moon Jae-in's similar approach towards North Korea) is briefly mentioned. In the second section, literature on South Korean and Swedish national role conceptions and identities for the context of this study are reviewed. The chapter ends with a brief discussion on existing literature.

3.1. THE SUNSHINE POLICY

The Sunshine Policy (햇볕 정책) came to life when Kim Dae-jung was elected President of the Republic of Korea in 1998. It was named after the idea that it is simpler to make a man remove his coat by giving him sunshine than by blowing hard wind at him. (de Bear, 2015). The policy had four main objectives: (1) to encourage allies to actively engage North Korea; (2) to address North Korea's economic and humanitarian needs above responding to its strengths; (3) to concentrate on solvable problems and not revisit the more onerous issues until substantial progress had been made; and (4) to use both dialogue and deterrence, in contrast to previous focus on mainly deterrence. (Levin and Yong-Sup, 2003 p.65).

The design of the Sunshine Policy was of such to promote peace and mutual prosperity, thus moving away from strategies that resulted in stagnation where dialogue was put to a halt whenever conflicts arose between the two Koreas. The policy also prioritised a strong defence through South Korea's alliance with the United States and creating an environment where North Korea could feel safe enough to open up and pursue political and economic reforms (Levin and Yong-Sup, 2003 p.67). Many cultural activities were conducted between 1998-2002 as a part of the Sunshine Policy, among them 'The National Unification Concert' in Pyongyang December 1999 and the 'Peace and Friendship Concert 2000' in Pyongyang. The results of the change in policy towards North Korea included increasing cooperation, South Korea becoming North Korea's third largest trading partner and an increase in contact, tourism and humanitarian aid to North Korea. (Jonsson, 2006 pp.64-65).

The Sunshine Policy has been reviewed in many contexts, and a particular focus can be set on the domestic-centric analysis of the Sunshine Policy. In South Korea, there have long been severe divides between conservatives and the progressives. The former has tended to focus on relative power balances, whereas the latter puts their emphasis on the promotion of economic collaborations, making of institutions and forming a desired identity that promotes security cooperation. (Snyder and Easly, 2014 p.1). In popular opinion, pro-America in a South Korean context equals anti-North Korea, and vice versa. This fundamental difference in opinions, as well as the different ways of perceiving and dealing with North Korea, has led to a difficulty between the two sides of the debate to reconcile (Heo and Woo, 2007, p.151). These domestic debates as well as the structural deliberations of needing to show consideration of its bigger neighbours as well as a divided peninsula has additionally reserved Korean diplomacy. (Snyder and Easly, 2014 p.1). It has been argued that the polarisation of South Korea-United States alliance identity against North Korea was established through the Sunshine Policy and the support given by the Clinton administration. Heo and Woo (2007, p.155) argue that the engagement policy of the time played an important role in embedding inter-Korean national identity, thus producing a 'we-feeling' between North and South Korea.

When President Moon Jae-in took office in South Korea in May 2017, attempts towards a modern Sunshine Policy were implemented. Moon's administration, partly together with the Trump administration in the United States, has conducted activities to improve relations with North Korea. Cultural and sports activities, such as competing in the Olympics in inter-Korean teams and sending South Korean artists to perform in Pyongyang, have been mixed with attempts of deterrence in the form of sanctions as well as inter-Korean and US-Korean summits to reinforce a relationship with North Korea. (Kim, 2019).

3.2. THE SOUTH-SOUTH CONFLICT

The South-South conflict (남남갈등) was coined as a term following the inter-Korean summit in June 2000, and became a mainstream term after a controversial visit of South Koreans in 2001 for Pyongyang's 'National Unification Festival.' The conflicts between conservatives and liberals regarding North Korea policies received widespread media

coverage in Korea and abroad, adding to the international impression that Korea was struggling with the conflicts regarding the policy approaches. Confrontations are not unusual as a consequence of policy changes, and South Korea experienced a major change from being ruled by strongly anti-communist conservatives for decades to a president who believed in inter-Korean reconciliation, which gives explanation to the domestic tension. (NAPSNet Policy Forum, 2005).

When reviewing the South-South conflict, first impression tells us that the conflict is a continuing confrontation between conservatives and liberals, which appeared after the liberation of Korea in 1945. During 1998-2002, there were still many people who had experience with the Korean War, to whom North Korea is an object of opposition, mainly due to the groups' anti-communist values. However, in a post-Cold War and post-Soviet context, the anti-communist/pro-communist debate evolved to new scopes, certainly as the Kim Dae-jung administration did not support the political system of North Korea. Due to this, the debates shifted focus to how change of the North Korean system should occur. Many of the conflicts derived from economic interests regarding North Korea, as some groups gained from the changes of policy and other groups felt marginalised by them. However, the largest driver behind the conflict has, by some, been identified as the political struggle for power between the conservative and liberal parties in South Korea. (NAPSNet Policy Forum, 2005.).

3.3. NATIONAL ROLE CONCEPTIONS & IDENTITY IN SOUTH KOREA

The election win of late President Kim Dae-jung in 1997 invoked a change in South Korean politics. It was the first power transition to the opposition since the country became democratic in 1987. The new administration brought in new political elites, which led to policy changes, including the legislation of the teachers' labour union. This legislation brought dominance of union members at schools and thus impacted the younger generation's perceptions of North Korea and the United States. The union's perception included views such as North Korea being a part of the Korean nation, and that American troops were staying in South Korea for national interests rather than for the protection of South Korea. (Heo and Woo, 2007 p.153).

In 1994, a summit meeting between North and South Korea was proposed by President Kim Young-sam. However, after the death of Kim Il Sung in July 1994, the meeting was cancelled. In 1996, the Kim Young-sam administration proposed four party talks with North Korea, the United States and China. The administration also attempted other efforts to improve relations, such as providing 150 000 tons of rice in 1995 and demanding official dialogues in return for the aid. However, this had repercussions domestically by the opposition. (Heo and Woo, 2007, p.158). Thus, in 1998, as Kim Dae-jung introduced the Sunshine Policy it followed new role conceptions and was introduced in the shadow of previous failures of policies that followed the preceding role conceptions. This created a situation with two competing sets of role conceptions among South Korean citizens and the government that became more prevalent than previously.

Heo and Jung (2007), bring up two perspectives on national identity in South Korea that can affect policies toward North Korea, namely the state-centric paradigm and the nation-centric paradigm. According to the state-centric perspective, the Koreas should be viewed as two separate states. Because of this, the relationship has antagonistic characteristics and thus, the national interest of South Korea is the state's survival as a sovereign entity against a North Korean military threat. This perspective was especially dominant during the authoritarian regimes of South Korea (1945-1993). In contrast to the state-centric, the nation-centric perspective views the inter-Korean issue to be a domestic issue within the two Koreas for the Korean people in the South and North to manage. When the inter-Korean issue is viewed from this perspective, the conclusion is often that South Korea's policy toward North Korea should emphasise the North Korean people, and thus reconciliation and cooperation are the goals of interaction. Furthermore, according to this perspective cooperation in non-political sectors can promote political integration and unification. This perspective was prominent after the transition to democracy and particularly under the Kim Dae-jung administration's Sunshine Policy (Campbell, 2015).

South Korean national identity and the Sunshine Policy provide a complex situation to analyse, as the premise of the Sunshine Policy erases North Korea as the 'other' to which South Korea could mirror itself against. Therefore, an identity of sameness can be said to occur in the shaping of the Sunshine Policy and inter-Korean relations, which points to a

nation-centric approach to the Korean issue. As for the 'other' in Korean identity, the processes of legitimacy that historically formed Korean identity mainly involved resisting force and influence from the outside world, such as Japan and China rather than North Korea. (Snyder & Easly, 2017, p.425). Domestically, political views are divided on issues regarding North Korean human rights violations and dealing with North Korea, which has created numerous identity-related debates that are referred to as the 'South-South divide' or the South-South conflict. These debates have not only affected South Korean policies toward North Korea, but also the domestic perception of South Korea's relations with the United States and the world. (Snyder & Easly, 2014). Despite the previous research made on South Korean national identity, little research has been made on how policy influencers react to, identify with and manage these contesting national identities.

3.4. NATIONAL ROLE CONCEPTIONS & IDENTITY IN SWEDEN

In the post-war period, Sweden's national identity had at its core small-state realism, with self-righteousness and neutrality as prominent features in the context of conflict situations. (Östling, 2011, p.127). Realists have generally accepted the existence of neutral states, but have been unable to provide persuasive arguments for and explanations of the influence of neutrality due to the fact that neutrality does not fall under mainstream realist thought. (Simpson, 2017). After the Second World War, Sweden did in some manners diverge from strict neutrality but kept a policy on the whole of resistance and efforts in favour of peace. The humanitarian efforts made by Sweden after the war have been heavily emphasised, continuing in international commitments made in the 1950s and 1960s. Over time, Swedish national identity became a combination of small-state realism and small-state idealism, where Sweden could be an actor in international politics as a neutral and peace-promoting democracy. (Östling, 2011, p.129). During the Cold War, Swedish foreign policy was permeated by neutrality and non-alignment, something that would be depicted as an 'exercise in hypocrisy' (Ibid., p.139) and during the 1990s the post-war construction of neutrality in Sweden was challenged and debated. This led to a change from a patriotic to a more universalistic narrative of Swedish national identity in conflict situations. Self-criticism and a movement away from national sovereignty towards international engagement started occurring around this time. (Ibid., p.136).

Little research has been done on Sweden and its role in the Sunshine Policy efforts. Despite this, Sweden played an important role in the events of 1998-2002 with the help of its neutral profile. To put the importance of the role Sweden has played on the Korean Peninsula in the words of President Kim Dae-jung (2000):

> After the war, as a member of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission, [Sweden] has continued to contribute to maintaining the peace on the Korean peninsula. As the only EU member country to keep resident diplomatic missions in both Seoul and Pyongyang, it enjoys the trust of both South and North Korea [...] Korea and Sweden share the ideals of democracy, market economics and social welfare. [The two countries] are bound by the common aspiration to oppose war and nurture peace.

Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson was the first leader of a Western nation to visit North Korea, which he did as an EU initiative in August 2001 (Hwang, 2001). Sweden has a nearly 60 years long diplomatic relationship to North Korea and this was used by Mr. Persson during the time of Sweden's EU presidency to enhance relationships by using the neutrality of the European Union in general and Sweden in particular when it comes to the Korean Peninsula issue. Göran Persson also brought the EU security affairs chief Javier Solana and EU foreign affairs commissioner Chris Patten. During the meeting in Pyongyang, Kim Jong Un let the EU delegation know of an interest in 'the Swedish model' (with regards to social welfare and economics). Before returning to Europe, Göran Persson visited South Korea to meet with Kim Dae-jung. (Olsson and Thunblad, 2001). Research on how these efforts were born from and fed into the Swedish national identity of small-state idealism and active neutrality could be of significance to understanding Swedish policy behaviours.

3.5. Discussion on Existing Literature

The existing literature on the Sunshine Policy and Swedish and South Korean policies has thus far had its main focus on activities, outcomes and domestic-centric perspectives with focus on citizens and polls. This thesis adds an organisational narrative perspective to foreign policy studies by examining the perceptions of national identity, national role conceptions and the sensemaking processes of individual policy influencers as parts of

larger organisations (mainly think tanks and foreign ministries). By adding an organisational narrative perspective, one can review the driving forces that affect policy influencers and thus policy outcomes. Weick (1995) puts focus on organising processes and emphasises interactions and co-constructions of thoughts. In Weick's narrative perspective, one studies narratives in situations of change, controversy or cogitation to find the narrative intelligence of actors and their ability to co-construct and understand stories, which from this perspective is considered to be the foundation of theories of discursive thought and the ability of common action (Giroux & Marroquin, 2005).

4. METHODOLOGY

This chapter clarifies the research method of the thesis. The first part, section 4.1, explains the study design. The second part of this chapter, section 4.2 to 4.3, explains what data is collected and how the data is collected. In the third part of this chapter, section 4.4 to 4.7, the challenges, limitations, risks and ethical issues for the fieldwork and the role I play are outlined.

4.1. STUDY DESIGN

When analysing the material gathered, I took on an abductive approach to the existing theories in comparison to my thesis question, meaning that I returned to the theoretical framework during the analysis, and thus derived from having a theory to "prove" (Ong, 2012). Bryman (2016, p.100) states that reading the literature is something one should to do more or less throughout the entire research process, as was done for this research. As my gathering of data was be through performance of interviews with policy influencers, it was important to let the empirical data 'speak for itself' (Eksell and Thelander, 2014). In addition to that, when studying a social phenomenon the outcome of the study is usually not clear from the beginning (Ong, 2012), which means that the theories used and the academic material needed to be updated during the writing process.

The analysis and gathering of empirical data was conducted at the same time as the gathering of theory and existing material in order to confirm and revise the thesis and make

it relevant for the research from both a methodological and analysis perspective. According to Eksell and Thelander (2014), this method allows the researcher to pick out relevant and interesting themes, but it can also mean that the quality of the data used in the analysis is based on the researcher's ability to detect these themes. Therefore, the coding of material was useful in organising and recognising themes.

4.2. SAMPLING

Sampling should be executed based on a set of specific criteria, which is also known as purposive sampling (Bryman, 2016, p.418). The criteria for interviewees in this thesis were: 1) representatives of their state in foreign affairs 2) having relevant experience of the North Korean issue, 3) having personally experienced the Sunshine Policy. The empirical material was gathered through qualitative, semi-structured interviews. On the South Korean side, I interviewed five policy influencers from relevant organisations that were involved in the Sunshine Policy. These included two high-up employees at the Korean Institute for National Unification (KINU), one high-up executive at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security (IFANS) as well as two diplomats from the Republic of Korea's Foreign Ministry. On the Swedish side, I also interviewed five policy influencers: two former diplomats who worked with the Sunshine Policy, one employee at the Swedish Foreign Ministry's Asia Unit, one diplomat currently working with North Korea and one former leader in the Swedish North Korean policies. All of the respondents matched my criteria.

4.3. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS AND CONTEXTUALISING THE FIELD

For the Korean interviewees, I first attempted to reach them by contacts and through emails and phone calls. However, the gatekeepers, who in this case were assistants of the interviewees, blocked my access to the individuals repeatedly. In the cases where I could reach the respondents immediately, I received no response to my attempts of outreach. Therefore, I followed a more unorthodox procedure while in Korea, which needs to be discussed.

To gain access, I went to the offices of the respondents and told the literal gatekeepers (the people sitting at the gate and/or reception) that I wanted to see said respondent. Due to the poor English skills of the gatekeepers, they either let me in without further questions when I showed emails between me and the respondents, or they called the respondents who after a conversation decided to let me in. Consequently, the interviews occurred immediately after I entered the respondents' offices for the first time, and the question of anonymity and consent were discussed on the spot as my good fortune would have that the respondents had time to spare for an interview immediately. Due to the uneven power relation between the respondents and me, I felt comfortable doing this as they had the power to say no to an interview. Furthermore, I ensured to give the respondents the opportunity to tell me that they did not have time for an interview by suggesting this to them. This was the case for four of the respondents. As they had all read my emails without replying, they were surprised to see me at their office but happy to give interviews as they had all done research themselves and saw the value in research on the subject. The fifth respondent from Korea was a previous contact whom I had scheduled an interview with weeks ahead of time. For the Swedish respondents, I used my contacts and professional email addresses to gain immediate access to the interviewees I was pursuing. The interviews were set up ahead of time, giving the interviewees the opportunity to change their mind and/or ask any questions they might have as well as ensure anonymity if wanted.

The interviews in Korea were held between 29 January and 11 February 2019. The interviews in Sweden were held between 28 February - 16 March 2019. All interviews but one took place at the respondents' offices or at a café of the respondents' choosing to ensure that the interviewees were comfortable with the interview settings; the last interview was held via Skype as the respondent lives in a different country. The interviews consisted of four main parts; open narratives on the Sunshine Policy, perception of identity, perception of threat and role conceptions (see Appendix B). The interviews with the Korean respondents were conducted in English and the interviews with the Swedish respondents were conducted in Swedish. The interviews lasted between 25-50 minutes. Before all the interviews I asked the participants if they allowed me to record the interviews, and all respondents agreed to be recorded. This gave me more opportunities to focus on the answers and think of potential follow-up questions. After the interviews, I went immediately to a

different location to transcribe the recordings while the memories of the interviews were still fresh in my mind.

4.4. DATA ANALYSIS

In approaching the analysis of the data, the first step was coding through open coding. This is defined by Bryman (2016) as 'the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data' (p. 569). Therefore, I firstly read through the transcribed interviews and highlighted repetitive themes in the replies. After reading through the text once more, I searched the data for patterns, which were interpreted through a narrative analysis. As this thesis focuses on narratives, narrative analysis was deemed appropriate due to the focus it puts on individuals' way of telling stories to interpret the world (Frank, 2002). In certain circumstances, narratives take priority over the truth. Instead of seeking absolute truth, it is therefore important to ask oneself why an individual chooses certain narratives and what the truth the want to convey is. Thus, listening to stories can be more useful than attempting to decipher a factual narrative of events. (Pearce and Wu, 2018). In addition to this, Bryman (2014) underlies the potential importance that focusing on how people make sense of what happened instead rather than discovering factual timelines of events. Lastly, in my narrative analysis, I was forced to return to the literature review and edit this as certain findings brought to my attention the importance of relevant topics.

4.5. LIMITATIONS AND DEMARCATIONS

The sample in this research cannot represent either the Korean or Swedish policy makers as a whole. It does however provide an example of the existing organisational narratives that exist among policy influencers regarding the Sunshine Policy. The purpose of qualitative research is not representativeness (Brinkmann, 2014): instead, it aims for an in-depth understanding of various issues. Therefore, targeting specific groups, events or processes can help achieve this goal. (Bryman, 2016, p.383). Another limitation to this research is the fact that some main players, who would have been of interest to this study, are deceased. Additionally, some of the prospect respondents for this thesis denied being interviewed.

The thesis was demarcated to a very specific period and using the perspectives of two nations. Other nations, such as the United States, China, Russia, Japan, Switzerland, the EU, and North Korea, could have been reviewed for this case as they were all involved in the North Korean issue between 1998-2002. The United States was ruled out as there has already been research conducted on the United States and the Sunshine Policy. North Korea was ruled out due to the difficulties of extracting reliable data, and Russia, Japan and China were not chosen due to linguistic and knowledge limitations on the researcher. Finally, the EU was considered for this study; however, as I wished to review national identity and two nations, it was ruled out as the European Union is not a state per se.

4.6. REFLEXIVITY

Reflexivity is essentially regarded as the awareness of the connection between researcher and the research situation, as well as how the researcher affects the research situation (Bryman, 2016, p.136). In the context of this research, relevant questions asked are the following: how does the fact that I am a young female interviewing predominantly middle-aged, powerful men affect the answers they provide and their attitude toward me? How does the fact that I am fluent in English, and thus more efficient than the respondents' English, affect the interviewees who were interviewed in English? How does my personal experiences and views influence the research? These questions are highly relevant as the interpretation of results contain a certain level of subjectivity.

Although the interviewees and I did not share the same identity, we did share affinities that assisted in creating a degree of common ground from which to speak (Haraway, 1991). The fact that I could speak simple Korean with the Korean interviewees made them more comfortable and was used to remind them that there is a language in which they outshine me, as well as created a more relaxed situation. Additionally, from a humanistic perspective, both the interviewees and I are interested in and care about the North Korean issue.

The relationship between the researcher and research situation is quite complicated: qualitative researches choose to focus on what they consider to be significant while in the

field. This might not correspond to what other researchers would choose to focus on. Similarly, the way interviewees respond to the researcher could be affected by the personality, age, gender and other characteristics of the researcher. Furthermore, the lack of structure that qualitative data is permeated by will lead to the subjective inclinations of the researcher to influence the interpretation of the data. leanings of a researcher. (Bryman, 2016, pp.136-137).

4.7. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Reliability is essentially the degree of trustworthiness and consistency of one's findings. If a thesis is reliable, it can be resourced by other researchers (Brinkmann, 2014). One aspect that could affect the reliability of my work is the issue of language when interviewing the Korean subjects. As all of the interviewees from Korea work in an international context and hold degrees from outside Korea, their English skills were sufficient for giving interviews. However, there were some limitations to their vocabulary that affected the way I could interpret their answers. Therefore, the sentences that were in any way unclear were not used for analysis. Furthermore, due to this as well as to ensure further reliability, one must formulate questions clearly to ensure that the interviewees understand the questions asked. This is essential for the quality of the replies and thus the results. Therefore, I formulated the questions in a simple and clear manner and reformulated and repeated the questions that were misunderstood.

Validity refers to the degree of accuracy; i.e. whether the methods chosen investigate that which is intended, consequently leading to valid knowledge (Brinkmann, 2014). Validity is determined by the quality of the research design, particularly in the quality of the data collection and interpretation process (Ibid., 2014). To ensure validity, the interview questions focused on extracting cues from the interviewees as well as allowing them to openly answer questions. This was done in order to follow the sensemaking process as it occurred, while keeping with the relevancy of the research question.

4.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When interviewing public persons, keeping some of the more high-profile interviewees anonymous was very difficult. Therefore, written consent and the possibility to withdraw were two crucial ethical aspects to consider, as well as reporting neutrally and factually, and offering interviewees to review the thesis before it was published and state whether what is written is factual or not. All interviewees were asked whether they wanted to be anonymous or not. The interviewees did not choose anonymity. If they would have chosen anonymity, names and places associated with the particular interviewees would have been changed to ensure anonymity to the highest possible degree.

The Swedish Research Council (2017) established ethical guidelines that Master students in Asian Studies are expected to follow. This guideline specifies how data collection during field research should include ethical considerations such as transparency, anonymity, free will, and confidentiality. Therefore, consent is to be obtained by a consent form. The consent form I sent out provided the participants with written proof that all content published can be reviewed by participants and if a participant does not want something to be published, he or she can contact the researcher who will immediately remove the content before publishing. Secondly, it included the opportunity to keep interview questions completely confidential, ensuring that responses be exclusively read by the researcher and the responsible teacher. Thirdly, the consent of respondents was emphasised by providing the interviewees with the opportunity to withdraw at any time during the writing of the thesis, stressing that participation in this study is completely voluntary. Finally, the consent form enhances transparency by stating the research topic, research purpose, my full name and contact details, as well as that the data collected through interviews will only be used for the Master's thesis and that the Master's thesis will be published at a public website managed by Lund University Library. Lastly, issues of funding were non-existent for this research, as it was fully self-funded.

5. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part analyses national role conceptions and identities among the South Korean and Swedish interviewees. The second part builds on the first to analyse the sensemaking processes of the policy influencers.

5.1. NATIONAL ROLE CONCEPTIONS AND IDENTITIES

This section covers the national role conceptions of the South Korean and Swedish actors, and mainly reviews the sub question 'What were the national role conceptions and identities of South Korean and Swedish policy influencers during the Sunshine Policy years?' by linking the policy influencers' perceptions with Holsti's model of national role conceptions and the expressed national identities of the interviewees. When analysing the gathered data, it became obvious that both the Swedish and South Korean interviewees viewed their national role conceptions as those included in Holsti's (1970) collaborative category. This became apparent through the focus on dialogue, cooperation, and peace by the interviewees. Four prominent subcategories of national role conceptions became apparent in the replies of the interviewees: the conceptions of 1) regional subsystem collaborator, 2) reunifier, 3) active independent and subsystem collaborator and 4) mediator-integrator, example and bridge. These are further investigated below.

5.1.1. REGIONAL SUBSYSTEM COLLABORATOR

When isolating the national role conceptions of South Korea within the context of the Sunshine Policy, the South Korean interviewees showed examples of role conceptions that fall under the category of regional subsystem collaborator. This was mainly done by emphasising the possibility of building a greater community through reunification of the Korean Peninsula. A majority of the South Korean interviewees expressed beliefs in line with the premise of the Sunshine Policy through portraying a nation-centric approach where South Korea and North Korea essentially are viewed as one divided country. This was partially expressed through the emphasis on the North-South Joint Declaration (referred to as the June 15th declaration).

> June 15th declaration is the symbol or the masterpiece of inter-Korean reconciliation since the
> over 50 years division. National identity or homogeneity or peace-making and humanitarian

cooperation are all publicly supported in South Korea and the international community. But the only one article, the second article, the unification wrote would pass the stage of confederation by the side of North Korean rhetoric, and confederative stage of unification [...] But due to the wrong time of animosities and mistrust, the article 2 June 15th declaration seems to come too early for South Korean people to understand its implications: the prospect of reunification. We are praying for the co-improvement in the Korea relations, which would open the sustainable peace and sustainable development. (I1)

Two aspects should be emphasised in this quote: the importance put on the declaration and the ultimate aim of reunification in the efforts initiated by South Korea. This implicates that reunification is the end-goal of inter-Korean relations according to the foreign policy influencer. One reason for this can be found in the narrative of interviewee 1, who emphasised the emotional aspects of the nation-centric perspective on inter-Korean relations.

We are nationally, ethnically and culturally the same with DPRK. And we, you know, all of us share the same national identity [...] So even these days when we see DPRK people and are talking to each other, you know, from time to time I forget that North Korea is still there and then I'm talking to them, I'm seeing the television, that there is supposed to be another country, but talking to the same people with the same language, we feel very comfortable and there is no language barrier at all, and I think people recognise that one day we could be, should be one. (I3)

Through emphasising history, language, culture and ethnicity, it was possible for the South Korean interviewees to create a larger Korean identity that stretches beyond borders. To do this, one must ignore political systems, physical borders and economic systems that separate the two states. This indicates a willingness to make far-reaching commitments towards cooperation with the aim of building greater communities, which strongly speaks in favour of a regional subsystem collaborator national role conception.

Despite an overwhelming nation-centric approach to the Sunshine Policy years, when defining South Korean national identity in the context of the Sunshine Policy the

interviewees often needed to take a paradoxical stance: first, in order to engage with North Korea, the state-centric approach became necessary in a sense as the mainstream argument for dialogue was reunification. However, to be able to engage with North Korea, the foreign policy influencers needed to recognise North Korea as a separate entity rather than one half of a divided state as state recognition was the premise for engaging in dialogue with one another. However, the goal of the Sunshine Policy was reunification based on the nation-centric approach, meaning that the Koreas in essence are one nation momentarily divided by various circumstances.

> Politically [North and South Korea functioning] as one system or one country a lot of people have reservations, because the process could be very violent. So there is already established two powers. We don't recognise DPRK as a state, DPRK doesn't recognise us as a state. But also we have this confusing situation, as long as we see DPRK as the same people, sharing the same language and very much the same culture, so one day we should be one. And this Sunshine Policy, on the one hand we could re-confirm that we are the same people, but on the other hand when we are engaging in dialogue we also recognise that our political, the countries are so different, so that is a problem that we have to overcome. (I3)

One critique of Holsti's national role conceptions was that key actors might not hold the same perceptions. Interviewee 2 showcased this issue, being the South Korean interviewee with the highest degree of scepticism toward the Sunshine Policy and also the interviewee with a perception that aligned more with a state-centric perception of South Korea. With regards to the Sunshine Policy and national identity, the interviewee stated the following:

> I wouldn't say the Sunshine Policy affected the identity of South Korea, but at the same time I would say that the hard policies of the previous governments did not affect the identity either. It's more historical and, it has been affected by so many things. And North Korea is of course one important factor and so the Korean War and I think it depends on the generation, the older generation mostly have ties with North Korean perception and the young people, I wouldn't say the young people has only good relationships and memories with North Korea [...] (I2)

There is an indication in interviewee 2's statement of a generation shift of the South Korean people as well as the policy influencers, as interviewee 2 was around 20 years younger than the others. The lack of personal ties with North Korea, according to the interviewees, has made it difficult for the younger generation to identify with the nation-centric perspective that permeated the Sunshine Policy. However, by and large, the South Korean policy influencers shared the nation-centric approach to South Korean identity that Kim Dae-jung set as the premise of the Sunshine Policy. This was expressed through the belief that reunification is an inevitable future for the two Koreas. This belief has a direct link to statements made by Kim Dae-jung (1996) that North and South Korea are to be considered one nation meaning that the role conceptions of the Korean policy influencers active at the time of the Sunshine Policy and the author of the Sunshine Policy correlated.

5.1.2. REUNIFIER

The South Korean interviewees expressed perceptions of a national role conception that did not fit into Holsti's (1970:271) original 17 role conceptions, but rather in the category of 'other national role conceptions.' This national role conception is, in this thesis, named 'reunifier.' The theme of the South Korean policy influencers' perceptions was that it was the destiny and right of the Korean people to one day be reunified. For example, interviewee 3 expressed that '[...] I like DPRK to be opened, and as much as, the more they are open to the world there will be a much better possibility of having peace on the peninsula and for reunification [...].' and interviewee 10 used phrases such as 'finally [we will become] one nation, one state.' This was also the perception expressed by Kim Dae-jung (1997) in his explanation of introducing the Sunshine Policy:

> The unification, embracing the national hopes, seems within our reach - entering the realm of realistic possibility. The changing environment for national unification demands from us a clear unification road map. If we are not prepared for unification, the road we shall travel towards our national unity will be tortuous. (p.xxiv).

The motivations for reunification were highly focused on ethnicity, culture, history and language, and did not focus on the differences of political or economic systems or tangible reasons for unifying the Korean Peninsula. Interviewee 3 expressed that 'as long as we see

DPRK as the same people, sharing the same language and very much the same culture, so one day we should be one.' Very similarly, interviewee 1 expressed that 'I'm seeing the television, that there is supposed to be another country, but talking to the same people with the same language, we feel very comfortable and there is no language barrier at all, and I think people recognise that one day we could be, should be one.' This national role conception differentiates itself from the role of the mediator-integrator in that South Korea is directly involved in the conflict at hand, whereas Holsti's (1970:265) mediator-integrator works towards the goal of reconciling conflicts between other states. Furthermore, the national role conception of the regional subsystem collaborator is focused on building a wider community. Although reunification on the Korean Peninsula technically builds a larger community the word 'community' was never mentioned by the South Korean interviewees, and the goal was never expressed to be stretching beyond the Korean Peninsula. Therefore, the role of the reunifier can be a more appropriate manner to define the South Korean national role conceptions of the policy influencers.

5.1.3. ACTIVE INDEPENDENT AND SUBSYSTEM COLLABORATOR

Although Kim Dae-jung believed reunification was the end goal for South and North Korea (Kim, 1997), not all of the population agreed with him. The interviewees from South Korea put heavy emphasis on Kim Dae-jung as the main character in the initiation and execution of the Sunshine Policy, as well as emphasised the South-South conflict in determining the success of the Sunshine Policy. The Sunshine Policy was often explained by the policy influencers as being ahead of its time, and the interviewees stated that the South Korean people 'were not ready for such a policy.' The South-South conflict was also the main explanation among South Korean interviewees as to why the Sunshine Policy ultimately failed.

It occurred because there was a mentality 1990s and early 1990s there was the first Korean nuclear crisis. But all of a sudden KDJ changed this policy orientation to the opposite side. So a lot of people felt very uneasy about the turnaround of the government. So ever since, I think it's unavoidable, but they couldn't handle this South-South conflict. So until now, we are suffering from that. (I3)

For interviewee 2, the liberal views of Kim Dae-jung was the primary explanation to why the Sunshine Policy manifested itself in the first place. Instead of putting any emphasis on Kim Dae-jung's personality, which a majority of both the South Korean and Swedish interviewees had done, interviewee 2 stated that the policy shift occurred 'because the KDJ government is more towards the liberalist, and liberals tend to have those kinds of analyses and standpoint towards North Korea.' Interviewee 3 stated that 'some people characterized that in Korea there is about 30 percent on the right, conservative, 30 percent left, progressive, about 30 percent in the middle, marginally.' The perception of the policy influencers was that less than half of the South Korean citizens (the progressives) supported the Sunshine Policy. Therefore, the national identity of a majority of the South Koreans did not appear to the interviewees to be correlating with the foreign policies created at the time. In these expressed views, party political ideology had a great influence on the national role conceptions among the citizens. The perception among South Korean interviewees was thus that a large part of the population had a drive for South Korea to play the role of the active independent rather than regional subsystem collaborator. According to this narrative, the South-South Conflict, according to the interviewees, led to a shift in administration around every 5 years, which led to policy shifts. This was described as one of the reasons to why agreements made between North and South Korea were never followed through.

> And all of [the agreements] collapsed because of some, because of this drastic change of our positions. And of course, DPRK was very dismantled to give up their weapons. And somehow, we mismanaged our policies. So even if I am DPRK when I don't know who I am talking to on the other side, I might be preparing for the rainy days. (I3)

The lack of an agreed upon national identity among the South Korean people made the policy influencers sympathise with the North Korean regime and its mistrust with the changing South Korean policies. All South Korean interviewees were however in the belief that in the present, the national identity of a majority of the South Korean people had changed in line with the Sunshine Policy.

> But after 10 years, two inter-Korean animosities changed the situation [...] by mutual or balanced perception of most of South Korean peoples, they realised that peace, at least peace-

making, regardless of their race, ideologies, sex, is the most important for our survival and co-prosperities. (I1)

Interviewee 1 indicated a belief in a change of agreed upon national role conceptions, which would imply a switch from simultaneous role conceptions of active independent and regional subsystem collaborator to a more widely agreed upon role conception for South Korea as the subsystem collaborator in the context of the North-South Korea issue.

5.1.4. MEDIATOR-INTEGRATOR AND BRIDGE

The main national role conception derived from interviews with Swedish policy influencers were the mediator-integrator. The Swedish policy influencers aimed to profile Sweden as a trustworthy, good-willed state and used its history as the main argument for its foreign policy by bringing up Swedish traditions of neutrality and peace-keeping.

There was a chance there, I think [during the Sunshine Policy years], to show that Sweden had a profile that could be taken advantage of, a trust that could be taken advantage of, which largely was true, but also that the government with the presidency in the EU had ambitions to do something concrete. And here was an opportunity in the foreign policy field to do something concrete. (I7)

The Swedish foreign policy influencers placed Sweden in three contexts: on its own, within the UN framework and within the EU framework. In these circumstances, the UN and EU frameworks were defined as working in favour of human rights, international law and international peace. Sweden's over 200 years history of peace was emphasised in identifying Sweden as a peaceful country, indicating Sweden seeing itself as an example that other states should follow in international relations. Similarly, highlighting the UN aim and Swedish tradition of working to promote the UN framework, as well as identifying Sweden as a part of the European Union created a narrative of Sweden as an inevitable driving force for world peace. Interviewee 8 stated that 'the EU played a large part [in the decision to play an active role in the North Korea issue].'

The Swedish interviewees did at times label Sweden as a 'neutral observer' in the context of the Sunshine Policy. This would fall under Holsti's (1970, p.266) national role conception of bridge, resulting in vague policies with a communicative function where Sweden's goal is to convey messages between different cultures (American and Korean). This strengthens Östling's (2011) arguments of Swedish national identity being permeated by small-state idealism and neutrality. While explicitly stating that their role was that of the neutral observer, the Swedish interviewees viewed this role as an immensely important one that brought legitimacy to negotiations, hinting towards that of a mediator-integrator. Despite this emphasis on the importance of Sweden, both Swedish and South Korean interviewees agreed that with time, Sweden's role had become somewhat insignificant post Kim Dae-jung, as the mediator-integrator role was no longer necessary due to direct dialogue between the United States and North Korea. For example, interviewee 10 states that 'the window [for making an impact] closed in 2002,' referring to the changes of both South Korean and American North Korea policies.

In contrast to the bridge, the role of the mediator-integrator is much more defined in policies, i.e. can be discovered in policies created by the state. The perceptions of Sweden as a mediator-integrator can be clearly viewed in Prime Minister Göran Persson's drive to take an EU delegation to Pyongyang. The visit had clear aims that were later apparent in the results of the summit. Existing assistance was being continued in the shape of humanitarian assistance and 20 million euros in food aid. Technical assistance for projects in North Korea to train officials and building basic institutions were also launched, as well as the organisation of discussions with North Korea on human rights in Brussels in June 2001 and diplomatic accreditation between several EU countries and North Korea. (European Parliament, 2001). These clear actions with the aim to support North Korea in building institutions, feeding its population and starting diplomatic relations indicate that Sweden did indeed undertake tasks, by organising the official visit and discussions between the EU and North Korea, to reconcile conflicts between groups of states, as Sweden already had long-term diplomatic relations with Pyongyang.

When the Swedish interviewees were asked why Sweden should play the role of the 'humanitarian superpower' in the North Korea issue, many gave the answer 'because we

can.' The identity of Sweden as a peace promoting humanitarian country was so deeply ingrained in some of the interviewees that it was not questioned or reflected upon, showing a strong and unified perception of the national identity and the role of Sweden among the Swedish interviewees. Additionally, Swedish priorities toward North Korea seemed to be defined by influence from 'the UN framework.' Only those who did not fully identify with this perception themselves would discuss in more depth the underlying reasons of the Swedish identity and review it with an emotional distance. Interviewee 4, who was sceptical towards the Sunshine Policy and the Swedish government's actions, expressed that '[The idea of helping] is to a high degree a social democratic tradition.' This implies that party political identity were perceived as taking precedence over national identity as the driving force of the international policies toward the Korean issue.

All Swedish interviewees responded in a similar manner and expressed a conviction that due to the circumstances Sweden found itself in, the country was 'predestined' to play a role in the North Korea crisis and work toward moving the Sunshine Policy forward.

> Through Sweden's role with an embassy in North Korea and our role in NSSC it was almost predestined [for us] to act, or there were expectations in the relations with South Korea that we would be active. So it was a diplomatic fact that I am fully prepared to agree with. If it was based on a realistic view of how North Korea acts is a completely different matter. (I4).

The South Korean interviewees also defined Sweden's role as an important one for inter-Korean relations. Interviewee 5 expressed that 'North Korea finds Sweden to be one of the most trustworthy actors in Europe [...] Whenever there is a stalemate, Sweden can play a role to facilitate and match dialogue [...] Very constructive role.' Interviewee 2 stated that '[South and North Korea] need external mediators, I think, to get through the difficulties.' The perception of Sweden's role was consistent among the Swedish and South Korean interviewees. When added together, the interviews built a narrative of Sweden as a stable part of an unstable situation and Sweden's role hardly changing since the 1950's: to prove this point, the Swedish interviewees all brought up NNSC, the arms hospital and the long-

standing diplomatic relations as proof of a stable and unchanging situation for Sweden on the Korean Peninsula.

> Because we don't have a hidden agenda, we are not trying to fool anyone. We are trying to find solutions at the same time as we need to realise our limitations. But I think that from the American side they see us as, in different ways such as the NNSC representation and representation in Pyongyang and Seoul, as a country that needs to participate in some way for the greater dialogue to be legitimate. (I8)

The interviewees also mentioned that Sweden's role in the Sunshine Policy was linked with its membership in the EU and that the visit by Göran Persson was an attempt to form a role for EU in the North Korean issue. As interviewee 7 said, 'Sweden had a role within the EU, EU had a role closer in relation to North Korea in the hopes that it would evolve into something.'

> Our role goes up and down but it's very limited. Then we are, I repeat this from the government's side, we are the only country with three representations on the Korean Peninsula. And that leads us to have an interest, a legitimate interest for the Korean issue. And so does all of Europe, people usually call it a conflict between North Korea and the United States, but that's not accurate because it's a conflict between North Korea, China and the UN. And we, if it's going to be solved the UN needs to play its part. (I8)

> [The DPRK] feel like the US has some ulterior intention of regime change, regime collapse, so they want to talk to the international society, but you are westerners who don't have any ulterior intentions of regime collapse, so then they feel comfortable. (I10)

The interviewees separated the issues of inter-Korean relations with the hypothetical end-goal of reunification from the issue of denuclearisation on the Korean Peninsula. In the context of denuclearisation, the South Koreans viewed their own role in the North Korean issue as that of a mediator and constructive actor in a more international context involving at least 7 parties (North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, the United States, Russia and the

European Union). However, although not autonomous due to demands from the United States, the inter-Korean issue was primarily viewed as a question to be handled between the two Koreas. Despite this, one problem could not be solved without the other. A majority of the interviewees additionally had the opinion that the United States' policies towards North Korea did not control the South Korean policies, thus arguing of a degree of autonomy in relations to major players in the North Korean issue.

> […] entering the conservative Bush government entered the, South Korean government policy, engagement policy toward North Korea, entering the difficult time but as far as I know the final stage of Kim Dae-jung, South Korean government had coordinated the policy toward North Korea while handling the cooperation with Washington, which was almost based on the long experience and wisdom of the leadership Kim Dae-jung. But during the other stage of Roh, the cooperation between Washington and Seoul had entered the difficult situation due to Roh's frank attitude, "I am independent toward (Washington) USA and other superpowers." He chose to prolong the cooperation with the US government. (I1)

Simultaneously, the United States was also considered to be a necessary part of the process.

> […] denuclearisation of North Korean programme and the security guarantee of DPRK by the USA would be in proceeding by the implementation of inter-Korean relations, which would favour peaceful reunification, denuclearisation, security guarantee and inter-Korean relations improvement. (I1)

The overwhelming consensus of the South Korean interviewees was thus that although the inter-Korean issues were mainly to be dealt with between the two Koreas, the two issues were interrelated and required enormous support from the international community, and that countries playing the role of mediator-integrator were necessary for the peace process. When comparing the Swedish and Korean national identity, history-building was less clear in the Swedish national identity, i.e. the Swedish interviewees lacked a clear, linear narrative of why the state acted the way it did. Both of the interviewed groups had a dominating identity and story as well as representatives of an opposing identity, although the Swedish group of interviewees spoke of less contested identities.

5.2. MAKING SENSE OF THE SUNSHINE POLICY

With the help of the above analysis of the national role conceptions and national identities of the interviewees, this part of the analysis addresses the sub-question 'How do the national role conceptions relate to the policy influencers' sensemaking processes of the Sunshine Policy?' Along the lines of Weick's (1995) structure for sensemaking analysis, this chapter reviews the values, beliefs and experiences of the policy influencers, moves on to identity and social aspect of their sensemaking processes, discusses the retrospective aspect, sensible environments and extracted cues, and finally discusses the belief-driven aspect of the policy influencers' sensemaking processes.

5.2.1. VALUES, BELIEFS AND EXPERIENCES

The Swedish attitudes and South Korean beliefs in the ideas of the Sunshine Policy differed immensely: the generally agreed upon attitude among the Swedish interviews was that the Sunshine Policy ultimately was a failure and proof that simply engaging in dialogue would not lead to real changes on the Korean Peninsula. Interviewee 7, for example, stated that 'the Sunshine Policy as I see it is a try that died because it was unsuccessful [...] you realise that [the Sunshine Policy] doesn't work.' The South Korean attitude was that the Sunshine Policy might have succeeded had the South Korean people been onboard and had the policy actors altered their behaviours slightly, or as interviewee 9 phrased it: 'Due to the wrong time of animosities and mistrust, it seems to have come too early for the South Korean people to understand its implications.' With regards to beliefs surrounding the Sunshine Policy, the interviewees all had cautious although somewhat positive expectations when it was first introduced.

> The Sunshine Policy, I didn't know what it was at the time, when it was mentioned. And many people were not sure of the result, and some people were suspicious. So yeah, so at the time I couldn't have any expectations, I just watched it to see what would happen. (I8)

I thought 'this is good,' and Kim Dae-jung did receive the Nobel Peace Prize, so that was, I didn't think that it would fail, but I did think it was worth a shot. At the same time, I didn't have any greater expectations [...] (I7)

According to Weick (1995), positive attitudes might influence the way the finished products of a change are viewed. Both Korean and Swedish interviewees displayed caution toward the Sunshine Policy and could thus be more receptive towards its ultimate failure. However, the South Korean interviewees expressed a stronger belief in a possible success of the more current version of the Sunshine Policy, i.e. the Moonshine Policy. In line with Weick's arguments, the attitudes did have a seeming effect on the way the results, or finished products, of the Sunshine Policy were viewed.

One of the South Korean interviewees as well as one of the Swedish interviewees were not active policy influencers during the Sunshine Policy years. These two interviewees had in common that their attitudes toward the Sunshine Policy differed from the rest of their compatriots. Whereas a majority of the South Korean interviewees had positive attitudes toward the Sunshine Policy, the interviewee who was not active during the time had a negative attitude toward the policy. Conversely, the Swedish interviewee who was not active during the time had a positive attitude toward the Sunshine Policy, whereas the rest of the Swedish interviewees had an either neutral or negative attitude toward the policy.

5.2.2. IDENTITY AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE SENSEMAKING PROCESSES

With regards to the social aspect of sensemaking, Weick (1995, p.39) points out that multiplicity of meaning given to an event exists, but through discourse and organised behaviour enough meaning can be shared to facilitate agreement or progress and even create moments that distinguish organisations. This links into the agreed upon national identity of the two countries in that these were formed through discourse and organised behaviour among the policy influencers. In particular, the shared discourse was displayed in the strong similarities of storyline among the interviewees when they were asked to in their own words describe the Sunshine Policy.

The Korean interviewees who identified with the national role conceptions that the Sunshine Policy reflected had more positive attitudes toward the policy and its potential. For example, interviewee 3 stated regarding their expectations toward the policy that 'I was happy to see a new type of policy' and later linked this to the results of the Sunshine Policy by stating that 'Kim Dae-jung showed us at the time what is possible and what is an alternative course of action to the DPRK and to the South, so now we could choose that option again.' The consensus of the South Korean interviewees was that, due to the unpreparedness of the world and the South Korean people, and due to decades of mistrust between North and South Korea, the policy was bound to fail. However, the Swedish interviewees expressed a strong belief in that the current government's policies would evoke different results. This links into Weick's (1995, p.46) point of sensemaking being retrospective. When ongoing flow is interrupted, it becomes possible to assess past occurrences, what has already been accomplished and what is incomplete. Retrospection creates a clearer perception of the past than the perception of the present or future. The fact that the policy failed to reach its goal is indisputable, but the reasons for the failure are not. This is reflected in the attitude of the South Korean interviewees that 'this time it's different' (I8) when speaking of the current Moonshine policy: similarly, interviewee 1 stated that 'now, the South Korean people have realised that peace, at least peace-making, regardless of their race, ideologies, sex, is the most important for our survival and co-prosperities.' Because of the nation-centric perspective of the South Korean interviewees and an adaptation to the new national role conception of reunifier, the South Korean interviewees had a need to believe in the new version of the Sunshine Policy due to its ultimate aim towards reunification.

5.2.3. SENSIBLE ENVIRONMENTS AND EXTRACTED CUES

In explaining how sensemaking is enactive of sensible environments, Weick (1995, p.14) states that 'Individuals are not seen as living in, and acting out their lives to, a wider reality, so much as creating and sustaining images of a wider reality, in part to rationalize what they are doing. They realize reality by "reading into" their situation patterns of significant meaning.' The first question asked to all the interviewees was 'what do you associate with the Sunshine Policy Years?' This question was asked to uncover the extracted cues from each individual interviewee that they viewed as the most important. As Weick (1995, p.109) puts it, it is important in sensemaking to closely review what people notice since sensemaking is so instantaneous that people are more likely to see products than processes.

By framing events through extracted cues, individuals are able to perceive, identify and label, or in other words, filter their experiences. The extracted cues were by and large the same for all interviewees, which indicates that the cues had been agreed upon by the government agencies that the interviewees worked for.

The extracted cues were mostly focused on tangible results of the Sunshine Policy, including summits held, projects executed, papers signed, establishments of diplomatic relations and money invested. This means that the interviewees did focus on products over processes, which could have included negotiations and planning. The only exception was extracted cues that had a highly emotional value, such as interviewee 7 describing the first time they met Kim Jong Il. These cues were described very colourfully and in greater detail than those with less emotional value for the interviewees.

The interviewees ultimately projected the Sunshine Policy's origin and much of its execution onto Kim Dae-jung. According to their narratives, the Sunshine Policy should be viewed as directly connected to Kim Dae-jung, which points again towards the agreed upon narratives of the Sunshine Policy in both countries and that which was projected by Kim Dae-jung (Kim, 2000) himself. At the same time, when describing highlights and important activities connected to the Sunshine Policy, efforts conducted by other actors than Kim Dae-jung or his administration were also brought up. For example, interviewee 1 brought up Chung Ju-yung (former president of the Hyundai Group), who invested $100 million with money from secret loans provided by the government-controlled Korea Development Bank and travelled across the border to North Korea in a motorcade of cars containing 1001 'unification cows' as a gift to the North Korean people. This effort gets credit by interviewee 1 as the first case of opening the divided areas for humanitarian aid. The focus on individuals is also a red thread among the Swedish interviewees, who focused Kim Dae-jung, as well as presidents Clinton and Bush. Weick (1995) states that leaders who are responsible for strategy making are both sensemakers and sensegivers. Leaders are to give meaning to their followers, especially during times of uncertainty or in complex environment with differing stakeholder interests. Maitlis and Lawrence (2007) support Weick's (1995) view, which is that complex sensemaking environments with perceptions of ambiguity and unpredictability of issues trigger leaders to give sense to followers. In the

case of the Sunshine Policy, the unpredictability of North Korea and the opposite interests of stakeholders such as conservative and liberal South Koreans, the sensegiving of the leaders grew stronger and led to a need of strong narratives. In Sweden, where the interests of stakeholders were less multifaceted, the need for strong sensegiving was however lower, as a consensus on national role conceptions of Sweden were already established.

5.2.4. EXPECTING VS ARGUING

Both groups of interviewees had gone through strongly belief-driven sensemaking processes with regards to the Sunshine Policy and the attitudes toward the policy that the interviewees expressed play a significant role in how they made sense of it. The Swedish interviewees landed in the *expecting* spectra of the sensemaking theory, meaning that they added meaning by connecting new meaning to old meaning. When the Sunshine Policy ultimately failed, the belief in old and conventional methods increased among this group. Interviewee 7 said that 'to simply pour sunshine only leads to North Korea grabbing what they can. The failure [of the Sunshine Policy] has created realism.' Similarly, interviewee 9 expressed that 'I think that some kind of political or military changes are more important to make some actual effects [in comparison to dialogue].' Additionally, the interviewees brought up the failed attempts of reconciliation that occurred prior to the Sunshine Policy as examples that would prove that engaging in dialogue is not effective on the Korean Peninsula. Interviewee 4 also reinforced this perception by stating that 'pressure against such a regime [North Korea] is better than the Sunshine Policy, but that's my personal opinion as a retired person. My conception along with others is that the openings we've seen between Trump and Kim ultimately have been a consequence of the strong threats and pressure from the American side.' This shows strong indications of the Swedish interviewees connection the new meaning (the limited success of the Sunshine Policy) to old meaning (failed attempts of reconciliation) to create a self-fulfilling prophecy (dialogue is very limited in its success on the Korean Peninsula). Similarly, new meaning was also connected to old meaning in the Swedish national identity and role conceptions. All of the Swedish interviewees stated that they believed Sweden should continue to play the same role as previously on the Korean Peninsula and that this role was of importance for stability between North and South Korea.

The South Korean interviewees landed in the *arguing* spectra of the sensemaking process, i.e. creating meaning through opposition of existing meaning and connecting contradictory elements, challenging and adapting current beliefs. To change policies, the South Korean interviewees first needed to change their national role conceptions. In this case this was done through adding a new way of approaching North Korea through dialogue rather than military measures. Interviewee 10 said that 'we cannot have a war with North Korea. So, the only possible solution is through dialogue, it is the only possible alternative.' Interviewee 1 was also convinced of this matter, saying that 'after 10 years, by mutual or balanced perception of most of South Korean peoples, they realised that peace, at least peace-making, regardless of their race, ideologies, sex, is the most important for our survival and co-prosperities.' This also led to a change of national role conceptions among the South Korean interviewees. The belief in the Sunshine Policy was strengthened through the policy enactments of the Kim Dae-jung administration.

According to Maitlis and Soneshein (2010), expectations are created from belief, and when people make sense of a change, they see what they expect to see, which causes selective attention. The Swedish interviewees expected failures from the Sunshine Policy to some degree, and thus chose not to focus their attention on the successful results that also derived from the Sunshine Policy.

> I was at [governmental unit] 92-93 and was then working with North Korea among other things and met North Korean representatives, and that made me pretty disillusioned. I thought that they are special, and this will never… Something has to happen with the [North Korean] regime for a change to occur. So, there was a bit of doubt when the Sunshine Policy came in around the year 2000. (I7)

> [The consequences of the Sunshine Policy were] that you realise that it doesn't work. That's the short answer. Before, people believed in the possibilities, now president Moon from the South Korean side has been doing some sort of Sunshine Policy, but even he has a realism that didn't exist earlies. That is, that to just baste sunshine only leads to North Korea taking whatever they can get. The failure of the Sunshine Policy has created more realism and a disbelief in only engaging in dialogue. (I10)

Weick (1995) brings up self-fulfilling prophecies and states that during the sensemaking process, expectations become self-fulfilling prophecies that can hide signals. For the expecting group among the interviewees, the signals they were receiving regarding the Moonshine Policy were linked to the failures of the Sunshine Policy, which had created a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure for attempts of dialogue with North Korea. Regarding the arguing group of interviewees, their sensemaking process was highly connected to the collective narratives created by strong sensegiving from President Kim Dae-jung. Arguing is an important trailblazer to decision making as there are various and often conflicting views of the products of sensemaking processes by the people (Weick, 1995). Therefore, arguing is used to achieve a collective making of sense. For this case, it is clear that the South Korean interviewees were more receptive to the arguing of the constructor of the policy.

6. CONCLUDING DISCUSSIONS

The aim of this thesis was to map out prominent national role conceptions that were influential for South Korean and Swedish policy influencers during the Sunshine Policy years and investigate the sensemaking processes that were affected by these. Four categories of national role conceptions were apparent in the interviewees: 1) regional subsystem collaborator, 2) reunifier, 3) active independent and subsystem collaborator and 4) mediator-integrator and bridge.

Among South Korean policy influencers, the role conception of regional subsystem collaborator was prominent in the belief that it was South Korea's assignment to build a greater community through reunification on the Korean Peninsula. As the role conceptions of South Korea were contested, an influence in how policies were managed was the South-South conflict. This was also used a major explanation among the interviewees for why the Sunshine Policy ultimately failed. Moreover, a large part of the South Korean citizens believed that South Korea should play the role of active independent, which was also seen to be the view of previous administrations. The shifting policies among various administrations were perceived to cause mistrust from the North Korean side. Although Holsti's subcategories of national role conceptions were useful for this research, they could not fully explain the role conceptions of the South Korean foreign policy influencers. A new role

conception, the reunifier, was expressed by the interviewees. The reunifier has as its mission to unify with a separate state seen as a part of the own state by arguments of history, ethnicity, language and culture while ignoring political and economic systems. This role conception does not fully fall under any of the original national role conceptions: as South Korea is directly involved in a conflict with North Korea, the country did not attempt to reconcile conflicts between *other* states such as the mediator-integrator does. Additionally, the efforts of the Sunshine Policy stretched perhaps further than building larger communities, as Holsti's regional subsystem collaborator suggests.

For the Swedish interviewees, the narratives formed complied with the national role conceptions that Holsti applied for Sweden in a general foreign policy context in 1970. Compliance with these even though individuals might not have agreed with them shows that national role conceptions persist throughout time, making them relevant today as well. At times, the Swedish interviewees defined Sweden as a bridge, as their role in the North Korea issue was very limited, but particularly the role of mediator-integrator applied to Sweden. By putting Sweden within the EU and UN frameworks, a narrative of working for 'the greater good' arose. The Swedish policy influencers defined Sweden as a peace country as well as a peace-promoting country, and the clear actions taken by Sweden through the European Union show links between Swedish policies and the role of mediator-integrator, namely to undertake tasks in order to reconcile conflicts between states. The answers given by Swedish interviewees indicate that party politics identity took precedence over national identity, supporting Brummer and Thies' theory on contested national role conceptions. The role of mediator-integrator was of importance for the interviewees from South Korea as support from the international community was necessary for the peace process on the Korean Peninsula.

Swedish and South Korean beliefs in the ideas of the Sunshine Policy differed in that the Swedes believed that the Sunshine Policy was proof that dialogue was an insufficient strategy for solving the North Korea issue, whereas the South Koreans believed that the Sunshine Policy failed due to being ahead of its time. This thesis has drawn links between the national role conceptions and the sensemaking processes that led to these conclusions and found a correlation between change of role conceptions and perception of success or

failure. The South Korean policy influencers perceived the Sunshine Policy to be an initiative of a change of national role conceptions, and were themselves on board with this change, but as a large part of the population was not. They viewed this as a key reason for the Sunshine Policy not being as successful as it potentially could have been. The Swedish policy influencers, on the other hand, experienced the Sunshine Policy as being an opportunity for Sweden to deepen and strengthen its national role conceptions regarding the Korean Peninsula issues. However, as the policy influencers had experienced a form of exhaustion from previous attempts of reconciliation, they created a self-fulfilling prophecy where the Sunshine Policy was nearly doomed to fail, thus providing support to the belief that primarily engaging in dialogue is ineffective when dealing with the inter-Korean issue.

This research has shown that domestic conflict on foreign policy has created clearer narratives on national role conceptions and foreign policy events. However, such conflicts also create divergent national role conceptions, which have created a perception of uncertainty for the other party in negotiations (in this case North Korea). By mapping out the national role conceptions of involved parties in the Sunshine Policy, we can further understand why the foreign policies looked the way they did and how various perceptions shape the way actors make decisions within the North Korea issue. Furthermore, by tying these national role conceptions to sensemaking processes of policy influencers as part of organisations, it has been possible to gain deeper insights as to why individuals alone and together act and think the way they do.

Future research on national role conceptions in particularly South Korea regarding the North Korea issue could be very useful for the understanding of why policy influencers act the way in certain manners. Furthermore, the discrepancies of interviewee 2's answers indicate that role conceptions could have shifted between generations. Further research can therefore be made on the possible generational shift of national role conceptions among South Koreans and how this affect the North Korea policies of the country. Although this does not affect the results for the Sunshine Policy significantly, it could be of interest for research on more current policies.

7. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND RELEVANT INFORMATION

Interviewee #	Nationality	Active 98-02	Active today	Attitude towards SP
1	Korean	Y	Y	Positive
2	Korean	N	Y	Negative
3	Korean	Y	Y	Positive
5	Korean	Y	Y	Positive
10	Korean	Y	Y	Positive
4	Swedish	Y	N	Negative
6	Swedish	Y	Y	Neutral
7	Swedish	Y	Y	Negative
8	Swedish	N	Y	Positive
9	Swedish	Y	Y	Negative

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (EXCLUDING FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS/INDIVIDUALISED QUESTIONS)

FOR SOUTH KOREAN INTERVIEWEES

1. I am writing about the time period of 1998-2003, which as you know is the Sunshine Policy years of President Kim Dae-jung. What do you associate with this period when it comes to South Korean inter-Korean policy? *(Extracted cues)*

2. Between 1998-2003, South Korea conducted many activities to promote inter-Korean dialogue. What were the most important and effective activities conducted during the time? *(Extracted cues, attitudes)*

3. What were some less effective activities? *(Extracted cues, attitudes)*

4. What were your expectations of the Sunshine Policy as it was introduced for the first time? *(Expectations, beliefs)*

5. What were the reactions of Kim Dae-jung receiving the Nobel Peace prize as a consequence of the policies? *(South-South Conflict)*

6. Why did the Kim Dae-jung administration decide to shift towards more friendly inter-Korean policies? *(Sensemaking)*

7. In what way did the Bush administration affect the directions South Korea took with regards to inter-Korean affairs? *(National role conceptions)*

8. Looking at the six countries most involved in North Korean foreign policy, where do you place South Korea? How would you describe the role of South Korea in the grand scheme of things? *(National role conceptions)*

9. In August 2001, an EU delegation, led by Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson, visited North Korea. How was South Korea and the Ministry of Unification involved in this visit? How important do you view the relationship with Sweden with regards to North Korea between 1998-2002 to be? *(National role conceptions)*

10. How do you regard South Korean national identity? Would you say that the Sunshine Policy affected the Korean identity? How? *(National identity)*

11. How high was the nuclear threat from North Korea at the time, or rather, how was it perceived? *(Sensemaking)*

12. And the threat of conventional war? *(Sensemaking)*

13. Looking back at the Sunshine Policy, what would you say is its legacy? (*Sensemaking*)

14. Could you describe the June 15th North-South Joint Declaration and what the consequences of this declaration were? *(Added after the importance of June 15th was expressed by first two interviewees)*

15. If you would compare the Sunshine Policy with the Moonshine Policy, what are the similarities and differences? (*Sensemaking, retrospective*)

FOR SWEDISH INTERVIEWEES
1. I am writing about the time period of 1998-2003, which as you know is the Sunshine Policy years of President Kim Dae-jung. What do you associate with this period? *(Extracted cues)*

2. Between 1998-2003, many activities were conducted to promote inter-Korean dialogue. What were the most important and effective activities conducted during the time? *(Extracted cues, attitudes)*

3. What were some less effective activities? *(Extracted cues, attitudes)*

4. What did the relationship between Sweden and South Korea look like at the time? *(National role conceptions)*

5. What were the reactions of Kim Dae-jung receiving the Nobel Peace prize as a consequence of the policies? *(South-South Conflict)*

5. Why did the Kim Dae-jung administration decide to shift towards more friendly inter-Korean policies? *(Senesmaking)*

6. In what way did the Bush administration affect the directions the dialogues took with regards to inter-Korean affairs? *(National role conceptions)*

7. What were the reasons for Göran Persson's great involvement in the inter-Korean issue? *(National role conceptions)*

8. What were the expectations and the goals with Sweden's involvement? *(National role conceptions, expectations, beliefs)*

9. Looking at the six countries most involved in North Korean foreign policy, how would you describe the dynamics between the other parties? *(National role conceptions)*

10. How would you describe Sweden's role in the inter-Korean issues during this time? *(National role conceptions)*

10. Why did Sweden play this role? Why did Sweden involve itself at all? *(National identity, national role conceptions)*

10. How high was the nuclear threat from North Korea at the time, or rather, how was it perceived? *(Sensemaking)*

11. And the threat of conventional war? *(Sensemaking)*

12. Lastly, could you describe the June 15th North-South Joint Declaration and what the consequences of this declaration were? *(Added after the importance of June 15th was expressed by first two interviewees)*

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