

Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

# Crafting a Brand from Tradition: An Innovative Public Diplomacy Strategy for the Organization of Turkic States\*

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## Abstract

This paper explores the potential of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) in leveraging Public Diplomacy to bolster its international stature, proposing the development of a unique brand, “Yurt Yeli.” Drawing parallels with South Korea’s successful Hallyu (Korean Wave) initiative, the paper suggests that the OTS can similarly utilize Yurt Yeli to harness the power of Public Diplomacy. The analysis begins with an in-depth look at Hallyu, providing a framework for understanding its effectiveness in public diplomacy. It then delves into the conceptualization and potential implementation of Yurt Yeli, tailored to resonate with the Turkic World’s unique cultural heritage and values. Given the OTS’s role as a representative of the Turkic World on the global stage, the paper underscores its vast potential in employing Public Diplomacy strategies to enhance its international visibility and influence. The comparison between Hallyu and the proposed Yurt Yeli offers insights into how cultural elements can be transformed into powerful tools for diplomatic engagement and global presence enhancement.

## Keywords

OTS, Turkic World, Yurt Yeli, Hallyu, Public Diplomacy, Soft Power, Korean Wave.

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# Gelenekten Marka Oluşturmak: Türk Devletleri Teşkilatı İçin Yenilikçi Bir Kamu Diplomasisi Stratejisi\*

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## Öz

Bu çalışma, Türk Devletleri Teşkilatı'nın (TDT) uluslararası alanda etkinliğini artırmak için kamu diplomasisini nasıl kullanabileceğini ele almakta ve bu bağlamda "Yurt Yeli" adında yeni bir kamu diplomasisi markası oluşturulmasını önermektedir. Çalışmada TDT'nin Güney Kore'nin Hallyu (Kore Dalgası) stratejisinden esinlenerek kamu diplomasisinde yeni bir söylem, Yurt Yeli, inşa edebileceği vurgulanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışmada, Hallyu detaylı bir şekilde incelenmiş ve Güney Kore'nin kamu diplomasisi etkinliğini anlamak için bir çerçeve sunulmuştur. Sonrasında, Türk Dünyası'nın eşsiz kültürel mirasını ve değerlerini yansıtacak biçimde tasarlanmış olan Yurt Yeli'nin kavramsallaştırılması ve potansiyel uygulamasına odaklanılmıştır. TDT'nin, Türk Dünyası'nı uluslararası düzeyde temsil eden bir örgüt olarak, kamu diplomasisi stratejilerini kullanarak uluslararası görünürlüğünü ve etkisini artırmak için geniş bir potansiyele sahip olduğu vurgulanmaktadır. Ayrıca çalışmada Hallyu ile önerilen Yurt Yeli'nin karşılaştırılması, kültürel unsurların diplomatik angajman araçlarına ve küresel etki alanlarını genişletme stratejilerine nasıl dönüştürülebileceği konusunda derinlemesine bir bakış açısı sunulmaktadır.

## Anahtar Kelimeler

TDT, Türk Dünyası, Yurt Yeli, Hallyu, Kamu Diplomasisi, Yumuşak Güç, Kore Dalgası.

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## Introduction

The “Turkic World Vision–2040” paper was embraced by the Heads of States of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) during the momentous Istanbul Summit led by H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, on November 12, 2021. This vision paper signifies a noteworthy commitment for the organization, representing a genuine pledge for the next two decades. The vision paper outlines numerous crucial objectives established by member states, with some of the most notable ones being the promotion of Turkic culture, values, traditions, art, and heritage on a global scale. These objectives are to be achieved through collaborative endeavors among the Turkic Cooperation Organizations (TURKSOY, Turkic Academy, Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and TURKPA), working in conjunction with pertinent international bodies. Furthermore, in the paper, under the title of “Person to Person Cooperation,” it is emphasized that there should be efforts to promote the shared Turkic heritage of eminent scientists, poets, thinkers, and artists. Additionally, it highlights the importance of preserving Member States’ traditions, customs, folklore, and acknowledging the role of the Turkic world in intercultural dialogue. Furthermore, the vision paper suggests the organization of annual collaborative events such as film festivals, music and art events, and other cultural activities (Purtaş). The aim is to unite the diverse peoples within the Turkic world, fostering a sense of togetherness and mutual understanding. As these encapsulate the goals set for the Turkic World by the OTS, particularly the objective to “Promote the Turkic culture, values, traditions, art, and heritage across the world,” the question naturally arises: what formula would be the most effective for accomplishing them? The South Korean government has been promoting its culture and entertainment industry through *Hallyu* to the world to introduce South Korea. During Moon Jae-in’s presidency, the *Hallyu* Content Cooperation Division was established, which aimed to enhance the impact of K-culture diffusion through an interagency promotion plan.

In December 2019, COVID-19 emerged in Wuhan, China, becoming a global pandemic that severely impacted many countries and caused a lasting economic downturn (Duran). Contrary to the global pandemic (Pirinççi and Demirtaş), *Hallyu*-related industries thrived during COVID-19,

expanding their reach by leveraging the popularity of the Korean language and K-foods, following the success of K-movies and K-music. In 2020, the copyright trade balance also recorded a surplus (S. E. Lee). Public diplomacy policies have been shifting towards values and norms that international society requires, focusing on cooperation and solidarity. A 2021 survey by South Korea's Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism revealed an increase in the competitive power of Hallyu content, indicating growth in the consumption and scale of K-content (KOCCA, "The Analysis"). Hallyu fandom worldwide has been captivated by K-movies and K-music, such as "Parasite," "Squid Game," "BTS," and "Black Pink," providing an opportunity to share South Korean soft power and raise awareness of South Korea among the international public and generating economic income through fandom.

In other words, it can be said that *Hallyu* is a success story of South Korea based on public diplomacy practice (Beasley and Erfani). This study's main aim is to formulate South Korea's public diplomacy success in the Organization of Turkic States (OTS). First and foremost, like *Hallyu* of South Korea, the public diplomacy brand for the OTS has chosen *Yurt Yeli*. Apart from *Yurt Yeli's* meaning, homeland wind in English, which is almost the same in all Turkic languages (Koraş, 2014), one would wonder why this study suggests that *Yurt Yeli* be the brand of the OTS' public diplomacy. As *Hallyu*, in other words, *Korean Wave* resembles the South Korea-oriented approach and defines the expansion waves of South Korean pop culture and K-culture content towards the World; thus, *Yurt Yeli* will blow from the very heart of Turkestan geography to the globe. Furthermore, *Yurt Yeli* is the most suitable name for the public diplomacy brand as it has a strong cultural resonance and signifies a sense of belonging and identity in the Turkic world. The name *Yurt Yeli* also suggests the idea of a cultural wind blowing from the homeland and spreading throughout the world, just like the *Hallyu* – Korean wave – does. Furthermore, by adopting *Yurt Yeli* as the public diplomacy brand, the OTS can leverage the power of public diplomacy to promote a positive image of the Turkic World and to enhance its soft power on the global stage.

This promotion could involve showcasing the music, television dramas/ movies, food, and fashion that are components of the *Yurt Yeli* subculture

and highlighting how they reflect the Turkestan region's rich cultural heritage and contemporary identity. In other words, *Yurt Yeli*, being a brand of public diplomacy, could exhibit the exceptional cultural legacy and modern-day identity of the Turkic World to the global audience. By promoting *Yurt Yeli*, the OTS can leverage the power of public diplomacy to build bridges with other cultures, enhance its soft power, and promote cross-cultural understanding. In addition, *Yurt Yeli* can also help to stimulate economic growth by creating new opportunities for cultural exchange, tourism, and trade. If implemented efficiently, by tapping into the popularity of *Yurt Yeli*, the Turkic World can attract new audiences and consumers from around the world and showcase its unique cultural offerings and *Yurt Yeli* might become a significant cultural export from the region. This paper does not focus on adopting or emulating the Hallyu phenomenon for the Turkic World. Instead, its primary objective is to present the institutionalization and implementation formula of a successful public diplomacy brand, which could similarly be effective for the OTS. Therefore, critiques directed at Hallyu and its potential negative impacts on society are not relevant to this study. Since the *Hallyu* is the inspiration of the *Yurt Yeli*; in this study, from *Hallyu*'s meaning to state-level policies will be examined in detail. After shedding light on the *Hallyu*, *Yurt Yeli*'s potential and efficient way of formulation for the OTS will be discussed.

### **The Concept of *Hallyu***

*Hallyu* (한류 in Korean), also known as *the Korean Wave*, can have different interpretations depending on the perspective of the Korean government and scholars. According to the Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, which operates under the Ministry of Education's Academy of Korean Studies, Hallyu is defined as a cultural phenomenon where Korean mass culture elements are disseminated to foreign countries centering on Asia and garnered great popularity (*Encyclopedia of Korean Culture*). Scholars have viewed Hallyu as a term encompassing a broad range of Korean popular culture, with the widespread consumption of Korean popular culture overseas (Choe 3; Park 17). It is stated that Hallyu is the varied and uneven reception process of South Korean culture/media products and images in Asia and forms of media and cultural representations in the transborder flows of South Korean popular culture in South Korea (K. Lee 175). Lee and Kim further suggested

that Hallyu was initially a means of cultural exchange through media but has now come to represent all activities based on Korean culture (124-125). It has evolved to lead new trends in fostering cultural brands as a nation or industrial branding of Korea.

The various understandings of Hallyu can be traced back to its origins. The term Hallyu first gained prominence in 1997 when a Korean drama titled ‘What is Love?’ became popular in China (Kim and Akilli). While Korean dramas had already been exported to Hong Kong and Taiwan in 1993, they had not garnered as much attention as they did in China (Jin). The spread of Hallyu was boosted by the official launch of K-music in Taiwan and China in 1998, which helped it gain popularity in Chinese-speaking countries and in Japan, Vietnam, and other Asian countries. The phenomenon was influenced by both domestic and international factors, such as Korea’s promotion of international exchanges after the 1996 Asian Games and the popularity of J-pop, J-drama, and Hong Kong movies in Asia around the same time (Jang). In China, the term Hallyu was initially referred to as 韓迷 or 哈韓族, which meant that Chinese people were enthusiastic about Korean popular music. Later, during the mid-1990s, the terms 韓朝 and 韓風 were added to the mix. The term Hallyu, combined with the Japanese word 流 (ryu), gained widespread popularity in the late 1990s (Lee and An). It was later adopted by the Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism when they distributed a publicity Compact Disc (CD) to China under the name ‘韓流 – Song from Korea’ in 1999 (S. E. Lee).

Hallyu has first introduced to the world approximately two decades ago, and since then it has undergone a transition from Hallyu 1.0 to what is now known as New Hallyu (신한류). According to Table 1 provided below, Hallyu initially began with Hallyu 1.0 which focused on K-dramas. It then gradually progressed through Hallyu 2.0 which centered around a few idol stars, and Hallyu 3.0 which aimed to globalize Hallyu in a serious manner. Finally, in 2020, the Korean government designated it as the first year of New Hallyu (K-culture) and developed ‘the strategy for boosting new Hallyu promotion policy’ as a long-term plan with objectives such as diversification of Hallyu content, leading Hallyu-related industries, and establishing a foundation for sustainable Hallyu diffusion. The meaning of New Hallyu is to pursue lasting and widespread effects of Hallyu by discovering Hallyu content in

all areas of Korean culture, strengthening Hallyu-related industries such as services and consumer goods, and promoting intercultural exchange. This approach differs from the previous Hallyu strategy.

**Table 1**

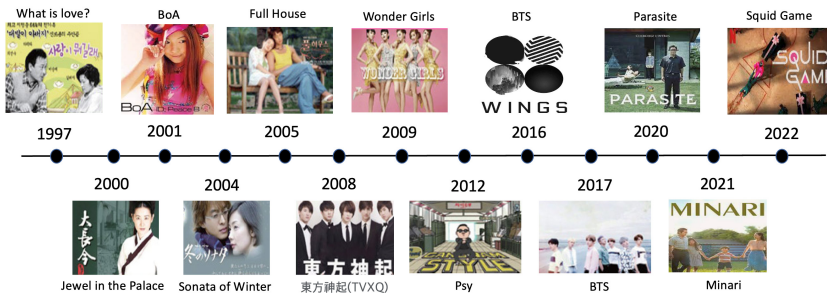
The classification of Hallyu

	Hallyu 1.0	Hallyu 2.0	Hallyu 3.0	New Hallyu (K-culture)
<b>Period</b>	1997~ the mid of 2000s	The mid of 2000s ~ the early 2010s	The early 2010s~2019	2020 onwards
<b>Character</b>	The beginning of Hallyu, centering on media contents	Diffusion of Hallyu Centering on idol stars	Hallyu globalization	Hallyu diversification and globalization through online communication
<b>The field of K-contents</b>	K-drama	K-pop	K-culture	K-culture and its related industry
<b>Target country</b>	Asia	Asia, Central, and South America, the Middle East, and some parts of the Americas	The whole world	The whole world with diffusion strategically
<b>Consumer</b>	A few Hallyu lovers	In teens and twenties	Cosmopolitan	Cosmopolitan with a customized approach

**Source:** *The Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (2020)*

## The Trend of Hallyu Contents

The Hallyu contents (so-called K-contents) are diversified with the march of time in accordance with catching popularity in all countries of the world. As noted above, the Hallyu contents varied and diversified; it showed that Hallyu has progressed and developed (Lee and Kim). In the early 2000s, during *Hallyu 1.0*, K-drama drew keen attention to East and Southeast Asia after ‘Winter Sonata (겨울연가)’ was broadcast in Japan. After the 1990s, Japan encountered stagnation across the country; however, South Korea showed great improvement in the cultural industry. Around the same time, China was in high demand in popular culture by virtue of economic revival, so it was a suitable time to export the Hallyu content to China (KOCCA, “Contents”). Not only that, K-drama dispersed to the Middle East by becoming the popularity of ‘Jewel in Palace (대장금)’, and later more K-dramas such as ‘Jumong’ and ‘Queen Sunduk (순덕여왕)’ were aired with sharing common feelings based on Korean cultures in the dramas.



**Figure 1.** The popularity of Hallyu contents in chronological order (G. H. Lee)

Hallyu gained attention through K-pop during the Hallyu 2.0 era. Kwon Bo-ah (BoA), a Korean singer, initiated a localization strategy in 2001, and a few years later, the boy band TVXQ dominated the Oricon single chart in 2007 and 2008. This motivated other Korean singers, including Big Bang, Kara, and Girls’ Generation, to enter the Japanese record market. Later, Wonder Girls and Rain also made strides in the American market. Although K-pop attempted to establish its presence in overseas markets, it was only able to gain popularity in the Asian market. However, that changed with Psy’s music video, which set a record for views on YouTube in 2012. His song “Gangnam Style” reached second on the Billboard charts and prompted



people worldwide to imitate his signature horse-riding dance moves (G. H. Lee). According to the New York Times, the song satirizes the hypocrisy and superficiality of the nouveau riche and highlights inequality and capitalism's problems (Young and Kim). This created an emotional connection with listeners, and BTS subsequently formed fandoms, also known as ARMYs, worldwide to build on their success.

Starting in 2015, Hallyu confronted unexpected problems with international politics, including a strong aversion towards Japan and a law that bans Korean culture in China. Around the same time, the Hallyu contents are also in a state of flux extensively and rapidly through global media platforms, especially Over the Top (OTT) such as Netflix and YouTube, amid relying on Korea's traditional media distribution channel (Noh). Consequently, *Hallyu* content, including K-movies, K-drama, and K-music, easily gave off their charm to the world with the assistance of OTT. In the period of Hallyu 3.0, the success strategy of "BTS" is the direct communication method of storytelling with its fans online by using Social Network Service (SNS). "BTS" reflects its members' message containing hope and happiness in their songs; thus, its ARMY empathizes with all their songs based on their experiences. "Black Pink", moreover, is a K-pop girl band that also expands its activities and increases its awareness through YouTube with differentiated plans focusing on music videos that put much work into its members' visual images that target the young generation. On this account, Black Pink's channel on YouTube broke through over eight million subscribers, as well as recording more than one hundred million views.

Not only that, K-movies and K-dramas have faced a period of prosperity since the New Hallyu (K-culture) period although there were many restrictions and limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As for K-movies, it was completely for the domestic market as most movies from the US and Hong Kong dominated the global market; after that time, K-movies enabled export abroad from the early 2000s (KOFICE, "Hallyu Now"). The Hallyu now trend shifted in earnest to an online platform has benefited. "Parasite," for example, overcame the translation barrier owing to Netflix, which set a place for introducing movies and dramas from non-English speaking countries. Netflix users got used to utilizing the subtitle function when they enjoy non-English-based content. Thus, audiences from English-speaking countries

were immersed in Korean movies, as mentioned by CJ Vice-President Lee Mi-Kyung, who took charge of the investment and distribution of *Parasite* (Min). In the case of “*Squid Game*,” as of 2021, the movie has officially reached more than 111 million viewers, beating the record of Netflix (Burke). When the K-movies caught popularity, more global audiences had a common understanding through *Hallyu* content. In this connection, the movie review by *Variety*, American entertainment media, commented that “[I]t’s worth noting that much of “*Squid Game*’s” nostalgic visual palette is drawn specifically from Korean culture, an element about which a white American critic lacks a granular understanding” (D’Addario). It shows that *Hallyu* contents are crucial for diffusing Korean culture to the world.

### **The Mechanism of Hallyu with the Korean Government**

The Korean government established the Hallyu Content Cooperation Division (HCCD) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (MCST) in 2020 for the first time during the Moon Jae-in administration so as to support the constant diffusion of *Hallyu* led by the public. Prior to the division, *Hallyu*-related projects were operated by the government department and agencies sporadically. Since the foundation of HCCD, *Hallyu* management through the government has shown clearer and more specific. The HCCD aims to examine the status of *Hallyu*, which dispersed *Hallyu* projects among inside and outside government departments, and to organize *Hallyu* systematically by supporting the public with a private-public partnership. Furthermore, it contributes to the spread of Korean culture as well as the mutual growth of *Hallyu*-related industry through *Hallyu*-based cultural exchange projects, *Hallyu* market research, *Hallyu* export support, shaping master plans for supporting *Hallyu*, and others (Policy Briefing 2020). Before establishing the Division, the *Hallyu* received support from different temporary organizations as the completely responsible department for *Hallyu* did not exist. The following organizations, for instance, assist *Hallyu*-affiliated works to shape policies for *Hallyu* promotion and leads cooperation between relevant Ministries and the private sector: the association of *Hallyu* culture promotion (한류문화진흥위원회) under the MCST in 2012 and 2013, the *Hallyu* 3.0 committee (*Hallyu* 3.0 위원회) as a private advisory body in 2014, and *Hallyu* planning group (한류기획단) as a private-public consultative group from 2015 to 2017.

The MCST enacted the International Culture Exchange Promotion Act in 2017. The ‘international cultural exchange’ in the Act defines “international cooperation and activities provided or performed to enhance mutual understanding of culture (referring to culture in a broad sense encompassing art, tourism, sports, etc.) among countries in relevant fields, such as culture, art, tourism, and sports” under the purpose of “contributing to improving mutual understanding of culture among countries by establishing a foundation for international cultural exchanges, as well as to developing global culture by enhancing the diversity and creativity of Korean culture, by prescribing matters necessary to promote international cultural exchanges” (KLRI). One year later, the MCST pushed ahead with the first Comprehensive Plans for International Culture Promotion (2018-2022) as a primary medium – and long-term official plan in accordance with the Act. The chief aim of the plans is to depart from the usual way of one-off and fragmentary international cultural exchange and build a basic framework that is systematic and sustainable; thereby, it proposes a vision of international cultural exchange that sympathizes and cooperates with the world, including specific policy purposes and strategies (MCST, “The First”). Moreover, the plans lay out international cultural exchange aid projects through the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange (KOFICE, “Information of KOFICE”) that a dedicated government institute devoted to international cultural exchange in 2018. The foundation has been publishing a report on the study of the real state of Hallyu status abroad since 2012 so as to grasp the level of awareness of Korea and favorability through K-contents. It employs the following activities to stimulate cultural exchange across national boundaries that are bilateral exchange events, global networking, research and studies, and professional training programs. By connecting people and exchanging cultures around the world, KOFICE aims to serve as a platform for “win-win cultural development” by connecting Korea and the world through culture (KOFICE, “Information of KOFICE”).

Besides the HCCD, the MCST works with different agencies, for a typical example, the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA, “The Report List of KOCCA”). The KOCCA was founded as an affiliated special corporation of the MCST in 2009 that consolidates five existing organizations, such as the Korea Game Agency and the Korean Broadcasting, for the purpose of directing and forging overall support for the content industry in Korea such as research on policy and systems, technical development, management

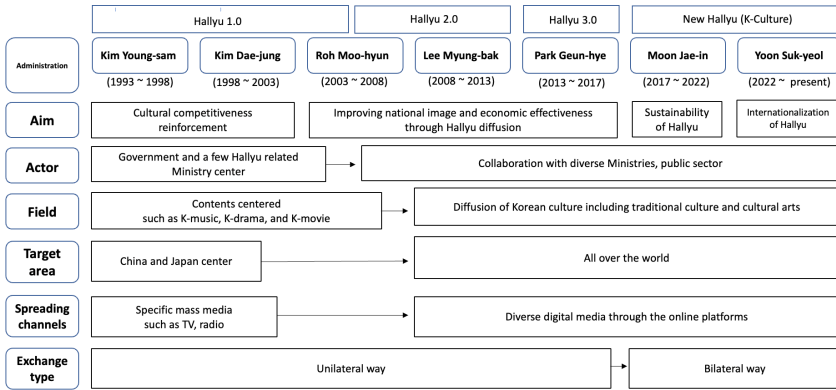
support for overseas expansion, contents development support for the cultural industry. Not only that, recently, KOCCA as published its research on the actual condition of K-pop, K-animation, K-cartoon, K-game, and K-webtoon, focusing on users all over the world (“The Report List of KOCCA”). Furthermore, diverse Korean government agencies also endeavor to spread Hallyu as a part of cultural soft power. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) runs projects of Hallyu diffusion to boost the interest and attraction of Korea, whereby constructing an environment that the Korean public and companies welcome in the international society based on revving up its comprehensive attractions. The MFA coordinates Korea’s public diplomacy with a vision of “fascinating the world with Korea’s charm”, whereupon it deploys Korea’s soft power as a part of its public diplomacy strategy to attain one of its goals, ‘share Korean culture’ (MOFA, “Introduction of the Public Diplomacy”). The Public Diplomacy Bureau under the MFA manages its affairs in culture, policy, and digital-related realms (MOFA, “Introduction of the Public Diplomacy”). Thus, the MFA goes over the present condition of Hallyu over the world, publishing ‘the Current Status of Global Village Hallyu (지구촌 한류현황)’ annually to fathom the ripple effects of Hallyu, the number of Hallyu clubs, Hallyu popular contents that show different geography. The Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs also not only supports the Hallyu club activities based on the K-Lover infrastructure project but also carries out cooperative projects with the relative authorities, quasi-government agencies, broadcasting stations, and others to enhance a better understanding of Korea (MOFA, “Diffusion of Hallyu”). Such efforts led to public diplomacy by means of different types of programs by the MFA. Furthermore, the rest of the Korean government agencies and departments adopt diverse Korean soft power-related projects and programs and connect to overseas expansion and extension of trade. For instance, the Korean Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Energy has been holding the ‘Hallyu exhibition’ annually abroad since 2010 in order to make headway into the foreign market with promising Korean companies in the consumer goods and service sector in conjunction with Hallyu (MOTIE, “Promising Companies”). The exhibition provides performances of Korean celebrities appointed as goodwill ambassadors and sets a place for experiencing firsthand K-beauty, K-foods, K-pop, and others.

## **The Policies for Hallyu as a Bridge to Achieve Cultural Powerhouse in Korea**

As reviewed earlier, *Hallyu* is a medium to introduce Korea with its culture to foreign countries. It has already been shown; for example, the Japanese who watched the “Winter Sonata” cast away prejudices and stereotypes of Korea in the early 2000s. The K-drama plays a role as a bridge between Korea and Japan via comprehension of each other’s cultures that were previously fraught with misunderstanding and distorted views. The fruitful results stem from the Korean government’s constant support for its cultural industry. The Korean government made much effort to maintain the continuity of the Hallyu policy when we look through the previous administrations. The government constantly attempts to figure out the present condition through the *Hallyu* industry and specialists, operating advisory programs to suggest better Hallyu policies. There were several advisory committees for accomplishing its purpose; for instance, the advisory committee for Hallyu policy under the Roh Moo-hyun administration, the advisory committee for promoting Hallyu culture under the Lee Myung-bak administration, the expert committee of cultural industry affiliated with the cultural enrichment board under the Park Geun-hye administration, and Hallyu cooperation committee under the Moon Jae-in administration (Jun 159).

The Hallyu policies have been detailed in accordance with the change of government. The Korean government has been supporting Hallyu due to the expectation of a growth engine for its economy from the Kim Young-sam administration (Cha 22). In the next government, under the Kim Dae-jung administration, the Korean idol/Hallyu Star system was introduced in the field of K-pop and carried out the Cultural Industry Policy in earnest that the previous administration had planned out. Thus, the Korean government took popular culture as an alternative to promote export to pass through the IMF crisis. The then-major entertainment companies – SM, YG, and JYP – had also sponsored, according to the government policy to shore up the culture industry in Korea to grant competitive power in the global market (Ju 19-20). As Figure 2 explains below, the full-scale *Hallyu*-related projects endeavored with bilateral cultural exchange in response to the anti-*Hallyu* movement in the early 2000s, but it did not draw public attention. During the Lee Myung-bak administration, the Korean government established the National Brand Committee to focus on improving its

image on the international stage. It was the first attempt for the Korean government to deploy Hallyu to bolster the national status which led to raised exports and vitalized foreign tourism domestically. By extension, the Park Geun-hye administration utilized the cultural industry for job creation that connects to shared growth of the manufacturing and service industry including education, medical care, and tourism. To fulfill the policy, the Park administration developed a framework of a belt for integrated culture and creation and established K-experience, K-culture valley, culture creation academy, and others (Jun 160, 163).



**Figure 2.** The characters of Hallyu policies according to administration changes (KOCCA, “Study on the Strategy of New Hallyu”)

In line with publicizing Korea through its culture, the Korean government officially recognized the significance of public diplomacy with soft power in 2010. The government designated the Minister of Public Diplomacy the next year and established the public diplomacy division under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the following year. In 2016, Korea enacted the law of public diplomacy to gain a foothold in carrying out and framing its policy by the MFA alone or through cooperation between local governments and the private sector. As of 2023, the MFA laid the second master plan for Korea’s public diplomacy (2023-2027) after the previous master plan for five years, from 2017 to 2021. Besides this, MFA drew up comprehensive implementation plans every year from 2020 with all Korean government ministries, affiliated government organizations, and local governments.

The Hallyu policies are expanded and combined with public diplomacy. The current President, Yoon Suk-yeol, plans to disperse the attraction all over the world; more specifically, his national political agenda in the contents field is ‘the proliferation of the Hallyu (so-called K-contents)’s attraction to the world’. Pursuant to Yoon’s policy decision, the MCST drew up a budget for the contents field of around 974 billion dollars, which accounts for 14.5 percent of the total of the Minister, to fulfill four practical strategies (*Hallyu* contents foundation construction, intensively fostering Hallyu contents representative fields, giving off charms of *Hallyu* contents, and cultivating new markets of Hallyu contents) and fourteen specific plans that are related to the strategies (MCST, “The Yoon administration”). By extension, in the same year, the MCST also plans to run a course of study on training content exports and marketing professional personnel under the catchphrase of ‘Content Connects the World’ to continuously support overseas expansion with the KOCCA (MCST, “The Ministry of Culture, Sports”). The government’s efforts act on Korea in terms of promoting Korea’s image on the global stage as the result of public diplomacy and improving its economic effect in the domestic economy.

### **Conquering the Hearts and Minds with *Yurt Yeli***

Hallyu, also known as the Korean Wave, has been instrumental in promoting South Korea’s soft power and improving the country’s reputation and branding on a global scale. The utilization of Hallyu to maximize the nation’s soft power has become a crucial policy objective for enhancing the country’s power and influence in the international arena. The idea of Soft Power, introduced by Joseph S. Nye (*Bound to Lead*), refers to the ability to attract people through charisma and persuasion, in contrast to Hard Power, such as military might (Akilli 130). On the other hand, public diplomacy (Gilboa 55-77; Melissen 542-561; Nye, *Soft Power* 100; Akilli 166; Snow and Cull) is a strategy used by countries to engage with foreign audiences and promote their national interests, values, and culture. It involves the exchange of information and ideas between countries with the aim of fostering mutual understanding and building relationships (Kerr and Wiseman). Public diplomacy includes a range of activities such as cultural diplomacy, educational exchanges, and digital diplomacy (Akilli 14). It is a way to enhance a country’s soft power and improve its image and reputation abroad. The practice of public diplomacy

has gained increasing importance in the context of globalization (Kan) and the growing interconnectedness of the world (Melissen 545). In today's world, countries are increasingly dependent on each other, and the need for mutual understanding and cooperation has become more urgent. Public diplomacy builds trust and fosters collaboration between countries, especially in mutual interest and concern areas. As such, public diplomacy is becoming an essential tool for countries to manage their international relations and promote their interests in the global arena (Akıllı 167).

Hallyu's success as a public diplomacy tool can be attributed to its ability to connect with people on a personal and emotional level. It has helped to break down cultural barriers and promote understanding between South Korea and other countries. By sharing its cultural heritage with the world, South Korea has promoted its soft power and built relationships with foreign audiences. As such, Hallyu has become an essential part of South Korea's public diplomacy strategy.

As mentioned earlier, the South Korean government has spent 20 years experimenting and refining Hallyu, and its triumph has exceeded the initial predictions. *Yurt Yeli* will adopt the formulation proposed in this study, which focuses on the latest version of the Korean Wave, known as the New Hallyu.

**Table 2**

Comparison of *Hallyu* and *Yurt Yeli*

	<b>New Hallyu (K-culture)</b>	<b>Yurt Yeli</b>
<b>Period</b>	2020 onwards	2023 onwards
<b>Character</b>	Hallyu diversification and globalization through online communication	Social media, official websites, mainstream media
<b>The field of K-contents</b>	K-culture and its related industry	Yurt culture and its related industry
<b>Target country</b>	The whole world with diffusion strategically	The whole world
<b>Consumer</b>	Cosmopolitan with a customized approach	Boosted by tradition yet inclusive of international diversity.



Steps need to be taken to formulate Hallyu for the Turkic world and construct the success of Hallyu in the region through the *Yurt Yeli* subculture. As a unique fusion of Turkic World cultural elements, *Yurt Yeli* could gain popularity across the region and has the potential to serve as a model for creating successful cultural exports from the Turkestan region to the rest of the world. One of the key factors that will contribute to the success of Yurt Yeli is the way in which it has been adapted to Anatolia and Turkestan region cultural norms and values. Similarly, the Yurt Yeli subculture represents a local adaptation of Hallyu that reflects the unique cultural identity and values of the Turkic World. By embracing Turkic World's cultural traditions and values, Yurt Yeli will be able to resonate with audiences across the region and will gain a dedicated following. To ensure the success of Hallyu in the Turkic World, the Yurt Yeli model comprises various measures such as integrating Turkic cultural traditions and values into Yurt Yeli content, promoting cross-cultural exchange and collaboration, and utilizing digital technologies to expand its global reach. By adapting Yurt Yeli content to Turkic cultural norms and values, it is possible to create content that resonates with audiences and reflects Turkic World's unique cultural identity. Furthermore, promoting cross-cultural exchange and collaboration through Turkic cultural industries can help create content that reflects cultural elements and resonates with audiences in the region and beyond. Moreover, with the advent of digital technologies, it has become easier than ever to reach global audiences with cultural content. By embracing digital technologies and using them to promote Yurt Yeli content, a wider audience can be reached, and the cultural richness of the Turkic World can be promoted to the rest of the world. To facilitate these steps in Yurt Yeli, certain key elements must be established. Firstly, it's essential to institutionalize Yurt Yeli within the OTS. Following this, the establishment of dedicated music, drama/movie, food, fashion, and beauty industries under the Yurt Yeli brand is crucial for the OTS, mirroring the successful model that Hallyu has adeptly implemented over the past two decades.

### **The Institutionalization of the Yurt Yeli**

The institutionalization of the Yurt Yeli brand entails the formal and systematic integration of Yurt Yeli into the organizational structure

and processes of the OTS. This necessitates the establishment of official departments, frameworks, and protocols specifically dedicated to Yurt Yeli within the OTS.

As a public diplomacy brand, the integration of Yurt Yeli into the OTS's organizational structure and processes encompasses various essential elements. The cornerstone of this effort is the establishment of a specialized organizational unit or department entrusted with overseeing and executing Yurt Yeli initiatives. As the Korean government established the Hallyu Content Cooperation Division (HCCD) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (MCST); this unit acts as a central hub for the coordination and implementation of a diverse range of Yurt Yeli programs and activities. TURKSOY holds the potential to spearhead the adoption of Yurt Yeli as the public diplomacy brand of OTS, assuming a role akin to the UNESCO of the Turkic World.

An integral facet of the institutionalization process involves the development of policies. These policies go beyond managing the promotion, development, and sustainability of Yurt Yeli; they are crafted to align seamlessly with the broader goals and mission of the OTS. As emphasized in the 2040 Vision document, the focus is on “promoting Turkish culture, values, traditions, art, and heritage worldwide through the joint efforts of Turkish Cooperation Organizations in cooperation with relevant international organizations”; these policies serve as a guiding framework in decision-making processes, ensuring that Yurt Yeli initiatives are aligned with the organization's overall goals.

The allocation of dedicated financial resources by the Office of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination (OTS) is a pivotal component in the institutionalization of Yurt Yeli, underscoring the importance and commitment to the successful implementation of its initiatives. This allocation is crucial for providing the necessary support for Yurt Yeli's diverse programs, projects, and promotional activities. Furthermore, the expansion of Yurt Yeli's reach, and impact is heavily reliant on the establishment of collaborative partnerships. By forging alliances with key stakeholders both within and beyond the OTS, Yurt Yeli can leverage shared resources, expertise, and networks, notably with organizations such as TURKSOY,

the Turkish Academy, the Turkish Culture and Heritage Foundation, and TURKPA, thereby amplifying its influence and effectiveness.

Additionally, the implementation of education and training programs is an integral part of the institutionalization process, ensuring that stakeholders, including staff and collaborators, are well-versed in Yurt Yeli's goals, values, and strategies. This comprehensive understanding is vital for the effective execution of the initiative. Moreover, the OTS's deployment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is essential for assessing the progress and impact of Yurt Yeli. These periodic evaluations provide valuable insights, enabling necessary adjustments and improvements to enhance the overall effectiveness of the programs.

Lastly, a critical element in Yurt Yeli's success lies in the creation of a harmonious and recognizable brand identity. To achieve this, the implementation of strategic branding and communication efforts is necessary to bolster Yurt Yeli's visibility and significance on a global scale. These efforts are aimed at positioning Yurt Yeli as a distinguished and prominent entity within the broad cultural landscape, thereby furthering its mission and objectives. The ultimate critical step in the institutionalization process entails the seamless integration of Yurt Yeli with existing initiatives within the OTS. This integration fosters synergy and maximizes the collective impact of these efforts, including events such as state leaders' summits, the World Nomad Games, and TURKSOY's initiatives. By institutionalizing Yurt Yeli, the OTS can effectively advance its commitment to promoting Turkish culture, values, and heritage on a global scale. This initiative aims to establish a sustainable framework for the long-term success of Yurt Yeli endeavors. Collaborations with organizations like TURKSOY, the Turkish Academy, the Turkish Culture and Heritage Foundation, and TURKPA not only emphasize but also broaden this commitment.

### **Essential Key Elements for *Yurt Yeli* Subculture**

In addition to establishing a responsible directive structure in the OTS, such as the Korean government's establishment of the HCCD under MCST, the following elements are vital to be constructed for Yurt Yeli:

*Yurt Yeli's Music Genre-Turku:* To promote the cultural richness of the Turkic world, it is important to create a new genre of music that combines

traditional Turkic music with modern influences blends different genres. This new genre can be named *Turku* and can showcase the diversity of music styles within the Turkic world, highlighting the unique sounds of each region and nation. There are numerous talented music groups and artists in the Turkic world that can be utilized to develop the music aspect of *Yurt Yeli* within the region. Here are a few instances:

- *Ordo Sakhma*: A popular ensemble that combines traditional Kyrgyz music with contemporary elements, aiming to bring Kyrgyz folk music to a wider audience. They have a unique sound that reflects the Turkestan region's cultural heritage and could be a great inspiration for a new genre of music that blends traditional Turkic sounds.
- *Sultans of the Dance*: Sultans of the Dance is a Turkish group that combines traditional Turkish music with modern dance beats. They have become popular in Türkiye and other parts of the world and could be a great inspiration for a new genre of dance music that reflects the energy and vibrancy of the Turkic world.
- *Sevda Alekberzade*: Sevda Alekberzade is an Azerbaijani singer who is known for her powerful voice and unique style. She could be a great inspiration for a new generation of Turkic singers who want to blend traditional sounds with modern influences like jazz. Just like Hallyu Stars, Yurt Yeli Stars can be trained through the Turkic music industry.

To apply the *Hallyu Star* formula in the Turkic world, OTS could concentrate on cultivating and endorsing fresh talents from different regions and utilize social media platforms to increase their fan base. Additionally, OTS could establish novel music shows and contests that highlight the most promising emerging talents from across the Turkic world and offer them chances to collaborate with established producers and stars. Lastly, developing a robust brand identity and marketing plan that appeals to youth globally, using digital marketing techniques and social media influencers to create awareness and interest in the new wave of Turkic music. The OTS could also host music festivals and concerts that showcase the unique sounds of the Turkic world and collaborate with artists and producers from around the world to create a truly global sound. Social media platforms could be

used to promote and share this music with a global audience, just like how K-Pop became successful with the help of social media.

*Yurt Yeli's Dramas/Movies:* In addition to the music industry, OTS could also focus on developing the drama and movie sectors that Yurt Yeli can promote. Through these mediums, Turkic filmmakers and actors can showcase their skills and narrate stories that resonate with global audiences. By creating a new genre of dramas and movies that explore the fascinating history, culture, and folklore of the Turkic world, can generate interest in the region. These productions could be produced with high production values, captivating storytelling, and talented actors, similar to the success of K-Dramas and movies. Türkiye has the potential to take the lead in these efforts, as demonstrated by the triumph of shows like “Muhteşem Yüzyıl” and “Diriliş Ertuğrul,” which highlight the country’s rich heritage and culture. Furthermore, other Turkic countries could create their unique productions that showcase their history, culture, and folklore. For instance, Uzbekistan could create films that depict the Silk Road era, while Kazakhstan could explore its nomadic traditions in its productions. Such efforts can foster greater appreciation and understanding of the diverse cultures of the Turkic world.

*Yurt Yeli's Fashion and Beauty Trends:* In addition to music and dramas/movies, the fashion and beauty industry can also play a significant role in promoting the cultural identity of the Turkic world through *Yurt Yeli*. Fashion and beauty trends reflect the values, history, and cultural heritage of a region. Therefore, highlighting the unique fashion and beauty trends of the Turkic world can help promote the region’s distinctiveness. The Turkic world has a rich history of textile and clothing production. The traditional costumes of the Turkic people vary greatly, from the embroidered kaftans of the Ottoman Empire to the intricate patterns of Central Asian textiles. These costumes often feature vibrant colors, intricate details, and unique designs that reflect the region’s cultural diversity. By showcasing these traditional costumes, fashion designers can draw inspiration from the rich cultural heritage of the Turkic world and create modern interpretations that appeal to global audiences. Similarly, the beauty industry can also draw inspiration from the Turkic world’s rich cultural traditions. Beauty practices and rituals have been passed down through generations, and they

reflect the cultural values and beliefs of the region. In summary, promoting the fashion and beauty trends of the Turkic world can help showcase the region's cultural richness and distinctiveness. By drawing inspiration from traditional costumes and beauty practices, designers and beauty brands can create modern interpretations that appeal to global audiences while staying true to the region's cultural heritage.

*Yurt Yeli's Gastrodiplomacy Aspect-Aş: Food* is an essential part of any culture, and the Turkic world has a rich culinary heritage that is worth promoting through Yurt Yeli as *Aş*. Turkic cuisine is diverse, with unique flavors and ingredients that reflect the region's history and cultural traditions. By promoting the diverse cuisine of the Turkic world, Yurt Yeli can showcase the region's cultural richness and distinctiveness. Turkic cuisine is characterized by its use of spices, herbs, and fresh ingredients. Each region has its own unique dishes and cooking methods, which have been passed down through generations. For example, in Central Asia, traditional dishes such as *Plov*, *Lagman*, *Samsa*, and *Mantı* are popular. In Türkiye, dishes such as kebab, baklava, and Turkish delight are famous worldwide. In other words, *Yurt Yeli* can assist in highlighting the cultural wealth and uniqueness of a region by presenting its authentic cuisine. Chefs and food bloggers can create modern interpretations of traditional dishes that appeal to global audiences while staying true to the region's cultural heritage. Additionally, Yurt Yeli can promote local food markets and restaurants, which can aid in supporting the local economy and preserving traditional cooking methods.

## **Conclusion**

First and foremost, it is crucial to underscore that Yurt Yeli is not a mere replication of the Hallyu phenomenon tailored for the Turkic World. Instead, it represents a strategic initiative for the OTS to formalize and embody public diplomacy, mirroring the successful model that South Korea has adeptly employed over the years. While the OTS faces unique challenges (Ataman), not only due to its decentralized structure but also in reconciling the diverse array of values within the Turkic World, Yurt Yeli seeks to navigate these challenges by promoting a standardized set of shared values.

It is noteworthy to acknowledge the ongoing criticisms directed towards K-Pop, a pivotal component of Hallyu, citing concerns about its potential negative societal impacts. In contrast, Yurt Yeli aspires to serve as a unifying concept for the Turkic States, facilitating the exportation of their local, cultural, and societal values to the global stage. Essentially, Yurt Yeli functions as a distinctive brand for the Turkic World and the OTS, positioned to showcase the beauty and richness of Turkic societies internationally. The ultimate goal is to establish Yurt Yeli as an institutionalized public diplomacy tool for the OTS, fostering a positive and authentic representation of the Turkic World on the global stage.

While the objectives of Yurt Yeli are clear, and it carries a distinct essence deeply rooted in the Turkic World, drawing inspiration from Hallyu, certain questions may emerge. Notably, South Korea stands out with its political, social, economic, and cultural unity and homogeneity, presenting a sharp contrast to the Turkic World, which is yet to achieve a consistent political, economic, and social structure. The rich tapestry of Turkic culture, shaped over millennia, has undergone diverse transformations in different states, prompting the question, “Which Turkic culture?” Yurt Yeli distinctly centers around the common identity, culture, and norms of the Turkic World, as exemplified by the OTS.

Hallyu experienced ups and downs on its journey from Hallyu 1.0 to the New Hallyu era (Kim and Akıllı). Despite its waves reaching the shores of the US and Europe, it had limited influence in the Asian region. Nevertheless, it faced political bans and restrictions from neighboring countries. Today, with the New Hallyu era, internet-based platforms and social media have been harnessed effectively to conquer the minds and hearts of millions around the world through K-fandom. As mentioned earlier, in 2020, the Korean government established the Hallyu Content Cooperation Division (HCCD) under the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (MCST) umbrella, and the OTS should do the same for Yurt Yeli.

The HCCD has the objective of assessing the state of Hallyu, which involves a wide range of Hallyu initiatives across both government and private sectors, and of arranging Hallyu in a structured way by assisting the public with a public-private partnership. Additionally, it fosters the dissemination of Korean culture and the mutual development of Hallyu-related industries

by means of cultural exchange projects based on Hallyu, research into Hallyu markets, aid for the exportation of Hallyu, the formulation of plans to support Hallyu, and other related activities. In other words, the establishment of a counterpart in the OTS will institutionalize Yurt Yeli, and this is vital for its future, given that the HCCD is the key actor in institutionalizing Hallyu.

Overall, the Yurt Yeli model for constructing the success of Hallyu in the Turkic World represents a promising approach to public diplomacy and soft power. By promoting cross-cultural exchange and collaboration, embracing local cultural traditions and values, and leveraging digital technologies, it is possible to create cultural content that resonates with audiences around the world and promotes greater cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. By adapting these elements to the Turkic world, it can be possible to establish a new cultural phenomenon that reflects the richness and diversity of the Turkestan region and resonates with audiences around the world.

As previously detailed, Yurt Yeli has the potential to be a groundbreaking initiative not just in the Turkic world but globally. In order to ensure its success, it is crucial to establish a dedicated institution or division within the official structure of the OTS to oversee Yurt Yeli operations. Once a solid foundation is established, it is important to develop key elements such as a Yurt Yeli-style music genre, dramas/movies, food, fashion, and beauty trends, similar to the way South Korea developed these elements for Hallyu. By building upon the rich cultural heritage of the Turkestan region with strong institutional support from the OTS, Yurt Yeli can showcase the cultural wealth and uniqueness of the region. Through Yurt Yeli, the OTS has the potential to wield public diplomacy effectively, positioning itself as a supranational organization with significant influence in the international system. In the midst of pandemics, wars, and disasters that have claimed thousands of lives, the need for soft power in world politics has never been greater. By leveraging the power of Yurt Yeli, the OTS can promote Turkestan's cultural richness and take a leading role in the international system. Turkestan was once a center of science and prosperity, and through Yurt Yeli, the OTS has the opportunity to send a message of hope and positivity from the heart of the region to the world. Ultimately, Yurt Yeli



will be a source of inspiration and pride for the Turkic people, blowing from the very heart of Turkestan and reaching all corners of the globe.

### **Contribution Rate Statement**

The authors' contribution rates in this study are as follows: Erman Akıllı 75%, Yunhee Kim 25%. The organization of the article, the development of the "Yurtyeli" concept, the writing of the entire article except for the "Hallyu" section mentioned above, and the language editing of the text were carried out by Erman Akıllı, while the information and creation of tables/figures related to the Hallyu concept was carried out by Yunhee Kim.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person within the scope of this study. There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

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