

Korean Space

1. A North American on a trip to Seoul would probably be reminded of his trip to Latin America.

A North American on a trip to Seoul would probably be reminded of his trip to Latin America because of the same experience of being touched by people in public situations. Since both Latin Americans and Koreans need the smaller amount of personal space than North Americans do, the situation that a North American would feel uncomfortable by being touched by others would happen quite often in both countries. Therefore, a North American who had experienced this kind of uncomfortable situation during his trip to Latin America would feel in the same way during his trip to Seoul.

2. An Arab would feel more comfortable than Poitras on a Seoul bus.

An Arab would feel more comfortable than Poitras on a Seoul bus because an Arab needs the smaller amount of space around him than an American in public places. Since people in a crowd push and press too much in a Seoul bus, an American, who needs for two cubic yards or so of personal space, would feel very uncomfortable about it. However, unlike Americans, as Arabs like close contact, an Arab would feel less uncomfortable at being touched by people in a Seoul bus.

3. During the summer one would be more likely to meet sociable and outgoing people on the beach than in the mountains.

During the summer one would be more likely to meet sociable and outgoing people on the beach than in the mountains because the people who enjoy the density on the beaches would be more likely to have that character. Many people in Korea invariably choose to spend their holidays at the most popular and thronged resorts like the beaches because of the Korean psyche that seeks company and prefers to be surrounded by others rather than remain alone. Therefore, people who are sociable and outgoing would be more likely to go to the beach to enjoy spending their vacation in a crowd.

4. A Korean at a party in a Western home would move his feet more than an American at a party in a Korean home.

Both a Korean at a party in a Western home and an American at a party in a Korean home would move their feet more than usual because of their different culture of sitting at home. Since Koreans are used to sitting on the floor with the legs folded and lowered and conversing at close range—sometimes at knee-touching proximity—if they sit upon furniture at long distances in an American home, they would feel awkward and wouldn't know what to do with their feet and so they would move them more often. On the other hand, as Americans are used to sitting upon furniture at long distances, it would be rather difficult for them to manage sitting on the floor with the legs folded and lowered and so they would move their feet more often because of discomfort.

5. Though Poitras was angry, he probably didn't glare at the young man as he got out of the taxi.

Though Poitras was angry, he probably didn't glare at the young man as he got out of the taxi because Poitras understands the different Korean culture of space. Even though what the young man did was very rude for westerners, Poitras, who has lived here for a long time, would be very well aware that the young man was totally unconscious of what he was doing. Therefore,

although Poitras thought that the young man was unpleasant, he probably thought that what the young man did was understandable in Korean culture.

6. A Korean's private bubble is probably smaller than an American's.

We can see a Korean's private bubble is probably smaller than an American's from their different attitudes toward being touched by others in public situations. As Korean people need the smaller private bubble, not only do they push and press other people unconsciously but they also don't care about the public situations that people in a crowd push and are pushed. However, Americans, who need for two cubic yards or so of personal space, would feel uncomfortable being pushed and pressed by others in public places.

7. In reference to the entire article: Korea is, relatively speaking, a touch culture.

Korea is, relatively speaking, a touch culture compared to western countries. According to this article, the Korean traditional community was a group of homes nestled together—unlike the United States, where the typical farming pattern scattered the homes all over the landscape—and it influenced Korea's touch culture. And Koreans' behavior in public spaces also shows their touch culture: they have a tendency to press and push unconsciously and they don't care about being touched by others in public situations, which makes Westerners feel uncomfortable. The closeness within the limited space at home—sitting on the floor and conversing at close range—is another aspect of the touch culture Korea has.

8. Poitras is generally negative about Korea.

Poitras doesn't seem to be generally negative about Korea in this article. The purpose of this article, I assume, is to inform us of the different Korean culture of space that he discovered from his personal experiences. Even though there are some unpleasant experiences appeared in this article, he shows his understanding of Korean culture and the difference of culture about space between Korea and western countries—which shows he is not generally negative about Korea.

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