Culture on the Korean Peninsula: Clash or Reconciliation?

Katharine (Kathy) H.S. Moon
Wellesley College

Abstract:

Both the South and the North of the Korean peninsula have developed distinct cultures around language, the arts, social relations, public rituals, and national identity. The paper addresses the following questions: What is "authentic" about Korean culture on either side of the 38th parallel? Is there a shared history and common custom that can facilitate social and political exchange between the two Koreas? What will be the cultural basis of political reconciliation? Might "culture wars" emerge as obstacles to reconciliation, and how might we envision a form of cultural diplomacy toward peaceable cohabitation on the peninsula?