Orienting Affection: The Political Economy of Affect and The Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation seeks to develop a model of affectivity based on the Hegelian dialectics of identity and uses this model to analyze the historical, economic and political history of North Korea. Drawing on propaganda materials, children's cartoons and by examining the dynamics of leadership transition over the course of the republic's history, a synthesis of Butlerian theories of performativity, Marxist political economy and the sociology of emotion allows for a description of nationalist affects levied against the anomic affectivity of commodification. Whereby the dynamics of capitalism, the historical forces of modernization, and the very ontic structure of individual/group identity inculcate an emotional dualism which operates simultaneously at the global, social and individual level.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the following people: to my parents, Robert and Dona MacKie, who are the substantive material basis of this piece of superstructure, and who I love very deeply, to Jessica Langston, who is the substantive emotional basis of this piece of superstructure, and who I also love very deeply, to Beverly Best, Valerie De Courville Nicol and Bill Reimer, who are the others by which I become myself, and to Friedrich Nietzsche, who instructed us all, "To wade into the dirty water when it is the water of truth, and not to disdain the cold frogs and hot toads".

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Introduction

In simplest terms, this paper has a single objective: to examine the role such forms as propaganda, the nation-state, the semiotics of nationalism, and the dynamics of group membership in the production of the social experience of the family in North Korean political subjectivity, an analysis that proceeds by means of two separate yet, to my mind, complementary schools of thought, affect theory, as it has been developed by Sara Ahmed, Valerie de Courville Nicol, Hochschild, et al., and a variety of theories of ontology and economy as they relate to the production of subjectivity, based in the work of Hegel and Judith Butler. In addition to these broad theoretical domains, the work of Foucault, Nicholas Rose, Max Weber, Benedict Anderson and a generally Marxist political economy serve as crucial supplements, roughly making up a third, distinct domain of theory.

Though a complete working through of the historical and conceptual implications of my proposed approach goes far beyond the ambition of this thesis, I do need to introduce the model in schematic form so as to include the reader in the inductively proposed social structures that have arisen in the course of this research. To this end, I will now give a very brief summary of the three theoretical spheres mentioned above, with a supplementary explanation of method and scope included in conjunction with the description of the third group. However, to put it succinctly, I believe a synthesis of these authors' positions gives us something approximating a political economy of affect, one that reveals formal similarities from the level of the individual to that of the nation-state, with (para)religious, consumer and legacy identities imbricated at every level.

By the term 'affect theory' I refer to that body of social sciences literature, primarily emerging in the 1990s, which seeks to introduce and theoretically integrate notions of emotional management as potential vectors in the production of social normalcy and marginalization. Captured in such early concepts as Hochschild's 'emotional labour' (1979) (defined as the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display that is then sold as a commodity), these theories began to explore affect as a comprehensible system characterized by 'economic' regularities. The work of Ahmed analogically drew on Marx to develop a theory of 'sticky' and 'backward linking' affective circulation, and later she published *The Promise of Happiness* (2010), which founded basic principles such as the anticipatory 'happy object' (discussed at length in chapter 3) and the role of the family in legislating labour, time and social obligation. In addition, the work of Valerie de Courville Nicol around fear, desire, security and pleasure completes my theoretical corpus, especially her observations regarding fear and anxiety as a painful anticipation of future conflict and the notion of emotional training as a form of embodied incapacity (2011). In sum, affect theory allows me to characterize the processes of emotional normativization that developed out of Korean colonial experiences and the Korean War. As I will show, the use of the family as an ideological justification of state legitimacy was mobilized at the same time that it was developed as a medium of state power, whereby the family as a symbol of an almost millenarian future reconciliation became an increasingly dominant theme.

Performance theory, on the other hand, requires more adaptation. Rooted as it is in theories of gender performance and sexed bodies, the work of Judith Butler

nonetheless shows itself to be particularly amenable to an analysis of the situation in the Democratic People Republic of Korea (DPRK). The 'abject and unliveable' body of the North Korean citizen shows marked similarities to the 'abject and unliveable' sexed body theorized by Butler. Butler's notion of an obligatory performance of heterosexuality resulting in gender melancholy can be adapted to the obligatory performances of the national community and the resulting figures of subjectivity produced. Further, the idea of adaptive change occurring by means of performative iteration, whereby the norm is subverted by the simultaneous manipulation and perpetuation of its constitutive characteristics and contradictions, has great utility in the study of North Korea. The aim is to measure the cycles of performance *generationally,* thus bringing into focus the transmission of affect norms between generations, while observing the changes in the various performances of leadership between the Kims (Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un). Beholden to the contextual economic, geopolitical and military conditions that have acted as forces of change in and of themselves, the adaptations each leader has been obliged to make can be related to the legacy of emotional norms established during the revolution (and before).

To bridge these theoretical domains while still giving an adequate account of the DPRK's affective economy requires a historical method, one predicated on the simultaneously affective and dialectical nature of group relations and appropriately scaled to account for the particular manifestation of social milieus at the level of the nation-state. The scale is significant not only because the unit of interest, the (North Korean) state, is not comprehensible without a clear understanding of modernity's technical and social impact on the formation of this unit, or to put it in Hegelese the achievement of the

'world-historical' moment. But equally, group identification at this scale equally requires a description of *vis à vis* communication, for, as is argued by Anderson, the moment of world-history could only arise by the means of certain technical developments, such as 'print capitalism' in the modern period, and the massively sophisticated system of telecommunication and transportation technologies that accompanied it's dissemination. Having seen the impact of the internet and other telecommunications technology on capitalist relations and their intersection with the state-form in the last thirty years Anderson's thesis regarding the relationship between vernacular print and the rise of 'nationness' seems even more persuasive. As with the nation, globalization, world-history, and all of its other instantiations emerge from the very being of this technological nexus, a nexus without which we would organically return to the intrinsic parochialism from whence we emerged. Thus, the manifest character of affinity groups (by which I mean any social unit of co-identification including nationalisms, religious membership, shared practices of consumption –commodity affinity- the family, various biological conceptualizations of humanity, etc.) is directly linked to that group's relative position within a very recently established *global* affective economy. Foucault, Weber and Durkheim will be mobilized in describing this arrangement, whereby an exegesis of Foucauldian corporeal and disciplinary power will enable a discursive and affective analysis of North Korean children's cartoons and the North Korean caste system of *Songbun*. I hasten to add that the historical method employed in this piece is predominantly historiographic rather than more rigorously historicist method, much more in line with the Foucauldian method discussed in chapter one, and partly a result of the epistemological difficulties faced in researching this topic.

For both epistemologically and affectively speaking, one must first deal with the fact that the ideologically charged material which makes up the majority of documents about North Korea is a body of work that is already deeply conditioned by felt experiences of political identity and 'lived' conceptualizations of freedom, by which I mean those constitutive, 'real' fictions of nationalism and liberalism. Regardless of the extent to which an individual reader may reject this frame or willfully dismiss its influence, the normative Western affective response to information about North Korea is in no trivial way preconditioned, positioned as it is to act as a negative correlate of primarily white, liberal identity. Ensconced in our conceptions of freedom and our experiences of national identity and ethnicity, the DPRK has semiotic significance far beyond that of most other nation-states. Barring, of course, the instance of complete ignorance about the place, anyone with knowledge of the DPRK is compelled to *feel something* about it, to have an emotional reaction. So while it is easy to feel neutral about Denmark or Singapore, there is something unnerving, odd, about someone who has no emotional response to the conditions in North Korea. As with certain other locales, such as Israel, indigenous land, the home, Bosnia, Cambodia, etc., an admission of ignorance or dedicated emotional neutrality (ie "I don't care about [x]"), carries much more powerful negative affective significance than a comment about one's lukewarm feelings toward New Zealand. Places with a poorly concealed originary trauma, established communities with disappointed promises of happiness, and those that have become marked historically by violence thus achieve a different place in the field of affective semiotics, as both affective and conceptual *negations*, with a prime example of this found in the simple binary distinction of 'a good family' and 'a bad family.' This distinction,

rooted in the principles of group identification, operates according to the same logic of identity operative within any imagined community, nation-states included, which are, in many ways, the analog or semiotic relative of kinship relations. Just as a national subject is necessarily defined by the national community through a series of inclusions and exclusions, interpellated into an inescapable matrix of good/bad, desirable/undesirable, traumatized/healthy, the family and the community, the immediate and self-identified relations of everyday life, are bound into an identical process. The emotions associated with inclusion in a group or exclusion/rejection from a group are consistent between these matrices, which helps to explain the North Korean conflation of the two (further addressed in the following section).

The ideological character of North Korean materials, and their manifest character of dogmatism, militarism and passionate evocation, also makes analysis of the DPRK's affective economy particularly challenging. The affective colouring of the available documents, the emotional force of humanitarian sentiment, horror and ironic humour has already both named and manifested that undesirable object 'North Korea,' an object which, for several generations, has been raised under a slowly evolving, market-based notion of freedom. North Korea, as the affective object of liberalism, must necessarily represent the anathema of meaningful and just governance (with all other possible Western subject positions just as equally likely to reject the DPRK on alternative grounds), whereas with many fundamentalist religious communities, the secular Liberal's semiotic matrix is antagonistically co-constructed against the figure of the Other. These positions produce identities which negate the discourse of the other as insensible *per se*. So, the conventional problem of acquiring knowledge, distinguishing truth from

falsehood is not so much a problem here, as the pre-established reflex of the Western (read: from hereon in Western Liberal) reader is to discount the content of the representation . It is fascinating in this context to note that many Christian fundamentalist communities, especially those involved in missionary and conversion work in Asia, hold Korean-style socialism to be a rival religion (Belke 1999), a testament to the unique positioning of this country's politics to say the least. But for a Western, liberal reader, as a result of its place in our identities, the DPRK's emotional performances and political values are antediluvian, belonging to a past, horrifying, politics – always already wrong.

Methodologically, then, the analyst studying affective discourse is obliged to first register the unique emotional tenor of the Western *reception* of North Korea before proceeding to make observations about the country itself. Theories of identity and performance, as well as a basic commitment to reflexivity, assist in this process, but as soon as one commits to the ethical norms of post-structuralism, the politics of representation immediately arise and one's position must be made explicit. This is an issue which I have not the space to answer to fully here. But in brief, as a result of the position of the DPRK in the aforementioned Western affective imaginary and corresponding to its place in U.S. imperial history, a work that emphasizes the 'emotional' qualities of North Korea runs the risk of perpetuating certain classic Orientalist tropes used historically to justify Western imperialist aggression. The learned reflexes of dominant ideology compel the Western reader to comfortably bracket the subject within an irrational space of affectivity, simultaneously explaining away the disconcerting otherness of the representation while soothing the sympathetic impulse, that which worries after the abject, unliveable experiences of others and frets at their

possible repetition locally. To avoid accidentally updating the content of imperialist rhetoric, while keeping in perspective the truly horrifying, yet sadly rational, logic of North Korean Stalinism, is an endlessly challenging task, one that has led to hours of fruitless Liberal handwringing in the composition of this piece. And yet, what has become evident in this process is that despite the impossibility of, *pace* post-structuralist epistemology, truly comprehending/understanding perhaps *anything at all* about North Korea, especially in the case of the generational transmission of traumas between Others and the attendant emotional adaptations and regime of emotional training that results (even more so in a case where the identities of each are caught up in the crimes of the other), understating the nature and history of crimes committed in the name of autonomy is a vital political project. The postcolonial politics of the subject notwithstanding, as an individual 'constituted by the event of socialism' it is extremely important for me to register what steps make up the emotional trajectory bridging liberty and tyranny; for just as North Korea is the unambiguous nightmare of neoliberal 'freedom,' it is also the depressing historical remnant of internationalist state socialism. If any alternative to the destructive economic system we live under is to be imagined we must take stock of, analyze, understand and, most importantly, *mourn* the political consequences of past socialist aspirations. What's more, if we wish, as I do, to continue past the classical modernist act of ethnographically and sentimentally 'understanding' the Other to an ethic prescribing some kind of action, then the motive force of our own horror, sympathy and humour must be maintained, as it is our passions that elicit us to overcome the comfortable predilection to contemplation. It is here that I part with Zizek in his expulsion of North Korea from a wholly imaginary Comintern (on the rather odd basis

that they have discontinued the practice of re-educating political prisoners); rather, North Korea must be interrogated, made to give its autocritique, questioned on the basis of its aspirations, actions and crimes, its affective logic and the consequences of its failed promises and internal contradictions. If Derrida is correct that the specter of Marx continues to insist on the unresolved crimes of the past, then the process of his exorcism from the DPRK, the simultaneous ritual and discursive excision of the tortured spirit of Marx from the totalitarian edifice of the DPRK is concordant with its conjuration *for* and *against* North Korea. At the same time that the crimes of the Korean war are made present and their significance revealed in the contemporary identity of Korea, the insistent and yet resilient *wrongness* ('time is out of joint') of the situation makes the history of Korea powerfully instructive for one pursuing any politics of liberation. Indeed, at the risk of overburdening the topic with heuristic significance, it is my suspicion/feeling that the uniquely punitive and socially taxing political arrangement of the DPRK provides us with a model of nigh-universal political undesirability, one that contravenes by its very existence the worst kinds of crass post-modern political relativism. As is argued by Nancy Fraser,

> [E]ven a 'utilitarian-humanist' can argue that, with all of its problems, the 'carceral' society described in *Discipline and Punish* is better than the dictatorship of the part-state, junta or imam; that *pace* Foucault, the reformed prison is preferable to the gulag, the torture cell, the death camp and the sex-slavery brothel; and that in *this* world – which is the real world – humanism still wields its share of critical, emancipatory punch. (30)

It is, thus, my hope that while attempting to maintain my distance from the pitfalls of Euro-American chauvinisms *vis à vis* 'our' brand of freedom, I can still speak in a practical fashion about the abject and unliveable political bodies of so many living in the DPRK.

However, before concluding and in order to provide some measure of clarification from the outset regarding the key concepts employed in my model, I will now offer a working definition of some of the most important theoretical sites:

Hegelian Dialectics of Identity: By this I mean the basic idea that all identities are co-constituting. Therefore, there is no subjectivity outside of a dynamic and processual set of mutual inter-relations between subjects. This notion holds that all subject formations are thereby made up of one another the result of which is that, on some level, subjects are also always incomplete.

Affect Norms/Affective Norms: By affect or affective norms I mean the standard performances of emotion expected and deemed preferable or 'normal' emotional behaviour. Affect norms can be broader socio-historical tendencies, such as general social orientation toward group or individual pre-eminence, as well as particular, such as the expected performance of an individual during a state's national anthem. **Emotional norms** is frequently used as a conceptual synonym.

Emotional Training: By this concept I mean the transmission of expected emotional performances from one generation to the next. Emotional training established the basic, performative and affective norms by which the subject is to seek inclusion in the social groups who likewise hold these norms.

Emotional Normativization: Emotional normitivization is the process whereby certain emotional affects are deemed, or become over time, the shared premises of membership in a group.

Affective Semiotics: By affective semiotics I mean the system of codes and performative citations that make-up a particular groups emotional comportment. Affective semiotics thus transmit effectively or ineffectively to particular individuals depending on that individual's knowledge of the 'underlying logic of that group's affect norms, along with that individual's ability to decode the particular affective performance he or she is witness to.

Disaffection: Disaffection refer to the mediation of the emotional satisfactions of group membership through object formations, particularly those which are produced by the notions of individual consumer satisfaction (such as commodities) or those resulting from the objectification of social processes by means of the market: such as that of land, labour, money and group status.

Objects: Reference to objects in this paper refers to both literal 'things' and concepts such as 'nation', 'brother', 'other' and 'neighbour', in line with the Hegelian tradition.

Historiography: By historiography I mean the use of historical example to elaborate on systemic social processes. The most popular and elaborate example of this method can be found in the work of Foucault, but underlies much use of history as evidence by

sociologists. I label this work historiographic as a result of my prioritization of conceptual elaboration over defense of the model by means of meticulous historical examples. This was a pragmatic choice based on the limits of textual space and resulting from the speculative nature of my theoretical endeavour.

Affective Bonds: By using the term affective bonds I am referring to the underlying system of emotional satisfaction and dissatisfaction comprising the dynamic of group exclusion and inclusion, or acceptance and rejection. All social groups make use of affective or emotional bonds to cement inter-personal relations and in order to establish a set of reciprocal claims on one another. My primary distinction of liberal and legacy affectivity revolves around the differences in affective bonds making up an orientation toward individual or group pre-eminence.

Affective Economy: By affective economy I mean the dynamic system of inter-related affective significations and effects, whereby objects (both material and conceptual) are socially recognized as desirable or undesirable, 'happy objects' (Ahmed 2010), leading to the implementation of security or happiness, or objects of fear leading to pain, abjection or social exclusion (De Courville Nicol 2011). This is likewise where conceptions of Signs of Danger/Signs of Security or Objects of Fear/Objects of Desire are drawn. The dialectical economy of emotion identified by Valerie De Courville Nicol, whereby fear is theorized as the embodied perception of anticipated pain and desire is the embodied perception of anticipated pleasure that is security, along with the object system described by Sarah Ahmed, as one of compelled by a logic of 'sticky' and 'backward linking'

emotively charged objects, describes a the most important coordinates of an affective economy. The movement of this economy is predicated on a variety of material, economic, biological, environmental and social coordinates, and is transmitted by means of performative citation of expected affective norms and through the emotional training of young subjects.

Chapter 1: Liberal and Legacy Affectivity

The dual disciplinary system of the Soviet gulag, somehow simultaneously 'corporeal' and 'modern,' nonetheless indicates a secular break with the power of the 'classical age.' Though for Foucault these features (those of the gulag as well as party discipline, the auto-critique, the show trials, etc.) are taken as either amniotic or vestigial in power's final articulation in the modern mode, they are underdeveloped theoretically. Through a concordant epistemic and methodological fixation on manifest discourse in the form of archival records and institutions Foucault was led to a de-emphasis on non-verbal affectivity, the arrival of a modern technical apparatus allowing the administration and governance of large areas made totalitarian Soviet discipline in many ways identical to that active in Europe and other areas of the world. In fact, if the developmental schema of Foucauldian discipline is re-oriented to include a more central emphasis on technical dissemination along with an affective economics sensitive to the valences of the social group in the face of change (which are ultimately issues of identity and consistency with the past), the articulations of 'modern' and 'classical' power begin to resemble hybrid modes of a more persistent set of relations, those of the destabilized social group against those groups actuating these social erosions through their economic activity. With all societies and groups maintaining elements of the discipline of the classical age while accepting, encouraging and integrating components of 'modern' discipline, it appears that we have neither an inevitable encroachment of disciplinary power on traditional structures of authority, nor the residual influence of a disappearing violent age. Instead we have local adaptations to the forces unleashed by modernization, ascendant liberal capitalism and the founding of a system of national state entities. With the ascendance of

politically reactionary groups within model liberal capitalist states (European neo-fascisms, religious revivalism, Islamism), it would also appear that Foucauldian discipline is also not a one-way street.

To be at the center of the system of late capital is thus to be most beholden, symbolically, economically and politically, to the values of liberalism, discursive rationality and neoliberalism. The extreme 'modern' case of the European hybrid is theorized in the work of Nikolas Rose, who charts the rise of neoliberal governance in contemporary England, a depiction which seeks to update and nuance the figure of the Foucauldian 'modern subject.' I will now elaborate some of the key ideas of Rose which will provide the contrasting evidence required to arrive at a theory of affective liberalism and affective conservatism.

Rose's book, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*, is too broad a work to summarize adequately, ranging as it does from the influence of freedom's contemporary conceptualization; the recent production of 'community' as a putatively extra-political space; the influence of numbers and actuarial relations on the governance of space; and the transition from a society of 'discipline' *pace* Foucault to one of 'control' *pace* Deleuze, to cite just four examples. This last notion, however, that of a 'society of control,' does roughly establish the outlines of his intervention. As he formulates the Deleuzian concept,

> In such societies…normalization was no longer a matter of the operation of specialist institutionally based disciplinary procedures: the family was splitting apart and could no longer socialize its members, the hospital was in break down as a site of confinement of illness and cure, the institutions of education inherited from the nineteenth century were in a more or less terminal crisis. But in their place, a new diagram of control had taken shape.

> Rather than being confined, like its subject, to a succession of institutional sites, the control of conduct was now immanent to all the places in which deviation could occur, inscribed into the dynamics of the practices into which human beings are connected. In disciplinary societies it was a matter of procession from one disciplinary institution to another, school, barracks, factory…-each seeking to *mould* conduct by inscribing enduring corporeal and behavioural competences, and persisting practices of self-scrutiny and self-constraint into the soul. Control society is one of constant and never-ending *modulation* where the modulation occurs within the flows and transactions between the forces and capacities of the human subject and the practices in which he or she participates. One is always in continuous training, lifelong learning, perpetual assessment, continual incitement to buy, to improve oneself, constant monitoring of health and never-ending risk management. Control is not centralized but dispersed; it flows through a network of open circuits that are rhizomatic and not hierarchical. (Rose 1999:233-4)

For Rose, the capillary distribution of power has changed since the modern period. No longer primarily disseminated through institutional discourse, the control society is mediated at the level of the reponsibilized individual who is not subjectivized by processes of totalitarian surveillance or institutional dictate but through the production of a subject who "…as an individual striving for meaning in work, seeking identity in work, whose subjective desires for self-actualization are to be harnessed to the firm's aspirations for productivity, efficiency and the like" (1999:244), and who is distinguished by "…conditional access to circuits of consumption and civility…recurrent switch points to be passed in order to access the benefits of liberty" (Rose 1999:243). By a 'governing freedom' the (neo)liberal subject develops a highly individualistic set of affinities, centrally oriented on the self and the mediation of human relationship through objects, symbols and sets of numbers.

That for Rose, neo-liberal governance is comprised of a trenchantly individualized responsibilization of work on the self and the nigh-emotional identification of the self with consumer choice and consumption itself, suggests strongly that this form of governance can only operate unimpeded in areas of heightened anomic erosion of traditional emotional bonds (as identified by theorists such as Weber and C. Wright

Mills) and in conditions of maximized commodity presence and circulation, not to mention an attendant and elaborate communicative apparatus and the necessary capital of cultural production (presses, electronic stations, television, internet, etc.) which assist in establishing what Debord would call a 'society of the spectacle' ([1968] 2006). This acute state of disaffection toward traditional bonds, obsession with novelty in consumption and lifestyle, and an attendant nostalgia for the absent past, will operate regardless of the stated ideology of the country in question, as long as it more or less has managed to integrate itself within global economic networks. On the other hand, areas and groups that are marginalized by those practices (and who choose to isolate themselves, both within countries and whole isolated nations such as North Korea) show marked characteristics of having to more regularly endure violence as a component of governance and a more central emphasis of governance by the group over commodity affectivity, be that group's orientation religious, nationalist, familial, etc. The destructive effects of capitalism and the quantitative enlargement of group units and unity historically (from the hamlet to the metropol to the nation-state) replace the affective bonds of the group, those that organized the 'classical era' as fully as corporeal violence, with disaffecting, formal systems of modern social mediation. These systems, which operate primarily at the level of the individual, have come to be symbolically and politically incarnated in the figure of privileged and disaffected liberal citizen, a resident in the bastions of capital and a citizen governed by the commodity and an ethic of self-work, which ultimately precludes primary affective loyalty being tied to the notion of human and group relations. The emphasis of this group favours an affectivity that reproduces emotional satisfaction through objects. While this is an 'ideal type' and any

subject must find residence in an affinity group at the risk of profound social isolation (while the 'affectively rooted' Islamist or Israeli nationalist is, of course, also caught up in the dilemmas and seduced by the promises of the commodity system[1]), the schema of legacy affectivity and liberal affectivity, having little to do with the stated ideology of a contemporary political apparatus, have the benefit of decoding many of the ideological oxymorons of contemporary politics, such as the North American 'progressive conservative,' committed to liberal capitalism while nostalgic for an idealized version of the family unit.

With the retreat of many of the principles identified by Foucault as constitutive of modern disciplinary power (i.e. the transformation of social discipline into a discipline of the self and the ascendant critique of rationality as a legitimating quality of governance) and with some features greatly intensified (i.e. panoptic surveillance), a broadly conservative bloc has arisen arguing for affective bonds as the most legitimate source of governance against domination by Western, secular, rationalist principles.

The most offensive formulation of this historical tendency can be found in such works as Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* (1997) or in the triumphal neoliberal text by Francis Fukuyama *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), missing as they do that

[1] The almost immediate racist connotations that colour this concept, that of the affective liberal or conservative (which may have already been coded by the reader as 'white' and 'coloured' or 'progressive' and 'backward'), is an unfortunate yet understandable effect of the very processes of symbolic colonization and imperialist caricature that sustain the affective bonds of the predominantly liberal capitalist state. Though I have no feeling as to the inferiority or superiority of either tendency of power, and have not claimed that there is any in the paper so far, the development of my argument according to a teleological Foucaldian schema of 'modern' and 'classical' power makes it appear that affective conservatism is somehow antediluvian or a kind of social regression. This is also an unfortunate result of my decision to pair the very expressive noun 'liberal' with its antonym, which I nonetheless defend as a result of the frequent, though certainly not inevitable, pairing of affective conservatism with more traditional political conservatism. Hopefully this intervention will assist the reader in realizing that he or she is already both an affective liberal and an affective conservative by living in the era of a globalized (post)modernity.

these tendencies (those of the 'anti-systemic movement' to use the language of Giovanni Arrighi) are reproduced within the Liberal Democratic states they lionize and that these reactions are predicated on the destructive effects modern capitalism and imperialism have had on these groups in the first place. With these understandings in place, *legacy affectivity* can now be defined as attempts by groups to maintain those elements of identity based on the emotional bonds of membership and legacy, operative at varying levels of abstraction (religious community, village, affinity network, nation-state, etc.). In contrast, *liberal affectivity* is characterized by a willingness to give-up, ignore or de-emphasize the emotional bonds of group identity in favour of the affective satisfactions of consumption, work on the self, therapeutic ideology, and other promises of individualistic capitalism. It is my suspicion that such an affective economy operates according to many of the principles identified by Lyotard in his 'libidinal' imaging of the economy (1984, 2004), where varieties of libidinal satisfaction are afforded by a society's historical orientation toward and access to a network of affectively charged objects circulated on a global scale. The affective predilections of a group and the level of a society's penetration by liberal affectivity will thus be articulated and bound in the form of individual commodities (or perhaps more accurately commodities and brands) and in the history, priorities and the aspirations of the local social group, making up a network of affectively charged objects which will become the emotional norms of the group.

The disciplinary apparatus changes dependent on the affective lever being used by those facilitating and producing discourse. With capillary distribution of power's effects, the mode of power (disciplinary or corporeal), and the extent of disciplinary penetration (which can be measured by discursive and systemic longevity and continuity) operate

differently and at varying levels of intensity dependent on the location of subjects within the matrix of capital, commodity and technology circulation. This is then further influenced by and the situated subjects unique cultural history and position in the world-system, which here is understood as a society's general position regarding the history of the family, of religion and other elements of the group's substantive identity, those typically labelled 'cultural'. The production of affective norms, objects, ideologies and personal aspirations ultimately become variously located on a scheme of security and danger (or fear), the elemental components of group identity (Nicol 2011).

Thus, where Foucault needs updating as regards North Korea is in the disciplinary function of affectivity, which steers us into the terrain of violence, the family and the emotional ties of group legacy, all of which were hypothesized as diminishing in effect concordant with the rise of modern systems of disciplinary power (with the possible exception of the family in some Foucauldian works). For Foucault's ideal system of modern control is, in truth, *never* fully operational in social practice and only approximates his model closely when subjects are privileged enough to have access to sufficient amounts of the physical, symbolic and administrative capital making up the infrastructure of a predominantly liberal affectivity. As noted previously, even here we find deep nostalgia and attempts to reclaim affective ties deemed threatened by subjects who have produced lifestyle choices that mimic those antecedent relationships. From the Southern Baptist to the corporate Buddhist, affectivity continues to insist.

Chapter 2: Affective Infrastructure: The Problem of the Gulag in Foucauldian Discourse

In December 2011 Kim Jong Il, the 'Dear Leader' of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea passed away after a reign of seventeen years. As with his father before him, this event precipitated a staged public mourning, a performance often greeted with puzzlement or ironic humour by Western observers who also frequently questioned the authenticity of the emotions expressed. This response – confusion, bewilderment, incredulity and suspicion – is typical of observations by Westerners regarding events in the DPRK, in many cases with very good reason. But what was particularly interesting in this case was the repeated insistence on the difficulty of this deliberate fakery: the manifestation or performance of 'genuine' sorrow for a man who, it is assumed, perhaps correctly, is secretly despised. The assumption of hatred's basic irrepressibility and, by extension, its 'truth' as the surreptitious animal underpinning of our daily social performances is thus used to construct the idea of an authentic emotional expression regarding the leader's death (Should it be indifference? Joy?). This authentic emotional expression is then contrasted against the unnatural repression of emotion obviously at work in this totalitarian state. Were the people not so repressed, their true hatred would have taken form in performances of freedom, rather than the cynical mourning of a craven and beaten people. This nice piece of enlightenment hopefulness, introduced systematically by thinkers such as Hegel, takes human freedom to be the secret truth of our being, and awaits the spirit's revelation that will inevitably result in liberation, in this case in outpourings of hatred.

In line with intervention in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Tunisia, etc. or in the coverage of such events as the recent death of Hugo Chavez, the stated assumption of the intervening military power or liberal hegemony is that the oppressed Others unconsciously or, more likely, *covertly* crave liberalization. That even in cases where a group shows evidence of loyalty to an alternative system they are either a) unaware that they crave liberation or b) are unable to express that they crave liberation. In the worst and most contentious form of Marx's classic quote, "They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (1852 [2008]).

In terms of the successes of this model, the classic illustration can be found in East Germany, a place to which North Korea is often compared, with the citizens acculturated to express public devotion while socially permitting or even encouraging widespread private criticism and jokes about the regime (Zizek:2009). In such cases it is held that the state to which phantasmic affection is directed need only show the correct combination of weaknesses and deligitimation for liberty to assert itself from these morally bisected subjects. This is an issue I will discuss more in the conclusion to this piece, but for now it is enough to say that this characterization is inaccurate in the case of the DPRK. As opposed to the East German case and in contrast to the Neoliberal vision of Korea as a place of 'repressed, hopeful, liberty,' I will argue that the country's leadership still has substantial, though waning legitimacy.

My aim in this chapter is to show why this is the case by means of an affective analysis, which, to be explicit, holds that for North Korea the success of the leadership in attaining widespread loyalty came from mobilizations of the family as the premier site of both emotion and political management in the DPRK. To this end I will draw on the work

of Sara Ahmed, Benedict Anderson, Nikolas Rose and Max Weber to characterize the affective economy of the situation. By examining institutions such as Songbun (preferential marriage relations based on historical proximity to Kim Il Sung), the diplomacy of family reunification, the legal practices of the state vis à vis Kin and, most significantly, the dynamics of leadership transition, I propose a reading of North Korean governance emphasizing the memorialized trauma of familial loss through colonialism and the political and emotive power of a leadership promising to reunify and represent the family. There is already a substantial body of literature supporting this view. However, there has yet to be an analysis drawing on the growing body of affect theory emerging in the social sciences. Though I am concerned about the political implications of such a representation (of which I will also speak more below), I am emboldened by the insight that in North Korea, as in North America, emotions and bodies are built, shaped, contoured, nuanced and produced by political practices. Further, it is my contention that such an approach – a blended political economic and affective analysis –is a uniquely suited approach to studying North Korea considering the documentary evidence available. Given the affectively charged, explicitly performative, and politically motivated representations which make up most of the works we have available from the DPRK, the models of Ahmed and Butler are particularly fertile when applied to the material available. The dialectical work of Hegel, Zizek and Lacan on identity, ideology and subject formation, along with the work on affective economy by Valerie De Courville Nicol (which I consider also eminently dialectical) was crucial in unlocking the contradictory nature of affective economics. Lest I am utterly remiss in any academic ethics whatsoever, before I begin some essential philosophical predicates must be

established, in particular I must deal with the fact that any attempt by a non-Korean speaking Westerner attempting to perform an affective analysis of North Korea is obliged to address at least three sets of problems: epistemological, methodological and political.

In examining North Korea through the lens of Foucault, it is useful to begin with the work of Charles Armstrong, a Foucauldian scholar who studies the disciplinary apparatus of this country. Armstrong, whose works include *The North Korean Revolution: 1945-1950* (2004), *The Koreas* (2006) and 'Surveillance and Punishment in Postliberation North Korea' (1995), began publishing in the late 80s and early 90s, a fertile time for predictions on the fate of the young dictatorship as a result of the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the visible ill-health of the leader. Armstrong's work, while instrumentally employing key Foucauldian concepts such as surveillance, control and the panopticon, echoes Chatterjee et al. in maintaining that Foucault requires significant adaptation to be efficaciously applied to the context of post-colonial nationalism, especially a post-colonial nationalism that explicitly "…claims to have rejected the western bourgeois model of politics, to have eliminated the ruling classes, [and] to represent to the poor and the oppressed" (Armstrong 1995:323). By Armstrong's account, in place of the conventional bourgeois liberal discourses and systems of discipline (those of the private individual, personal liberty, enterprise, risk, unemployment, etc.) the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) maintains the positive self-concept that totalitarian states had of themselves in the mid-twentieth century, an idea so firmly discredited in the West since the triumph of the post-cold war era as to appear positively archaic. Nonetheless, Armstrong is correct to point out that:

> On the one hand, totalitarian discourse during the Cold War can be seen as a western ideological construct used to mark off the 'East' as a hostile and aggressive Other, justifying a (largely American) project of neocolonial hegemony – a variation, that is, of Orientalism. But on the other hand, totalitarianism was an ideal, not only of the West but of the 'totalitarian' state itself. The idea of a society in which the division between state and society are effaced, in which the power of the party/state completely pervades the social space, may indeed reflect the goals, if not the actual practice of such states. The disciplinary process under 'totalitarianism' as under a postcolonial, Marxist-Leninist state, is linked to the broader development of western regimes of power but has certain distinct characteristics…The principal difference…between the distribution and development of disciplinary power in the West…and in a 'backward' or postcolonial society – especially one within a 'totalitarian state…lies in the spatial and temporal concentration of power in the latter….[A]nticolonial and revolutionary discourses themselves redeploy, if in new configurations and combinations, previous techniques of surveillance and control through the medium of the postcolonial state. (1995:324)

The remainder of Armstrong's essentially Foucauldian analysis proceeds to plot the rise of what he calls the DPRK's "crude methods of communist surveillance and punishment": a massive police force, a similarly massive domestic spy service, a totalitarian system of courts and justice, an emphasis on bodily discipline and so on (1995:330-341). Significantly, Armstrong's direct methodological translation of Foucault's analysis of modern power to the North Korean context highlights the panoptic effect of living in a society that tolerates and is compelled to self-discipline by means of secret police, a reasonable enough focus given Andrei Lankov's estimation of one police informer for every fifty people (2007). And while I am sympathetic to his argument that the label of a 'totalitarian' society in Foucault's sense would be more accurately applied to liberal capitalist societies as a result of the greater penetration and subtlety of the mechanisms of disciplinary control, his analysis also repeats Foucault's relative under-theorization of the family and misses the level of penetration achieved through the manipulation of kinship lines in the DPRK. In the end, by having missed the crucial role of familial obligation and the manipulation of guilt that is integrated even here, into the most self-evident of 'repressive state apparatuses' – the system of jurisprudence – Armstrong repeats the mistake of countless other political theorists observing North

Korea during the early 1990s by assuming that it is just another Soviet satellite ready to crumble. As the last two decades have shown, the case is quite to the contrary.

The question of the degree of penetration of the disciplinary mechanisms of the DPRK is, therefore, to my mind, far from closed. Though the DPRK certainly fashions itself in the tradition of Soviet totalitarianism, a system of discipline that proved untenable in the long run, the fact that its systems of control are also intimately bound to the obligations of familial loyalty and legacy gives it a (re)generative quality that borders on the literal. The kinship network, and its symbolic association with party, military and labour discipline, achieves the same capillary distribution of disciplinary effects that would rely on the more uniquely European system of discipline identified by Foucault. By mobilizing the affective force of love, loyalty and protectiveness and through memorialization and manipulation of the sympathetic wounds of families in mourning, it is thus arguable that the North Korean government achieved disciplinary penetration rivalling that of Western capitalist societies. So while the widespread use of police surveillance, modern technologies of audio and visual recording, show trials, auto-critiques, the radical and deliberate manipulation of records and statistics and so on were all essential in the development of a uniquely totalitarian style of discipline on which the DPRK leaders draw heavily, the North Korean practice of ruining the social lives of family members through diminished Songbun[2] and, later, following a 1972 dictate by

[2] The songbun system is the formal class hierarchy, or caste system, of North Korea. It is a fully endorsed public system and detailed records are kept by cadre as to the value of each person's Songbun throughout the country. It is premised on a 1) Relative genealogical and historical proximity to Kim Il Sung, to Korea and to the revolution 2) Resemblance to the main genres of Marxist class authenticity (In descending order: the proletarian, the peasant and, also unique to North Korea, the intellectual worker (bureaucrats and cultural workers)). An inverted set of bourgeois and aristocratic class depictions, of course, supplements this array 3) Finally, and as is consistent with previously described claims of ethnic and national purity, Songbun is lost after association with foreignness. The Songbun system most privileges the relatives of

Kim Il Sung, incarcerating relatives up to three generations distant in concentration camps after a given subject is deemed disloyal has an affective utility that would appear to outstrip the synonymous mixture of fear and guilt that acts to order a more conventional police state. And though the specific practice of incarcerating relatives for an individual's crime is not unprecedented amongst Soviet countries –Trotsky, for example, incarcerated the families of officers during the Russian civil war to ensure that they wouldn't defect (Trotsky 1923) – its use as a regular element in juridical practice certainly is. The family's integration as an object of everyday discipline and social shaping appears constantly in the practices of the North Korean state. In the realm of jurisprudence and nationalism as well as in such arenas as the military and in international diplomacy, the totalitarian ideal of complete saturation of social space does not exclusively tend to socialist propaganda and the ethics of labour in the DPRK but, at every step, includes the family as well.

Armstrong's emphasis on the 'crudity' of the North Korean disciplinary apparatus is, therefore, both *a propos* of Soviet states generally while woefully inaccurate in the case of the DPRK, a contradiction that can be illuminated by looking at the Foucauldian system as Foucault himself attempted to theorize it in relation to the Soviet Union. To address this problem, I engage with Plamper's discussion in "Foucault's Gulag" where he

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resistance fighters who were members of Kim Il Sung's regiment during the Second World War and those that most closely resemble the ideals of proletarian and national purity. Thus, an ideal marriage candidate would be a party member whose grandparents fought and died during the revolution (martyrdom increases one`s Songbun) in Kim Il Sung`s regiment and whose class background is made up by landless factory workers. It is further assumed that no evidence of collaboration, defection, foreignness or criminality can be found in the kinship lines, which would deeply erode one`s prospects. As in the West, an impoverished Songbun or class background narrows possibilities for marriage and work, leads to habitation in marginal spaces (in the DPRK this means life in rural towns) and is grounds for social censure and exclusion. (Lankov 2013)

charts the difficult time Foucault had in reconciling his novel vision of power and its attendant historical and spatial schema with the massively carcereal Soviet society.

To present the most salient components of Foucault's system first, we have the twin concepts of discourse and apparatus, along with the notion that power becomes more explicitly productive of the subject rather than violently annihilating. For Foucault, the rise of productive power signals a development inaugurating the end of corporeal, violent or annihilating power as the dominant mode of group governance and the initiation of a regime of power much more sophisticated and difficult to characterize. Power, especially in its modern variant, 'writes on' subjects who resist as paper resists, reproducing and transmitting the discourse of the powerful; this discourse, guided by the epistemic truth-value asserted by a bourgeois class in opposition to the monarchy, develops and takes hold through repetitions and systemic dissemination in the technical apparatuses of surveillance, in expert authority, and in the work of bureaucratic and administrative specialists. To sum up the critical observation of Foucault, power acts *through* subjects whereby power's 'productive subjectification,' the subject's reiteration of the discourses of technical control takes place in acts and utterances, which, in turn, reproduce the relations of control.

Foucault's point, and one well-taken, is that in the rise of Western modernity, the systems of repressive power, those that crushed and annihilated the body, were radically reformulated to become elaborate systems dedicated to producing docile subjects. For Foucault, the modern state, capital, the family and other sites of ostensible (generally leftist or psychoanalytic) 'repression' become instead forces of disciplinary mediation, not repressing or annihilating subjects, but encouraging them, addressing them and

providing them the materials by which one can furnish an identity. To prove this point, Foucault examined the most obviously punitive or controlling systems ready-to-hand, prisons, mental institutions, the military, the hospital, etc, showing how even here the operation of past discourses had been fundamentally re-ordered. This commitment was maintained from his archeology, which sought to uncover "deep structural discursive formations" (Plamper 2002:256), to his genealogy, which emphasized, "that which conditions, limits, and institutionalizes discursive formations" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982:), as cited in Plamper 2002). The result is a depiction of networks of control that are not rooted in a central figure or even an oligarchy which directly inflicts corporeal punishment but, rather, control whose roots are multiple and in a constant state of proliferation, located in the daily speech of subjects as much as in the dictates of some central authority. In this account, the power that circulates in the acts and decisions of local functionaries and specialists, limited and activated by the discourses of yet more specialists, who originally appointed and enabled their very positions, becomes the 'capillary distribution' of modern power (Foucault 1995).

Foucault's account is crucial in understanding the changes in power's articulation since the 18th century, especially in Europe and the U.S. and amongst certain other republics, but also 'universally' or globally. In the same vein, the work of Nicholas Rose is essential in plotting certain developments that have occurred in late capitalism since Foucault's original theorization, especially in Britain and in other neoliberal countries. Both having recognized the central importance of speech (discourse) as a newly empowered medium resulting from both the symbolic victory and massification of modern knowledge (which to use Heidegger's terminology 'colonized the life-world'),

Foucault's theories give insight into the 'headless' fashion by which power and control is circulated, produced and maintained over time. In a similar fashion, by withdrawing from visions of controlling oligarchies of men in rooms, even Marxists (one of the targets of Foucault's theoretical intervention) begin at about this point in history to withdraw from imagining the state and the corporate board room as the "executive…committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie" (Marx and Engels 1848 [2009]), realizing that the administrative cycles appointing varying CEOs and figures of state meant that power had begun to resemble something of a pre-decapitated hydra.

Alongside this theoretical insight, however, there is the problem of corporeal violence's historical persistence as a disciplinary method and the variable uses that the Foucauldian 'apparatus' (the panopticon, surveillance, discipline, local functionaries, etc.) has been put in the multiplicity of disciplinary systems the world over. Further, Foucault's emphasis on discursive rationality as a constitutive mode of power's transmission makes affective relations *inter alia* under-theorized. Signally, violence and emotion muted or, rather, 'sub-theorized,' de-emphasized and relegated to control by other mechanisms as a result of Foucault's commitment to differentiating modern power from the power of the 'classical age.' Foucault, having made classical power's key feature rooted in violence, was obliged to describe a contrasting schema of non-violent control, which became the key features of his approach to modern techniques of subjectification. Violence and emotion become analytically beholden to the processes of codification, normalization, classification and enumeration he seeks to champion as the key to the bourgeoisie's successful overthrow of the monarchical system, a reduction which obscures their essential and persistent function in the manipulations and appeals of

power. In proving his case by means of bourgeois rationalization – its obsession with truth by means of a proliferation of discourses, its passion for measurement and classification, its ordering system of the academy, the bureaucracy and the state – he textually submerged the still-present violence of the state and of law, as well as the affective bonds of family and the group.

The theme of violence's more central inclusion in Foucauldian analysis when one is dealing with Soviet or totalitarian countries is one that is highlighted in both the work of Armstrong and that of Plamper in "Foucault's Gulag." Plamper, however, is more assiduous in drawing out the reasons for Foucault's theoretical emphases as a result of his close reading of the author's work on the gulag. Plamper points out that in citing the Soviet Union as a "prime example of a country where on the macro-level the state had been overturned in 1917, but [where] the relations of power on the micro-level remained in continuity with the 19th century" (2002:), Foucault was motivated by the need to highlight the historical continuities of the revolutionary society rather than its differences. As Foucault writes:

> The administrative monarchy of Louis XIV and Louis XV, intensely centralized as it was, certainly acted as an initial disciplinary model. As you know, the police was invented in Louis XIV France. I do not mean in any way to minimize the importance and effectiveness of state power. I simply feel that excessive insistence on its playing an exclusive role leads to the risk of overlooking all the mechanisms and effects of power which don't pass directly via the state apparatus, yet often sustain the State more effectively than its own institutions, enlarging and maximising its effectiveness. In Soviet society one has the example of state apparatus which has changed hands, yet leaves social hierarchies, family life, sexuality and the body more or less as they were in capitalist society. Do you imagine the mechanisms of power that operate between technicians, foremen and workers are that much different here and in the Soviet Union? (Foucault [1976] 1990:72-3 as Cited in Plamper 2002: 263)

In this regard I am wholly in accordance with Foucault, who in this quotation serves to offer a foundational defense of an affective reading of the DPRK by means of the family.

And with this focus in mind, Foucault should be considered, in fact, an antecedent of affect theory against more one-dimensional readings of the state and nationalism. What's more, Foucault's notions of surveillance, the panopticon, disciplinary power, the influence of discourse and so many others, deserve central utilization in studies on Soviet and North Korean power since the mechanisms by which discipline is and was circulated in these places continues to proceed by way of the 'modern' apparatus outlined in Foucauldian theory and through greatly similar forms of discursive rationality (i.e., the 'truth-value' of socialist and nationalist maxims, bureaucratization by specialists and diffusion of a technically mediated administration, etc.). Nonetheless, the critique of Plamper must be understood if the limitations of the Foucauldian system for analysis of Soviet-style totalitarian states are to be made apparent. This next section illustrates Plamper's argument and advances several theses regarding the adaptations he suggests.

Plamper's critique of Foucault regarding the Soviet Union is two-fold. First, Foucault misunderstood the influence of Russia's geographic location and attendant discursive uniqueness *pace* Europe.[3] Further, his chronological schema introduces insurmountable contradictions in his analysis of the gulag. Alternating between textual citation and Foucault's quotations taken during interviews, Plamper follows Foucault's 'zig-zagging' statements on Soviet penal colonies and labour discipline, ultimately concluding that,

> [the gulag] became one case over which Foucault's categories stumbled, a notion that seems to have occurred to Foucault himself (if the proliferation of the word 'paradox' in his attempts to classify the Gulag is any indication). As a liminal case, Russia casts

[3] Plamper argues for a 'decentering' that goes a bit beyond the scope of this analysis. "By 'decentering' I have in mind attempts to relocate the cultural frame of reference to another context, to move the Archimedean point from which utterances are made, for example, from French to Chinese culture." (2002:257)

> problems associated with the seemingly universal claims and applicability of Foucault's work in even sharper relief than wholly 'Other' regions of the so-called Third World, from where, in the context of post-colonial discourse, most decentering challenges to Foucault have so far emanated. (2002:256)

Plamper's exegesis of Foucault's statements on the gulag is detailed, chronological, and extremely thorough, extending back to an interview with Foucault in 1971 wherein he responds regarding the contradictions of the Marxist-inspired student politics of May '68. According to Foucault,

> One of the biggest disappointments we had involving the Communist Party and the Soviet Union is that they readopted almost entirely the bourgeois value system. One gets the impression that communism in its traditional form suffers from birth trauma: you would think that it wants to recapture for itself the world at the time it was born, the world of a triumphant bourgeoisie; communist aesthetics is realism in the style of the nineteenth century: Swan Lake, painting which tells a story, the social novel. Most of the bourgeois values are accepted and maintained by the Communist Party (in art, the family, sexuality, and daily life in general). We must free ourselves from this cultural conservatism, as well as political conservatism. (Simon 1971:201 as cited in Plamper 2002:258)

This formulation is repeated several months later, as he responds to a question regarding Soviet history: "That is perhaps what has happened in the history of the Soviet Union: the seemingly new institutions were in fact conceived from elements borrowed from the preceding system. The reconstitution of a Red Army copied from the tsarist model, return to artistic realism, to traditional family morality: the Soviet Union fell back into norms inspired by bourgeois society of the 19th century" (Foucault [1971] 2001:234 as cited in Plamper 2002:258-9). Consistent with his interest in continuity and discontinuity at various imbricated levels of history and social force in *Archeology of Knowledge* (1969), Foucault's nascent utterances here essentially point his interest at the time in separating and investigating the "several planes of differentiation in which the objects of discourse may appear" ([1969] 2012:38).

Plamper's reconstruction of the Soviet gulag as a 'paradoxical' site for Foucault begins after he introduces Foucault's account of the 'archipelago' from the final pages of *Discipline and Punish* (1974). As noted by Plamper,

> Foucault inscribed Solzhenitsyn's central metaphor of 'archipelago' in the final pages of Discipline and Punish[4]…[and] we know that the reference to Solzhenitsyn was intentional, for, asked about the proliferation of spatial metaphors in his work, Foucault replied in an interview in early 1976 : "There is only one notion here that is truly geographical, that of an *archipelago*. I have used it only once, and that was to designate, via the title of Solzhenitsyn's work, the carceral archipelago: the way in which a form of punitive system is physically dispersed yet at the same time covers an entire society."(Plamper 2002, 261-2)

The archipelago is taken by Plamper in both the senses used by Foucault and by Solzhenitsyn, where Solzhenitsyn's concrete geographical reference, "the Solovetskii Islands…where the first Soviet camp for prisoners was opened in 1920" (Plamper 2002, 271), is enlarged by means of Foucault's metaphor, the physically dispersed punitive systems that steadily encroach upon and cover a society. For Plamper, Archipelago is, therefore, both the multiplication of the single 'gulag archipelago,' the Solovetskii Islands, "…and the spreading of the Soviet *Ur*-Camp…across the entire Soviet Union" (Plamper 2002, 271). Plamper claims that the gulag (and by extension Soviet 'bourgeois' totalitarianism) bedevilled Foucault because it appeared to contain both features of the discipline of the 'classical age' (corporeal discipline) and the discipline of modern power (discipline of discourse along with the containment and training of bodies), maintaining the crushing of bodies along with the labour discipline of the modern work-camp and the surveillance system of the panopticon. This is an assertion which is supported by the recounting of several telling quotations arranged in chronological order, beginning after the publication of *Discipline and Punish*.

[4] "In short, the carceral *archipelago* assures, in the depths of the social body, the formation of delinquency on the basis of subtle illegalities, the overlapping of the latter by the former and the establishment of specified criminality" (Foucault [1977] 1995: as cited in Plamper 2002:261).

It should be emphasized that this is a period marked by Foucault's final disillusion with Marx, "…culminating in his 1975 outburst: 'Don't talk to me about Marx any more! I never want to hear anything about that man again. Ask someone whose job it is. Someone paid to do it. Ask the Marxist functionaries. Me, I've had enough of Marx" (Eribon 1991:266 as cited in Plamper 2002:260). Along with the rest of the liberal left, and especially for Soviet apologists, Foucault was forced to respond to the implications of the gulag as it was revealed to the West in literary pieces such as that of Solzhenitsyn, in the accounts of dissidents, and in the works of analysis such as that of Andre Glucksman's *The Oven and the Man-Eater: An Essay on the Connections between the State, Marxism and the Concentration Camps* (1975). As Plamper goes on to explain, "in the [years following these revelations] Foucault embarked on a zigzag course in which he mostly associated the Gulag with the 'modern age' (punishment of the soul), sometimes with the 'classical age' (and corporeal punishment), but hardly ever considered the possibility of overlap, of superimposition of any trajectory, in short, deviating from Western Europe" (Plamper 2002, 262). In brief, Plamper introduces several key quotes indicating Foucault's emphasis on the gulag as an instantiation of corporeal (classical) or disciplinary (modern) power, of which I will here reproduce four, two of those suggesting a corporeal or classical orientation and two of those suggesting a disciplinary or modern orientation. For the classical case:

> Like all political technologies, the Gulag institution has its history, its transformations and transpositions, its function and effects. The internment practices in the classical age forms in all likelihood a part of its archaeology. (Foucault [1977] 2001:419 as cited in Plamper 2002:263)

Further, in a piece from a 1976 analysis of the function of terror in the Soviet Union after Stalin, Foucault suggests that totalitarianism is the failure of the disciplinary system:

> You say that the terror has diminished. That is for sure. Underneath, however, the terror is not the zenith of discipline, but its failure. In the Stalinist regime, the police chief could be executed one day after leaving the council of ministers. No NKVD chief died in his bed…Let us say that the terror is always reversible; it turns back fatally on those who exercise it. Fear is circular. But from the moment when the ministers, police commissars, academics and Party functionaries become irremovable and no longer fear for their lives, discipline will function in the open…I believe that the societies of the 18th century invented discipline because the grand mechanisms of terror had become both too costly and too dangerous. (Foucault [1976] 2001, 69 as cited in Plamper 2002, 268)

The statements suggesting a disciplinary or modern orientation include:

> The Soviet Union punishes according to a method the 'bourgeois' order…And far from transforming it, it has followed the toughest line of punishment; it has aggravated it and carried [it] to the worst. (Foucault [1976] 2001:64 as cited in Plamper 2002:262)

And,

> It is undoubtedly true that the Soviets, while having modified the regime of ownership and the state's role in the control of production, for the rest have simply transferred the techniques of administration and power implemented in Capitalist Europe of the 19th century. The types of morality, forms of aesthetics, disciplinary methods, everything that was effectively working in bourgeois society already around 1850 has moved *en bloc* into the Soviet regime…Just as the Soviets have used Taylorism and other methods of management experimented in the West, they have adopted our disciplinary techniques, adding to our arsenal another arm – party discipline. (Foucault [1976] 2001, 65, as cited in Plamper 2002, 262)

Plamper claims that this apprehension of analytic paradox or 'zig-zagging,' above and beyond the aforementioned spatial and chronological critique, is ultimately rooted in the problem of Foucault's "Evidentiary distinctions…[which] are indispensable to any analysis of the Gulag, even if it foregrounds micro-techniques of power at the expense of macro-politics or the question of causes. For example, a history of the Gulag based on public legal documents, one of Foucault's preferred source genres, would fail to capture a far greater number of life practices than ever imaginable in the case of France" (Plamper 2002:256). In effect, the macro-level processes that would explain the gulag for us, miss the micro-level motivations (pain, incarceration, fear, guilt) that would be more appropriate for a comprehensive analytic description.

When this evidentiary emphasis is generalized from the individual gulag to the macro-level '*Ur*-camp' of the totalitarian state, Foucault's distinction becomes even more burdensome, and a question inevitably begins to emerge: if Foucault's identification of an ascendant form of discipline fails to account for the hybrid variations that this system of power produces globally, is it possible that this developmental schema has lost some of its use? Or perhaps requires some updating? Certainly in the case of the DPRK Foucault's original observation regarding alternative institutional sites by which the state maximizes its own power cannot be more appropriate vis à vis the family. However, and as suggested above, the Foucauldian emphasis on discursive rationality and the disciplinary function of the modernist *episteme* elides a clear understanding of the affective economy manipulated by the forces and individuals governing dictatorial states.

Foucault's unsuccessful theorization of the gulag can, however, be understood and accommodated without abandoning his model of power, but the model does require adaptation to be useful in a global political economy of affect. As is suggested by Plamper, part of the problem originates in an unconscious teleological eurocentrism, an implication of which is the diminishment, to the point of obfuscation, of those networks of power which underlay the hegemonic discourses of the 'corporeal' age: kinship relations, legitimated by religious discourses. Likewise, Foucault's emphasis on the 'modern' – the secular, expert-driven, actuarial, and above all else, the individualistic character of the institutional apparatuses that emerged in the modern networks of national power – lead one to the problematic conclusion that a state whose disciplinary apparatus fails to approximate and develop according to Foucault's model is also somehow an

example of a failure to have become modern. In line with such authors as Carol A. Beckenbridge, I also maintain that,

> Most societies today possess the means for the local production of modernity, and, as their members move around the world, these experiences inform and inflect one another, thus making even the paradigmatic modernity of the United States and Western Europe (itself not an unproblematic assumption) no more pristine. Koreans, Samoans, Turks, Indians, Chinese, Mexicans, Haitians and Mongols now move to the countries of the West (and stay), not as folk ciphers waiting to be imprinted with Euro-American modernity, but equipped with their own understandings of modernity to negotiate with the ones they encounter. There is thus no justification for regarding the modernities of the world as pale reflections of a Euro-American original, or of looking at them for enactments of a recipe we have lived through (or past) already. Modernity is now everywhere, it is simultaneously everywhere, and it is interactively everywhere. But it is not only everywhere, it is also in a series of somewheres… (1995:1)

That said, Foucault's schema of power's discursive dissemination and his identification of many of the novel forms of disciplinary power that arose in concert with modern capitalism are essential in adequately imagining the manner by which affective norms operate, circulate and are created today. For as much as Foucault is a theorist of disciplinarity, he is also a theorist of the state and of subjecitivity's formation, and as much as his model could not quite account for the birth, peculiar manifestation and death of the Soviet-style state, the unique character and discourse of Soviet discipline is likewise incoherent without appreciation of such things as surveillance, record-keeping, scientific discourse, the cult of expert, etc. and the influence of such things on the structures of power in these countries.

The basic Foucauldian schema, which sees power's dissemination as operating by means of discursive repetition amidst and among localized sites of influence, I wholeheartedly adopt, but what must be included or, perhaps, re-installed is the figure of familial discipline and the subject's need for certain basic emotional satisfactions and competencies that are predicated on sociality: The family as structured emotional

expectation and training, its corporeality, its affectivity, its intersection with the discourses of the national group, and the continued influence of its logic of legacy against the logic of individual liberty and meritocracy to which it must stand in necessary and structural opposition. This antagonism between the seductions of the capitalist state of 'free labour' and the obligations of the family form is one of the crucial axes upon which the whole dialectic of liberalism and legacy turn and explains in large part the affective economy of the North Korean nation-state, a topic I will address in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: The Political Economy of Affect in North Korea

In James A. Foley's 2003 monograph, he refers to the separation of families as "one of the most urgent and pressing humanitarian issues" (2004: 1) facing Korea. Not only a case of the isolated North being cut off from the South, expatriate Korean communities in Japan, Manchuria, the United States, Eastern Russia and, indeed, across the world also lack the ability to contact their relatives. With diasporic pressure exerted during the Japanese occupation of 1910 and again during the Korean War in 1945, the scope of the problem is understandably wide, and with estimates of 520,000 wartime refugees fleeing the North, the scale of the problem is also of no small magnitude. Over half a century of separation has been borne by many families who often have no idea what has become of their relatives, explaining the "common…seemingly superfluous [greeting] 'Ah, so you survived then?' on the rare occasions when they are reunited" (Foley 2004:2). But the symbolic or what might be better referred to as the 'national semiotic' impact of this displacement goes far beyond the mutual isolation of families. The problem of family separation, through attachment to the national imaginary and by its inclusion into a narrative of postcolonial heroism and familial reunification, became constitutive of the affective legitimacy of the new republic amongst its citizenry. This legacy was in turn actively mobilized in the discursive practices of the state and its agents, repeated over and over in constellations ranging from the juridical to the literary, whereby a status politics of racial-cum-political purity was developed through a modernist formulation of inherited kinship politics. In the state literature of North Korea this is most clearly mythologized by the various stories of orphans written about in the

socialist realist novels of the country, with the implication being that South Korea was accordingly 'adopted' by the wrong (bourgeois, decadent, American) family during the Korean war. This genre, which was imported from the Soviet Union in the 1940s but became thoroughly 'Korean' by the late 20th century (Gabroussenko 2010), also began to develop the theme of a parent-leader and child-populace, though at the beginning it was Stalin and Soviet ideology that played the role of leader-father and master text. As is argued in B.R. Myers' overtly polemical text, "The genre was evidently meant to flatter the Soviets with the implication of filial subservience, and at the same time to plead for motherly protection of a race too pure to survive on its own…" (2010:25) as in, "…the depictions of the colonial era, novelists and painters focused on the forced labor of little girls and boys, thus reinforcing the impression of a child race abused by an adult one." (Myers 2010:24) Though Myers formulation of the 'child-race' is deeply problematic as a result of the instrumental way he uses it in his text, the work does correctly register the incessant recitation of filial and familial themes and the nigh-Lacanian fixation on the dead father that characterizes propaganda in the DPRK(a theme I will return to in chapter 4). Perhaps unsurprisingly, this figuration is repeated in Korean American literature, as is noted by Tracy Wood, who argues,

> When a diasporic perspective is applied to Korean American literature, what rises to the surface is the figure of the orphan, a figure that is facing forward and yet always looking back. The figure of the orphan, of course, is not restricted to Korean American literature, but the frequency with which it appears and the layers of meaning bound in its deployment distinguish the Korean orphan from his literary counterparts. Besides the nearly 200,000 actual orphans that have been exported since the Korean War, the image of the orphan resounds throughout Korea, a country which often refers to itself as 'a dissected body, a fractured mind or a separated couple of family'…And while Korean American writers also use the figure of the orphan to signal their own isolation and distance from American hegemony, it is impossible to ignore these *Korean* feelings of loss and abandonment which are bound up in the figure of the orphan. (2008:131)

This duality in the formulation of Korean 'nationness' can never be forgotten in any discussion of the Korean national consciousness. So though it is important to emphasize the family as it is imagined from the perspective of the North Korean nation, and in terms of this country's unique discursive claims to represent the national family, the complicated snare of overlapping identity claims must always be kept in mind. Indeed, it is the as a result of the scission of Korea into two halves, each with its own radically different social structure, that the history of this peninsula has been called by Korean scholars as 'a comparative political laboratory par excellence', and if one is compelled to look, the primordial history of international bolshevism and the gaudy adventure of capitalism does seem in many ways manifested into these nigh-Platonic state forms. So the relationship between North and South Korea, while providing a parodic version of capitalism and communism for Western journalists and academics, also powerfully and clearly incarnates the interwoven passions and techniques of state and economic formation as they impact identity in general, a claim I hope to convince you of by means of this work in its entirety, and though my main focus in later chapters is primarily on North Korea, this section attests to the most basic conviction of this work, that North and South are a dialectical formulation.

With this in mind, the nation, as it is understood from the perspective of the DPRK, can be ordered, more or less, as follows:

1) There is a claim to an ethnic Korean community extending back to the Chosun dynasty. This group includes all member of the Korean diaspora.
2) There is a claim to 'Korea' as a geopolitical entity, explicitly including the South of the peninsula and currently legitimated by a stance of aggressive post-Soviet

autonomy. This claim to *the* authentic Korean identity is, of course, contested by most in the South, who point to the equally foreign origins of the Northern system of governance. But in an irony of postcolonial hegemony, with the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the continued presence of American military bases in the South and the persistent reliance of the Southern economy on US trade relations, the Northern claim to authentic nationality actually has significant credence, even amongst nationalist South Koreans. The most dramatic example of this was seen during the 2000 Masundae talk as enthusiastic groups of South Korean nationalists proudly waved Northen flags and Korean media outlet reported the accounts of Southern schoolgirls claiming to find Kim Jong Il 'cute.' (Gourevitch 2004)

3) There is a (steadily diminishing claim) to socialist internationalism. This tendency works in relative proportion to the 'indiginization' of the revolution and the rise of a specifically nationalist form of Stalinism in the North. Though for some time North Korea attempted to export 'Juche' to the third world in the hopes of encouraging revolutionaries in these countries and to develop an international bloc autonomous from the U.S. and Soviet spheres, this practice fell precipitously off after the fall of the Soviet Union. (Park 2002) See Benedict Anderson's 'imagined communities' on this topic. (2006)
4) Finally, there is a claim to a homogeneous ethnic community, which imaginatively borders on a schema of racial purity, an ethnic chauvinism that explicitly excludes the South and the rest of the Korean diaspora and is linked to the notion of ideological purity, thus the excision of anyone outside of the DPRK

> or who is contaminated with foreignness. This claim is governed by a xenophobic logic of purity and pollution, similar in some ways to Nazi racial supremacism, as has been argued by B.R. Myers. (2010) Where Myers is wrong, however, is in his understanding of North Korean racism as an extension of Japanese colonial attitudes, which were imperial in origin. In contrast, the legitimacy of the North Korean claim to racial purity is premised on the much more durable ethical foundation of post-colonialism. So while the North Korean contention that it represents the authentic form of *Korea* uses the operative distinction of unclean races to justify its withdrawal from the international community and the maintenance of a belligerent but nonetheless ostensibly defensive military force, it does not use this distinction to justify foreign military ventures.

This is all to say that in the development of the North Korean national franchise, as in the account of Benedict Anderson regarding the constitution of all imagined communities (2006), the modern imperative to establish and claim ownership of a coherent and recognizably legitimate national identity over-determines the Korean national project in this, the existence of the Other Korea will always undermine the claims of either country, North and South, as long as the peninsula remains split and the war remains a frozen armistice.

We have, then, the logic of identity working against the logic of what Sara Ahmed would call the 'happy object' or affectively rooted promise. As the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the DPRK are pitted against one another in a conflict of national identity, this very conflict simultaneously frustrates the 'promise' of the national community itself, the state of happiness or flourishing/ belonging which acts as the metaphysical and

emotionally-mediated guarantee of the compact between citizen and state. As Ahmed argues, the happy object is both intentional and anticipatory, being something we deliberately turn ourselves towards in hopes of future pleasure. In fact, for Ahmed, as for North Korea, this state of anticipation may, in fact, be more important than the object itself. As is stated by the author,

> "The object is not simply the cause of the feeling, even if we attribute the object as its cause. The object is understood retrospectively as the cause of the feeling. Having understood it in this way, I can just apprehend the nail and I will experience a pain affect, given the association between the object and the affect has been given. The object becomes a feeling-cause. Once an object is a feeling-cause, it can cause feeling, so that when we feel the feeling we are expected to feel, we are affirmed. The retrospective causality of affect…quickly converts into what we could call an *anticipatory causality*. *We might even anticipate an affect without being retrospective insofar as objects might acquire the value of proximities that are not derived from our own experience*" (2010:28, my italics).

The shared notion of a pre-established community is thus one of these 'retrospective causalities' referred to here by Ahmed, where the very predilection toward sociality seen in every human culture is manifested as a generalized favourable disposition toward the dominant group identity. In the case of Korea, this relatively distinct identity also has the unusual trait of being over six hundred years old, an issue spoken to by Foley:

> Korea's Choson dynasty lasted for 518 years, from its foundation in 1392 by Yi Song-Gy – later know as King T'aejo – until Korea's final ignomious loss of her independence to the rising Japanese Empire in 1920. For a dynasty to last such a length of time is, as far as I am aware, unique in world history, and the Choson Dynasty persisted far longer, for example, than any Chinese or European royal house. Longevity is, of course, a two-edged sword in historical terms. Choson's half millennium of rule testifies to the development of a social and political system, which was unique in the world in its degree of flexibility and success in surviving in a small country surrounded by more powerful neighbours, and in staving off, defusing or absorbing any internal dissent. However, by the last half of the 19th century Choson's success in this regard was to prove to be one of the key elements in its ultimate failure and in Korea's subsequent disastrous loss of sovereignty. (2004:4)

The heritage of ethnic identity that authenticated Korean kinship and early statehood following the Chosun period, thus, became the obligatory tradition by which both nations had to legitimate themselves. As the very loss of that identity in 1910 to Imperial Japan

retroactively constructed 'Korea' as the lost happy object, or what Zizek, Laclau et al would call the political *objet petit a*, the stage was set for its emergence as a national entity. So while, *pace* Anderson, the new 'Koreas' were founded in reaction to traditional aristocratic authority, were bound by new mechanisms of print and visual media (indeed, this becomes an especially important component of North Korean modernity after Kim Jong Il) and in every other way followed a route of technological modernization, Weberian rationalization and the establishment of fiscal capital, the affective legitimacy and nostalgic power of the ancestral field of relations nonetheless imbricated itself within the emerging structure of nationhood.

More than even the DPRK, Kim Il Sung, or even the peninsula of Korea, the reunified Korean ethnic family is the anticipated happy object of North Korea's affective training. So while what we might call this *prime* happy object lends positive affect to objects around it (i.e. Kim Il Sung, socialism, the military) and always references social history, what Ahmed elsewhere calls the 'sticky' and 'backward' linking nature of affective circulation, the promissory nature of happiness overdetermines the social bond by acting as a point of shared aspiration. Again, in the language of Ahmed, "To be affected in a good way by objects that are already evaluated as good is a way of belonging to an affective community. We align ourselves with others by investing in the same objects as the cause of happiness" (2010:38). Indeed, one might suggest that a perpetually frustrated promise holds a special kind of longevity. That as the subject invests more time into commitment to the promise, the possibility of non-receipt gains an edge of desperation. As with millennial cults that fail in their predictions of rapture, it is easier to forestall and re-imagine the millennial judgement, or, in this case, the

reunification, rather than give up on the promise altogether (Stone 2000); for "a happy object [can] accumulate positive value even in situations of unhappiness: we can live with disappointment by imagining the promise of happiness will be given to those who follow us...Happiness can involve a gesture of deferral, as a deferral that is imagined simultaneously as a sacrifice and gift: for some, the happiness that is given up becomes what they give" (Ahmed 2010:33).

Ahmed's signal example of such a deferral is the act of a parent sacrificing happiness for a child, an act which implicitly promises, first, an ultimately greater happiness in the child's life paid for with the happiness renounced by the parent and, second, the 'happiness' of the sacrifice itself, the self-assured knowledge that the final happiness of the child is reason enough to be content in a present unhappiness. So while the happy family "is both a myth of happiness, of where and how happiness take place," it is also, "a powerful legislative device, a way of distributing time, energy and resources" (Ahmed 2010:45). In other words, the family can also be a legitimative force in the maintenance of an economy; a legitimative force that, further, is structured on a sense of anticipation and sacrifice to the group rather than on the more immediate pleasures of the late capitalist economy. Through this anticipatory mechanism whereby happiness is 'found,' or at least located in the future of the family, and where the family simultaneously acts as an impetus to defer one's happiness to posterity, the family can thus become a powerful force of libidinal disinvestment premised on a pleasure to come in the future, a disinvestment that was used strategically by the North Korean leadership. It is also essential to reaffirm here that the often bloodless discourses of the 'national family' used in the attempts of states to bolster its citizens is, in the case of Korea,

predicated on the real deaths and separations of thousands of family members, making this strategy of loyalty to the family one rooted in outrage of hundreds of thousands who felt incapable of responding to the illegitimate pain experienced during not only the Korean War, but also during the preceding Japanese colonial occupation and the bisection of the peninsula that came afterward. The ethics of the new regime's policies aside, its manipulation of the affective force of these families in mourning to the ends of legitimation, economic production and nation-building was unprecedentedly effective. More importantly, it is only by understanding the contradictory temporal orientation of a group's future commitment to the happiness of legacy that one can understand the strange durability of the North Korean state after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Having founded the state on the dual principles both of constituting and recapturing the nation, while likewise having developed the essence of the nation as an extended, yet homogenous family unit, Kim Il Sung was able to set up the state as a surrogate for those lost to war, colonialism and, later, ideological contamination. At the same time, directing the efforts of the citizens toward the object of a re-founded, national happy family, understood as both that day-to-day life in DPRK and that of the eventual unification to come, the North Korean leadership was able to continually direct the aspirations of its citizens toward future generations while maintaining daily rank-order discipline through the mechanism of familial loyalty, a mechanism whose motive trajectory moves seamlessly from the past in the form of emotional obligations to the dead. With a special sense of totality that connects the family as biological unit to the family as national community, it is, therefore, particularly true in North Korea that, "the family is also an inheritance…[and t]o inherit the family is to inherit the demand to reproduce its form"

(Ahmed 2010:45). For the DPRK, then, the 'nightmare of history' is not found in the same rootless, anomic breakdown of traditional bonds that we experience in the West; rather, North Korea's unique nightmare is to be beholden to an unending generational obligation to a supra-biological family. This is a metaphor which has been pushed so far in the country that today the state is conceptualized as a one-to-one relation directly linking not only the nation and the family, but also the individual body of the leader, where "…the life of every citizen [is] conceptually part of the leader's personified sovereign body and the citizen's economic life part of the superorganic household economy headed by the leader – hence, the slogan 'We are the general's family' (janggunnim sikso), which is widely displayed in the domestic space of North Korean households" (Kwon and Chung 2012:155).

Interestingly, one of the recent South Korean responses to the dilemma outlined above has been to begin to show signs of withdrawing from its sense of national kinship with the North, a development testified to by the growing and yet, nonetheless, shameful/embarrassing/shame-faced admissions by wealthy Koreans that reunification with the North is probably undesirable as a result of its anticipated impact on the economy. This tension between loyalty to the family and the imperatives of the economy shows its obverse expression in Northern intransigence. As a DPRK guide expressed with some gravity to one of the authors of *North Korea: Beyond Charismatic Politics*, "For us in North Korea, the thing that really matters is politics. The economy is nothing compared to politics. We are ready to endure hunger and sacrifice lives for politics if necessary" (Kwon and Chung 2012:10). It is important to note here that, as one might expect by this point, 'politics' as a term in the North Korean vocabulary means

something quite different than its typical Western usage would suggest, the definition of which has challenged many scholars writing on the topic. As Lee Moon-Woong asks, "Anyone who [takes an] interest in North Korean society would have observed the fact that politics is an essential element in daily lives in North Korea and in integrating these lives into a whole. Politics in North Korea is a vital mechanism of mobilization to link and tie members of society with the totality of the political system. What then are the meanings of this *politics*?" (Kwon and Chung 2012:10-1). This is a question I, too, will be aiming to answer.

I am in agreement with Moon-Woong that 'politics' here captures the dynamic of loyalty, power, and identity, what he calls the 'linking and tying in' of society, which organizes North Korea. In the absence of a powerful market mechanism for disciplining labour and regulating desire, 'politics' is used to harness and direct what Lyotard would call the libidinal or Foucault would call the biopolitical activity of the nation. As with the politics of liberalism, 'politics' here is a comprehensive system outlining expectations, privileges, logical aspirations and, in many cases, appropriate public affect. But whereas the ideal Liberal conception of politics discounts kinship loyalty as a remnant of feudal politics and fetter to its proper functioning as a market-based or democratic meritocracy, the 'politics' of North Korea has been deliberately merged with an amazingly complex system of kin loyalty. In Korean, this is known as the *Songbun* system.

Helen Louise Hunter describes Songbun as follows:

> One only has to talk to a North Korean for a few minutes to get a sense of what's important in his life. Two phrases are likely to dominate the conversation, regardless of the subject under discussion, just as they dominate every aspect of North Korea. They are Songbun, or 'socio-economic' or 'class' background and Kim-Il_Song Sangsa or 'the thought of Kim Il Sung'. It would be impossible to understand North Korea, its people or its policies, without having some understanding of these two concepts which

> colour the thinking of every North Korean about himself (sic), other people, his (sic) country, and the rest of the world
>
> In North Korea, one's Songbun is either good or bad, and detailed records are kept by petty cadre and security officials of the degree of goodness or badness of everyone's Songbun. The records are continually updated. It is easy for one's Songbun to be downgraded for a lack of ideological fervor, laziness or incompetence, or for more serious reasons, such as marrying someone with bad Songbun, committing a crime, or simply being related to someone who commits an offense. It is very difficult to improve one's Songbun, however, particularly if the stigma derives from the pre-revolutionary class status or the behaviour of one's parents or relatives. (1999:3)

Songbun is the kind of evidence one would expect Foucault or Nikolas Rose would look for in understanding North Korean governance. A practical manifestation of the imbricated discourses that make-up the circulation of power at the level of everyday life, it ensures that the 'capillary distribution' of relative power positions in the country is constituted by various measures of national purity and loyalty, measures which are recorded, codified and monitored by preapproved members of the cadre, members who themselves are beholden to the same system.

Status/Market Stratification and Social Scale: The Production of Commodity Affectivity:

What we see here is the perpetuation of what Weber would call the 'status relation' over that of 'class position' in North Korean society. Weber characterizes status in the following manner:

> "Status" (*standische Lage*) shall mean an effective claim to social esteem in terms of positive or negative priviledges…typically founded on
>
> a) style of life, hence
> b) formal education, which may be
> i) empirical training or
> ii) rational instruction, and the corresponding forms of behavior,
> c) hereditary or occupational prestige.
>
> …Status *may* rest on class position of a distinct or ambiguous kind. However, it is not solely determined by it: Money and an entrepreneurial position are not in themselves status qualifications, although they may lead to them; and the lack of property is not in itself a status disqualification, although this may be a reason for it. Conversely, status may influence, if not completely determine, a class position without being identical to it. The class position of an

> officer, a civil servant or a student may vary greatly according to their wealth and yet not lead to a different status since upbringing and education create a common style of life. ([1922]1978:305-6)

Likewise, a 'status group':

> …means a plurality of persons who, within a larger group, successfully claim
>
> a) a special social esteem, and possibly also
>
> b) status monopolies.
>
> Status groups may come into being:
>
> a) in the first instance, by virtue of their own style of life, particularly the type of vocation: 'self-styled' or occupational status groups,
>
> b) in the second instance, through hereditary charisma, by virtue of successful claims to higher-ranking descent: hereditary status groups, or
>
> c) through monopolistic appropriation of political or hierocratic powers: political or hierocratic groups.
>
> The development of hereditary status groups is generally a form of the (hereditary) appropriation of privileges by an organization or qualified individuals. Every definite appropriation of political powers and the corresponding economic opportunities tends to result in the rise of status groups and vice-versa. (Weber [1922]1978:306)

The key concept in the Weberian conception of status is what he calls 'style of life' (*Lebensstil*), which is composed of 'life chances' (*Lebenchancen)* and 'life conduct' (*Lebenfuhrung*), with status stratification acting as the necessary analog of market stratification (market stratification more or less approximating the Marxian concept of a class society), and with both forms of stratification always co-existing to some extent in all societies. Nonetheless all societies show a prevalence of one mode of stratification over the other, leading Weber to speak of 'class' or 'status' predominant societies, a correlative theoretical structure to societies of liberal and legacy affectivity.

This distinction is particularly important in developing a political economy of affect because, since the advent of capitalism, it has been these factors that have constituted the pivot around which the differential affective economies have moved and drawn their dialectical structure. As modernity and capitalism have established themselves, we have seen an historic shift in the way affective norms are organized, with the promises of the status society and those of market position oriented according to

different affective scripts or feeling rules, producing contradictory or antagonistic discourses of emotion. Though this historic shift took over two hundred years to establish itself and has thus seen countless manifestations, its archetypal (most common discursive) form can be found in the moment of revolutionary modernity and its promises of individual equality waged against the privileges of kinship (For the sake of contextual clarity,I am here referring to the general 'age of revolutions' which led to enfranchisement in the form of the nation-state, running from the French or Hatian revolution to the production of post-Soviet republics in the Balkans). In this context it is essential to remember that what was occurring at this historical moment, among bourgeois and Marxist revolutionaries alike, was the drastic re-organization of status relationships by forces advocating stratification iterated at the level of the individual over and against social organization on the basis of the (dynastic) household. The Marxist and bourgeois revolutionaries differed on how exactly the re-structuring was to take place, with the key site of the disagreement centered around their positions regarding the role of the market over that of the individual's liberty, but in both cases the target of insurrectionary activity was the system of aristocratic privilege, a status arrangement *par excellence*, to be permanently erased and replaced with a new set of relationships and arrangement of commodity production and distribution. Then, as was seen throughout the 20th century, while the relative economic vigour of capitalist societies inculcated a new form of liberal affectivity, the Soviet international became progressively ever-more reliant on a modernized system of status stratification, scaled in a national rather than a dynastic fashion and bound by the newly risen systems of communication and linguistic homogeneity (Anderson 2006). It also important to note that, were Marx's teleological

schema of history completely accurate, the advancement of capitalism would see a progressive and quantitative diminishment of status societies in favour of class societies, and though this is true in the main, there appears to be a dynamic in operation whereby the rise of class societies produces for itself a dialectical opposition in the form of newly emergent and resistant status distinctions, a situation that is especially true in the case of the Korean peninsula. And though the situation that has arisen between North and South Korea constitutes a particularly extreme form of this relationship, it does nicely illustrate the way that the fixation on status relations in the North is imbricated by and deeply inter-related with the dominance of class relations in the South.

The primary process that is involved in the production of this class/status dialectic as it has manifested itself between the two Koreas, again, cannot be understood without reference to the developments of modernity. But, in this case, it is the relationship between the economy and the family as they have developed together in the national form, refracted and reflected off of the policies and discourses of the other. Of chief importance in this dynamic is the influence of scale on affective relations, a topic presciently discussed in Durkheim's theses on the conjugal family. Writing as he was during the birth of the national form, Durkheim charted the influence of this organization on the very foundation of the family's semiotic constellation along with the concordant sphere of economic solidarity and the move from the *oikos* of the feudal household to that of the conjugal or nuclear one, emphasizing the historical novelty of the family in its nuclear articulation, or as he puts it, 'concentration in the primary or central zone.' He points out,

> The great changes which occurred [from the point of view of the family] was the progressive disruption of [extended filial economic ties][5]. In the beginning, [economic solidarity] extended to all kinship relations; all the relatives lived in common, possessed in common. But as soon as the first dissociation occurred in the heart of the originally amorphous masses, as soon as the secondary zones appeared, [economic solidarity] withdrew and concentrated itself in the primary or central zone [of the conjugal relation]. When the agnatic family emerged from the clan, [economic solidarity] ceased to be the basis of the agnatic family. Finally, little by little, it was confined to the primary circle of relatedness. In the patriarchal family, the father of the family was liberated from it, since he freely and personally controlled the family property…[while finally] in the conjugal family, only vestiges of this right remained: this development was therefore linked to the same causes as the preceding one. The same causes which had the effect of progressively restricting the family circle also allowed the personalities of the family members to come forth more and more. *The more the social milieu extended, the less, we are saying, the development of private divergences were contained*. But, among these divergences there were some which were more specific to the individual, to each member of the family, and these continuously became more numerous and more important as the field of social relations became more vast…Each individual increasingly assumed his own character, his personal manner of thinking and feeling. *In these circumstances, [economic solidarity] became more and more impossible because it, on the contrary, presupposed the identity and fusion of consciousness within a single common consciousness which embraced them*… ([1904]1978:233-4)

Durkheim's account of affective individuation under changing economic regimes is precisely the figure I would like to draw for the reader, with this contradictory movement between the scale of the social milieu and the scope of a subject's sphere of affective identification kept in mind. For, in this figuration one can see this contradictory movement imagined as working on a continuum which ranges only from the body of the lone individual to identification at the scale of universal humanity. A process which simultaneously diminishes the extent of affective ties and obligations to a sphere of corporeal immediacy while identification with the abstract Other iteratively maximizes.

But Durkheim's figuration was also incomplete, terminating as it does in speculation on the achievement of universal humanity and puzzling at this "unforeseen

[5] Durkheim uses the term 'familial communism' to describe the holding of property in common and the general state of having extensive familial and status ties determine economic behaviour. I have decided to re-translate this concept to that of *economic solidarity* to avoid confusion.

and nearly incomprehensible miracle [whereby] the fundamental conditions which have dominated social evolution since its beginning [have not remained] the same" ([1902]1978:234). For, what is becoming patently obvious is that the bourgeois revolutionary claim to have been able to emancipate the citizen from the irrational authority of the filial bond has not only proven historically false, but contrariwise, alliances of affective immediacy and situated, resistant group recognition, those of the family and the immediate bonds of the marginalized community, those of the religious community and the governmental clique, and those of the national community, among others, are showing distinct signs of resurgence across a variety of locales and by means of an array of cultural and economic mediations. Though there is a strong ideological taboo against speaking about the nepotistic elements of the labour force distribution under liberal capitalism (despite its obviousness in any class society between the ruling and working classes), they only become more self-evident in times of economic crisis and unemployment, when even the dutiful liberal's obvious response is to turn to the relations of affective immediacy against identification with their role as some kind of meritocratic 'free labourer.' This tendency is even more pronounced in conditions of environmental catastrophe, which are more acute and immediate, and whose status as being beyond the moral control of the individual allows one to make stronger demands on the affective obligations of the family unit despite the potential prevalence of liberal affectivity. In this sense, the difference can be imagined as that between those persons we would and could make claims upon when in need of help or during crisis and those to whom one could not, but in another sense must also be understood as extra-market economic arrangements which must be developed or arrived at in cases of market failure, or in conditions of a

group's relative distance from the benefits of capital. In other words, status groups make economic claims on one another by means of a bond or set of reciprocal obligations whose norms and accords are affectively rooted, exercised and maintained.

More to the point, this rearticulation and increased reliance on the bonds of the status group is an economically defensive articulation, a bond substantiated on the members position as being one of militating against a more powerful other and a solidarity whose participants identify itself in struggle against the dominance of those who assert the scaffolding of global hegemony through their ownership of capital, in other words an identity that responds to the relative state of dispossession resulting from being sited in a marginal location far from the network centers of global capital. In this way, national identity, which is a status identity, can become coordinated by local discursive articulations toward not only the predominance of the group in affective terms generally, but will do so in reference to the specific group, in the vernacular of the local identity, efficaciously mobilized by reference to the group's unique lifestyle being eroded by the effects of capitalism itself. Though these mobilizations will often similarly categorize their opponent in national terms (as with the North Koreans whose figures of international capitalism are, in order, the U.S., Japan and then South Korea), the relation works first by means of economic possession and dispossession, which then effects a categorization of national entities into lesser or greater statuses. As with dynastic competitors whose title indicated their relative position within an economically articulated arrangement of status positions, the name of the national community plays the same role on a different scale, serving as a label expressing the local group's degree of

sovereignty over the necessities of life and its level of dominion over the other groups that live around it.

And it was only in those societies where market penetration was developed to its utmost extent that this dialectical mutation in scale reached its most acute and mature formulation. The shift from the dynastic family to the conjugal family, and ultimately, to the individual is a prime indicator of the development of what I have called liberal affectivity. For the birth of the market society, which are symbols of predominantly liberal affectivity, could only come about by means of the generalization of the commodity world, a generalization predicated upon the proliferation of objects which capitalism engenders and whereby the affective orientation of the individual was fundamentally rearticulated. Though the individual of liberal affect still requires the emotional satisfactions of status and immediate ties, they become oriented around practices of consumption rather than those of legacy. The central principle of life-conduct in Weber's theorization of status must be reasserted here, however, for the affect community predicated on consumption is in this sense identical to the aristocratic status community. But here we also see emerge a distinction based on temporal orientation, where the esteemed consumptive practices of legacy affectivity are composed of identification and consistency with the 'sacred' consumption practices of the past, while the consumptive practices of liberal affectivity operate according to a notion of individual experimentation, self-invention and the satisfactions of novel consumptive practices in the sense of a governed individual freedom described by Nikolas Rose (1999).

This oppositional quality that emerges in the temporal orientation of consumption is a symptom of the more general effect markets have on the location of emotion satisfaction. With the retraction of extensive filial obligations, the subject experiences a correlative de-emphasis on emotional investment in group ties that has, by this point, generalized socially a subject who, nonetheless, is motivated by the basic human instinct for sociality and group inclusion. The dilemma of liberal affectivity, then, becomes how exactly one satisfies the need for group sociality in a context where the ties of legacy are seen as retrograde. And it is here that we see the basis for the consumer affinity and the ties of an individuated status association. Wendy Brown describes this process, at the nexus of the individual and the state, whereby the:

> …liberal subject is increasingly disinterred from substantive nation-state identification, not only by the individuating effects of liberal discourse itself but through the social effects of late-twentieth century economic and political life deterritorializing demographic flows; the disintegration from within and invasion from without of family and community as (relatively) autonomous sites of social production and identification, consumer capitalism's marketing discourse in which individual (and sub-individual) desires are produced, commodified, and mobilized as identities and disciplinary of a fantastic array of behaviour-based identities… (1995:58)

The logic of affectivity being the logic of emotional investment in objects (Ahmed 2010), or, in this case, of the practice of emotional investment in consuming objects and, thus, becoming the self, it, therefore, appears that, alongside such phenomena as Marxist commodity fetishism, proceeds a correlative and quantitative increase in the liberal subject's affective investment in the commodity object itself, a libidinal reorientation that erodes the preceding norms of investment in the object of the 'community,' or, rather, of the legacies and obligations of the group for which that community stands. Thus, the closer one is located to a nodal point of commodity circulation, there inheres a correlative and quantitative increase in the potential for a subject to actuate their identity by means of the market and, likewise, the production of a regime of liberal affect in general. Again,

this is not a choice or state of being defined either by consumptive practice or not, but by the reinscription of status relationships in the absence of the *group's* pre-eminence, whereby the subject persists in defining the self according to their membership in a group, where this identification becomes more firmly located in the pleasures of the self and in the cultivation of a unique embodiment of the distinctions of taste.

Conversely, location on the margins of the network of commodity circulation quantitatively decreases the potential for such an affectivity to be realized, with a correlative increase in the affective norms of 'traditional' status arrangements, those of affective immediacy and production of performative citations around the legacy group, arrangements which compete with those of the liberal market as alternate rationales for the distribution of social privilege and access to resources. As with the Soviet nomenklatura and party bosses or liberal inheritance, the notion of an idealized systemic fairness, operative at the level of the individual and mediated by the structure of the state is incessantly negated by the bonds of the group, often in self-interest, but always in co-identification. Regularity of corporeal contact, the relations of affectivity and particularly those of the family produce what Bourdieu would call 'cultural capital' (1986), the character of which is developed from the affectively maintained distinctions between the in-group and the various groups of others. However, beyond this immediate economic and spatial punctum, around which the affect community orbits, there is the general state of 'emotional habitus' in which these bonds are resolved.

Chapter 4: Performing the Nation and the Affective Training of Children

The transmission of the affective norms of the dominant group requires that these norms are taught and upheld by future generations, thus emotional training and the instillation of appropriate affective comportment becomes a priority for any society who by establishing its identity simultaneously establishes the affective economy which will distribute positive and negative affects towards various objects. A common example of this practice, and one that is universally practiced as an appropriate form of nationalism, is the singing of national anthems or nationalist songs, a performance that is taught at the primary school level in all countries that I am aware of. Other forms of youth culture, such as cartoons or comic books, also transmit affective norms, and were of particular interest to both Soviet authorities and McCarthyist style censorship in the United States during the 1930s. To elaborate on this process of transmitting affective norms, to register its regularities and differences, I will examine both U.S. and North Korean depictions of the military. This choice is simultaneously pragmatic and strategic, as not only is there a broad array of North Korean cartoons available to a Western audience as a result of their archiving on Youtube, with a natural complement in the late-cold war era cartoon *G.I. Joe,* but the material available also highlights a broad trend within North Korean culture linking the military and the family as a co-constituting unit. It is this hyper-militarized familial unit that became the legacy of North Korean socialism, while turning the distribution of privileges, inheritance and control 'on its head,' in the revolutionary moment the underlying mode of power's transmission through kin lines remains substantively unaltered.

Confucianism's influence here is undeniable, a position expressed countless times by scholars who point to the uniquely patriarchal and conservative form of Confucianism that governed pre-revolutionary Chosun Korea.[6] Even with this important point *vis à vis* the family and a comprehensive, generational and familial disciplinary apparatus established, the reason for the longevity of the state remains somewhat mysterious, a point that Kwon and Chung make through an insightful application of Weberian leadership typologies. I quote at length their analysis:

> Whereas the character of the North Korean postcolonial political system is not unique in history, North Korea is unique in maintaining this particular character [, that of Stalinist, state-centered, totalitarianism], far longer than any other state entity born in the Cold War era and, indeed, way beyond the end of the Cold War as the prevailing geopolitical order of the twentieth century. The early North Korean political order centered on an able and preeminent personality, as were the orders of other revolutionary states known in the history of the Cold War. This personality, Kim Il Sung, was in substance and from no more extraordinary than other leading twentieth-century revolutionaries – notably, Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong. These leaders all had prestigious careers in emancipatory political movements and led a mass-based yet elite political organization that, harboring the principle of democratic centralism, focused on mass mobilization for radical social transformation. They all grasped the central importance of modern technology in politics, including the effectiveness of print technology, art, theater and drama in mobilizing the masses. They also knew very well that the elite revolutionary vanguard organization was not always an easy family to run and that, at times, the efficient functioning of this organization required an exceptional charismatic leader whose authority went beyond the realm of institutional politics.
>
> The historical lives of these charismatic revolutionary leaders of the twentieth century can be discussed not only in terms of comparative history but also according to the conceptual premises of historical sociology – most notably, those of eminent theoretician of modern political sociology Max Weber. Weber was interested in the typology of modern political power and authority, including charismatic authority. No matter how strange the phenomenon appears to rational eyes, for Weber, the enchanting power of charismatic authority is a thoroughly intelligible historical and social phenomenon whose nature is no more mysterious than that of traditional authority (i.e., the authority of a patriarch or emperor) or that of modern bureaucracy and legal systems. Weber understood that all these forms of human authority are imperfect, although all of them, despite their imperfect nature, aspire to perfection and frequently claim to have attained it. When extraordinary-appearing charismatic authority appears on the horizon, according to Weber, the circumstances of its rise may be other than ordinary; nevertheless, its nature is nothing but extraordinary. In Weber's view, there is nothing miraculous about the miracle-claiming personality. Weber makes it clear that charismatic authority exists only because of the imperfection of other authorities. Charismatic personalities erupt in history in situations of radical social upheaval, when

[6] On this topic see John Duncan's "The Problematic Modernity of Confucianism: The questions of 'civil society' in Choson dynasty Korea" (2002) for a full account.

> the society's aspiration for change can no longer be contained within the routine traditional order or satisfied by the existing legal-bureaucratic order. Weber also makes it clear, however, that the historicity of charismatic authority, because it originates in extraordinary times of social crisis, is limited in time and eventually dwindles away as the society recovers from the upheaval and returns to a routine, everyday order. Most of the charismatic, cultic state personalities of the Cold War era underwent a dramatic rise and fall, following the historical destiny of charismatic authority envisioned by Weber at the turn of the twentieth century – except in North Korea.
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> The exceptional character of the North Korean political system lies, therefore, not in the specific relationship between the state and society anchored in what we commonly call the cult of personality but rather in the fact that this particular mode of rule has shown a remarkable resilience, defying the contrary historical trend found in most other revolutionary societies. The durability of this form of politics is an exception also in a theoretical sense, going against the historically impermanent nature of charismatic politics rendered in the Weberian exposition of modern political power and authority. The puzzle of the North Korean political system is therefore not the practice of an extraordinary cult of personality, but the extraordinary continuity of this practice. In today's North Korean political terminology, the country's unique, protracted, and cross-generational charismatic politics is called, to name just two among many other expressions, "legacy politics' (*yuhun jongch'i)* or "politics of longing" (*guriumui jongch'i)*. (2012:2-3)

In this context, I have often wondered if it is, in some ways, stability *per se* that threatens North Korean legitimacy. If as a country founded on social crisis, the extraordinary measures of war and the tragic historical adventure of Soviet socialism, is it not the ossifying processes of bureaucratization, routine and the ebbing of national passion which constitutes the true challenge to the North Korean system of governance? So, while the embarrassing failure of the predictions of system's theorists in the late 80s completely misapprehended the impact that the battery of crises faced by the DPRK would have, it was perhaps because the crises themselves reactivated the latent legitimations on which the nation had been originally founded.

For, though a promise perpetually deferred has its own libidinal staying power, it will eventually become intolerable – with even millenarian cult members softly drifting away from the group for 'other reasons' after the predicted reckoning fails to appear four or five times (Robbins 1997) – for the North Korean state has also substantively failed to facilitate even the survival family units that constitute its 'capillary network,' who cannot

reconstitute themselves on even the most basic level. The chronic food shortages and recurrent famines beginning in the mid-1990s have deeply eroded the base of legitimacy once enjoyed by the leaders of the DPRK, who have now been forced to drastically re-engineer the system of discipline and the related symbolic content of their ideology as the country has descended into periods of lawlessness (Haggard and Noland 2007). The purported existence of '9/27,' a camp for *Kwaiju*, children orphaned as a result of the breaking apart of families under economic stress, is a chilling indicator of what lies in store for a country that legitimates itself by protecting and providing for the family (Hawk 2003). Further, the equally totalitarian-inspired technique of total information control, again developed to an unprecedented extent in the DPRK[7], is now unravelling as a result of economic migration across the Chinese border (Smith 2005) and the related, increasing, presence of foreign radio sets that can pick up the full range of broadcasts; the previously sustainable conceit of the capitalist world as dystopian wasteland and North Korea as home to the 'happiest people on earth' (Brenhouse 2011) can no longer be maintained.

Nonetheless, the state monopoly over the symbolic content received and the daily public performances expected of citizens has produced a comprehensive *Zeitgeist* that admits little to no variation. So, in addition to the often unreasonable demands that family places on a person, demand with which we are all too familiar, there is only the most fragile of counter-cultural semiotic systems and related affective experiences available for a North Korean to use to even begin to express a state of disaffect. This is, in no way, to suggest that someone living in the DPRK does not have access to the full range of

[7] Andre Lankov recalls how one Soviet barbershop would stock translations of North Korean newspapers for the comedic effect of their outlandish claims. (Lankov 2004)

emotional experience that anyone else in the world might have, but rather to emphasize that the emotional continuum in the DPRK is pre-inscribed with appropriate symbolic and performative content that has almost no correlative set of counter-symbols, symbols that would enable a subject to express resistance to the system at large. This lack of counter-symbols is evident in the way that public critique has arisen in the country, a dynamic that also reflects the residual legitimacy that the essential co-ordinates of North Korean nationalism continue to have. For even North Korean *defectors*, individuals that have a vested interest in denouncing the state and its excesses, have consistently described an almost complete absence of public complaint following the first famine, mild critique of local agents following the second famine, and only now a rising sense of discontent with Kim Jong Un on his ascent to leadership. The nuances of how these complaints are framed are extremely important. Signally, the critiques of Kim Jong Un have been frequently premised on his competence as a military general, with detractors pointing out that he could not possibly have led men or fought battles considering North Korea's definitive cold war stance during his lifetime, and for the same reason why Jong Un had to inherit the title of Marshal, or head of the military, from his father. ("Kim Jong-un promoted to marshal amid North Korean military reshuffle" 2012) This key criticism combines almost all of the themes that were previously essential in the process of legitimation of Kim Il Sung: the national promise, delayed; security, become insecurity and anxiety about the military as a result of Jong Un's inexperience and youth; and ultimately, the power of the Kims, brought into question with the waning of charismatic affect and through the routinization of crisis. The process of delegitimation occurring in the DPRK is, therefore, undeniable but difficult to cipher as a result of its phrasing

always maintaining the symbolic consistencies of North Korean ideology. Without a doubt, however, the future of the North Korean government has become less stable as a result of the death of Kim Jong Il and the ascent of Kim Jong Un, with the purported insufficiencies of the patrilineal leadership necessarily linked to the insufficiencies of state governance, generally, by the very density of the system's network of symbolic correspondences. Kim Jong Il was able to extend the legacy of his father's charismatic personality one generation by politically performing the role of the dutiful son amongst renewed conditions of crisis, a performance that if repeated by Jong Un, through the very increasing abjection of the situation, cannot have nearly the same chance of success. However, before this theme can be fully addressed, there is one group whose affective links to the family has not been elaborated on adequately: the military. As the most likely candidate to inherit leadership in a scenario where the authority of the Kims lapses, it is essential to understand where and how the military has been semiotically and affectively located since the rise of Kim Il Sung.

The first fact to remember about the relationship between the individual citizen of the DPRK and the apparatus of the military in North Korea is that in, all likelihood, oneself or someone in the immediate family has recently, or is currently, doing service. With a population of 25.5 million and a standing reserve of 8.2 million men and women (for a total 9.3 million when one factors in active personnel), along with a period of 3 to 5 year mandatory service between the ages of 17 and 22, there is roughly a one in three chance of a young person having an immediate family member in the military at any given time, and is almost guaranteed to have a relative one relation distant in active service. This connection to the military, in and of itself, serves as enough of a contrast to

make the affective foundation of the citizen/military relationship profoundly different than that between, say, a citizen of the United States and their armed forces (Their being a roughly 1 in 143 chance of having an immediate relative in active service). Not only is the concept of the soldier historically more masculinist, penetrative (*vis à vis* other nations) and conservative in America (which is not to say that the People's Army of North Korea is a non-patriarchal institution), but that the everyday experience, by both the mechanisms of daily visibility and a dual symbolic and actual presence in the home, cannot but structure the set of emotional appellations of the DPRK citizen entirely differently.

The People's Army of North Korea is, thus, an institution which is included in the system of North Korean affective economy as primarily linked to the object of the home, while simultaneously being inscribed with the symbols of security and protection as guarantors of its affective legitimacy. And, as with practically everything 'good' about North Korea, this symbolic and affective figure, that of the soldier who defends the home, has, from the beginning, been tied to the body of Kim Il Sung as revolutionary leader. It is for this reason that any leader of the country must hold, simultaneously, the titles of leader of the Korean Workers Party and General of the military. On the simple and brutal level of political pragmatics, it is prudent for any dictator to ingratiate themselves with the military elite, a motivation clearly at work in the 'military first policy' (*Songun chongch'i ui ponjiljok t'uksong)* [Essential Attributes of Military First Politics], formally enacted by Kim Jong Il in 2002, which accorded soldiers priority in the distribution of food and other necessary commodities (Koh 2005). The politics of crisis aside, however, the efforts of the North Korean leadership to deliberately tie the

military to the affective force of an idealized home and the related notions of security, safety and tranquility is nowhere clearer than in propaganda produced for and performed by children.

Woronov, an anthropologist that studies the construction of national subjects in the contemporary People's Republic of China, writes about this propaganda in the related context of Chinese national communism, where he explores the gap between the expectations state officials had of children and the reality of the children's affects during a heat wave at the 50th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the Young Pioneers. The resulting scene of 10,000 irritable children gathered in Tiananmen Square standing up and sitting down, yawning, talking and crying during the speeches of communist leaders was omitted from state coverage of the national celebrations, which precipitated Woronov's interest. His piece, "Performing the Nation: China's Children as Little Red Pioneers," argues "…both that the organization is *not* an anachronistic holdover from the socialist era, and that a close study of children's daily activities as Pioneers provides privileged insight into the nature of contemporary Chinese nationalism….[while also holding that]…a performative approach to nationalism…augments our understanding of the ways that children are produced as national subjects" (2007:650). Woronov's Butlerian understanding of political performance mirrors my approach in understanding North Korea, indeed, I rely on Butler's same theories heavily in arguing for the political performances of leadership transition that took place after the deaths of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il. For, like leadership transition, "'children's nationalism requires repeated performances, reiterations of an ideal that can never be entirely achieved' (Butler 1993). At the same time, the norms for performances of nationalism are constantly changing in

the context of…rapid social and economic changes, rendering them impossible to achieve fully." (Woronov 2007:651) The mass games of the DPRK and the indigenous paramilitary children's organization, called the Pioneer corps after the Soviet fashion, are the obvious correlates in the case of North Korean children's political performances. (Martin 2006) With 30,000 children elected and drilled every year to perform in the airing games it has recently won the Guiness record for the largest event of its kind. (Watts 2005; "North Korea halts showcase mass games due to flood" 2007)

In addition to the expectation that children repeatedly perform acts of nationalism in their production as civic subjects, the issue of children's affective training is equally crucial. The content of the national identity must be made palatable to the more delicate, or at least more embryonic emotional sensitivities of children, a challenge similarly faced in the transmission of any emotional norm to the young, be it centered around danger and fear, hope and realism, morality and immorality or national identity: the proper affect of the group and the improper affect of the Other group. What's more, the proper orientation toward what *is* to be considered dangerous, immoral, Other, etc. must be made pedagogically transmissible at the same time that the proper affects are accorded to the proper symbols, ideas and concepts. Jackie E. Stallcup quotes a pedagogue of children's literature regarding this issue in her essay "Power, Fear and Children's Books":

> Literature for children is not children's literature by and for children in their behalf. It never was and it never will be. Literature for children is script coded by adults for the information and internalization of children which must meet the approbation of adults…It is the adult author's symbolically social act intended to influence and perhaps control the future destiny of culture. At heart are notions of civility and civilization. Adults who write literature for children want to cultivate raw sensibilities, to civilize unruly passions, and to reveal unsocial forces hostile to civilization. (Zipes 1981:19)

This imperative to correctly organize the distribution of positive and negative affects while providing children with edifying educational and moral lessons has obvious extensions into other media produced for children, such as cartoons or the decorations of a kindergarten class. One only has to think of the different representational logic seen in pictures of, say, kittens versus snakes, especially when these animals are included as illustrations intended for very young children and as long as the audience of children intended is putatively threatened by snake-bites. The anxieties adults have about the safety of children and their orientation toward safe or unsafe realities, toward improper emotional orientation and toward proper affective socialization, the establishment of which will later be known as 'healthy fear' or 'realistic expectations,' will be coded into any children's media produced, even a single illustration or the framing of a photograph, and certainly will be included in the *civilizee* productions of Western children's literature and the animated shorts of North Korean children's propaganda.

For De Courville Nicol, "Fear emotions, as felt incapacities, should not be thought of outside of their relationship to desire emotions, or felt capacities, toward which they tend" (2011:3). Instead, they are always related in a dynamic of the designation of an object of fear or insecurity, a threat (from cigarette smoke to terrorism) and the designation of an object of desire, which implements security. For me, it helped to conceptualize De Courville Nicol's description of the economy of desire and security as the 'securing' of the object of desire. In the above example of the adult's fear for the child's security, the establishment of the child's appropriate fear designations actually satisfies the desire for security in the adult's relationship with their child, or less so, with other children. De Courville Nicol's model also usefully conceptualizes the experience of

'moral outrage' as a fear-based compulsion to escape the Other's illegitimate ability to inflict harm on the self and, by extension, on the community and familial ties that one identifies with, a point that has multiple implications in the case of the DPRK. In any case, fear, along with desire, are here astutely described as being involved in a linked state of felt anticipation, mediated through the embodied pain of fear and the embodied pleasure of desire, where, "Simply put, fear is the painful anticipation of pain that produces the urge to overcome danger, while desire is the pleasurable anticipation of pleasure that produces the urge to implement security" (2011:16). With pain being the originary point which motivates individuals to 'avoid through fear-driven anticipation" (2011:17), experience lends "subjects knowledge of the means of averting pain…and of seeking pleasure…[which] may be inborn or embodied more recently, but, like their knowledge of the forces that cause painful and pleasurable consequences – like their knowledge of objects of fear and desire – it is in any event a result of prior interactions with their environment" (2011:22). Therefore, while being educated as to the appropriate objects of fear, imperialist soldiers and vicious foreigners, the very daily proximity of family members who are soldiers reaffirms the child's sense of security and the identification of the military with the family as related object of security and desire. Moreover, the learnt means of avoiding pain and producing security that have been socially engendered by the revolutionaries who have been running the country since 1945 include a militaristic policy of belligerent anti-imperialist sovereignty, alliance with counter-hegemonic countries (now strained in the case of China as it continues to grow in international significance), isolationism and reliance on the bonds of family, all of which have been promulgated and internalized as related affective structures and distributed

through a powerful propaganda apparatus. The association of the military with the pleasures of the family, outrage at the inequities of the world system, along with fear of the violence of imperialism, and a xenophobia predicated on not only fear of the Other, but a related fear and desire for the security of one's family at the hands of state violence are all components of this complex system of affect manipulation by the DPRK. Drawing on this understanding of affective performance and training, I will now discuss the implications of this theorization as it may be used to adapt the work of Judith Butler.

Political Performance

As mentioned previously, the work of Judith Butler presents some difficulties when translated into the idiom I am working with here. Given that I have more or less ignored the position of women in North Korea, the concept of gender performativity, though completely adequate in its own terms, must be pressed into a masculinist dictum emphasizing politics and the economy to be suitable for my model.

And, while admitting the obvious problem of writing a work on the family while keeping silent regarding the role of mothers, this choice nicely illustrates the point I would like to make regarding citationality in the performance of politics, for just as any gender performance must incessantly draw from a hegemonically prescribed index of appropriate sex behaviour, the political performance must, too, cite an index. And just as any academic citation draws into view certain parts of the total indexical structure of a hegemonic discourse, in this case the discourse of Butlerian performance theory (which holds a place of positioned discursive hegemony within the arts generally), while suppressing others by way of their absence, the political citation too will emphasize and silence. Even when this performance holds the promise and potential to reform the

hegemonic apparatus by iteratively recomposing one of its pieces, by its very repositioning, it necessarily supresses some other potential performance.

So while Butler rightly proposes that such performances of symbolic discourse, the hegemonic instantiation of which she terms 'the Lacanian symbolic law,' "can be subject to the same kind of critique that Nietzsche formulated of the notion of God: the power attributed to this prior and ideal power is derived and deflected from the attribution itself…" (2011:14), she seems to underestimate the abjection that can result from even the resistant adaptation of the dominant discourse. For if we consider North and South Korea as being comprised of subjects who, breaking with the hegemony of an aristocratic age, each uniquely adapted the discourses that they inherited, it becomes clear that the liberal reflex to identify with the subject resisting domination harbours a painful romanticism.

What I mean to say is that the performance of group identity, which is simply an individual's performance in alignment and accordance with the dominant group's affective norms, or, to put it another way, the expectations of the group with which one identifies, necessarily posits the act of the Other, a relationship of antagonistic co-identification that is an elemental co-ordinate involved in the formation of any group or subject's identity. Both the group that defines and the group that is defined are thus caught in,

> …the paradox of subjectivization (assujetissement) [where it] is precisely that the subject who would resist such norms [whom] itself is enabled, if not produced, by such norms. Although this constitutes a constraint it does not foreclose the possibility of agency, it does locate agency as a reiterative or rearticulatory practice, immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power. (2011:15)

This is a paradox that is likewise not isolated within the ambit of the resistant subject, but acts on the master as well. For the hegemonic partner of the resisting subject is similarly bound to these multiple figures who have set themselves against the dominant discourse, though in a sort of amnesiac form, an example of this symbolic linkage seen in such contradictory representations as were analyzed in Chapter 3. It is as a result of this tension that we have produced the depictions of the subhuman colonial subject and the shifting ethnicities of postcolonial Hollywood villains, this contradictory co-identification itself an analog of the situation of material bondage that the resistant party finds themselves in, for indeed *pace* Butler, as the militant draws their ability to resist from the privileges differentially distributed by the hegemonic parties, the hegemon is always aware of the constellation of bodies upon which their privilege rests.

The work of Judith Butler, in combination with Hegelian theories of identity, political economy, affect theory and Foucauldian models of power, serves as the foundational theoretical perspective employed in this piece; in particular, and *pace* Woronov's conceptualization of the everyday political performance, her emphasis on the iterative nature of symbolic and performative deployments and her observation that the adaptation of the norms which constitute such deployments occurs peformatively as well, was essential in understanding the often nigh-untranslateable affective performance documented by and about North Koreans.

Even more importantly, her arguments around abject and unliveable bodies produced by the norms of sex made me realize that a risky yet pragmatic politics could be arrived at based on analysis of the dominant political norms and the related political performances expected of the citizen (as with Butler's gender performance), compared

with the degree of abjection and the unliveability produced in the human bodies performing such politics. Of course, less immediate impacts of political performance on distant bodies that are nonetheless involved in such acts by means of socio-economic and technical networks would have to be theorized. But a politics of unliveability seems to me preferable to a politics of liberation, as the putative 'freedom' of such groups as the North Koreans, countless indigenous groups, itinerant labourers, et al. seems incapable of facilitating much of a life, and certainly not a flourishing existence. Embodied in such phenomena as health, education, access to tools (libraries, means of domestic repair, the internet), housing, public parks, in sum, all those elements of the modernist national project that actually seem to have sustained their communal utility and perhaps even their utopian promise, a politics of flourishing bodies in their full emotional and material measure does seem at the very least promising. By means of the awareness that we are always already pre-constituted, constrained in the life and the world, and that some of these constraints are meaningful, useful, 'good' even is the lesson missed in a politics of freedom. But by also realizing that some of these constraints cripple the 'spirit', limit embodied capacity, while yet others enrich the spirit of one at the expense of many, and that a very few, by the medium of text or sound, by instrumentation or by heed to the manipulable rhythms of nature (which is ourselves), have the potential to enliven us simultaneously with others. That in the experiences of art, sharing food, political solidarity, the family and elsewhere (while accepting that these things can be constructed as monstrosities) we receive intimations of the universal social essence, the emotionally, linguistically, technologically and biologically mediated need for membership in a group. This sentimental materialism, while prone to all the same excesses of any politics, at least

counts the embodied agency of the individual, in both their affective and economic in/capacity, rather than discounting such powerful forces as religious sentiment, political orthodoxy, and the ties of kinship, inheritance, initiation and other arenas of supposedly 'irrational', mystifying, or otherwise, to use the good old word, 'ideological' behaviours and performances. In fact by removing altogether the notion of the irrational and sublating together the rational and affective the whole idea of a 'false consciousness' is fatally problematized, while at the same time this union is unpalatably conjoined in other arenas as part of a bid for hegemony and must be challenged.

The notion of a political performativity presents us with the challenge of identifying how the norms of this apparatus are transmitted, but as the North Korean experience would suggest, these norms appear to iterate above all generationally, and work according to the same logic of inclusion and exclusion or competence and incompetence in the performance of the norm that is seen in Butler`s account of gender performativity (De Courville Nicol 2011). Similarly, if Woronov is correct that the mainstay of affective training as regards group inclusion takes place during childhood then it follows that an abrupt and traumatic re-arrangement of society`s order, particularly as regards the affective promise of being part of a particular group, will invariably result in adaptations of the more immediate and familiar norms of the previous generation. This accounts for the incongruous conservatism one tends to see in even the most *avant garde* revolutionary group, for as the forces of resistance emerge from the moment of crisis, there is often very little ready to hand from which to draw a coherent, affectively satisfying populist culture. What`s more, as the particular trauma that these groups have undergone tend to be the act of some other party, such as is the case with the DPRK, the

burgeoning hegemony of the resistant in some ways enters into a hyper-performance of Other, with a related fixation on the crimes endured by their group in the past, as opposed to the historical amnesia of the global hegemon seen in groups depending of liberal affectivity.

The necessity of having one`s resistance legitimated by reference to historical memory adds a conservative cast to the subject`s identification, what I have heretofore referred to as legacy affect, a garrison mentality, that is operative in North Korea as it is in Quebec, the Southern United States and amongst metropolitan militants of every type. Though this was not necessarily the case with the Marxist and bourgeois revolutionaries of the 19th and early 20th centuries, their performances were positioned against aristocratic and familial privilege and in an ascendant trajectory toward hegemony as the leaders of new republics. However, since the fall of the Soviet Union, and indeed during most of the Soviet period, revolutionary politics has entered the domain of being primarily constituted by the affective norms of legacy, focused on conserving certain groups and protecting certain status associations against the erosive character of the market. Again, this trend is consistent from the global level to that of the individual, as it is seen everywhere from the protectionist maneuvering of Cuba and Venezuela to the struggles of North American trade unions. Where we might not expect it to be seen, however, is in works of children's literature and in children's cartoons. And yet, by means of a comparative discourse analysis examining both American and North Korean children's cartoons, I intend to show that this is precisely the case.

G.I. Joe Vs. *The Frog Guard*

These systemic components are particularly visible in the production of animation, still-frame cartoons, which is a surprisingly sophisticated practice in North Korea. One of the only examples of a DPRK industry that is able to hire foreign experts, the inner workings of this unusually important state apparatus was described and dramatized in an autobiographical piece of graphic non-fiction by Montréaler Guy Delisle entitled Pyongyang (2007). When one considers the emphasis placed on the production of propaganda by Kim Jong Il, particularly televised propaganda[8], it is no surprise that cartoons are part of the state's propaganda machine. Given the fact that North Korea is listed 76 out of 215 in terms of numbers of television per capita[9] and that many televisions are located in public sites intended for regular group viewing (Kim 2010), the importance of still-frame, animated cartoons, a creative form that is amenable to production by large numbers of labourers with few tools or electronic devices, perhaps becomes clearer. And, when one further considers that Western advertisers, in concert with psychologists, long ago came to the conclusion that it was in childhood where 'brand loyalty' and the related connotations of pleasure were to be inscribed, the emphasis appears quite rational, if not perhaps prudently Machiavellian.

Cartoons produced for North Korean children, like any DPRK propaganda piece accessible through pirated broadcasts and deemed humorous by the internet community, are also readily available in quantity. The simplicity of the texts also makes the frequent lack of translation into English only a very slight problem. And though I would obviously

[8] North Korea is unique as a famine-wracked 'Third-World' country with roughly 1.2 million televisions – a huge number when compared to other Third World countries such as Ethiopia, at 682,000 televisions; Cambodia at 94,000; and Sierra Leone, at 53,000

[9] Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_number_of_personal_televisions)

be very interested were the shows to be translated, there also seems to me an edge granted by the absence of cognisable language when an adult attempts to sympathetically view or perform an analysis of the affective qualities of a product intended for very young children. So while the suspension of the text's dialogue-driven narrative necessarily leads to a more acute focus on images, characterizations, setting and so on, which may, in itself, serve useful ends, the jarring effect of receiving a text that is set up according to an alternate affective economy, as with North Korean cartoons, is also partially mitigated. My analysis here will focus on the settings of two model North Korean children's cartoons that represent the military, "The Frog Guard" and "Squirrel and Hedgehog," contrasted with the iconic American cartoon representation of the army, "G.I. Joe."

Both of the North Korean cartoons under investigation here either indirectly or directly represent the military or state as an agent of the family's security, a perennial theme in almost all North Korean propaganda intended for children, even when the military is not directly referenced. Of special importance in this regard is the contemporary education of very young children in the life story of Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung, which emphasizes the selflessness of the young Kims and their immediate generosity of spirit,[10] even in conditions where they would cause pain to themselves. One documentary, "North Korean Kindergarten,"[11] captures this example in the presentation of a model kindergarten classroom where the story carefully selected by state censors highlights the children's story of a young Kim Jong Il who gives his boots to another

[10] On this topic see Chapter 19 of the voluminous The North and South Korean Political Systems: A Comparative Analysis by Sung Chul Yang (2001).
[11] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzPJ7PUvlLU

needy child. When asked about his missing boots on returning home the young Jong Il pontificates on the need for self-sacrifice.

Once a generation has established the pedagogical norms and the appropriate constellation of affective signals deemed appropriate and thereby presentable to children, these standards show themselves to be markedly resistant to change or variation, especially in the context of state legislation and in relation to the system of social aspirations and prohibitions deemed legitimate by the group. Indeed, the prohibitions placed on this form in many ways becomes its representational destiny, with the key sites of violence, danger and group identity showing particular acuity as arenas of social contention. One only need note the trenchant debates between Liberal secularists and Christians in the United States regarding the role of evolutionism in public schools to see both the affective significance and the relative gradualness of change when an issue revolves around group identity as it is transmitted to the young, a dilemma that can easily become even more divisive when the issue is one of the representation of war and violence to the very young.

It is unnecessary for me to enumerate the U.S. struggles over depictions of violence in children's media. It is a perennial theme in any country where the logic of commodity desire runs up against the liberal family's claim to be able to nurture their children free of interference, particularly from the society's historically inscribed disposition toward the military, the notion of sovereignty and the always linked idea of legitimate violence. The content of music, video games, cartoons, and so on, thus, becomes a site where simultaneous insecurity and ambivalence, along with concordant systems of enthusiasm and embrace, surrounding a country's relationship with violence is

played out. In the U.S., as a result of its unique imperialist history and along with its pre-September 11th sense of security arising from the absence of foreign attacks on the continental United States, made the socially permissible representation of the military extremely complicated, and required that any representations of realistic violence be excluded from children's media. As is argued by Alpers in his essay "This is the Army: Imaging a Democratic Military in World War II," any person tasked with the representation of the soldier to the post-First and Second World War American civilian populace was faced with the imperative to reconcile the unclear role of the military in a democratic country (1998). So while attempting to navigate the contradictions and explain the role of the army, even to its own soldiers (Alpers' examples all derive from animation produced for enlisted men during the second world war), the challenge of explaining the same principle to children, while at the same time instilling a sense of security and consistent order, must be, in many ways, much more difficult.

In the 1980s, the recuperation of late cold war American militarism took the form of the animated cartoon *GI Joe*, a twenty-two minute Saturday morning show whose conflicts revolved around the global conflicts of the 'Joes' in combatting the international terrorist organization, 'Cobra.' The depiction is consistent with the observations of Alpers, wherein the main set of symbolic anxieties revolve around the reconciliation of the everyday citizen (the Joe) with the figure of the solider (1998). Moreover, the settings selected for the stories are as telling as those predominant in North Korean cartoons, in "G.I. Joe," abject and foreign landscapes: the arctic, unrecognizable swamps, deserts and islands, almost without exception, delineate the locations of necessary and permissible violence as they are transmitted to U.S. children. And, as with the conservative

designation of rap music as particularly problematic in its evocation of violence, the settings of these cartoons reveal a masked form of the American settler-colonist's unresolved history of racist and imperialist violence. As U.S. troops fought proxy wars in the exotic terrains of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Afghanistan and engaged in saber rattling with tropical Cuba and 'icy' Russia, the logic of symbolic division and the Othering of the enemy appears to have designated where the Joes were to fight by nationalist fiat. Or perhaps it was simply deemed too traumatic for the delicate sensibilities of the audience to witness combat take place in the cities, suburbs, farms and homes of their country.[12] In any case, the two exceptions to the semiotic consistency of GI Joe vis-à-vis the setting: the appearance of the team on top of the Statue of Liberty (in order to produce a state of hyper-affect and viewer identification with the Joes as part of the opening credits of *GI Joe: The Movie*) and the simulacra of a generic Mid-Western American town in "There's No Place like Springfield" reaffirm this, revealing the polar logic of fear and desire that is navigated in each author's placement of the military. The defense of the homeland, linked to the abstract notion of a global fight for liberty, is contrasted with the ill-fittedness of the soldier to the American home and the liberal or democratic community.

The symbolism of the opening credit sequence of *G.I. Joe: The Movie* (1987), the feature length culmination of the serialized animated series, is rather crude and obvious. A ham-fisted affective gesture that is appropriate to the generation of *over*-enthusiasm required when a beloved television programme is incarnated in its first feature film.[13] The

[12] Signally, North Korean children's cartoons often also distantiate violence from the inside of the home, positioning the military in the interstice between the inside/outside of the home rather than the American convention which locates the soldier in the interstitial space between nation-states.
[13] Such over-enthusiastic affective semiotics also partially account for the inevitable feeling of disappointment that accompanies the actual viewing of such films. There is a sort of spectacular promise of

Joes are depicted standing on top of the Statue of Liberty, brandishing the American flag, to designate their significance as the defenders and upholders of freedom. What's more, their position on top of the statue actually reproduces their perennial situation in areas where American citizens do not live or do not generally go. No one in the United States is, in fact, allowed to stand on top of the Statue of Liberty; it a position of hyper-liberty only afforded to this extra-sovereign cartoon military force. Much more interesting is the episodes "There's No Place Like Springfield," a two part episode [54 and 55], aired in 1985, and a patently self-evident reference to the phrase "There's no place like home" from the Wizard of Oz, the only other depiction of the Joes as recognizably situated in the continental United States. What makes this episode so important, however, is that the Joes are not actually in a suburban American town. The town, as it turns out, is an elaborate Cobra fabrication of such a place, filled with synthetic 'replicoids' who can take on the appearance of anyone they are programmed to resemble. Though a good cross-section of the characters from the program appear in the episode, only one Joe is 'actually' there. The character Shipwreck, the token naval officer of the show, is being manipulated by a narcotic amnesia and the performances of characters who, though 'replicoids' or doubles, appear as if they were former Joes now retired into civilian life.

To return to the formulation of Alpers, the entire episode is predicated on the uncanny disjunct between the life of the soldier and that of the civilian. In a children's cartoon that is almost nigh-gothic, Shipwreck is constantly making utterances about how things 'seem wrong' or how he, "… never really figured myself for the two-car, suburban daddy type…" Though the manifest narrative reason for this is that he is, of course, being

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hyper-pleasure generated by the translation of the narrative from a serial format to that of the feature film appearing to always disappoint when the object materializes.

mystified by a Cobra plot, there is a regular undercurrent in the episode suggesting that Shipwreck's feeling of being out of place has much more to do with the fact that he doesn't fit in with the affective emphases of the peaceful civilian community. This last quote is captured from a more lengthy discussion between Shipwreck and his replicant wife, a character introduced along with Shipwreck's fake daughter immediately after Shipwreck's amnesia is established to maximize the character's sense of dislocation. Later, Shipwreck discusses his feelings with his cloned wife, Mara:

> Mara: Hector, sit down dear, you look like you're going to cry, what's the matter?
>
> Shipwreck (Hector): I…I never figured myself for the two-car suburban daddy type, but, maybe, this is what I always wanted…
>
> Mara: You sound like someone's going to steal it from you at any moment.
>
> (Intense) That's how it *feels* Mara. How come I don't remember this house, the kids, I don't even remember our wedding!
>
> Mara: You'll remember darling. Soon enough. I'm going to turn down the covers. We'll get a good night's rest and tomorrow you go to work, bet that'll help your memory too!
>
> Shipwreck: Yeah…I suppose…but where do I work?
>
> "There's No Place like Springfield." G.I. Joe 1985 [16:06-16:54]

The key coordinates of home, kids, wedding and work all challenge the military character of Shipwreck, who does not see himself in this life. The appearance of the other Joes in civilian roles is also intended to frustrate the child viewer, who identifies with the characters in their heroic mode as soldiers, not as retired 'people,' pursuing personal goals of pleasure and peaceful affinity. The marriage of two of the Joes is also interesting in this respect, as the transition of the Joes into civilian life also allows apparent romantic affections to be actuated, suggesting that their role as soldiers precluded such behaviour. In a veritable phantasmagoria of alienation and a strange, yet so familiar, fear of peace. The Joes must be returned from the village to their proper location: outside of the home,

outside of the family, outside of the suburb, outside of the nation-state. In a nod to Lacan here, they are effectively situated beyond the (civil and oedipal) law, being able to actuate violence, and as the pivot of sovereignty, the Joes are not allowed to fully reside within the affect group.

In contrast "The Frog Guard"[14] and "Squirrel and Hedgehog" are an excellent example of this scheme of fear and security in its articulation based on North Korean history, with the locale of the village or home as a site of violence a more important affective lesson in the context of post-colonialism. This piece, which in most ways is structured identically to American children's cartoons, contains one significantly unfamiliar element, the deliberate attempt to produce an affective link between the military, home, and security. As can be seen in 3:07 of the clip, the arrangement of the nearby settlement, the guard tower and the crops are integrated in such a way so as to make the relationship undeniable. As opposed to the symbolic logic of G.I. Joe, the soldier is not only a 'guard' of the American (or North Korean) way of life but is also a member of the community, inscribed within the village. Also centrally significant in the piece is the fact that when violence occurs it is distantiated yet more present than in G.I. Joe, with the Frog Guard firing arrows from his gun rather than bullets. This essential but minimal difference seems to be operating according to the same principles which led to the North American decision to allow hand-to-hand combat instead of the penetration of bodies. It is as if the real violence cannot ever be symbolized, but must always have a 'symbolic cap,' that covers it up, even when there would be no significant difference if violence were expressed more realistically. In any case, the theme of the soldiers'

[14] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CE8q5K66_0

affective inscription into the community is much more powerfully evident in "Squirrel and Hedgehog,"[15] but "The Frog Guard" presents the semiotic constellation in its basic constituent parts: the soldier, the community, and its defence; the military is the principle by which the community is constituted. So while the family is not directly represented, the way that it is in "Squirrel and Hedgehog," the implication is that the community is sustained under an affectively rooted sense of loyalty, a loyalty that takes place in the context of a life-and-death struggle. The historical circumstances that make this affective constellation cognisable are the colonial history of the Korean peninsula.

"Squirrel and Hedgehog" present a much more elaborate version of the affective role of the soldier in North Korean children's cartoons, a depiction that begins to significantly depart from the more familiar, North American style, depiction we receive in the case of "The Frog Guard." In "The Frog Guard," the main character shows a more taciturn aspect than would be expected of a North American illustration of the soldier; in "Squirrel and Hedgehog," however, the protagonist more regularly expresses passionate affect towards the community. In sequence 1:30 to 2:22, for example, Squirrel arrives in a local village by military helicopter and, as patriotic strains of music play in the background, weeps while looking at the harmony of the community below him. Squirrel, in another sequence of group affinity, is then reunited with his brother, who immediately expresses that though he works as a medical assistant, wishes he could be a scout fighting the boss of the Weasel army himself (3:15-3:20). A simple viewing of both clips will convince the reader of what is a rather uncontroversial claim: a group's history with violence will determine the kinds of stories it tells its children about violence, especially

[15] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiHJ7t2vscU

where, when and who takes part in it. In the differential affective economies of the United States and North Korea, the soldier either resides in or outside of the community, with the DPRK child being made to understand that it is the military who have enabled the survival of the local group, a stark contrast to the American practice of representing the military in a variety of symbolically distantiated locales when producing media for their young.

And yet, both forms have a markedly similar semiotic and narrative structure otherwise, perhaps a result of Kim Jong Il's extensive study of foreign media and the influence of the South Korean and Japanese animation industry, but also equally a result of the important, more universal, ideological and affective pedagogy expressed in such materials. The terrorist is replaced with the imperialist aggressor, and the soldier is an object of love and affection as well as security and aggression, but otherwise, the themes of vigilance, safety, and, ultimately, the necessity of the military is the foundational narrative of all of these various stories. The need for adults to explain to children the strange idea of 'legitimate' violence, the who, how, where, when and why of adults fighting with other adults is imperative and would seem inevitable, as a result of the child's ontic insecurities and the impulse (rooted in the parent's fears), to producing an affectively rooted awareness in the child of the various systems of state surveillance and legitimate authority by which to ensure their security. In the West, though I suspect just as frequently in the DPRK, this pedagogy of security is often located in the need to differentiate, usually 'bad men' from 'good people,' along with the concordant designation of the 'police' or other 'adult you trust' (teacher, crossing guard, friend's

parents, etc.) as objects of security, though my expectation is equally that the 'bad men' in North Korea include Americans, Japanese and capitalists amongst their number.

This process of historically and ideologically transmitted affect suturing the emotions inspired and the objects designated by those in authority, therefore, acts in a realm of both legacy and immediacy, where the influence of immediate context, through the traumatic impact of new, unaccounted for pains and the presentation of other, unaccounted for, objects of desire, has the power to erode and rearrange the representations of the affective economy. This is, of course, what happened in 1910 with the arrival of the Japanese Imperial Force and again in 1945 with the scission of the peninsula; it is also what occurred with the death of Kim Il Sung and again with the death of Kim Jong Il. But these dramatic flashes of history obscure the gradual instantiation of alternative affects that follows such events, for, in truth, Kim Il Sung's death, as significant as it was in reorganizing North Korean semiotics and propaganda, could not have had the same impact or an equivalent destabilizing force when compared against the famines that followed in its wake. So while I am in agreement with Badiou that the 'unaccounted for' elements of any system are certainly what leads to eventual resistance collapse and disposal, his punctual vision of grand Events seems more of a nostalgia for epic modernism than it does fidelity to the event of Cantor's Set Theorem. Nonetheless, the elegance of Badiou's heuristic system and language does allow for its inclusion in the notion of an *affective count*, where the state[16] of the situation necessarily produces counts of a certain measure and organization, and where what is accounted for in the arrangement of the state necessarily precludes the representation of certain elements in

[16] For Badiou this means both the 'state' of the situation and the 'state' in the sense of l'etat.

the dominant (ac)count (Badiou 2005). The elements that are excluded (here the affective objects of *fear of* the military, the loss of the security of the home and family, and the fallibility of the Kims) are precisely those factors that will emerge to confound the system and, ultimately, destabilize it. Without question, the famines, the recent behaviour of the military, and the economic impotence of the Kims in the face of capitalist triumphalism, are some of those events that belie the core affective reference and the legitimacy of the claims of yesterday's DPRK.

Conclusion:

With all these principles asserted as regards the basic affective economy of the DPRK, the most bedeviling question facing anyone studying this country continues to be the longevity of the regime. How is it that such a draconian system of discipline can persist over generations? And why would any social body submit to such a system of rule? Two factors seem to point the continued success of the North Korean system of governance. First, the nigh-hermetic seal on communication, the almost complete system of control exercised by the government over the information received by the populace, allows for the state to produce an uncontestable depiction of reality, one showing only the very first signs of cracking with the arrival of foreign radio sets spilling through the now porous Northern border, carried by economic migrants returning home. This communicative embargo also allows for the absenting of any affective semiotics that would rival the expected emotional comportment of a North Korean citizen. With no alternate representations of desirable group behaviour available, an errant relationship to the dominant social norms circulating within the state form becomes necessarily a state of abjections. Second, the socio-historical consequences of colonization by Japan, the United States and even by the Soviet Union, has produced an ethic comparable to the kind of affect that underlies the 'never again' of liberal discourse on the holocaust. A powerful identity of resistance that has facilitated the production of a society predicated on militant watchfulness, fear for security and an acceptance of harshness as a measure against greater loss. This identity is not a fiction as much as it is constructed, for it is based on the illegitimate harm and seizure of Korean families by multiple groups of generations, no matter who the culprit.

What is clear is that the emotional marginalizations implicit in societies of liberal affect, market societies, those nourished by successes in the economic wars of capitalism, produce supplementary adaptations of the underlying affective economics that satisfy the needs of individuals. The mediation of group identities by means of a proximal and linking object, (music, food, drugs, etc.) in the context of a novel historical stage in the level of group abstraction, produces group identities which overlap with commodities as affective objects in a way that is simply not available when commodities are quantitatively and qualitatively less accessible to the general populace. But marginality in the networks of commodity circulation and consumption is only one side of this process, which produces reciprocal identities over and against commodity identities. These formations are quintessentially modern, but they are formations that also very frequently draw on the legacies of the past to substantiate their validity and legitimacy.

A political economy of affect helps describe how it is that national objects become simultaneously constructed as objects of desire and objects of fear, with the constellation of different nationalities inversely or concordantly arrayed depending on the various groups' relative positions in history with one another, each produced in an antagonistic and co-constituting fashion of relative distance and closeness, a formation that is identical in its processes, albeit at a completely different scale, to the differences between the identities of individual subjects.

In this way, The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has developed an affective economy that sees South Korea, Japan, the United States (and certainly, by extension and through affective proximity, Canada as well) as affective objects which produce a painful anticipation of insecurity and fear. This representation is balanced

against the self-image of positive insularity and heroic resistantance against global capitalism, a national object that operates in the libidinal frame of a militant and uncompromising defense of a threatened family unit, which is imagined and actuated by an embodied anticipation of the pleasure of peace. Though this representation should be rightly contested, it is logical and consistent with the North Koreans' historical experience, and makes perfect, symmetrical sense according to an affective political economy.

Post-Script: *Thymos* and *Ressentiment*

Though I feel that I have adequately laid before the reader the basic sociological schematics of my model, along with what I hope is a compelling historiography, to my mind the most exciting of the possibilities of this project have yet to be fulfilled. And yet I must conclude, finish the *work* in exchange for the promise of certification, the achievement of status and anticipated adulthood, which is the true libidinal force of this thesis.

For it was this indictment, that of completion of the product, more than anything else that broke the trance of theorizing, the iterative pleasures of reordering *logos*, and ends this piece. For as with Lyotard's Marx:

> …this suspension of theoretical labour on capital…[is] the result of a libidinal transaction…That is to say [I have paid,] paid in word products, in articulations in structured arguments…" [Lyotard 2004:98]

And now we will have an accounting.

But this work will always remain incomplete for me, because in the end it was never really a question of North Korea that drew me on, but an understanding, "…of whatever guilt or *ressentiment* there is in the assemblage of the desire named Marx and generally named militant…" [Lyotard 2004:99] an understanding, not a critique and not a rearticulation of the religious metaphor, but is a work of comprehension. As with the post-'68 illumination which guided Lyotard, I re-inscribe,

> Let's repeat it over and over again, we are not going to do a critique of Marx, we are not, that is to say, going to produce a theory of his theory: which is just to remain theoretical. No, one must show what intensities are lodged in theoretical signs, what affects within serious discourse; we must steal his affects from him. Its force is not at all in the power of its discourse, not even in inverse proportion to it, this would still be a little too dialectical an arrangement; no, its force erupts here and there, independently of the consistency of the discourse, sometimes in a forgotten detail, sometimes in the very

> midst of a solid conceptual mechanism, well articulated and rooted – but of course always in intelligent signs….we have superseded nothing and we have nothing to supercede, we do not climb onto Marx's back here, 'armed with double spectacles, we do not climb onto Marx's extremity of the giant's posterior [it was Aristotle actually[, announce amazedly to the world what an astoundingly new view is offered from his *punctum visus*, and ridiculously endeavours to demonstrate the Archimedian point…on which the world hinges, can be found not by the pulsating heart but in the firm and solid area on which he stands… we would not at all be content to have demonstrated that Marx's politics and political economics are full of religiosity, reconciliation and hope – although we are constrained to do so and it is impossible to avoid this sort of knowledgeable discourse. We are, however, aware that this is set out in such a way that there is no trace of the emotions which induce it, and this, in consequence, its very position is reassuring, perhaps allowing only a certain anguish, apparently the only noble affect, to filter through, but not love, not anger, not some disconcerting surprise. It would make us happy to be able to retranscribe, into a libidinal discourse, those intensities which haunt Marx's thought and which, in general, are dissimulated in the brass-tacks solemnity of the discourses of economy and politics. We will show, therefore, how in Marx's own terms, political economy is a libidinal economy. (2004:102-3)

And it was through the mediation of the North Korean story that I was able to grapple with these themes. I thus offer, by way of conclusion, a plea for understanding *ressentiment* without negativity, the *ressentiment* of desire called Marx, which is also the *ressentiment* of the North Korean state, or at least resentment as it is in dynamic with privilege, as it is in the world.

And yet the process of writing this work did deliver to me one significant insight which will forever change my perspective on things. This being that along with the primordial scission of identity in difference comes the hierarchal rank order, but it is a ranking for-the-self and by-the-self, with the ranked other producing its own vision and version of order. In other words, the subject's self-esteem is predicated on being able to consider oneself in some sense superior, more successful or more adequate, over and against the subjectivity of another, a fact that the discourse of egalitarianism in liberalism and Marxism submerges in a deep quagmire of ideological shame, and a principle that articulates itself within the status group so powerfully as to become first institutionalized and then forgotten.

In the densest sites of liberal affectivity the remaining arenas of status (job position, marriage partner, education) become indicators of the residual substance of the self-balanced against the affects of the desiring self, which are then measured along with these more individual pleasures garnered in acts of consumption, to arrive at a rough approximation of one's social value, or to put it another way, what degree of envy one might inspire. On the other hand, to be a subject at the mercy of the Other's success, to find oneself with minor status, or to constitute the Other's prevalence and sovereignty brings with it a consuming need to find an identity of substance despite, or more likely the result of, this vanquished position. As it is argued by Peter Sloterdjik in *Rage and Time*:

> one cannot not surrender oneself exclusively to desiring affects. With equal emphasis it needs to be said that one should watch over the demands of *thymos,* if necessary even at the cost of leaving erotic inclinations unrealized. A person is challenged to preserve dignity and self-respect even while earning the respect of others in the light of their high standards. It is this way and could not be different because life requests every individual to step out onto the external stages of existence and expose his powers to prove himself before his peers. This is necessary for one's own personal benefit as well as for the benefit of the community. (2012:16)

This concept of *Thymos* advanced by Sloterdjik is the exact correlate of those elements of personal status operative according to the affective logic of domination and *ressentiment* that I have explored in this work. As he describes it:

> The source of the fundamental misunderstanding to which psychoanalysis has succumbed is rooted in its naturalistically concealed cryptophilosophical pretense to explain the human condition in its entirety based on the dynamics of libido, that is, from the standpoint of eroticism. This did not necessarily have to lead to a disaster for psychoanalysis, if the legitimate interest of therapists in the dimension of eros would have been connected with an equally vivid attention to the dimension of thymotic energies. However, psychoanalysis was never willing to turn as much detail and basic interest to dealing with the thymotics of the human being of either sex. It did not sufficiently investigate human pride, courage, stoutheartedness, craving for recognition, drive for justice, sense of dignity and honor, indignation, militant and vengeful energies. Psychoanalysis somewhat condescendingly left phenomena of this kind to the followers of Alfred Adler and other allegedly minor interpreters of the so-called inferiority complexes. If at all, it conceded that pride and ambition can take over control whenever sexual wishes do not get realized adequately. With a little irony, psychoanalysis called this transition of the psyche to a second program "sublimation"—a fabricated elevation for those in need of it.

> Psychoanalysis remained for the most part silent when it came to that form of rage that springs from the striving for success, prestige, self-respect, and their backlashes. The most visible symptom of the deliberate ignorance that resulted from the analytic paradigm is the theory of narcissism, the second offspring of psychoanalytic doctrine, with which the inconsistencies of the oedipal theorem were supposed to be resolved. It is telling that the narcissism thesis focuses on the human forms of self-affirmation. However, it aims to incorporate this thesis against all plausibility into the framework of a second erotic model. It thus takes on the futile effort to deduce the peculiar richness of thymotic phenomena from autoeroticism and its pathogenic fragmentations. Anyone interested in the human being as a bearer of proud and self-affirmative affections should leave unsevered the knots of this tangled, overextended eroticism. One must probably return to the basic conception of philosophical psychology found in the Greeks, according to which the soul does not only rely on eros and its intentions with regard to the one and the many. Rather, the soul should open itself equally to the impulses of *thymos.* While eroticism points to ways leading to those "objects" that we lack and whose presence or possession makes us feel complete, thymotics discloses ways for human beings to redeem what they possess, to learn what they are able to do, and to see what they want. (2012:13-6)

This, then, is what you have before you, a transcript of resentment, of the reciprocal loop of resentment and hegemony, which is reflected back and forth between the irreducible insistence of the past and the heedless adventures of the future, both lodged within the other through the interplay of viciously material national performances. Between the worker who is employed and the labourer without work as between the spinster or aged bachelor and the newlywed, the same reciprocity of resentment asserts itself that has produced the nations of North and South Korea.

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