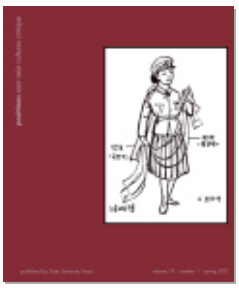
Dressed to Kill: Women's Fashion and Body Politics in North Korean Visual Media (1960s-1970s)

Suk-Young Kim



positions: east asia cultures critique, Volume 19, Number 1, Spring 2011, pp. 159-191 (Article)

Published by Duke University Press

Dressed to Kill: Women's Fashion and Body Politics in North Korean Visual Media (1960s–1970s)

Suk-Young Kim

From a sociopolitical point of view, the way people dress is a worthy subject of scrutiny: fashion is a domain in which self-perception and taste manifest, where the desires for beauty and consumption materialize; it is also a contested ground where social hierarchy is articulated through individual spontaneity and state control.[1] As Georg Simmel pointed out in the early twentieth century, "clothing can serve both as a vehicle of individual identity and social distinction and as a marker of belonging to a group."[2] My interest in fashion in this article is similar to Judd Stitzel's in his study of clothing, politics, and consumer culture in the socialist state of East Germany;[3] it concerns a specific sociohistorical period in which state regulation dominates everyday life, including fashion choices.[4]

Questions of politics and fashion are far from tangential in understanding North Korea. North Korea is a highly fashion-conscious nation where

positions 19:1 DOI 10.1215/10679847-2010-028

political leaders are preoccupied with how people dress; they impose rigid regulations, including uniforms for various social sectors, and systematically recommend certain designs to civilians. On November 16, 1961, Kim Il-sung noted to a group of mothers that "our ideal is to build a society where everyone is well fed, well clothed and lives a long life."[5] His son, Kim Jong-il, inherited this vision and has linked improved livelihood directly to matters of clothing: "Clothing is of equal significance to people as food. Without the discussion of clothing, we cannot talk about happy livelihood of the people."[6] North Korean leaders have issued numerous statements promoting fashion as a national project; these are meant to groom an ideal corporeality and coin national strength through centrally monitored practices. Both Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il have predicated their ideas about national well-being on such sartorial projects.[7]

North Korean women's fashion involves a bifurcation of femininity. As other socialist, authoritarian states have glorified military uniforms for women while simultaneously endorsing garments that uphold ideals of domestic femininity, North Korean fashion has explored and expressed femininity through diverse fashion codes.[8] The varying visual representations of ethnically marked national femininity and state-organized socialist femininity reveal a fashion symbiosis for women in North Korea not unlike the hybrid form of socialist dress devised for women in the 1920s Soviet Union.[9]

Retaining traditional Confucian ideals of a male-centered society, North Korea's leaders have perceived women's and men's dress as separate national projects, forging different corporeal practices for the two genders.[10] Images of female citizens have been shaped primarily by male leaders of the nation, which presents an interesting analogy to the circumstances in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Chinese historian Tina Mai Chen has argued that "since the early twentieth century, liberated body parts represented new sociopolitical and gendered visions of China, but these visions tended to be imagined on the bodies of women by male intellectuals or masculinized political parties."[11] Antonia Finnane has pointed out that the imperative for women to revamp their corporeal identity in socialist China meant that "the transition to a new regime in late 1949 was especially significant for women, who were required to rethink themselves in a theoretical context provided

by Mao's critique of the patriarchy."[12] Similarly, in North Korea, the notion that femininity is a gift bestowed by the state—or more specifically, by male state leaders—has provided grounds for regulating gendered bodily practices.

I examine representations of the "ideal female body" in North Korean fashion in a variety of visual media, including stage productions, films, magazine illustrations, paintings, and posters. I interrogate the process by which the North Korean state politicized the female body through the production and consumption of women's fashion from the 1960s to the 1970s; this was a formative period in the country's history when ideas of *juche* (self-reliance) and national purity governed everyday life under the leadership of Kim Il-sung.[13] I look at two pieces of fashion in particular: the *joseonot*, an ethnically marked garment made of *jeogori* (short jacket) and *chima* (long and wide skirt), and a feminized military uniform, with a skirt and a distinctive waistline. Although the two may seem to be clear garments organized along a bifurcated femininity—the *joseonot* representing timeless national tradition and domesticity and the military uniform ideals of socialist revolution and public life—I see these fashions as intricately related, coproduced in a symbiotic realm of feminine ideals that remained distinct from what North Korean authorities defined as normative masculinity.

On a larger plane, I ask how a postcolonial state such as North Korea charted its own brand of modernity. Emerging from a long and embittered Japanese rule (1910–45), the process of North Korea's decolonization has been shaped by a cultural economy in transition, in which new policies were based on the radical eradication of the economic system under Japanese rule.[14] Colonial rule brought to Korea filtered forms of Western culture, which were seen by the North Korean state as posing grave dangers to ethnic purity. This visceral resistance to the Japanese cultural legacy is manifested in North Korea's foundation myth: that Kim Il-sung's anti-Japanese guerrilla resistance in Manchuria was the sacred, original moment of a military tradition that North Korea glorifies to this day. Privileging the military in North Korea refracts corrupting colonial legacies, but it also points to the intricate juncture between the North Korean brand of militarism and the ethos of socialist revolution.[15] The socialist principles that shaped postcolonial cultural practices, including state-engineered fashion codes, accom-

panied a nationalistic sentiment that has influenced North Korean body politics. As Carter Eckert argues, in both Koreas, "nationalism was used to legitimate state power and functioned as a kind of state religion in the post-colonial nation-building process."[16]

Fashion in North Korean visual media reflects the transformation of ideological issues into tangible modes of discipline. Jane Gaines's observation that costumes in films "primarily work to reinforce narrative ideas" is pertinent to understanding how North Korean dress codes materialized the ideology of bodily practices.[17] Like fashion, visual media in North Korea are the country's most important forms of communication: visual media educate, entertain, and mobilize. In a society where ideals shape reality, the coordination and circulation of visual images is far from spontaneous. It would not be an exaggeration to claim that visual media in North Korea set the parameters of available fashion choices.

In North Korea, images of women on stage and screen, along with photos and posters, are not only objects of visual consumption but concrete models to emulate, imposing on viewers the desire to produce specific bodily presentations. For the state, monitoring the daily practices of civilians would have been impossible without women's fashion, which the leadership uses as a means of managing its population. Moreover, male idealization of certain female body types, often framed by proper dress, has relied on abrasive media forces to disseminate new fashion codes and reform old ones. The dress of female protagonists on stage and screen illuminates how ideal female bodies have been crafted through a constant negotiation of socialist and ethnically marked femininity.[18] The idiosyncratically feminine aspects of women's fashion result from a code shift from colonial modernity to nationalism in the *joseonot* and then to a more eclectic mixture of styles. Each fashion paradigm reflects a different stage of state-led reform and a new social agenda, as the North Korean policy toward women changed over time. However, these fashion codes are not separate signifiers of consecutive time periods but synchronous manifestations of styles that express various degrees of ideal femininity.

Away with Colonial Legacies: The *Joseonot* as a New Socionationalist Fashion Code

With the success of post–Korean War reconstruction efforts, beginning in the 1960s, North Korean leaders had the chance to make fashion into a symbol of the new socialist state.[19] Fashion became a performative instrument separating the oppressive feudalism of the past from the liberating socialism of the present, and the way people dressed "then" and "now" involved some irreconcilable differences. On November 16, 1961, two months after the Fourth Party Convention during which Kim Il-sung emerged as the nation's unchallenged leader, Kim gave a speech at the National Meeting of Mothers in which he criticized women in the past "who went about dressed to kill and wearing fancy hats"; he claimed that "these women have been removed from their posts and the ranks of the Women's Union."[20] In so doing, Kim used fashion codes to separate out a corrupting element within North Korea as a remnant of the colonial era. In that same speech, Kim inscribed correct ways of living through fashion codes: "How can Women's Union work be conducted by the so-called enlightened women if they are ignorant of the factory and rural life and only know how to apply make-up and hair curlers? To tell the truth, it is not so essential to have curly hair and wear pretty dresses, and neither are these things difficult to learn. Even rural women can learn these things easily once they are taught."[21]

Here, Kim publicly condemned certain fashions. His disparaging remarks contrast *these* fashion types with those of laborers and farmers—the idealized citizenry of the new nation. His speech is a critique of the nonworking bourgeois bodies associated with the urban decadence of the colonial era. Kim's references to "rural life" and "rural women" figuratively stand for the working bodies of farmers as much as they designate a geographic area. Paraphernalia such as "make-up," "hair curlers," "pretty dresses," and "fancy hats" would surely interfere with the backbreaking work on collective farms and in factories. With its Western features, this negative fashion contrasts with North Korea's proletarian working bodies and defies the ethnocentric look of Korean women's dress.

Western fashion codes were introduced for the most part during the Japanese colonial period and were seen by many as compromising national

purity. As Susie Kim argues, the encroachment of Western sartorial norms in Korea at the turn of the nineteenth century was filtered through ambiguous encounters between Korea and the West and often framed by a Japanese sensibility. She points out that women's fashion reform was carried out by female students who had been exposed to new ideas about womanhood through education abroad and at newly established modern schools in Korea, where they could vicariously experience the ideals of the West. The movement during the colonial era to reform old-style ethnic attire into a more functional dress code was motivated not only by the practical suggestion that Western-style dress offered better mobility but by a symbolic order in which wearing Western clothing was a gesture toward civilizing the self within a globalizing economy. Western-influenced fashion codes were mostly accepted by educated upper-class women. These sartorial codes the North Korean state later labeled as oppressive and bourgeois: "So-called *sinyeoseong* (New Women) could partake in this new material culture insofar as their social standing and economic means, often through their wealthy families, would permit it."[22]

In the new North Korean state, these fashions had to be promptly eradicated from women's wardrobes; they represented remnants of the colonial past and the cultural traits of the enemy class, the bourgeoisie. The spirit that guided this process was akin to that of the Chinese Republican era, when clothing reform was viewed "as a rite of ethnic rehabilitation that would expunge . . . ignominy and reinvigorate the nation to redress its recent humiliation."[23] As these sartorial markers of colonial modernity were erased, new socialist clothing norms arose as alternatives to the Western-style garments that had been brought to Korea through a corrupting Japanese influence.

As the nascent North Korean leadership envisioned it, the socialist era's departure from the past would mean not devising a new dress code but restoring the clothing found in the sacred memories of the leader's household during the anti-Japanese struggle. Official North Korean historiography, assisted by paintings and photos, cultivated the idea that the Kim family epitomized national purity through their resistance to Japanese aggressors. Although historians have argued that Kim Il-sung's father attended Chris-

Figure 1 The painting shows Kim Il-sung as a child visiting his father, imprisoned for his anti-Japanese revolutionary activities. The caption provided in the text indicates that Kim was inspired by his father to become a revolutionary at an early age. *Joseon Yesul* 6 (1968): 7

tian school and was an obscure figure in the Korean independence movement, North Korean official history claims that his life was sacrificed in prison for rebelling against Japanese colonizers.[24]

Figure 1 illustrates Kim Il-sung's childhood as a period in which his father and mother stirred his political consciousness by living as revolutionary martyrs. His imprisoned father is shown sacrificing himself to the cause of national independence. The parting of father and son, husband and wife, calls forth an emotional response from viewers, who see a little boy submitting to a heartbreaking family separation. What fashions this emphatic moment are the Korean garments worn by mother and son, which mark their bodies as ethnically distinct and stand in stark contrast to the Japanese police uniform featured at the far right. The indifference of the policeman and the suppressed sorrow of the family are paralleled by the sartorial contrast, thus evoking the nationalistic imperatives of the revolutionary household by means of ethnically specific garments.

In North Korean revolutionary legend, as a boy, Kim Il-sung promised, with his mother's encouragement, to carry out retribution in the name of his family and fight against the Japanese enemies:

> At the age of seven he and his mother visited his imprisoned father, whose countenance had "sadly changed from the torture endured." After the visit his mother told him that he would never see his father again. "I want you to grow up fast and avenge your father!" she cried, whereupon Kim, hearing these words, "swore before his mother that he would avenge his father without fail."[25]

In the pictorial version of the story, Mother appears as a formidable force shaping the patriotic mindset of the young Kim Il-sung and igniting a revolutionary spirit in the future leader. Her equivocal bodily performance of ethnically signified femininity and belligerent resoluteness is coded in the *joseonot* she wears. North Korean women's ideal clothing thus found its prototype in the officially sanctified domestic chronicles of the Kim household, and Kim Il-sung's mother, Kang Ban-seok, became the ideal standard for women's behavior and appearance. North Korean socialist modernity found its prerogative in an ethnically marked national dress code set in clear opposition to the colonial period, when modernity for women meant Westernized garments — markers for nonworking bodies.

The *joseonot* became the new national dress code for women. However, since many had always worn this ethnic dress and never fully accepted Western clothing, no thorough reform was required to promote this dress type. A poster from the National Archives and Records Administration dating from the late 1940s or early 1950s features a motherly figure mending clothing (fig. 2). The caption at the bottom ("Let Us Be Well Prepared for Winter!") urges viewers to prepare for the upcoming season. The frugal imperative of this slogan is mirrored by the woman's modest ethnic dress, which marks her body as enduring hardship akin to that experienced by Kim Il-sung's mother (see fig. 1). Like Kang Ban-seok, the woman in this poster, who also wears the *joseonot*, embodies a working-class ethics and thereby becomes a state-endorsed antidote to the corrupting colonial past.

As the state perceived it in the early 1960s, North Korean women's ethnically distinct bodily presentation was a corrective to the recent past of Japanese colonial rule, which disgraced national dignity. Promotion of the *joseonot* was predicated on ethnic motifs that emphasized modest feminine beauty and virtue. In the following description of the *joseonot*, published in 1960, the author describes the garment's nationalistic qualities as different from those of other national dress forms:

> People say the Korean women's dresses with the pleated *chima* (skirt) and short *jeokori* (jacket) are simple but they have a charm of elegance and harmony. The *jeokori* has a white *tongjung* (neck piece), and the *posun* (footwear) is also white. Korean women usually wear white shoes. The

Figure 2 A poster produced between the late 1940s and the early 1950s by the North Korean Culture and Propaganda Bureau. It features a woman in Korean clothing mending winter clothes. The slogan below reads, "Let Us Be Well Prepared for Winter!" Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration

beauty of their dress is in their graceful lines, not in flashy colors. As a matter of fact, Korean women prefer delicate or pastel shades for their dresses, as if to symbolize the virtue of Korean women that they have preserved throughout the long history of Korea.[26]

The essentialist quality of the dress code recurs throughout the 1960s. A 1966 anonymous article titled "Characteristics of Korean Women's Cloth-

ing" describes the specificities of Korean women's fashion as grafted onto ethnically marked body types:

> Korean women's clothing is designed to suit the special physiological needs of our Korean women. Short jackets and long skirts—this is the basic style which embellishes feminine beauty. Skirts which start above the waistline ending at a length covering the knees make one slim so as to enhance the elegant personality of the wearer. Short jackets which barely cover the armpit make one's face look simple and dapper while revealing the chaste nature of the wearer. Tightly designed jacket and wide skirt, when worn together, complement each other to create harmony. . . . Korean women's clothing is as practical as it is beautiful, for it reflects the frugal spirit of the Korean people. The end of sleeves and neck area of the jacket are always prone to wear and tear, and by using different cloth and color for these areas, one does not have to throw away the whole jacket because it is possible to retain the decent part of the jacket while replacing the old part with new cloths.[27]

Here, the corporeal distinction of Korean women shapes the *joseonot* into certain design patterns, which in turn reflect the frugal nature of the wearer. The clothing transcends its materiality to symbolize character traits and connects the ethnically distinctive bodies of Korean women with essentialist, nationalist characteristics.

The *joseonot*'s modest beauty inheres in its subtle color schemes and harmony with the environment. In the 1960s, the *joseonot*'s color scheme portrayed female modesty and chastity. Visual media were particularly concerned with chromatically coordinating costumes with the surrounding environment; color coordination was not merely an aesthetic concern but an ideological one. A 1963 article by theater critic Hwang Gwang-hyeon exemplifies this point, raising questions of color and clothing in a review of the children's musical film *Our Flower Garden*: "Color on screen plays an important role in enriching ideological themes. Colors affect both the visual and psychological realms and produce various effects in the viewer's mind. Therefore the various identities of the viewers—race, age, knowledge, sex, and health—bring in various emotional responses to different colors."[28] Far from being a peripheral element, color here is an essential collaborator with

the emotions. Hwang argues further that "colors should be organically coordinated with each other, and also with other elements of film, such as music and dance."[29] He goes on to criticize *Our Flower Garden* for using too many colors without appropriate coordination, especially in a scene that featured "a motley of flowers, grass, trees, butterflies, which clashed with the colors of the protagonists' clothing. Inappropriate color coordination distracted viewers from the jolly mood created by the dance and music and instead distracted the viewer's attention."[30] (See fig. 3.) Hwang implies that the protagonist's *joseonot* should reflect the subtle and elegant beauty of the Korean people. His criticism targets not only the misuse of color but the disruption this creates in the *joseonot*'s mission to express a modest nationalistic ethos.

Another example from a *hyeokmyeong gageuk* (revolutionary opera) illustrates the necessity to coordinate the *joseonot* with the surrounding environment. A scene from *Song of Geumgang Mountain* (*Geumgangsanui norae*) shows chorus girls in Korean dresses rehearsing their song and dance for a performance competition. The girls' bodies in *joseonot* create a seamless harmony with the idealistic national landscape of Geumgang Mountain, an iconic North Korean tourist space with a scenic, idyllic beauty.

However, the representation of the *joseonot* in *Song of Geumgang Mountain* did not preclude either a socialist ethos or a vision of modernity for revolutionized North Korea. Quite the contrary, the appropriately dressed female bodies became active interlocutors for the new socialist state. Tradition became not a remnant of a feudal past but a rich reservoir where nationalism could be reinstated in the service of the new socialist state. In *Song of Geumgang Mountain*, the girls wearing the *joseonot* are mediators of tradition and revolution, past and future; indeed, the female protagonist travels back and forth between the countryside and the modern city of Pyongyang. In the end, she is reunited with her father, from whom she was separated during Japanese rule. Her ethnically marked dress symbolizes restoration of the family, which can be seen as restoration of the nation at large. The *joseonot* acquires a timeless quality, mediating disparate times and places.

This ability of the *joseonot* to negotiate different values of national life was represented in the August 1960 issue of *Joseon Nyeoseong* (*North Korean Women*), which featured a collage of photos of smiling North Korean women

Figure 3 A scene from the children's musical film *Our Flower Garden*. Photo by Park Gyeong-un. Cover of *Joseon Yeonghwa* (*North Korean Film*) 6 (1963)

wearing the garment (fig. 4). In the background are factory chimneys and a tractor on farmland. The women's look, typically identified with domestic space and ethnic purity, is brought in this image to the front line of industrial and agricultural production — the very heart of socialist reconstruction. The juxtaposition of seemingly incongruous elements of tradition and

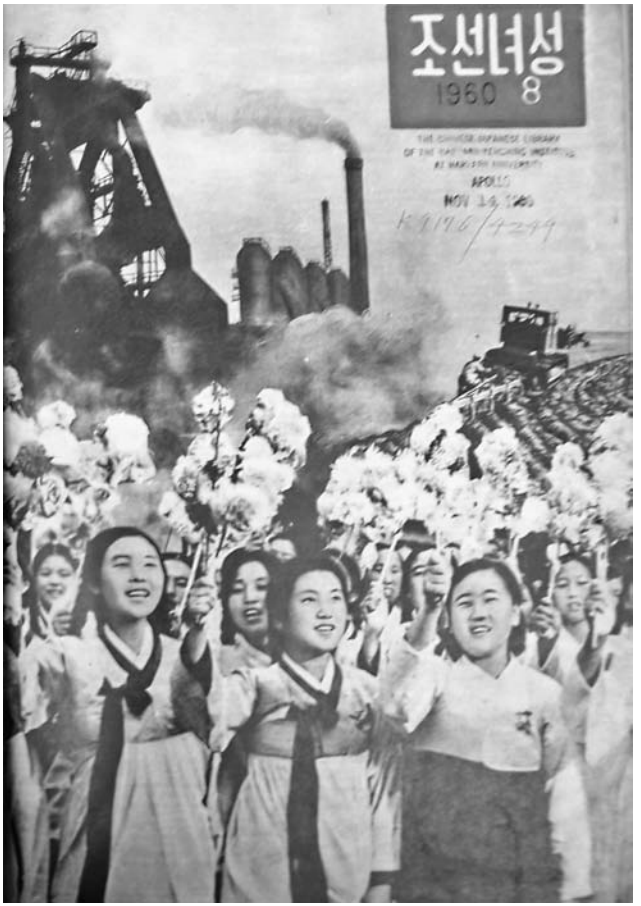


Figure 4 Cover of the August 1960 issue of the magazine *Joseon Nyeoseong* (*North Korean Women*). Note the traditional attire of the women while the background features images of a modernizing state with factories and tractors—quintessential markers of socialist construction

modernity marks the *joseonot* as the dress of North Korean women under a new nation. Nevertheless, these well-groomed women are pleasant embellishments of social reconstruction rather than the main force of production, a beautiful garnish to the rising economy, just like the flowers they hold in their hands.

Why is there such ambiguity in women's bodily performances? Why are *women* depicted as mediators between past and present, tradition and revo-

lution? North Korean men do not wear ethnic Korean clothing, nor are they encouraged to master essentialist virtues in either theatrical representations or everyday life. It is women who must conform to this double standard.

There are two major reasons for this. The first is North Korea's pursuit of *juche* ideology, which is generally translated as "self-reliance" or "independence." This ideology, known to be Kim Il-sung's theoretical work, was adopted in international politics for advocating the ideological independence of Third World nations. But as historian Park Han has noted, "Juche views Korea as a chosen land, as people are told consistently that world civilization originated from the Korean Peninsula."[31] As a way of practicing this extreme ethnocentrism, North Korean women did not abandon Korean dress for Western styles. While this explains the persistence of ethnic dress, it does not explain why only women had to express "Koreanness" through their bodies.

Throughout Korean history, and especially during the Joseon dynasty, few social roles integrated women into state politics. Youn Mi-ryang notes that from the early days of the North Korean state through the consolidation of Kim Il-sung's leadership in the early 1960s, there were systematic attempts to promote women as aggressive revolutionary fighters; such policies eventually gave way to more traditional approaches that emphasized the domestic virtues of women as mothers and wives—docile subjects of state discipline.[32] Thus, for North Korean women to become revolutionary warriors, they had to master new and unfamiliar roles. If women were to take military positions, they would have to abandon their familiar personae as domestic housewives. No matter how intensively visual media created simulacra of female warriors, their impersonation presented a tough challenge for North Korean women, because the gap between themselves and such theatrical characters was a wide one. When everyday life is so distanced from its representations, the ability of visual media to present a credible model is diminished.

Yet the North Korean state intended for ordinary women to feel a strong degree of empathy when watching revolutionary women in media productions. For this reason, the state needed an intermediary procedure that would enable everyday women to identify with women onstage. By producing ideal women from real life, propaganda productions could convince

viewers that such women existed. Thus the lives of historical characters were forged into narratives in the liminal zone between reality and illusion. As the state promoted the ideal North Korean woman through its fashion code, it also carefully invented paragons of female virtue through legendary tales of its leaders' family members.

As seen in figure 1, Kim Il-sung's mother, Kang Ban-seok, was the icon of this movement.[33] In the 1960s, Kang's biography unambiguously promoted her as the model for all North Korean women to emulate.[34] Titled *The Mother of Korea* and written in the style of communist hagiography, the book presents Kang's lifelong dedication to her husband and son, the revolutionary hero Kim Il-sung. In it, Kang appears as a dexterous, hardworking girl from a poor household who displayed a precocious gift for weaving and spinning—not unlike Arachne in Greek mythology—creating a superhuman aura around her sartorial talent:

> In the evening she used to spin together with her mother. She had learnt to spin when she was a child, and now she could also weave. She did not just imitate others—watching them working she tried to work even better. Far from being satisfied with her results of today, she strove to achieve perfection tomorrow. She worked with such dexterity and skillfulness that all her movements seemed easy and graceful. Everything she made was extremely durable. She weaved so skillfully that the neighbors used to say: "Her linen is as soft as silk, and as beautiful as brocade."[35]

Even as a young girl, Kang is portrayed as a producer rather than a consumer of dress materials.[36] Although she is a domestic laborer and not a revolutionary on a battlefield, her ability to produce endows her with heroic qualities: she grows up to become the mother of the national savior, who liberates Korea from the Japanese colonial yoke and establishes a socialist paradise. Here, the display of Marx's hallmark labor and production legitimizes Kang as the mother of a national hero, creating close ties between production and reproduction.

The idea that motherhood coalesces with the ability to produce endured among North Korean leadership throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Statements by Kim Il-sung testify to the fact that women's domestic nurturing skills positioned them as useful members of society. This assertion was tied

to fashion rhetoric that indicated women's social position. These discourses merged with the state's glorification of production, although for women, production was confined to the domestic sphere. For North Korean leaders, women's domestic labor was a foundational aspect of the national economy but was nevertheless subservient to male labor, which was performed in the public sphere. This is evident in speeches by Kim Il-sung:

> Women play a very important part in their homes, and their mentality as housewives greatly affects their families. At home even men are influenced by their wives in no small measure, to say nothing of the fact that children are influenced by their mothers. If women with obsolete ideas grumble over food and dress at home, asking their husbands to buy them this or that, even men are obliged to be distracted by these things and gradually become greedy.[37]

In a similar vein, women were seen as mothers who had a duty to groom their children tidily, which again was predicated on correct clothing and bodily representation:

> If women would be just a little bit concerned about a neat and orderly life, then everything would be settled. But some mothers do not do what they could well do within their possibilities, nor do they consider anything wrong with that. In some homes they even allow children to go about with their hair uncombed, and they do not feel the need to provide them with caps and school knapsacks. . . . Only when children are reared to be tidy at home, will they keep everything spick-and-span at school and grow up into men of a new type who will live in a cultured way in the future.[38]

The national project of making women into reliable housekeepers concerned the domestic discipline of family members' bodies, but it had other repercussions, as there was a concrete need for efficient clothing for women's domestic work. Simple and modern clothing was promoted to meet that need, and yet these new clothes retained distinctive feminine traits. The preference of skirts to trousers in the *joseonot* and modern clothing alike, and the way women groomed for elegance in both, accentuates the similarities between the two fashions (see figs. 5 and 6). Both locate women's

Figure 5 "Elegant-style" women's clothing. *Joseon Nyeoseong* (*North Korean Women*) 4 (1966)

bodies firmly in the domestic realm; they are devoid of any hint that these delicately adorned bodies have any direct participation in national construction and advancement, although the reality was that, by this time, women comprised almost half the workforce in North Korea.[39]

Military Uniforms: A New Code of Revolutionary Virtue

The national embrace of women as useful members of society extended the ideal dress code for women beyond the domestic sphere. Women were also to participate in industrial and military efforts to resist colonial powers and defend the liberated motherland through hard labor and military tactics. In the mid-1970s, women were actively encouraged to labor in both the domestic and public realms.

Figure 6 "Home-style" women's clothing. *Joseon Nyeoseong* (*North Korean Women*) 4 (1966)

In 1974, at the Fourth Congress of the Democratic Women's Union of Korea, Kim Il-sung gave a speech titled "On the Revolutionization and Working-Classization [*sic*] of Women" that emphasized the importance of women's labor: "The revolutionization and working-classization of women is of great significance not only in revolutionizing and working-classizing half the population, but also in revolutionizing their homes."[40] Kim's speech came at a time when women were consolidating their position within North Korea's workforce. As Helen Hunter points out, "In 1947 only 5 percent of industrial workers were women; by 1949, the number had jumped to 15 percent. The timing of this speech is significant, since by 1967, women accounted for almost half of the total workforce."[41] To extol the value of the female workforce, visual media promoted images of women working in all spheres; most notably, military women glorified the female labor force.

There exists an obvious correspondence between promotion of the military uniform and Kim Jong-il's rise to power: as head of the propaganda bureau, Kim Jong-il promoted *hyeokmyeong gageuk* and their film versions from 1971 to 1974. Partly in response to the *yangbanxi* (model theater works), which were created in China during the Cultural Revolution and promoted the militarization of women, North Korea's *hyeokmyeong gageuk* placed its female citizens in a dual role that straddled the domestic-public divide. Women in *hyeokmyeong gageuk* were stable guardians of family life, yet when necessary, they were at the forefront of military battle and revolutionary struggle. On stage and screen, women's ambidexterity was marked by the constant alternation of the *joseonot* and the military outfit. Unlike in the PRC's *yangbanxi*, where women's domestic activities were presented as feudal practices of a bygone era, in North Korean *hyeokmyeong gageuk*, women mediated the public and private realms. Nevertheless, women's military outfits retained feminine characteristics, such as the skirt, which distinguished women from their male comrades even more so than the dress of female soldiers of the PRC, which included military trousers like those their male counterparts wore, although "key costume colours" were "clearly gender-differentiated" according to Rosemary Roberts.[42]

Negotiating the dual values of domestic femininity and socionationalist femininity, feminized military uniforms were devised to express the fluid identity of North Korean women in the 1970s. Military uniforms signified women's participation in social and economic structures, but at the same time, their feminine shape was a constant reminder of the different positions held by men and women in the public sphere; military skirts were adopted to mark women's auxiliary role to their male comrades.

Women in uniform are frequently seen on the streets of North Korea as well as onstage. A scene from the *True Daughter of the Party* shows a military nurse graciously receiving a new uniform from the Korean Worker's Party as a reward for her excellent service on the front (fig. 7). Her feminine gesture, holding the uniform like a treasure, marks the endearing relationship between the female body and the military uniform. On a surface level, women's military uniforms create a sense of gender equality or privilege; more important, they mark women's bodies as state property and an essential part of social routine. Uniforms become a visual claim about the body's

Figure 7 Scene from the *hyeokmyeong gageuk True Daughter of the Party*. *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 2 (1978)

determination to submit to state discipline. The fashion code of the North Korean military uniform, therefore, signifies empowerment less than it does regulation by discipline.

Kim Jeong-suk — Kim Il-sung's first wife and Kim Jong-il's birth mother — appears in visual media as the quintessential figure marking the transition from the *joseonot* of the domestic realm to the military uniform of revolutionary space. This shifting dress code reflects her dual roles as domestic worker and revolutionary fighter; biographical sketches of her life show that "as soon as she became familiar with the revolutionary ideology, she never left Kim Il-sung's side and assisted him in various capacities, such as seamstress, cook, nurse, and shooter in his anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle."[43]

If Kang Ban-seok was the mother who epitomized Korean women's virtue in the domestic realm, Kim Jeong-suk was the archetypal model for the 1970s women who negotiated domestic activities with public ones, including military struggle. This transition is visibly marked by the shift from the *joseonot* to the modern uniform. An anonymous article published in a women's magazine emphasized women's need to fulfill a binary set of

duties within the domestic and public realms: "Just because our country has issued the Laws of Gender Equality, we cannot forget to think and behave like virtuous women. We should be as resolute as possible when it comes to revolutionary business, but in ordinary life, women should be feminine and use feminine speech."[44] This article is not an isolated instance of a writer extolling essentialist feminine virtues but one of countless similar examples, most of which center around the legendary figure of Kim Jeong-suk.

Kim Jong-il systematically promoted his mother's virtues in revolutionary artworks, visually capturing the juxtaposition of the *joseonot* and military uniforms worn by women of the new era. The painting depicted in figure 8, for example, was published in September 1976 in *Joseon Yesul* with the title "Unflinching Fighter of Revolution, Comrade Kim Jeong-suk Studies Juche and Revolutionary Ideologies of our Great Leader Comrade Kim Il-sung." Here Kim Jeong-suk is presented as a girl who finds time to read the revolutionary writings of Kim Il-sung, her future husband, after putting her brothers to bed; her chaste, modest, and diligent nature is expressed through her black-and-white *joseonot*. The painting in figure 9, published as "Comrade Kim Jeong-suk Protects Comrade Kim Il-sung, the Great Leader of the Revolution, with Her Life" in the March 1975 issue of *Joseon Yesul*, shows her as an adult in military uniform, a companion of the revolutionary hero. The hagiographic companionship of the couple in a revolutionary setting legitimizes Kim Jong-il's rise to power. Of particular interest is the intricate symbiosis of the domestic and the revolutionary captured by the paintings and captions: in figure 8, domestic space is featured visually while the caption emphasizes revolutionary ideology; in figure 9, revolutionary/military space dominates the visual while the caption draws attention to the domestic role of Kim Jeong-suk. Captions and images work in tandem to contain and redirect the dual roles of women — as housewives and revolutionary fighters — toward each other.

As Kim Il-sung's mother, Kang Ban-seok, was portrayed as a producer of dress materials and thus as the righteous bearer of the country's future national father, Kim Jeong-suk was shown as a revolutionary fighter whose son would naturally assume the position of heir. And as Kang Ban-seok's sartorial dexterity was emphasized, legends about Kim Jeong-suk accentuated her sewing skills, which produced much-needed uniforms for revo-

Figure 8 An oil painting titled "Unflinching Fighter of Revolution, Comrade Kim Jeong-suk Studies Juche and Revolutionary Ideologies of Our Great Leader Comrade Kim Il-sung." *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 9 (1976)

lutionary fighters. A short story titled "She Produced Military Uniforms During the March" describes an event that allegedly took place one bitter winter before the liberation of Korea, when Kim Il-sung had to retreat from the Japanese:

> As the fighters marched through high piles of snow for many days, their uniforms were torn into pieces. So Kim Il-sung acquired cloth materials to make military trousers, but the soldiers had no time to do so. So Kim Jeong-suk wanted to make new trousers for soldiers instead, but not wishing to burden her with such a task, the soldiers did not hand over the cloth material. However, the unflinching revolutionary fighter comrade Kim Jeong-suk read the soldiers' kind hearts and told them that building clothes is naturally a woman's job and took the cloth material from them and made uniforms.[45]

Figure 9 An oil painting titled "Comrade Kim Jeong-suk Protects Comrade Kim Il-sung, the Great Leader of the Revolution, with Her Life." *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 3 (1975)

Like Kang Ban-seok, Kim Jeong-suk appears as a maker of clothes, but unlike her traditional mother-in-law, she does so on the battlefield. In so doing, Kim Jeong-suk expands the realm of women's domestic labor to what was conventionally defined as a male soldierly space. At the same time, she keeps her militant identity from completely taking over by performing what is regarded as a feminine activity, even on the battlefield (fig. 10). From shooting to sewing, Kim Jeong-suk negotiates the worlds of domestic and socionationalist femininity. In paintings, she marks the transition from the ideal woman of Kang Ban-seok's generation to that of the 1970s.[46] For her, the two realms are not mutually exclusive but coexist harmoniously and form a feminine virtue that is much more complicated than that of the previous generation.

The gradual transition from the *joseonot* to the military uniform, or, better put, the seamless coexistence of the two dress codes, did not contradict women's undertakings in North Korean society. There existed a dual mis-

Figure 10 An oil painting version of the story "She Produced Military Uniforms During the March." *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 9 (1970)

sion for women: to nurture and build family life and to fight and construct in the public workplace. Visual and performing arts were at the forefront of translating such ideas into daily practices. In an illustration that captures a dance drama titled *Snow is Falling*, the duality of North Korean women's fashion codes and bodily practices is represented in a hierarchy, capturing various layers of femininity (fig. 11). Dancers wearing white *joseonot* represent snowflakes forming in the foreground to sustain a glorified female soldier in military outfit. The soldier holds up the red flag as the escutcheon of revolution. The vertical composition captures the hierarchy of North Korean femininity: at the summit shines the red embodiment of revolutionary ideology; beneath it is a female soldier whose body is distinctively feminine, with its slim waist and exposed calves beneath a knee-length skirt; she,

Figure 11 An illustration of a scene from the dance performance *Snow is Falling*. *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 2 (1981)

Figure 12 Costume illustrations for a North Korean female nurse in the dance performance *Snow Is Falling*. *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 10 (1970)

Figure 13 Costume illustrations for dancers in *Snow Is Falling*. *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) 10 (1970)

in turn, is supported by women wearing white *joseonot*—the dress code of the traditional past. Though this trilevel structure signifies different levels of femininity, on closer examination, it illustrates a visual-ideological continuum rather than a rupture.

Accompanying the choreographic plans for the performance are two illustrations of costumes, one for the female soldier and one for the dancers performing snowflakes (figs. 12 and 13). At first glance, the two figures reveal their differences: military uniform versus ethnic *joseonot*; short hair versus long; short skirts versus more modest, differentiated waistlines; and different forms of headwear. Yet the bodies are united by similarities: both figures exhibit docile bodily gestures while their gazes focus on some distant point, as if anticipating the advent of an ideal world. Topped by the red flag—the ultimate sign of socialist revolution—both figures imply the coming of a

Figure 14 Stage curtain of the Grand Pyongyang Theater depicting a scene from *The True Daughter of the Party*. *Joseon Yesul* (*North Korean Art*) (February 1975), cover page

socialist utopia. Although different in color and shape, their costumes have the same fluid silhouette that accentuates their feminine beauty and resonates with the fluid identity Kim Jeong-suk embodied through her wide variety of dress codes and bodily gestures.

Such resilient negotiations between the *joseonot* and the military uniform are too numerous to catalog, since similar images have been infinitely replicated and circulated in visual media since the 1970s. This ubiquitous visual structure was transformed into a larger spatial environment in a *hyeokmyeong gageuk* titled *True Daughter of the Party*. The images from *Snow is Falling* (fig. 11) and *True Daughter of the Party* (fig. 14) are nearly identical in visual composition. Once again, a female soldier is carrying a red revolutionary flag. This production seems to have taken the dance performance a step

further in that a utopian future is not only implied through the performers' gazes but is visually manifested through a realistic rendering of Pyongyang architectural details. The statement is that Pyongyang is the socialist utopia of the revolutionized future. Even more telling, the trilevel hierarchy is extended by the significant addition of a red sun, which, without exception, signals the presence of the Great Leader, Kim Il-sung. Ultimately, regardless of women's progress, as portrayed through various dress codes, they are situated under the benevolent guidance of the national father, destined to perform docile gestures of beauty and obedience.

Conclusion

Fashion is but one way for North Korea's leaders to configure and circulate politically normative ideas about female bodies, which have proven central to postcolonial nation-building. This process has been as nationalistic as it has been socialist, since the conceptualization of postcolonial socialism has hinged foremost on ethnocentric ideals. While the new socialist republic promised to bid farewell to its feudal legacies, the most painful of which were immediate memories of Japanese colonial rule, those promises were rhetorical at best when it came to womanhood. As late as 1988, Kim Il-sung proclaimed his essentialist view on women and called for women to remain within the parameters of proper femininity: "Of course women should be encouraged to struggle to achieve liberation and rights. This is one of the reasons why we still struggle. However, women should not solely focus on their liberation, rights, and equality and forget about the traditional feminine beauty and virtue that typically defined the Korean women. . . . women should be feminine after all."[47] Upholding the sacred opinion of the leader, North Korean visual media have been mindful of the potentially dangerous cross-pollination of genders in women's fashion; to prevent this, women's military uniforms were feminized by a pleated skirt and slim waistline, which created a new look that captured ideals of socialist femininity. At the same time, ethnically marked dresses were modified to achieve mobility, helping women to participate in domestic and social labor alongside men.

Beneath this convenient marriage of women's instrumental labor and control over gender hierarchy there lies a much more resilient interchange-

ability and fluidity between ethnically signified and socialist femininities. Women's fashion in North Korea is woven through these complexities, and it is a sight of production as well as consumption. As seen in the examples of iconic national heroines Kang Ban-seok and Kim Jeong-suk, both masterful makers and wearers of clothing, North Korean women's fashion has created an equation in which production and consumption are themselves exchangeable.

The question remains whether possibilities exist for reading subversive moments in these fashion practices, moments in which women rebel against astringent state gender politics. Can we further decode women's fashion in North Korea? A comprehensive study of how fashion practices work from the bottom up is impossible to conduct at this point in history, as free access to North Korean people and ethnographic research in the country is yet to be guaranteed. While we can at present only answer these questions by interviewing defectors or foreigners who frequent North Korea, one thing remains certain about women's fashion there: it gains its distinctive texture by weaving labor and art, production and consumption, and the postcolonial desire to restore a national essence by reinforcing ideals of untainted femininity.

Notes

This article was presented as a paper at the Kluge Center of the Library of Congress, the Korea Society, Yale University, and Penn State University. I am grateful for various comments I received from colleagues at these institutions and in the field. Peter Carroll, Michael Berry, and the anonymous readers all provided thoughtful feedback, which proved crucial in completing this article. An earlier version appeared in *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea* (2010).

1. See Dorinne Kondo, *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater* (New York: Routledge, 1997).
2. Georg Simmel, "Fashion," *International Quarterly* 10 (1904): 130–55.
3. Judd Stitzel noted, "The frequent personification of fashion as a fickle, impulsive woman driven by conspicuous consumption reflected the common perception of women as being susceptible to irrational desires, exaggerated sexuality, and 'false' needs that threatened to undermine the state's attempts to rationalize both production and consumption." Judd Stitzel, *Fashioning Socialism: Clothing, Politics, and Consumer Culture in East Germany* (New York: Berg, 2005), 3.

4. I use the term *fashion* to refer not only to clothing but to hairdos and makeup, which bear a close relationship to bodily practices and representations. Fashion also implies an industry that regulates the production and consumption of attires and styles that is recognized by the social collective.
5. Kim Il-sung, "The Duty of Mothers in the Education of Children: Speech at the National Meeting of Mothers, 16 November 1961,"in *On the Work of the Women's Union* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1971), 4.
6. Kim Jong-il, "Inminsaenghwalul deouk nopilde daehayeo: Joseon Rodongdang Jungang Wuiwonhoe Chaekimilgunheopuihoieseo han yeonseol. 1984.2.16" ("On Improving the Livelihood of the People: Speech given to the Managerial Workers of the Central Committee of the Korean Worker's Party on 16 February 1984"), in *Kim Jong-il Seonjip* (*Selected Works of Kim Jong-il*), vol. 8 (Pyongyang: Joseon Rodongdang Chulpansa, 1998), 13.
7. According to Li Go-song, following the Korean War, the North Korean state did not make visible attempts to restore its light industry, which had been completely destroyed; instead, it focused on rebuilding heavy industry centering on the military. But since the 1980s, North Korea has groomed its light industry, at the center of which stands textiles, for the following reasons: (1) the textile industry is an easy way to attract foreign investment to North Korea; (2) with the increase in foreign investment, the state has been able to attempt to earn foreign currency by exporting textiles and clothing; and (3) the state wanted to revitalize domestic consumption of clothing.
8. For instance, the complex history of the People's Republic of China (PRC) shows that different female fashion codes — from the traditional *qipao* to the cotton-padded Maoist jacket — coexisted and often competed with each other, each clothing type emphasizing a different norm of gender or sexuality.
9. According to John Bowlt, in the early days of the Soviet Union, "experimental artists such as Aleksandra Exeter, Nadezda Lamanova, Kazimir Malevich, Aleksandr Rodchencko, Vladimir Tatlin, and especially Liubov' Popova and Varvarar Stepanova . . . [were to] create . . . a revolutionary dress that was to be simple, cheap, hygienic, easy to wear, and 'industrial,'" but by the 1920s, these Soviet designers had "lost [their] clarity of purpose and, as all aspects of design, the result was a curious eclecticism of styles." See John Bowlt, "Constructivism and Early Soviet Fashion Design," in *Bolshevik Culture*, eds. Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 203, 218. The systematic promotion of Soviet fashion resembled North Korean state-led efforts to cultivate nationalistic dress. However, the North Korean fashion, unlike in the Soviet case, did not drastically differ from that of the previous era.
10. The gendered distinction in fashion for men and women seems to be a ubiquitous phenomenon. Jane Gaines argues that in Hollywood musicals, "a woman's dress and demeanor, much more than a man's, indexes psychology; if costume represents interiority, it is she who is turned

inside out on screen." Jane Gaines, "Costume and Narrative: How Dress Tells the Woman's Story," in *Fabrications: Costume and the Female Body*, eds. Jane Gaines and Charlotte Herzog (New York: Routledge, 1990), 181.

11. Tina Mai Chen, "Dressing for the Party: Clothing, Citizenship, Gender-formation in Mao's China," *Fashion Theory* 5, no. 2 (2003): 367.
12. Antonia Finnane, *Changing Clothes in China: Fashion, History, Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 201.
13. The term *juche* made its first appearance in a 1955 report to the Korean Workers Party Central Committee plenum. On a practical level, the ideology was abused in setting the Soviet Union and the PRC against each other. North Korea used the term in the broadest sense to indicate everything genuinely Korean. For more detailed meanings and usages of the term, see Bruce Cumings, *Korea's Place in the Sun* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 403–5. Chin O. Chung argues that the major factors that enabled North Korean communists to emphasize *juche* in domestic and foreign politics were (1) bitter memories of the Korean War; (2) postwar political consolidation; (3) economic progress; (4) the possibility that Soviet and Chinese influence on North Korean decisions had reached a state of equilibrium; and (5) the growing conflict within the international Communist camp. Chung argues that the North Korean regime, however, could not afford to alienate either of its two neighbors, the PRC or the Soviet Union, by excessive advocacy of *juche*. Chin Chung, *Pyongyang between Peking and Moscow* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1978), 23–24.
14. Hyun Ok Park, *Two Dreams in One Bed: Empire, Social Life, and the Origins of the North Korean Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 234.
15. I use the term *modernity* in this article as a relational concept to contrast with the feudal political and economic system under which Koreans lived prior to the twentieth century. Koreans under Japanese colonial rule struggled to liberate the subjugated nation; in the process, socialism was introduced as a way to modernize the nation. For North Korea, the term represents a utopian state that is diametrically opposed to Japanese colonialism, since North Korea's understanding of the colonial period is entirely negative, with no redeeming aspects whatsoever.
16. Carter Eckert, "Epilogue," *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, eds. Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 369.
17. Gaines, "Costume and Narrative," 181.
18. In discussing the bipolar bodily representation of women, I share the views of fashion historian Tina Mai Chen, who notes that "examining the bodily performance in conjunction with costumes highlights the way body and clothing accrue meaning to each other within intertwined sociopolitical and aesthetic frameworks." Tina Mai Chen, "Dressing for the Party," 363.
19. According to Youn Mi-ryang, the 1960s were a turning point because Kim Il-sung had

by then managed to subdue political strife and had emerged as the unchallenged leader during the Fourth Party Convention in September 1961. Youn Mi-ryang, *Bukhanui yeoseongjeongchaek* (*North Korea's Policy Towards Women*) (Seoul: Hanwool, 1991), 135.

20. Kim Il-sung, "The Duty of Mothers in the Education of Children," 25.
21. Ibid., 28.
22. Susie Jie Yong Kim, "What (Not) to Wear: Refashioning Print Civilization in Print Media in Turn-of-the-Century Korea," *positions* 15, no. 3 (2007): 621.
23. Peter Carroll, "Refashioning Suzhou: Dress, Commodification, and Modernity," *positions* 11, no. 2 (2003): 446.
24. For an account of the fiction and reality of Kim Il-sung's father's life, see Dae-sook Suh, *Kim Il Sung: The North Korean Leader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 5.
25. Quoted in Sheila Miyoshi Jager, "Students and the Redemption of History," *Narratives of Nation Building in Korea: A Genealogy of Patriotism* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 115.
26. Jung-sook Li, *The Life of Korean Women* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960), 5.
27. "Characteristics of Korean Women's Clothing," *Joseon Yeonghwa* 11 (November 1966): 19.
28. Hwang Gwang-hyeon, "Color as a Creative Element: Case of Children's Musical Film *Our Flower Garden*," *Joseon Yesul* 8 (August 1963): 46.
29. Ibid., 48.
30. Ibid.
31. Quoted in Don Oberdorfer, *Two Koreas* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 19.
32. See Youn, *Bukhanui yeoseongjeongchaek*, 131–55.
33. Kang Ban-seok's Koreanness, expressed through her *joseonot*, is emphasized vis-à-vis Lady Francesca, the Austrian wife of the first South Korean president. The film *Magnificent Heart* portrays Francesca as a foreigner who aligns herself with greedy Americans who want to partition Korea for their own gain.
34. For a detailed description of the ideological orientation of this book, see Youn, *Bukhanui yeoseongjeongchaek*, 142–47.
35. *The Mother of Korea* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1978), 36.
36. In the 1980 film *Story of Chunhyang*, the female protagonist Chunhyang, paragon of female virtue and beauty, is depicted as weaving and embroidering clothing material in the same manner as Kang Ban-seok. Such a parallel creates a mythical dimension for Kang Ban-seok, who is equated with the heroine of the folk novel *Chunhyang* in her weaving skills.
37. Kim Il-sung, *On the Revolutionization and Working-Classization of Women: Speech at the Fourth Congress of the Democratic Women's Union of Korea* (Pyongyang: Foreign Languages Press, 1974), 4.
38. Kim Il-sung, "The Duty of Mothers in the Education of Children," 25.
39. According to North Korea's 1958 report "Plans to Hire More Female Laborers in Various Economic Sectors," North Korea was planning to (1) increase the percentage of female

workers in education and healthcare to 60 percent by 1961; (2) hire women instead of men for jobs women could handle; (3) open more day care centers to accommodate working mothers' needs; and (4) increase the ratio of female students in higher education. Chang Pilwha, "Gendered Labor in North Korean Society," *Unification and Women: North Korean Women's Lives*, (Seoul: Ewha Womans University, 2001), 81–82. However, even though women's enrollment in higher education increased, Helen Hunter warns against reading that as an achievement of gender equality: there remain in North Korea "disproportionately fewer women in other fields, such as government, business management, engineering, or trade and finance." Helen Hunter, *Kim Il-song's North Korea* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), 96. The North Korean regime's true motivation to encourage women to join the labor force was to fill empty workplaces left by men who had joined the army. For North Korean men, "it is mandatory to serve the army for approximately ten years, which accordingly creates more demand for female workforce." Chang, "Gendered Labor in North Korean Society," 80. As marriageable men were serving the state over the long term, women's marriage and pregnancy rates were accordingly retarded. Thus, instead of having families of their own, North Korean women were driven from the domestic sphere and into the public one in such a radical manner that Hunter claims "it is doubtful that any society has accomplished a more basic change in so short a time." Hunter, *Kim Il-song's North Korea*, 95.

40. Kim Il-sung, *On the Revolutionization and Working-Classization of Women*, 3.
41. Hunter, *Kim Il-song's North Korea*, 95.
42. Rosemary Roberts, "Gendering the Revolutionary Body: Theatrical Costume in Cultural Revolution China," *Asian Studies Review* 30 (June 2006): 146.
43. Youn, *Bukhanui yeoseongjeongchaek*, 151.
44. Quoted in "Valuable Instructions," *Joseon Nyeoseong* (July 1982): 15.
45. "She Produced Military Uniforms During the March," *Joseon Nyeoseong* (February 1986): 22–23.
46. Youn Mi-ryang argues that "if Kang Ban-seok was presented as the model women of the 1960s and 70s, then Kim Jeong-suk played the role in the 1980s." Youn, *Bukhanui yeoseongjeongchaek*, 147. However, at least in visual culture, Kim Jeong-suk makes an appearance as a paragon of female virtue by the mid-1970s, earlier than Youn argues.
47. Kim Il-sung, "Women Should Be Feminine," *Joseon Nyeoseong* 5 (1989): 5.