

THE TRADITIONAL MORALITY OF TOTALITARIANISM

-Analysis of Juche Ideology through Honoring Parents-

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ABSTRACT

The hyo (filial piety) system of Juche Ideology of the North Korea that leans excessively upon the hyo of obedience gives rise to the criticism that the North Korean political system is too extremely totalitarianism. To keep the North Korean system through Juche Ideology, the regime needs to make use of friendship of hyo in Juche Ideology too. Once the North Korean people's demands are satisfied properly through friendship of hyo, Kim's regime can invigorate the North Korean people to overcome their difficulties. If Jung Il Kim harmoniously makes use of the hyo of obedience and the hyo of friendship in Juche Ideology, he will succeed in keeping his power alive and developing the North Korea regime together.

INTRODUCTION

After the death of Il song Kim in 1994, many believed the North Korean regime would not survive. But the totalitarian regime of Jung Il Kim, son of Il Sung Kim is still alive. How did this regime manage to survive, though there was much crisis at the beginning of the regime?

As David Easton said¹, the subsistence of a political regime depends on the capability of the political community, regime and authorities. As Chul Ho Park disagrees,² the belief that Kim's regime in North Korea was saved because the regime or authorities of North Korea had the capability to survive is nonsense. Then what has allowed the North Korean political system to survive?

The primary reason for Kim's regime's survival is an ideology of the North Korean political community. This ideology is Juche³ Ideology. The political community composed of North Korean people supports the regime and authorities by Juche Ideology free of their capabilities of governing the state.

As Easton said,⁴ ideology is the last wall to protect the legitimacy of a political system. In order to operate, every political system needs the integration of the political community. Ideology is the primary mechanism to integrate a political community.

Juche Ideology has helped to integrate the North Korean political community and to strengthen Kim's totalitarian regime. Now we are interested in Juche Ideology as a

¹ David Easton, *A systems Analysis of Political Life*(John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1965).

² Chul Ho Park, "The Analysis of the Political System of North Korea in Relaton to the Possibility of Change and Existence, "*International Relations and the Reunification Issue*(Inchon: Incheon University Institute Peaceful Reunification, 1995), 107-122.

³ In Korea language "Juche" means a sense of sovereignty (and independence).

⁴ David Easton, *A systems Analysis of Political Life*.

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mechanism of integration for the North Korean people and a mechanism that empowered the survival of Kim's regime.

In this viewpoint, we are interested in the character of Juche Ideology and we want to investigate Juche Ideology structure. In order to understand the structure of Juche Ideology, we must first understand hyo, that is, the filial piety system that is a primary part of Juche Ideology.

The process of this study is, at first, to construct the model of analysis for Juche Ideology, next, to analyze Juche Ideology, finally, to suggest conclusion.

TOTALITARIANISM AND THE HYO SYSTEM OF GENERALIZING POSSIBILITY

1. Totalitarianism and traditional basic morality

As above statements, Jeung Il Kim's regime is described the totalitarianism. What is the totalitarianism? And how does ideology do function the subsistence of the totalitarianism? Now, let us analyze these issues.

There is significant controversy over the terms totalitarianism. In relation with totalitarianism, Lawrence Aronsen, Karl Popper, Hannah Arendt, Carl Friedrich, and Juan Linz have each described totalitarianism in a slightly different way.⁵ But there is a common to all definitions. According to these scholars, totalitarianism is to attempt to mobilize entire populations in support of the official state ideology, and the intolerance of activities which are not directed toward the goals of the state, entailing repression or state control of business, labor unions, churches or political parties.⁶

In history, totalitarianism, employed in the writings of the philosopher Giovanni Gentile, especially stresses the ideology of state that influences over most its citizen, if not power. In the view of ideology, totalitarianism is different from authoritarianism. Usually authoritarianism, unlike totalitarianism, lacks a guiding ideology.⁷ Speaking of otherwise, totalitarianism more stresses the ideology than authoritarianism.

Except of an elaborating guiding ideology, totalitarianism, as Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski explain,⁸ is comprised with a single mass party, typically led by a dictator, a system of terror, a monopoly of the means of communication and physical force, and central direction and control of the economy through state planning. Of course, these elements of totalitarianism operate mutually supportive organic entity.

But why is ideology more stressed than other elements of totalitarianism?

⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Totalitarianism#Origins>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Various differences can reflect the difference between authoritarianism and totalitarianism. First, authoritarian leaders, although often they repress their political opponents, may also leave a larger sphere for private life than a totalitarian government. Unlike totalitarian governments, authoritarian governments usually lack a guiding ideology, tolerate some plural is in social organization, lack the power to mobilize the whole population in pursuit of national goals, and exercise their power within relatively predictable limits.

⁸ Carl Friedrich and Z.K.Brzeninsk, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (edn 1967).

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According to Arendt,⁹ the source of the mass appeal of totalitarianism is its ideology which provides a comforting, single answer to the mysteries of the past, present, and future. For Nazism, all history is the history of racial struggle and for Marxism, all history of class struggle. Once that premise is accepted by the mass people, all actions of the totalitarianism could be justified by appeal to the ideology.

Strictly speaking of, ideology does not only consist in the advocacy of ideas. Rather, it informs talking, writing, thinking, working, making love, dreaming, raising kids...It is inscribed in the way we do these things and in the very language that substantiates the discourses of law, physics, TV sitcoms, education theory, bohemian culture, medical procedures, etc.¹⁰At last, ideology is, in effect, not only the condition of all conscious life but also condition of existence itself.

Because ideology is condition of existence, ideology is fundamental value-laden.¹¹ The fundamental value contains generally basic traditional moral elements that are in effect acknowledged in present society. Therefore, ideology of totalitarianism likes to use the basic traditional morality because the basic traditional morality generally has strong power of integration of society. The basic traditional moral elements are mostly rooted in the life of family or community. In totalitarianism, political leaders form the relation of them and their people on these elements to confirm, sustain, and expand their political power.

Generally, basic traditional moral elements have an important function to integration which is also the main function of ideology. Integration would deepen our incorporation in a socially empowered system, whatever that system may be. It would make us functionaries of the system. Therefore, the basic traditional moral elements justify political hegemony and its exercising. The language of these elements is intended to impose silence.¹² Through the basic traditional morality of ideology, the existing social formation, which is little more than the inequitable distribution of power as it has been legalized, mediated and 'naturalized' in the form of a complex system, reproduces itself and its relation of new production by produce a new people, not just biologically but socially.

⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The origins of Totalitarianis*(1958, new ed. 1966).

¹⁰ <http://www.lus/dd.net/essays/ideology.html>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² As Noman Chomsky notes, it is necessary to control not only what people do, but also what they think. It is necessary to establish a framework for possible thought that is constrained within the principles of the State religion. These need not be asserted; it is that they be presupposed framework for thinkable thought. The critics reinforce this system by tacitly accepting these doctrines and confining their critique to tactical questions that arise within them. To achieve respectability, to be admitted to the debate, they must accept without questions inquiry the fundamental doctrine that the State is benevolent, governed by the loftiest intentions....The more intensely the debate rages between hawks and doves, the more firmly and effectively the doctrines of State religion are established. It is because of their notable contribution to thought control that the critics are tolerated, indeed honored. Therefore the deepest silence may be produced by criticism itself. That is, ideologized criticism within a system may be the most effective confirmation of that system. Noman Chomsky, "The manufacture of Consent," *Our Generatio* 17:1(Fall/Winter 1985-86), 100-101. Recitation; <Http://www.lus/dd.net/essays/ideology.html>

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In the process of these integrations of traditional morality of ideology, the extreme totalitarianism, as Chomsky criticized,¹³ becomes to a form of state religion. The highest leader gradually becomes to a god because people acknowledge him as a charismatic man like god. For example, there were Hitler of Nazi, Stalin of Soviet, Mutating of China, and North Korea of Ill Sung Kim and Jung Ill Kim etc.¹⁴ In the state religion of totalitarianism, people take their charismatic leader in the form of the possessor of the ruling force of society.

People of the state religion of totalitarianism accept without questions inquiry the fundamental doctrine that the state which the charismatic leader rules is benevolent, governed by the loftiest intentions of the leader. The more intensely the legitimacy of ideology of totalitarianism and idolizing of charismatic leader, the more firmly and effectively the doctrines of State religion are established. Therefore the deepest silence of people may be produced by these processes of idolizing. That is, the establishment of state religion by idolizing of leader within a system of totalitarianism may be the most effective confirmation of that system. At last, in the state religion, the most honorable moral element is an entire obedience. In state religions, most people obey commands of their charismatic leader either with voluntary or through oppressing. But, generally what we understand is that the state religions of extreme totalitarianism is changed. Some have disappeared, some are transformed into other regimes and some remain. This study focuses on the North Korea as an extreme totalitarianism. More specially, our concern is how North Korea may be changed.

In relation to changing of North Korea totalitarianism, North Korea needs to investigate the relationship between Juche Ideology and the hyo system. We need to understand the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility because the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility helps us investigate the character of Juche Ideology. What is the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility?

2. The Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility

On studying of hyo among the religions of the world, we have found that most religions have an interest in hyo. Especially Confucian, Buddhism, Christianity,¹⁵ and Islam emphasize hyo very much. Of course, there is some difference among these religions about hyo. But generally speaking of, hyo of these religions have largely four elements. The four elements of hyo are obedience, friendship, persistence and attorney.

The hyo of 'obedience'-emphasized at most in the filial piety of oriental and western beliefs-states that children should follow the will of their parents sincerely in order to please their parents in daily life and to follow their parents' wishes.

¹³ Here, the concept of 'extreme' contains meaning that an image of a leader of totalitarianism has a character of a god.

¹⁴ It is generally said that except regimes of these political leaders, the communist totalitarian regimes were original totalitarianism.

¹⁵ In this respect the Christian hyo system from the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament and family precepts of the New Testament can be universal too. From the systematic point of view, we need to recognize the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility is rooted in the Christian hyo system in a compositive and multidimensional relationship. The beliefs of the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility are obedience, friendship, persistence and attorney. These beliefs can be found the Bible¹⁾ in the book of Ephesians 6:1-4. Ephesians 6:1 speaks regarding obedience and agency, 6:4 friendship, and 6:3 persistence. Ephesians 6:1-4 states.

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In the Christianity, the obedience of children to their parents is explained in the relationship between God the Father and His Son Jesus. The relationship of God the Father and the Son Jesus has two characteristics; vertical and horizontal. As Augustine said in his theory of the Trinity, the vertical relationship is Jesus' obedience to God the Father. This relationship gives us a model of how children should obey their earthly fathers.¹⁶

In this relationship, the earthly father or mother has the authority and power to achieve his/her will. Through this hyo of obedience, children learn to follow a social order within the family and within society. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica,¹⁷ this parents' character in the parent/child relationship can be called the 'pater'.

The hyo of 'friendship' is the relationship between parents and children when they respect each other as equal persons and share friendship in a horizontal way. Being different from the pater parents, the parents of friendship keep a horizontal relationship with their children. The characteristic of these parents is called 'the genitor parents' that is well introduced by the Encyclopedia Britannica.¹⁸

The relationship of genitor parents and their children is rooted in the mutual equality of people before God or social law. So this relationship is characterized by love and affection. Of course, children may keep the relationship of friendship. Therefore parents and children need to have much time to mutually discuss the wants of the parent and the child.

Parents should not exasperate their children. To exasperate a child is to treat a child impersonally. So parents should bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. If the friendship between a parent and a child is properly constructed, a child will follow his/her parents for a long time.

The hyo of 'persistence' means to supply what parents need to survive and continue. And it is made possible by the physical and material blessings through the hyo of obedience and friendship.

The hyo of persistence requires that children help provide their parents with the basic needs of life: food, clothing and shelter. In addition, children should take care of their parents' health with the materials and minds. These hyo activities allow for parents' long life.

And the hyo of 'attorney' means the origin of hyo is in God or natural law; we must practice hyo by friendship and through obedience to parents as the agent of God or natural law according to the God's Commandments or natural orders.

The hyo of attorney emphasizes that children should practice hyo in the God's Commandments or natural orders. In other words children should not practice hyo based only their will, concerns, or experience. Along with the will of God or natural

¹⁶ Barnes, Michel Rene, *Augustine in Contemporary Trinitarian Theological Studies*, 56/2(1995), 2.

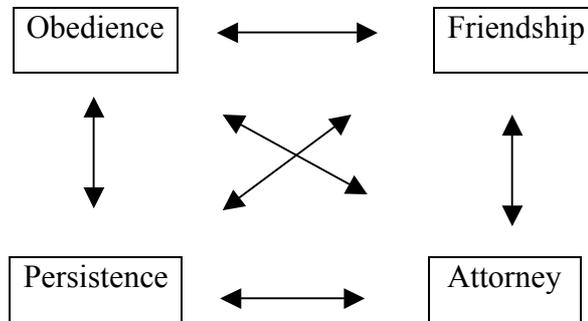
¹⁷ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (1973~1974), 754.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

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order, children should practice the hyo of obedience, the friendship of hyo, the hyo of persistence. These are the elements of the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility.

Below picture is the interaction net of above elements of the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility.¹⁹



The Schema of Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility

Now, let's analyze the contents of Juche Ideology by the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility.

ANALYSIS OF JUCHE IDEOLOGY BY HSGP

1. Hyo presented in Juche Ideology

Juche Ideology as it relates to Kim's regime was based in Kim IL Sung's Juche Ideology and has stood for 40 years. What are the contents of Juche Ideology?

Juche Ideology is composed of four theories. The four theories are 'the theory of revolutionary leader', 'the theory of social-political life', 'the theory of the great socialist family', and 'the theory of revolutionary morality'.²⁰

Now let's study the relationship between of these four theories and hyo.

1) Hyo presented in theory of revolutionary leadership and the theory of social-political life.

According to the theory of social-political life and the theory of revolutionary leadership, Jung IL Kim and his North Korean people constructed a blood relationship that allows coexistence between them whether in life or in death, in sorrow or happiness and so on.

¹⁹ Here, the sign of arrow means the interaction of among factors of the Hyo System of Generalizing Possibility.

²⁰ 'the theory of revolutionary leader' and 'the theory of social-political life' have an affinity for each other, and, 'the theory of the great socialist family' and 'the theory of revolutionary morality' also have an affinity for each other. Therefore we discuss these theories by two part according to the affinity.

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According to these theories, the captain leader gives political life to his people even as real parents give physical life to their children. More exactly speaking, 'the captain leader as a father' and 'the party as a mother' give social-political life to his people. So the captain leader as a father is the supplier of political life which is much more valuable than physical life.²¹

In these meanings, the captain leader, the political party and the people are a family made from the blood relationship of political life. The people are required to repay, by *hyo*, the captain leader as the 'bestowed of life'.

The *hyo* that the theory of captain leader and the theory of social political life contain is manifested from the fact that an explanation of *hyo* and captain leader creates a problem. Concerning this problem, Jung Il Kim said that children should not honor their parents because their parents have more ability than other parents and not because of taking something interesting from their parents but because their parents are their bestowals of life. Likewise the man who keeps revolutionary loyalty constantly makes a commitment to the captain leader, party and people and follows them by devoting his life because he is thankful for receiving social-political life from the captain leader and the party.²²

Jung Il Kim said again if one is disappointed and betrays his country and saves only his life when his country is under development or in crisis, he is guilty and everybody will scorn his unconscientiously behavior.

The *hyo* contents of Juche Ideology might be rooted in Confucianism.²³ The idea of absolute obedience to the captain leader has been stressed as the best moral norm since 1990 when the problem of the transmission of heredity was critical and functions to justify Kim's transmission by heredity and to construct individual adoration of him.

2) *Hyo* presented in theory of the great socialist family and the theory of revolutionary morality

"Labor Newspaper" published in North Korea said the North Korean people had to live in the great family that was not introduced by history until now and was a new human society. And it said the North Korean people were happy to live in this family honoring the great father Jung Il Kim.²⁴

The theory of the great family asserts that the real parent is the captain leader in the great family. Why is Il Sung Kim the real father? Because Il Sung Kim recovered the right of country and allowed the North Korean people to be the master instead of the slave.²⁵

²¹ Jung Il Kim, "The Historical Lesson for Chongroeseon of our Party and the Socialist Construction", *The Labor News*, February 4, 1987.

²² Jung Il Kim, "About Education of Juche", *Workers*, June 7, 1987, 17.

²³ Chanil An, *The End of Juche*(Seoul: Eulyu Press, 1997), 142.

²⁴ "The Labor News", February 1, 1993.

²⁵ Hyeondeok Yi, *Byeokkot*(Pyongyang: Literature Publishing, 1986), 51-52.

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Jung Il Kim emphasized children who honored the father Il Sung Kim had a duty and a disposition of revolutionary warriors.²⁶ As Jung Il Kim said, *hyoja*-the devoted son/daughter- commits his loyalty to the captain leader as a father to keep his commands and to help achieve his political agenda.²⁷

In this meaning *Hyoja* the great family must follow the father-captain leader's commands, protect the father's well-being, and give pleasure or contentment to father. This is theory of *hyoja* of Jung Il Kim.

On the other hand, *hyo* immanent in the rule of ideology of North Korea is stressed as an absolute moral virtue to control North Korea people. This virtue is the revolutionary morality. The basic element of this revolutionary morality is *hyo* that produces obedience to the father-captain leader.²⁸

Now in North Korea *hyo* is the issue that is a key to the life of the revolution and is a fundamental value to achieve the task of the labor's revolution.²⁹

Jung Il Kim presents himself the incarnation of *hyo*. As a model he shows his *hyo* to his father Il Sung Kim so that the North Korean people might honor him as he honors his father Il Sung Kim.

Jung Il Kim's propagandizing himself called this incarnation of *hyo* was at peak in 1994 when Il Sung Kim was dead. At this time Jung Il Kim kept a so called '3 years mourning' along with the custom of Confucianism. The politics of this term is known as the governing of the teachings of the departed.³⁰

By doing this, Jung Il Kim internalized *hyo* into the mind of North Korea people by promoting socialization as the best virtue among the social norms and as the highest instructional morality to achieve conduct of revolution

2. The criticism of Juche Ideology by HSGP

When we analyze and criticize the Juche Ideology by the HSGP, we concentrate on four points. What are these points?

First, the Juche Ideology as a theory of family that equates a state with family is an extremely simple conceptual structure and it should receive much more criticism.

According to the four variables of the HSGP, *hyo* of Juche Ideology takes into consideration the 'obedience variable', 'the persistence variable' and the 'agency variable' of the HSGP.

But the *hyo* of Juche Ideology is much too centered on the obedience variable of the HSGP. In other words the four components of Juche Ideology-the theory of social and

²⁶ Jung Il Kim, *Anthology* 11, 303.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 394.

²⁸ Jusang Baek, "Faithfulness of a People's Revolution is Moral", *Study Philosophy*, 3, 1990, 32.

²⁹ Editorial Central Television (January 27, 1993), "Chunghyo is Subject of the Party's Basic Pungmo in Communist Revolutionaries", *Communication both Inside and Outside*, January 28, 1993.

³⁰ Jucheol Yi, *Read Jung Il Kim's Idea*(Seoul: Gongjakso Knowledge, 1992), 55.

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political life, the theory of revolutionary morality, the theory of the great socialist family and the theory of revolutionary leader mostly emphasize the 'hyo of obedience'. Why do they emphasize the hyo of obedience? As Jang Youp Hwang said,³¹ to integrate the North Korean people as a political community, Juche Ideology believes it is important to internalize spirits of obedience towards the captain leader. Therefore Juche Ideology emphasizes unconditional obedience towards the captain leader. This obedience, as professor Young Bae Song acknowledges,³² is from the dynasty of the Jeoseon of Korea history whose system was Confucian feudalism. In this way the North Korean people obey Jung Il Kim as the people of the Jeoseon dynasty obeyed their king.

Second, in relation with hyo of obedience, Juche Ideology utilizes well another element of HSGP: Persistence of hyo. Juche Ideology emphasizes the subsistence of the great family in which the father-captain leader is the center of this great family. The North Korea people give their sacrifice to this great family and the father-captain leader: Jung Il Kim. Therefore, in Juche Ideology, in order to persistence of this great family, the North Korea people should endure, sacrifice themselves. In all, Juche Ideology is successful to take advantage of persistence of hyo of HSGP.

Third, Juche Ideology utilizes well attorney of hyo of HSGP too. Juche Ideology emphasizes hyo of attorney because the hyo of attorney is based on the norm legitimated by the traditional custom. Therefore attorney hyo emphasizes heteronomy rather than autonomy. In this meaning, Juche Ideology puts value on unconditional acceptance rather than individual reasoning about hyo of hyoja.

Fourth, in this way even if there is much more emphasis on obedience, subsistence and attorney, this emphasis might disdain the variable of friendship in the HSGP. According to the HSGP, the relationship between parents and children has both vertical and horizontal characteristics. In other words, 'obedience' and 'friendship' are needed together in the HSGP. So the children of hyo not only obey their parents but also love their parents with a friendship relationship.

But Juche Ideology almost completely neglects the hyo of friendship. Why is the hyo of friendship neglected? The reason is that the regime of Kim's is totalitarian. In this regime authorities disdain the rights of the North Korean people. Therefore it neglects the rights of the North Korean people as children of the captain leader.

As Easton said,³³ to integrate a system for survival, every political system not only requires the support of the political community but it must also dispose their demands. Therefore if a political system does not balance the two factors 'support and demand', the political system faces a critical situation. The hyo system of Juche Ideology that leans excessively upon obedience gives rise to criticism of the North Korean political system.

³¹ Janghyeop Hwang, *The Life of the Nation more precious than Personal Life*(Seoul: National Museum of Ethnology, 1999), 101.

³² Youngbae Song, *Confucian Tradition and Revolution, China*(Seoul: Present and Philosophy, 1992), 460.

³³ David Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis*(Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 96.

CONCLUSION

Now Jung Il Kim' regime is barely surviving owing to the decline of economy. This survival is due to the Juche Ideology that might integrate the North Korean people, especially the hyo of strong obedience in Juche Ideology which has the capacity to integrate the North Korean people.

But in change of international situation the oppression of obedience by hyo of feudal Confucianism in Juche Ideology does not diminish the difficulties of the North Korean situation.

In order to keep the North Korean system through Juche Ideology, the regime needs to make use of hyo of friendship in Juche Ideology. When, by hyo of friendship, the North Korean people's demands are satisfied properly and the regime can invigorate the North Korean people to overcome their difficulties.

If Jung Il Kim properly makes use of the hyo of obedience and the hyo of friendship especially in Juche Ideology, he will succeed in keeping his regime alive and developing the North Korea system together. Therefore the harmony of hyo of obedience and hyo of friendship is necessary for the surviveal of North Korea and Kim's regime.³⁴

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³⁴ It is very important to unify the South and North Korea. And there are many difference strategies about to unify two regimes. But more important thing is unification not through war but through peace. Although there is possibility of a sudden unification according to sistuation through war, the unification through gradual changing of the North Korea is more necessary than through a sudden breakdown of the North Korea regime by internal or external war.

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