THE POWER OF REPRESENTATION IN REPRODUCTION:
A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH KOREAN INDUSTRIALIZATION

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Abstract

The perennial problem that lies at the heart of an intellectual understanding of an event is usually the lack of interdisciplinarity. In the case of South Korean industrialization there appears to be a divide seldom bridged between economists, political economists and sociologists as they scramble to claim knowledge of and explain the reasons behind South Korea's so-called "economic miracle." This essay begins to bridge the divide by presenting a counter-coherence to the economic miracle by problematizing the relations of power and hegemony between state and labor. The two contending literatures of "developmental state" theory and "Confucian capitalism" will serve as a platform from which to spring into a critical analysis and re-intellectualization of the form, nature and manifestations of power.
Introduction

Under the South Korean authoritarian regime of former president Park Chung Hee (1961-1979) the state and large national conglomerates (*chaebol*) acted as a combined force in steering the direction of industrial development and economic growth. This state-corporatist relationship represented a hegemonic partnership with tremendous power to recreate Korean society. This extreme power imbalance, essentially comprising the dominance of state-corporatist hegemony over civil society and its effects, is the central feature of this thesis.

It must be specifically noted that South Korean 'modernization' need not necessarily be viewed as a zero-sum game, as it so often has been, in which the massive sacrifices of the people was a necessary evil to realize economic prosperity. This dichotomization is a false construct that acts to exclude alternative understanding of Korean modernization. This essay will interrogate state-labor relations in Korea with the aim of exposing a potentially new discourse over South Korean economic 'success' and modernization in general through the interrogation of what constitutes "power", or the ability of the South Korean state to mobilize its citizens for the task of industrialization.

Thus, this thesis will argue that state strength lies in its ability to produce culture – to shift and manipulate the social boundaries, thoughts and actions of groups of peoples, rather than in the mere allocation of capital. In order to do this we will specifically discuss the power of representation – of the power inherent in the ability to assign meaning to events in such a way as to orient peoples’ thoughts and behaviors towards particular agendas. This essay will specifically explore the means by which the Park
regime attempted to socially and culturally solicit and manufacture consent from South Korean working citizens for their own exploitation throughout the industrialization era by depicting capitalist activity as a patriotic task while suppressing alternative discourses. It will further contend that certain pre-existing cultural understandings of society enabled the regime to mobilize people against their own well being and interests (sacrifice themselves) for the sake of national development.

The first chapter of this thesis will begin by problematizing developmental state theory and its narrow conception of power – of capital as power. This chapter establishes the need to question the root of state and corporate power beyond that of money and force, and to additionally regard power as a multifunctional and multifaceted tool of appropriation. In order to surpass the developmental state’s theoretical basis for industrial development, this chapter will first establish the developmental state’s argument, problematize the argument based upon its limited conception of power, and then build upon it with a discussion of the multivariate nature of power. The ultimate goal is to establish that the subtle, unobservable nature of power has the capacity to wield incredible strength, as it did in the case of the South Korean state’s relationship with and strength over its population.

The second chapter addresses the second developmental theory featured in this project, which also operates within a limited framework for understanding power - that of Confucian capitalism. Confucian capitalism posits that Confucian ethics characterize the ways in which East Asian economies and business cultures have developed and continue to develop. In the case of South Korean development, chaebol business culture features as a marriage between Confucian tradition and capitalist modernity, which in turn
explains how South Koreans negotiate their past, traditional lifestyles in the face of globalization and the modern lifestyle. This theory relies on a particular conception of culture that is chiefly apolitical, which is a largely problematic. Confucian values are discussed as existing beyond the realm of agency, but rather, embedded within social structures that are plucked out of dormancy and appropriated depending on the present, cultural context. Whereas the developmental state’s primary inadequacy lies in its interpretation of how power is constituted and appropriated, Confucian capitalism’s most problematic point is where and with whom the power lies. Thus, the second chapter’s chief concern is the question of agency and how it operates so that it gets excluded from the debate.

The third chapter will concern itself with the central task of mapping and deconstructing the processes by which the Park regime wielded symbolic and cultural power over the South Korean people to orient them towards a subordinate life style under the industrializing state. Public mediums of education, media, the military, as well as the private institution of family, will serve as investigative sites for understanding how acts of representation have the ability to reproduce cultural standards. This interpretation interrupts the conventional understanding of the industrial experience, such as the developmental state and Confucian capitalism, by introducing a psychological dimension that throws into relief the hegemonic relationships between the South Korean state, conglomerates, and working population. The last section of this chapter includes a feminist reading of the South Korean industrial experience. As the state’s accelerated growth was facilitated by low wage work, the participation of women, undervalued by class and gender, within the labor force was vital to the economy. The central goal here is
to articulate how women were targeted and reproduced by the state-corporatist industrial agenda, specifically focusing on gender signifiers as mediums of symbolic violence.
Chapter I: Problematizing the Developmental State

In the last two decades, developmental state literature has become a popular vehicle for explaining the conditions, processes and reasons behind the economic successes and downturns of the newly industrialized countries of East and Southeast Asia. Originally spearheaded by Chalmers Johnson and his seminal work, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (1982), and more recently typified by the work of such authors as Alice Amsden, the developmental state literature focuses on the cohesive relationship between the strong, interventionist state and the state-elected private business apparatus. In theoretical operation, a developmental state is that which co-opts state-sponsored business through financial and political support. In return, business yields to state demands and invests in select, export-led sectors. The state minimizes domestic competitors by ensuring the success of only a certain number of businesses. The state's continued investment in such firms is dependent upon profit returns and the firms' abilities to repay their loans. Out of this relationship of supposed mutual benefit between the elite public and private sector, the state is able to engineer a course of development that safeguards and builds its domestic economy. In sum, the developmental state theory is an analysis of how the state exercises power through distribution and control of capital.

The developmental state can also be described as quasi utilitarian given its tendency to marginalize sectors of civil society in order pursue its primary agenda of industrialization. Onis informs us that, "The strategic power of the East Asian developmental state has depended on the formation of political coalitions with domestic industry and on the destruction of the left and curtailment of the power of organized labor
plus other popular groups. State intervention, in turn, has relied on organizational and institutional links between politically insulated state agencies and major private sector firms.”¹ Chalmers Johnson also acknowledges that, while there is no necessary connection between authoritarianism and the developmental state, authoritarianism can inadvertently solve the main political problem of economic development using market forces – “namely how to mobilize the overwhelming majority of the majority of the population to work and sacrifice for developmental projects”².

The South Korean industrializing experience of the 60s and 70s is a supposed archetypical case that emulates the developmental state model. The Park regime was considered a strong, if not authoritarian state, largely insulated from societal interests and yet strongly embedded in the business sector consisting of the large chaebol conglomerates. Some insight into the mutually embedded relationship between the state and private sector can be gleaned from the three-point agreement between Park and the top ten chaebol leaders soon after his coup.

1 The government would exempt most businessmen from criminal prosecution.
2 With the exception of bank shares, which would be turned over to the government, assets would not be confiscated.
3 Businesses would pay off their assessed obligations by establishing new businesses in basic industries and donating them to the government.³

Park implemented a combination of policies toward foreign capital, including forced exports, the preference for debt over foreign investment, and controls over

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investment, which had an impact on the strength of national firms. The only exception, in part to resolve the problem of Japanese foreign aid being tied up in investment credit, was the creation of the Masan Free Export Zone which allowed 100 percent foreign ownership and attractive tax and capital repatriation concessions, while permitting duty-free import and export. This zone, and the other two like it that followed, were atypical of Korea's foreign relations with foreign capital, however, and in actuality only accounted for a small portion of total foreign capital entering the country. In fact, between 1962 and 1974, 65 percent of all foreign investment was domestically oriented, which when broken down, revealed 61 percent of Japan's direct investment as export oriented while this was turn for only 10 percent of U.S. investment. Direct investment tallied little more than 3.7 percent between 1967 and 1971 and 7.9 percent between 1972 and 1976.

In painting the overall picture, the South Korean government favored joint ventures between foreign and domestic companies, and through the end of 1978, 61.8 percent of all manufacturing direct investment received at least 50 percent Korean participation, while only 25.5 percent was foreign owned. Through the protection and promotion of joint ventures, the state had fostered large, internationally competitive groups that exercised a monopoly power over the domestic market. Primarily speaking, the South Korean state played an instrumental role in strengthening a national capitalist class.

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5 Haggard and Moon, 151.
6 Ibid, 152.
7 Ibid.
Alice Amsden further instructs us on the extent of state-corporate domination over the processes of industrialization by arguing that Park Chung Hee had five general controls at the state’s disposal:

...first, control over and ownership of Korea’s commercial banks, which provided the state with the means to orient the chaebol toward long-term economic activity; second, control over the number of firms allowed to receive protection and subsidies; third, control over prices, which curbed monopoly power; fourth, control over capital flight, which restricted rent seeking and capital diversification. Finally the state ignored the lower classes, providing virtually no social services. 8

The quote above provides a somewhat stifled explanation of South Korea’s economic achievements, by giving the economic and financial interpretations. Four of the five points related only to the power of capital allocation, with a fleeting emotion of the extensive socio-political and socio-economic power employed by the Park regime in shaping South Korean society. This poverty of explanation deserves further attention.

Developmental state literature fails to accurately account for the process by which labor and the left were “curtailed” and the subsequent rise of the labor movement. The role and importance of civil society in general has largely been excluded from developmental state literature’s articulation of industrial growth, with little substantial analysis as noted by such authors as Hagen Koo and Peter Evans. As something being beyond a commodity, society is more often included within the frame of economic explanation only to be disregarded as a coherent category.

Political discourse is prevalently bombarded with overwhelmingly large, yet often vague abstractions. From presumptuous references to the “state” as a single-
minded, yet institutional agent to convoluted language about "networks", "collaboration" and the like within developmental state literature, it becomes difficult to think about human society either in a global way, or at the level of everyday life. Even proclaimed opponents of developmental state theory, such as dependency theory which analyzes the exploitation of third world economies by first world economies, maintains analysis on the systems level, failing to thoughtfully consider the very resource which, when mobilized, makes industrialization possible – people. To do so is to marginalize the importance of the ways in which, for example, the South Korean state included people in its industrial plan. Exclusion is not a finite condition; to be excluded in one sense means to be included in another.

Moreover, if labor was the backbone of South Korean industrialization, then how did the developmental state mobilize its citizens yet simultaneously oppress them? Was this merely achievable through the power of capital or is there a more complex explanation? It may be useful at this juncture to explore the forms of multivariate, pluralistic power in order create a theoretical framework within which to deconstruct how the Park regime mobilized many South Koreans against their own well-being.

The plurality of power

It is important to invoke theories of power that go beyond the economic-developmental agenda because without a more complex understanding of, in this case, South Korea's process of industrialization, a more well-rounded historical account cannot be achieved.

As shown above, there is a poverty of theory in developmental state explanations of industrialization and modernization, which is an imbalance this section seeks to address.

Power emerges in multiple forms, ranging from direct force to coercion, co-option and the production of consent. The exercise of power is likewise varied, with the face of power openly visible in some cases, and disguised or hidden in others. The concern of this essay is mainly, although not exclusively, the invisible forms of power and the ways in which they were deliberately exercised by the Park regime to produce consent and reshape culture.

Thomas Hobbes’s concept of Leviathan power relies upon its visibility and dominance in discourse to maintain its effect.\textsuperscript{10} Power is imbalanced in this sense due to its domination by a ruler such as a Sovereign, or rulers such as a ‘ruling class’.

Weber’s notions of power lends a more contemporary and structuralist framework in which to advance upon the classical Hobbesian definition. Weber’s analysis links state power to the broader processes of social bureaucratization. More simply, Weber recognized that a general definition of human power had to be augmented by an exploration of the ways in which power is manifest in society. Weber’s three sources of legitimate domination or authority – traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational – discuss the dangers involved in an increasingly bureaucratic society which places the rational drive for greater efficiency above the danger of organizations increasingly controlling our lives. In this sense, Weber’s conceptualization of power extends beyond power as mere domination to include coercion and co-option.\textsuperscript{11}

The Marxian concept of class struggle and the direct as well as indirect power wielded by the ruling class gives us a deeper understanding about the realms of possibility related to power:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e. the class which is the ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it.\(^\text{12}\)

-- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

The work of Karl Marx invites us to consider the relation of people to the means of production, which is a project to design an understanding between economics and society. Marx is particularly concerned with the implications of the power of capital to create and eventually revolutionize society.

Louis Althusser also discusses the relationship between the State and its subjects in a Marxian light, relating the means of material production to ideology in a structuralist argument. He is concerned with the nature of ideology and the ways in which state ideology, mediated by various public institutions (educational, legal, familial, religious, etc.), gets interpreted and represented by society. Althusser argues that ideology is structural and works unconsciously through systems, which we inhabit, such as language. Ideology has the capacity to lend people an illusionary sense of freedom and choice within the capitalist system, and therefore distracts and distances society from the real, alienating conditions of capitalism.\(^\text{13}\)

\[^\text{12}\] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. \textit{The German Ideology} (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1970), 64.

\[^\text{13}\] Umberto Taccheri. "Louis Althusser’s 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus'" [http://dept.english.upen.edu/~jenglish/courses/taccheri2.html]
This somewhat structural conception of Marxian power relations – essentially between socio-economic classes – was augmented by Antonio Gramsci’s equally structural but altogether more superstructural and sociological understanding of how hegemonic power works. The origins of Gramsci’s work on hegemonic power are best understood as part of his aim to expand understanding about competing social forces.

What we can do, for the moment, is to fix two major superstructural ‘levels’: the one that can be called ‘civil society’, that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called ‘private’, and that of ‘political society’ or ‘the State.’ These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of ‘hegemony’ which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of ‘direct domination’ or command exercised through the State and ‘judicial’ government.  

To lend deeper meaning to our comprehension of state-labor relations in South Korea, Gramsci (as extrapolated by Cox) explains that, “to be meaningful, the notion of the state would also have to include the underpinnings of the political structure in civil society” including not only the whole of material relationships and commercial and industrial life, but the whole of ideological-cultural relations as well as spiritual and intellectual life.  

Following Gramsci’s thought, it becomes clear that in South Korea the ruling hegemony, although sometimes experiencing its own internal competition, monopolized Korean thought and scope for action in such a way that resulted in an activation of class consciousness. Gramsci takes us beyond power in its rawest form to a domain in which

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16 Stephen Gill, 31.
the political gets framed as a struggle between hegemonies – the ruling class, state, capitalists or the market on the one hand, and civil society, the masses, minorities, women, the poor or the workers on the other hand. When applied to South Korea during the Park regime (1961-1979), Gramscian thought helps us to see that the ‘ruling class’ state-corporatist monopoly exercised hegemony over the state as well as over much of civil society through institutions, including schools (what gets taught in them), to some extent churches (what people felt they could say in them), the media (the interpretation of events), voluntary organizations (who they assist) and trade unions (how they relate to industry). Trade unions were band, martial law was imposed, freedom of association was disallowed, and the constitutional rights of women were restricted which doubly marginalized their position in the work place. The Park regime exercised pervasive hegemony over education, media and, thus, culture. When one class can exercise dominant hegemony over each of these spheres, that class can wield an absolute form of power. In this regard, when Korean labor protested, its requests were in opposition, or at least in response, to policies and doctrines of the Park regime. Therein lies the link between the state and the development of Korean labor.

With pervasive control over institutions of education, Pierre Bourdieu shows us that Park could reinvent Korean culture in a variety of frames. Bourdieu presents ways in which symbolism and discourse appropriates meaning via systems of circulation that are constituted by both the specific interests of a certain class vying for a monopoly over a certain ideological realm, as well as the audience for whom the ideology was intended
through the unconscious practice of it. He stresses the point that ideologies are doubly
determined bringing to light the possibilities of power as it relates to agency, which
consciously exercises it through the production of ideology/discourse/symbolism, as well
as to those who unconsciously abide by it and, thus, reproduce it. This Bourdieu’s idea of
the reciprocal nature of the production of power/ideology is important for understanding
that agency, albeit relative in scope, is inscribed within all of us and that we can be
implicated in a system of domination that is wielded against ourselves. Bourdieu’s ideas
are further enlisted in chapter 3 to explain how the Park regime brutally co-opted and
dominated social relations for the goal of high-speed economic growth. Combined with
total control over education, the Park regime was fully capable of employing a deliberate
and targeted agenda of symbolic violence.

Stewart Hall’s understanding of the operation and production of representation, at
the institutional or individual level, is valuable for throwing into relief how discourse,
language, images, signs (representation) act as transmitters of social power. He stresses
that power cannot be bracketed outside of representation, precisely because people are
constitutive of and implicated in the process of meaning-making. The specifics of how
meanings are constituted, received, and reproduced are very telling of how the South
Korean state, for example, constructed a national identity based on concepts, ideas, and
images of labor, war, struggle, and success. As will later be discussed in more detail, the
effectiveness of the Park regime’s representational agenda, through education, the media,

18 Hall, Stuart. “Representation and the Media”. (Northhampton, MA: Media Educational
Foundation, 2002)
and other extensions of state, depended on society's identification with and investment in
the meanings produced.

As already invoked above, Michel Foucault usefully introduces an understanding
of the persuasive, co-optive and genealogical forms of power. From an earlier Hobbesian
view; “The sovereign exercised his right to life only by exercising his right to kill, or by
refraining from killing; he evidenced his power over life only through the death he was
capable of requiring.”¹⁹ More contemporarily (and more Foucauldian),

...to govern a state will ... mean to apply economy, to set up an
economy at the level of the entire state, which means exercising
towards its inhabitants, and the wealth and behavior of each and all,
a form of surveillance and control as attentive as that of the head
of a family over his household and his goods.²⁰

This exceedingly pervasive power seeks to control all of society toward economic goals,
much in the way the Park regime sought to control labor and the whole population in
South Korea. Foucault regards this type of power as ultimately exercised by the
production of discourse. Discourse unites language and practice and refers to the
production of knowledge. As such, meanings are assigned to objects and are temporarily
stabilized or regulated into discourse.²¹ We shall later explore how discourse was
deployed by the Park regime to produce a patriotic, industrialist culture and the effects of
such discourse seeded in the rebellious rhetoric of laborers.

In the sense that MacKenzie, Marx, Althusser, Gramsci, Bourdieu, Hall and Foucault

136.
²⁰ Michel Foucault in Graham Burchill, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, (Eds.).
“Governmentality”, in The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality (Chicago: University of
push us to think beyond monolithic power, we can be inspired to think beyond capital as
the main form of power influencing the economic development of a state. In fact, by
relating these other forms of power to capital/power utilized by developmental state
theorists, we can more accurately judge the taproots of a state’s economic strength. In the
case of South Korea, Hagen Koo illuminates the fact that,

“whether the debate concerns the economic miracle or the financial crisis, conspicuously
absent is any serious attention to the people – those millions of working men and women
who made the spectacular economic growth possible with their blood and sweat.”

The sentiment found in the above quote from Hagen Koo would seem to suggest that
developmental state literature has systematically excluded a deeper understanding of the
formation of the modern Korean people and industrialization as a human experience.
Although knowledge of this is emancipatory for our understanding of Korean economic
industrialization on one level, it is also undeveloped. Intellectual investigations into
Korea’s economic ‘successes’ largely incorporate an understanding of the Korean people
in a dismissive way, much in the same way the Park regime ultimately did. To
meaningfully investigate the formation of Korea’s economic power, we must discover the
extent to which the Korean people were in fact included, not excluded.

The Park regime exercised itself with the task of controlling Korean society. The
complexity of the relations between structure and superstructure, or state and civil
society, are “a complex and confusing task to unravel”, however, and require “a deep and
widely diffused study of all spiritual and practical activities...”.

22 Hagen Koo. Korean Workers: The Culture and Politics of Class Formation (Ithica: Cornell
23 Mouffe, 33.
structure/superstructure relationship, the realm of cultural power will be introduced into the argument; I propose an investigation of the processes by which the South Korean state and chaebol apparatus deployed a program of representational violence to mobilize society.
Chapter II: Problematizing Culture in Confucian Capitalism Discourse

...culture works very efficiently to make invisible and even 'impossible' the actual affiliations that exist between the world of ideas and scholarship, on the one hand, and the world of brute politics, corrupt and state power, and military force, on the other. The cult of expertise and professionalism...has restricted our scope of vision that a positive doctrine of non-interference among fields has set in...and the most crucial policy questions affecting human existence are best left to 'experts', specialists who talk about their specialty only....

In preparation for a discussion on the power of cultural production, as that which is pursued in chapter 3, it may be useful to first examine and then problematize upon how the concept of culture has been employed within developmentalist literature. The problematization of culture in this chapter is useful for reading the next in so far as it will open-up "culture" for reconsideration and debate amidst an otherwise tightly sewn set of assumptions, delineations, and definitions.

While developmental state theory focuses on state-controlled economics as a meaningful sight for investigation, Confucian capitalism literature attempts an explanation of East Asian economic expansion and decline based on the ways in which Confucian ethics have been mobilized and reproduced in Asian industrializing countries to negotiate the changes brought on by the 'modern', capitalist lifestyle and globalization. Confucian capitalism theory draws on certain assumptions about the nature and form of culture that requires attention on different analytical levels.

It should be noted that while Confucian capitalism, as a literary category, is no longer the new rage in academic circles, it still very much informs debates on issues of development, globalization and modernity in East Asia; it functions as a carrier of larger

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beliefs about culture that have an extensive history with implications for the future of academia. For example, a seminar on politics, governance, and security titled “Authority Orientations and Support for Democracy in East Asia” presented by Russell Dalton (Visiting POSCO fellow at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa and Director of the Center for the Study of Democracy at UC Irvine) at the East West Center on September 8, 2003, focused on the central question: How strong are the cultural foundations to support democratization in East Asia? Analyzing World Value Surveys in East and Southeast Asia, as well as “established Pacific Rim democracies of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the U.S.” the literature offers a “more positive view of the prospects for modernization in the region” and raises questions about the “congruence of these values [authority orientations] and political/economic values”. While this discussion is seemingly praise-oriented, the terms of the argument itself has not changed significantly since the beginning of the Western gaze on Asian societies. The argument is based on an assumption that Western style democracy and capitalism would be an improvement to Asian societies. In this sense, there is an undertone of pessimism to the discussion about development and democracy in Asia and the extent to which Confucianism and modernization are compatible. Thus, the foundation for questioning cultural aspects of Asian societies, with intent on finding how they might be incorporated

It is worth mentioning that the fading discussion about Asian culture and its relationship with capitalism within the arena of “Confucian capitalism” from the forefront of Area Studies to the background is significant and telling of the connection between academia and economy. Given that the demand for analysis of the relationship between Confucianism and capitalism was made during the 1980s and 1990s, one can understand that the U.S.’s interests were not “purely” academic, but were in response to a fear of economic competition that would ultimately threaten U.S. economic hegemony.
into systems of democratic governance and capitalism, is the motivating agenda behind the Confucian Capitalism literature that still influences how academics approach questions on culture.

This chapter is largely critical of the meanings attached to and deployment of 'culture' within the Confucian capitalism discourse. I will argue that the existing literatures, which use cultural explanations to explain economic growth in Asian countries, either completely obscure the complex dynamics of cultural relations or are insufficient in their analysis. I contend that such works produced about Confucian culture and Asian development is rooted in an academic tradition of the social sciences that has perceived culture as an apolitical network of practices and beliefs - as a set of performances/traditions/behaviours rooted in moralities which unveil the better, "civilized" side of humanity, as ultimate and unchanging truths, as detached from agency. In other words, culture has been categorized as a separate discipline to be studied apart from the social, the political, and the economic.

In order to unveil a deeper understanding of the "cultural", we must try to see culture as not captured in relics or traditional practice which is present in some people and places and absent in others, but as a transient process of reproduction and change within context, as a social phenomenon belonging to all of humanity, as a process underscored by power in many forms - as a phenomenon that is very much political.

My argument will unfold within two analytical frames in accordance with where the locus of power in cultural relations lies. The first frame is concerned with Confucian capitalism as a knowledge-producing genre within the academy. I will problematize the global power inequalities produced and capitalized upon within the practice of writing.
and talking about culture. Here I am mainly concerned with the privileged position from which the creators of the genre sit that first enabled/s Confucian capitalism as a site for academic, and thus, 'legitimate' debate. This argument does not deny the existence or exercise of ‘Confucian’ values, (whether they be “Confucian” to those who live and mobilize them or not) in Asian societies. Rather, it challenges the process by which the terms of the debate have been set, via hidden power inequalities on a structural level, for thinking about how culture gets produced and negotiated. Thus, I will discuss case studies of literature as it relates to globalization and modernity discourse – how culture gets talked about and represented in local and global locations, how it gets circulated, consumed and reconsumed to the benefit of the first world and to the disadvantage of the second world (the object of Confucian capitalism’s investigation as a developmental theory).

The second level of analysis in this chapter is concerned with the inadequate deployment of cultural reproduction theory in Confucian capitalism literature. By inadequate, I mean the absence of any substantial reference to agency to explain how Confucian ethics have been mobilized against people for the sake of national development. The discussion here requires one to think beyond culture as a shifting and transitioning context or process, to that which is also produced by hegemonic power. I will analyze various cases of literature that exemplify a one-sided mode of analysis in order that the power relations between the producers and reproducers of cultural context and behaviour might be rendered more substantial. This downshift from discussing culture as a global commodity to an investigation of how ideas about culture get reconstituted in local institutions/spaces is for the purpose of demonstrating in the
following chapter how apolitical interpretations of culture can be mobilized effectively to reproduce culture.

This chapter will first examine how culture has been regarded in the academy which enabled Confucian Capitalism as a literary genre. It will briefly trace the development of Confucian Capitalism out of area studies and thus from an intellectual tradition embedded in the Euro-Atlantic colonial history which Edward Said calls “Orientalism”. This mention of Orientalism is not for the sake of explaining what constitutes Orientalist practice so much as to attest that the apolitical treatment of culture within Confucian Capitalism descends from and is still a part of uneven power relationships. These power relationships have created the ways in which mainstream academia puts Asia under the microscope, from the investigation of regional dynamics, to internal aspects of a society. This section will then throw into relief the shortcomings of the most recent interpretations of Confucian capitalist theory which lies in inadequate deployment of cultural reproduction theory.

**Orientalism**

Orientalism as a networked system of practices that grew out of Europe’s colonial encounter with the ‘Other’, during the time when European countries were becoming ideologically invested (as opposed to just economically) in the “business” of “discovering” and “civilizing” “exotic peoples”. In order to sustain its colonial conquests and to justify the political and economic bounty the system afforded, an embedded system of cultural hegemony was needed to ensure some kind of permanence of power. One of the ways in which this cultural hegemony was established was through the
intellectual currency of what Edward Said calls “Orientalism”. This currency often circulated as narratives which produced and reproduced themselves as knowledge about the Orient. Narration is an incredibly powerful tool as it has the ability to silence people out of existence and/or write histories for those who do not have the power or ability to circulate their own versions. Narration has the ability to dismiss the political from its texts and acts as the link between culture and imperialism.26

The Orientalist tradition remains firmly embedded in present academic institutions. Most notably, Area Studies is the blanket under which the various social science disciplines (sociology, anthropology, history, etc.) systematically study the social configuration, political systems, economic systems, “cultural” traditions and practices of non-Western countries. Culture, as a subdiscipline, is rarely incorporated into the investigation of the social, the political and the economic, which leaves a tragically skewed, delimited and artificially timeless framework from which to understand how practices and behaviors are politically motivated and altered.

Problematizing Area Studies

As an extension of classical studies, which focuses on ancient Greece and Rome, modern Areas Studies was born out of the Cold War period as an intellectual field in which the United States (predominantly) took on the task of developing a body of elite scholars capable of producing knowledge about other nations to the benefit of “our nation”.27 It is no coincidence that, like Britain’s production of knowledge about India, American Area

Studies has generated countless literatures about Russia, China, the Koreas, Japan and Taiwan, for example. The U.S. has been heavily invested, politically and economically in Asia, from World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War, to Vietnam and now the China-Taiwan tensions. No wonder the U.S. has become an authority on the “Far East”. But an authority for whom? Who are the audiences of such scholarship? The relationship and cooperation between U.S. universities, federally funded research companies, private corporations, and the military, (comprising the military-industrial complex) is surprisingly strong. Hall specifically notes that the pedagogical value of area studies lies in shattering American intellectual isolationism just in the way that Mill’s era resulted in a break with ‘British provincialism’, which led them to acquire a vast empire.\(^{28}\) The intellectual investment of American empire can be gleaned from government defense investment in education institutions from past and present illustrates just how strong the military-industrial complex is. In 1958, the Department of Defense (DoD) spent 91 million dollars on academic research; by 1964, the figure increased to 258 million. By 1970, the investment had reached 266 million, and by 2003, the combined total the Pentagon spent on just John Hopkins University and MIT alone was $842,437,294.\(^{29}\)

This is not to say that some or even most people involved in this system of knowledge production regard their contributions in such a light; the connections between such institutions are far from obvious, precisely because the study and representation of culture is conventionally thought to be apolitical. Traditional thinking about “areas” has

\(^{28}\) Rafael, 9.
\(^{29}\) Nichole Turse. “The Military-Academic Complex”
http://www.nationinstitute.org/tomdispatch/index.mhtml?emx=x&pid=1385
been driven by conceptions of geographical, civilizational, and cultural coherence that relies on aspects such as values, languages, material practices, and so on. Thus, traditional area specialists tend to envision ‘areas’ as relatively immobile aggregates of traits with durable historical boundaries and enduring properties. This view is simultaneously overlapped by a U.S. security driven image of the world, and to a lesser extent, a colonial and postcolonial conception of national and regional identity. From within this mode of thinking about what constitutes culture as specifically tied to a place and certain people, questions about how culture might be perceived as political representations (that which is underscored by power) become difficult to ask if culture is thought to be a unchanging phenomenon existing outside the grasp of agency. Questions that draw a relationship between cultural representation and agency also push us to ask the question “who?” and “why?” – questions that require reflection on and criticism of the very system of knowledge production that we ourselves are engaged in and contribute to.

In this sense, area studies – against its proclaimed purposes to attain mutual cultural understanding – has the capacity to perpetuate misunderstandings about and unfamiliarity with Asian countries and its peoples. Area studies tends to reproduce Asian countries and Asians as the “Other” who seem familiar enough for certain purposes, but beyond that remain quite a mystery. For as Dorinne Kondo observes, “Whatever the intentions of any individuals involved, at the institutional and geopolitical levels there can be no denying our area studies enmeshment in a geopolitics that inevitably involves a

long Orientalist legacy."

Instead, the unfamiliar gets maintained through social analysis that does not require accurate knowledge of its subjects. In the enlightenment tradition that combines scientific rationale with the sprit of moral or human idealism, conventional area studies continues to search for culture as the "embodiment of perfect and universal values so that analysis is limited to the search for and discovery of such timeless values..." or culture as documentary, in which human thought, language, form, convention and experience are recorded, in part as a descriptive act but also one of clarification where they are valued through comparison with the idea, through reference to the qualities of the text in question or through reference to particular traditions and the societies in which they appear (so that valuation is tied to some criteria for establishing its authenticity). 32

What simultaneously underscores this essentialized perception of culture (timeless perception of unhampered morals and traditions) are colonial experiences of the past that have tainted and still taint ‘tradition’ as retrograde, stagnant, unprogressive, or “unmodern”. 33 Thus, while culture has the tendency to be interpreted as moral idealism that derives from enlightenment thought (as in “I love this Monet exhibition; his art is so cultured), for the “Other” it is better understood as an essentialized part of a false dichotomy – culture/tradition vs. modern/progressive. This does not change the essentialized treatment of culture, but changes its meaning as demeaned and reaffirms


Western ideological and technological superiority. It is not surprising, then, that area studies often seeks cultural explanations for problems or curiosities that the discipline itself has created, but the product or “cultural” explanations produced are often more telling of the political, social and economic system in which the academics are operating more than it does about the academics’ subjects of study.  

It should be noted that a number of more progressive thinkers within area studies, such Edward Said, Harry Harootunian, Dorinne Kondo, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Nicholas Dirks, Ranajit Guha, etc. have striven to subvert this dichotomy by interrupting Orientalist narratives with critical analysis of their formation – by essentially uncovering the power relations that construct the ethnographic encounter between author and subject. The spirit of such work is “to try to utilize the critical tools our disciplines provide, while working to stretch, unlearn, and challenge those formations”. Dorinne Kondo cautions us, however, against a type of optimism that would make us believe that, through the exploration of multidisciplinary spaces (such as womens’ studies, cultural studies, postcolonial theory, and minority discourse), we have therefore left our intellectual/political disciplinary baggage behind. For such ease under the banner of postmodernism can give rise to superficial analysis of contemporary phenomena that

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34 This is not to discount intellectual movements that criticize the Orientalizing academy. Critical works on cultural representation tend to be produced under the genre of postcolonial studies or subaltern studies, which provide counter-narratives to the histories that have been created for marginalized natives by former and present imperial powers. East Asia (with the exception of some Japanese studies scholars) tends to be the most underrepresented in this body of knowledge, possibly for reasons involving present U.S. security interests on, for example, the Korean peninsula.

35 Kondo, 31.
reinscribes conventional notions of what counts as theoretical.\textsuperscript{36} Thus, even under the umbrella of critical area studies (as practiced through various disciplines), we can reaffirm the very terms of the debate we set out to interrupt. Taking into account the varying implications for critical scholarly work in area studies, however, it is important to continue to question and problematize our own positions within the knowledge-power structure, and to understand how our work is animated by it.\textsuperscript{37}

In returning to the critique on area studies, traditional area studies, particularly as it relates to security studies, remains a dominant voice in the academic community. It continues to grow with the reinforcement of a post-911 war on terrorism in the Middle East, and in connection to it, the reviving of North Korea as an ‘evil’ (as in Bush’s Axis of Evil) that threatens the maintenance of peace in North East Asia. The reproduction of national security discourse in the U.S. have given rise to a gamet of federally-funded projects that recruit area studies scholars into the realm of security studies. For example, the Flagship program, installed in key U.S. universities by the National Security Council, (the University of Hawaii being one of them), specifically trains young students in Korean, Chinese, and Arabic (to name the major languages), with the goal of producing country specialists who will eventually work for the government in security-related areas.\textsuperscript{38} Although area studies within the academy can be disciplinarily distinguished from state institutions that produce information on Asia, the two are explicitly connected to each other in an exchange of knowledge production. The expansion of knowledge gets continually grounded within the same ideological problematizations, building a regime of

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Author’s personal experience.
truth that becomes increasingly difficult to subvert. Additionally, the resources that back such large-scale endeavors, such as the Flagship program, are overwhelming in the face of whatever academic resistance that can be mustered, and continue the legacy of traditional area studies under the rubric of global cooperation and expansion.

There is still a real need to question the power-relations that produce representations or and knowledge about Asian countries, particularly work that dismisses the link between power and knowledge and/or power and culture in its content. Today, the various disciplinary explanations which seek an answer to East Asia’s economic “miracle” and subsequent fall are inextricably linked to the Orientalist tradition on which area studies was founded. Confucian capitalism, which specifically seeks a cultural explanation, is most overtly trapped within the ideological confines of area studies because its interpretation of what culture is hides the political currents that underscore the complexity of cultural relations. If we are to achieve a more mature, substantial understanding about the effects of modernity on social behaviour and visa verse, it is imperative to acknowledge the existence of power dynamics within cultural relations, to understand what meanings are put into circulation, by whom, for what purposes and in whose interests.39

Case Studies

Max Weber’s correlation between Protestantism and capitalism and Confucianism and capitalism, which in a sense founded the premise within the social sciences that Asian countries’ adaptation to or incompatibility with a capitalist lifestyle

39 Barker, 65.
lay in indigenous religious cultures, is prime example of hegemonic practice that often lays claim to cultural authority. Harry Harootunian, an outstanding scholar and critic from within the field of history and East Asian Studies, explains Weber’s methodology as a need for comparison often practiced when teaching and researching Asian societies. The “favored mode is to accommodate the local knowledges so as to make them conform to categories derived from and worked through the study of European and American history.” Harootunian specifically identifies Max Weber as a pioneering sociologist who laid the foundation upon which the modern social sciences would continually approach the relationship between Asian religious cultures and issues of modernity.

It is rather ironic that Weber was sceptical of China’s capacity for capitalist activity because of its Confucian society, given that Confucianism has come to be viewed the success in the late 20th century. This irony, however, does open up an avenue for understanding this seeming shift in attitude, or rather, the necessity for a shift to be perceived via altered representations of Confucianism and the “Other”. To make clear, the Orientalist foundation of the cultural argument has not changed much since Weber. Whether Confucianism is or is not compatible with capitalism and democracy is not the point; the very act of framing the question that results in Asian cultures either being deemed progressive according to Western standards, or backwards for not conforming to Western institutions is an act of essentialization. The question in the positive or the negative sets up East and West as binary cultural opposites, the latter that far outweighs the former in terms of global, cultural currency (both figuratively and literally). This

perpetuated binary construct or colonial perception of the West vs. the rest becomes
trickier to detect when the Oriental subjects, once criticized, are suddenly turned into
objects of praise. It is crucial to note that shifting discourse does not indicate a shift in the
conventional, status quo binary construct. The rhetoric gets inverted, but the terms of the
debate essentially remain the same.

Nevzat Soguk’s identification of the dangers that can be gleaned from speaking
on, about, for or on behalf of the non-Western worlds and their inhabitants lends two
points around which to base an analysis of Confucian capitalist discourse. The first, as
discussed above, is the increasing tendency to “heroize the resistant capacities of the non-
West” which this essay shall flesh out next. The second point, as related to the first, is the
non-West’s “seeming unwillingness in the otherwise critical endeavors to recognize the
tyrannical, the hegemonized and the not-so-resistant non-West that constructs its
identities and histories, and then calls itself a necessary indigenous experience of nativity,
namely, nationalism.”

An enthusiastic article titled “The post-Confucian Challenge” (1980) by Roderick
MacFarquhar, a China historian at Harvard and participant within the Confucian
Capitalism literary genre, attributes Japan’s and the trailing South Korea, Taiwan and
China’s growing economic might and military prowess to Confucianism – a culture that
values learning, the power of collective action, discipline and acceptance. His
measurement and praise of Confucian ‘traditional culture’ by its ability to survive and
adapt to capitalist practices and a Western lifestyle exudes assumption that modernity is a

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natural, inevitable and superior step up on one single timeline of human evolution. He, like many others, discusses East Asia in terms of its capacity for economic competition with the West which further perpetuates the false ideological dichotomies of “East” and “West.” MacFarquhar, like others, could be considered trapped in “privileging content of the cultural imagination”, which seeks cultural explanations, divorced from power and agency, for the political, social, economic “unevenness” that globalization and modernity produces.  

There is something discomforting about MacFarquar’s reference to “all East Asian peoples” conscious application of Confucian learning to daily life and economic development in that the reference ignores the complex, co-dependent, and correlative power relations between agency, societal shifts and the production of culture. Many questions remain unanswered. “Do these representations speak for a timeless culture or are they reproductions with a purpose”? “Who gets to decide how Japanese are represented in local society as well as globally”? Who benefits or gets secured by the circulation of these representations?

This conventional vision of what constitutes the cultural, in its already demeaned and essentialized form, is weighted unequally when co-opted into discussions about the typical “East meets West” cultural hybridities in an age of globalization where “the world is getting smaller”. Thus, when theories about cultural hybrids and “fusions” get circulated as knowledge within a first world system that already disadvantages the culture of the “Other” (via such trigger words as “tradition”), the effect is a re-essentialization of

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the cultural aspect separated from its Western counterpart (despite its global circulation) as part of a hybrid. On the other hand, concepts of democracy, development, free-trade and so on become the focus of praise and indication of progress - that which helps along the Asian value(s).

Song Byung-Nak, (a professor of Economics at Seoul National University, former visiting professor at Harvard University, and former holder of various economic posts in Korean government) attributes South Korea’s economic success to East-West hybrid features of its society. Song privileges modernism and its enablement of the “new Confucian ethics”. He claims that South Korea appears to have the most extensive features of both Eastern and Western learning and have learned about democratic processes of government through their participation in church activities. In fact, among an entire list of adjustments to Korean society that have made it most compatible with capitalist development, a few are the “introduction of Western civilization, rearmament of a decaying morality, modernization of traditional values and philosophy, and stimulation of individualism.”

Multiculturalism often gets appropriated as a concept that engages indigenism, nationalism, and trans-nationalism - that which attempts to accommodate the concept of local and global. What it in fact does is function to displace the reality of peoples’ histories, cultures, and social relations with ideological constructs of ethnicity and a collective heterogeneity. Whether conducted by state elites, its intellectuals, or indeed

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any intellectual implicated in the imperial power/knowledge grid, the spreading of multiculturalism as an ideology undercuts the legitimacy of transitive political subjectivity - how people, who inhabit multiple ethnic, religious, gender, class categories, react differently to situations depending upon the political grounds on which they are being hailed as an agent. Song’s discussion of the “new Confucian ethic” is an example of the dangers and damages of multiculturalism, which has resulted in the unconditional exclusion and denouncement of a certain set of immobile Korean, traditional traits in the name of a morally superior hybridity of traits. What gets lost, or in some cases gets deliberately excluded, however, is the power imbalance that exists between representations of cultures, rendering certain components dominant and oppressive, and others marginalized or co-opted.

The concept of multiculturalism is full of contradictions and false delineations because of its refusal to debase itself from an apolitical understanding of culture. Thus, regardless of how “small the world gets” due to the effects of globalization, the “Other” is still based in a particular place and space within the Western imagination that undermines any attempt at a more equitable form of international cooperation. The irresolvable nature of this contradiction is what enables globalization, under the façade of multiculturalism (cultural hybrids – the parts of which are equal), to maintain and perpetuate political and economic inequity.

Cultural traits that come, let us say, from different parts of the third world are used to both create and eclipse racism, and we are discouraged from reading them in terms of relations and symbolic forms of power. In fact, it is this uncritical, de-materialized, seemingly depoliticized reading of culture through which culture becomes a political tool, an ideology of power...

46 Bannerji, 6.
One can only conclude from all this that the discourse of diversity, as a complex systematically interpretive language of governing, cannot be read as an innocent pluralism.\(^{47}\)

Kishore Mahbubani’s article entitled “A Cultural Fusion” is another example that discusses East-West hybrids in a celebratory way, denoting that mergers of select cultural traits come from equally powerful actors. The article asserts this fusion as a “positive trend, signalling a new culture that may blend the best of the two” by avoiding certain mistakes made by Europe in their appropriation of interpretations of democracy, human rights, and freedom of the press.\(^{48}\) He also concurred that “American society will do as well as Japan when it undergoes a similar osmosis, absorbing the best of Asian civilization.”\(^{49}\) While Mahbubani necessarily articulates Asia’s impetus to “develop” as connected to a post-colonial psychology and various cultural nationalisms, he does not recognize globalization itself as a condition, which makes the equalizing of elements within a cultural hybrid counterintuitive to the functions and purpose of globalization.

This is evidenced in the derogatory references to Europe and European colonialism and yet surprisingly supportive comments about the United States as “the most benevolent power” who has “contributed in a sterling fashion to uplifting East Asian society.”\(^{50}\) In other words, the author does not seem to acknowledge that globalization can also be defined as a new age of imperialism. He thus suggests that Asian countries have found a way of competing on equal ground with “the West” that could even lead to “the West” adopting Asian cultural values and practices. There is no analysis of the power imbalance

\(^{47}\) Bannerji, 37.
\(^{49}\) Mahbubami, 107.
\(^{50}\) Ibid.
embedded in the global relationship between Asian and Western actors (the "traditional" vs. "modern").

Relations of power and hegemony are inscribed and reproduced within hybridity for wherever we look closely enough we find the traces of asymmetry in culture, place and descent. Hence hybridity raises the question of the terms of the mixture, the conditions of mixing and mileage. At the same time it's important to note the ways in which hegemony is not merely reproduced but refigured in the process of hybridization.51

It is not uncommon for people to think of border crossings, the mixing of peoples, and sharing of cultures as symbolic of "globalization" and "modernity", - processes that "give rise and expansion of individual consciousness of the global situation and of the world as an arena in which we all participate."52 Yet, the concept of the global-local hybrid is more a façade to conceal the project of globalization/modernity than it is an accurate representation of global interaction. The imbalance of globalization can be seen quite clearly in the existence of an entire system of institutions in the United States that study East Asian cultures and their capacity for democratic governance or free-market trade, but there is no such equal counterpart anywhere in Asia. Within the context of globalization, Confucian capitalist literature "globalizes the local"; it privileges and ascribes to dominant modes of thought in modernization discourse by not exposing globalization as an uneven process with unequal participants.

The culture of developmentalism has also been internalized by people in local

51 Pieterse in Barker, 119.
places, resulting in the act of self-essentialization. Local power imbalances, such as that between state leaders and civil society - have the capacity to create the “erasure of difference” between the local and the global by marketing representation of the local on the international scene. The local simultaneously become the audiences of such erasure by localizing the altered form that has been circulated for global consumption. In other words, those (statesmen, corporate leaders, writers and artists) who have the power within local societies to control or change how they (as a country or culture) get represented to a global audience contribute to a system (globalization) that profits off of the concept of the “local”. This profit happens when the local is taken out its context, put into global circulation where its meaning gets popularized and essentialized to the advantage of first world countries and gets sold back (literally as well as conceptually) back to the local place in altered form, an altered version that has built in inequalities to further subordinate the local.

For those “native” intellectuals who have been co-opted in or ascribe to the modern, academic system in order to be allowed a voice, writing about the compatibility of Confucianism and capitalism facilitates the creation of an arena in which to practice a kind of cultural nationalism. Although politically motivated, discussion about native culture, or Confucian culture, often emerges in an apolitical context that reaches back over the modern era in search of an authentic, “uncontaminated interiority”. This can be gleaned from the repetitious use of phrases such as “Confucian tradition remerged...”,
or “The revival of the Confucian tradition…”, as if such values had been lost at the turn of the century only to be rediscovered in the face of global competition and as a building block of national identity.

“The recent revitalization movement of Confucianism is understood in the context of the people’s search for a new culture to construct their own community for civilian politics by which they can cope with state authority on the one hand and the ever-increasing influx of Western culture on the other.”

Culture gets mobilized as an escape for “overcoming” capitalism, modernity and the West.

The search for comparable alternatives to Western rationalism also characterizes the act of self-essentialization. Tu Wei-ming’s article titled “Multiple Modernities” in Samuel Huntington’s and Lawrence Harrison’s edited work Culture Matters exemplifies this kind of practice. He argues that Confucian humanism is “the basic value system underlying East Asian political economy” that draws similar parallels with Western Enlightenment thought. In fact, while the Enlightenment was just beginning to spread in Europe, Confucian China had already created an ordered society without the benefit of any similar religion. In Tu Wei-ming’s attempts to diversify the cultural argument pertaining to East Asia’s adaptation to capitalism, he has not only positioned Confucianism as the opposite and competitor of Western rationalism, but he has

essentialized, and therefore re-Orientalized China by mobilizing ancient “tradition” in a modern-day setting. The urgent need to compete in order to negate Western academic models of Eastern economic development actually leads the “native” to reinvent tradition in a new historical narrative that, again, delivers the Orient to the first world as a place of antiquity.

The practice of cultural essentialism is wrapped up in the politics of memory, time ruptures, and cultural retrieval that subscribes to the hegemonic “modern” vs. “tradition” dialectic and reinforces “the sense of some single moment – call it the modern moment – that by its appearance creates a dramatic and unprecedented break between past and present.”59 In reaffirming the globally-circulated, essentialized representations of Confucian culture in forms of cultural nationalism, the local reaffirms the superiority of the global hegemon. It is only within the desired understanding of modernity can culture be perceived as a stagnant, non-modern phenomenon.

**Problematizing Cultural Re/production within Institutions**

The remainder of this chapter will discuss how culture is perceived and treated within the Confucian capitalism literature giving attention to the ways in which East Asian institutional characteristics are translated as cultural adaptations. While more recent works within the Confucian capitalism literature do recognize the fluidity of cultural exchange and transformation, the changing qualities tend to be recognized as happening among and within members of modern institutions, without much

consideration for how larger influences might be steering the ways in which Confucian values get appropriated for particular interests. The arguments do not critically consider agency as a factor in the reinvention of Confucian values in so much as the altered application of Confucian ideas to particular situations benefits certain groups within society. In his book, Korean Workers, Hagen Koo explicitly states that,

In South Korea, as in many other newly industrializing societies, capitalists consciously sought to reproduce patriarchal authority relations in their enterprises and to ensure worker submission and loyalty by appealing to familial values...thus, rather than being an obstacle, the traditional family system functioned as a crucial mechanism through which a desirable labor force was produced and reproduced for the export industries.60

At this point, cultural reproduction theory presents itself as one of the most thoughtful explicators of the conscious and subconscious process by which human behaviour is perpetuated and transformed, creating context and dominant social "norms". The Confucian Capitalism literature, however, only achieves in conjuring a partial picture of the processes of and actors involved in cultural reproduction. Let us turn to a definition of cultural production:

The idea of cultural production makes reference to the emergent quality of experience of everyday life – albeit through a spectrum of interpretations. That is to say that the concept serves to articulate the dynamic process that makes sensible the utter contingency of, on the one hand, the stasis and determinacy of social structures and, on the other hand, the innovation and agency inherent in the practice of social action. Cultural reproduction allows us to contemplate the necessity and complementarity of continuity and change in social experience.61

The above passage alludes to two faces of cultural reproduction. The first is the self-

60 Koo, 47.
determinacy of social structures, which has been discussed to a fair extent in more recent works within the Confucian Capitalism literary genre. There is a poverty of examination of the second face, however, which makes reference to the innovation of agency in its relationship with social structures – of the means by which agencies create or alter cultural standards, and in essence become the re/producers of social thought, habit and practice through the control of representation and knowledge. More precisely, Confucian Capitalism literature fails to question the cultural behaviours of people as direct or indirect manifestations of power, agency, and design.

As an example, “The Mutual Constitution of Confucianism and Capitalism in South Korea” co-authored by Roger L Janelli and Dawnhee Yim proposes an explanation for how transformations of the Confucian heritage have been informed by material interests, and visa verse. Their goal “is to explore relationships between cultural ideas and material gain without privileging either” by claiming that “Confucianism and capitalism have multiple truths and can be understood in several ways.” More specifically, the work addresses culture as a multidimensional, chronologically transient process whereby Confucian values and social standards are continually and pluralistically reinterpreted and self-imposed. While the latter point is true enough in that culture is never static or shared by all with the same interpretation, there is no analysis of why this is so. There is no interrogation of whose interpretations count for more and have the capacity to be circulated as “truths” about societal interaction or institutional etiquette.

...We explore popular versions of Confucianism and capitalist practices

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in present-day South Korea and try to show how these common understandings have been and continue to be mutually reformulated. Such popular understandings have by no means been autonomous of elite discourse, but neither have they been entirely determined by it.\(^{63}\)

Instead, this work chooses to stress reciprocity without addressing the power imbalance between actors - by discussing cultural reproduction as a process alone, and not also an as an act. One gets a sense of the impetus to talk about culture as an objective process or entity, an impetus continually reinforced by an anxiety that the integrity of the academy would be in jeopardy should any subjective voice extend itself from the text. This desire contributes to maintaining the façade that an academic piece of work can avoid privileging certain voices, thereby also rendering the author’s position as “neutral”.

Nicole Woosey Biggart’s “Patrimonialism in Korea” is written with a similar deployment and understanding of cultural reproduction. Her analysis is predicated on the belief that the institutional perspective is best for examining organizational structure and practice. She specifically explores the role of patrimonialism within chaebol firms to assert that their central organization acts as an alternative vehicle for family control in the face of government pressure to divest stock in the 1980s and early 90s. While recognizing that industrial strategy centred around a patrimonial logic might prove successful due to its familiarity within Korean society, there is no identification or analysis of who appropriates concepts of patrimonialism in the workplace, who it benefits, and who gets marginalized. The organization of the chaebol is, rather, discussed as a cultural carrier that has re-appropriated the indigenous tradition of patrimonialism in response to the need for an understood pattern of authority. Patrimonialism is also juxtaposed against the

\(^{63}\) Janelli and Yim, 110.
Western concept of democracy and Japanese colonial experience to further stress its traditional status recalled within a global era.

Patrimonialism has worked in modern South Korea at least in part because it was a widely understood pattern of authority; although it conflicted with other strains of Korean culture - individualism, and more recently democracy - patrimonialism in the 1950s had the force of experience and perhaps some level of acceptance in the populace dealing with the effects of brutal civil war and a destroyed economy. Patrimonialism was a familiar, institutionalized means for political and economic organization. Moreover, it was indigenous, not a model supplied by Japanese colonial experience or the American occupation.64

Roger Goodman's "Culture as Ideology" (1999) also demonstrates a limited perception of how the cultural gets constituted by agency. The analysis attempts to unearth how culture has influenced the current organization of industrial relations in the Japanese economy by defining culture as "a shorthand for the convergence of moral and spiritual ideologies with political, historical, and economic forces in ever-continuing processes."65 There is an air of assumption about the natural properties or "forces" of culture that transform and bend around social change, economic or political climates, but no acknowledgement that social change and agency produces cultural shifts. He also mentions the convergence of morality and the political as if they are naturally separate. In not recognizing that the moral is political, he fails to make the connection between how cultural representations are demonstrations of power.

64 Nicole Woosely Biggart. "Institutionalized Patrimonialism in Korea" in Capitalism in East Asia (JAI press, 1990), 235.
Conclusion

In sum, Confucian Capitalism inaccurately portrays the cultural. The literature conforms to interpretations of culture prevalent within globalization discourse, a discourse that must obscure the power imbalance between it and the subjects it affects and reproduces in order to maintain the illusion as being a non-discriminatory and “civilizing” force. Such interpretations have bled into how Confucian capitalism literature negotiates the concept of cultural production, failing to interpret cultural reproduction as a process whose recurrent outcomes are the result of any kind of power or agency.

The discussion of Confucian capitalism’s inadequate treatment of culture has not been for the sake of reprimanding those within the discipline for not having “covered it all”, but rather to add another dimension to the arguments that have been made thus far. The value of this chapter largely subsists on what has “not” been talked about, because the power of cultural reproduction lies in the unsaid, unobvious, and in the multiple possibilities of interpretation in representation.

Having identified the problematic points inherent in Confucian Capitalism literature, it may be appropriate at this juncture to rectify its shortcomings and those of developmental state literature, as discussed earlier, by exploring culture as a process and a product of the human unconscious as well as of agency and intent. The next section will turn from a macro level investigation of how the power relations that produce culture are obscured by disciplines in the academy and processes of globalization, to a micro level demonstration of the processes by which institutions wield cultural power through acts of reproduction and representation, embedding agency into the analysis. The chapter will
explore how it was that the Park regime of the Republic of Korea between 1961 and 1979 was able to create and disseminate a nationalist discourse that reoriented the socio-cultural boundaries of the South Korean people and how it was that the South Korean people allowed their pre-existing value systems to be manipulated and mobilized against them.
MISSING PAGE(S)

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picked by the regime voted on the ‘peoples’ behalf’. Park’s establishment of the Korea Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA), which grew to over 37,000 Korean Army Counter-Intelligence Corps members by 1964, was wielded as the iron fist of the regime and developed into a complex set of institutional links with almost all of the government’s key decision-making bodies.

The KCIA had a near-monopoly over crucial information concerning national security under the charter of the Act Concerning Protection of Military Secrets and, more importantly, possessed considerable veto power over other agencies through its supervisory and coordination functions. The KCIA’s practically unlimited power to investigate and to detain any person accused of antistate behavior severely restricted the right to dissent or to criticize the regime. The frequent questioning, detention, or even prosecution of dissidents, opposition figures, and reporters seriously jeopardized basic freedoms and created an atmosphere of political repression.

While the personal circumstances surrounding Park’s ascendance to power as well as the methods by which his regime wielded power was cause for popular upset, the political and economic climate of Korea at that time afforded him the opportunity to detract from his political illegitimacy. Capitalizing upon the circumstances of mass unequal wealth distribution brought on by the Japanese, as well as former President Rhee Syngman’s corruption and failed attempts at jump-starting the economy, Park created new standards and justifications for his rule. Out of such a necessity arose the need for Park to “problematize” - to appropriate a term of Michel Foucault - national development and respond with a priority plan of industrialization.

Physical might and intimidation, although rendering dissent difficult, lacks

69 Park Chung Hee has been often termed as Chae-yook gwan dae tong ryong (gymnasium president), because he held the presidential voting in a high school gym.
efficiency in its effects. For might to be effective, it must constantly be appropriated requiring human and material resources. As prohibition is the most obvious form of power, its source/agency is also most clearly identifiable, locating the hegemon(s) to be overcome. As explored previously in chapter 1, Foucault alludes to power that does not just say 'no', but that rather say 'yes'.71 Less obvious and indirect forms of power work through (as well as create) audience desires and fears, convoluting, dispersing, embedding, and normalizing power relations into social and economic circumstances. The subtle nature of power renders agency more difficult to locate, and is thus able to exercise far greater domination. In returning to the question posed in chapter 1, - “If labor was the backbone of South Korean industrialization, how did the developmental state mobilize its citizens yet simultaneously oppress them?” - this chapter posits that Park’s control over representation via public institutions mobilized South Korean citizens against their own interests, by being led to believe that subordination to the state industrial plan was in their best interests.

This is not to say that the Park regime’s manipulation of its citizens’ desires was a blanket success and that the government did not face opposition of any kind. Media was not without some freedom to criticize the Park administration, critical intellectuals managed to raise their voices, and the labor uprisings persisted despite police crackdowns. Thus, citizens’ internalization of state representations is undoubtedly difficult to prove. If we do not necessarily equate internalization with conscious compliance, however, and assume that a mass cultural movement mobilized by the state was more likely to have some psychological effect than not on its citizens, than it is easier

71 Foucault, Power/Knowledge, 141.
to understand how the regime managed to mobilize the South Korean population for a substantial amount of time that resulted in incredible economic growth. The realm of experience is crucial when accounting for the social structure of human conduct, after all, and if we accept Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of ‘sense practique’ - that our lived experience or ‘habitus’ reflect the logic of the social order in which they originated\textsuperscript{72} - then we can look on the mass Korean population’s overall compliance with government-mandated industrialization policies, education initiatives, etc. as a reflection of the effects of socialization or the social constraints within which people interpreted their lived experiences. People are bound to a ‘conditioned’ and ‘conditional’ freedom in which the production of thought, expression, and actions occur within the limits of its genesis.\textsuperscript{73} To deviate from the intended interpretation of broad social messages and to be critical of such representations is presumably more difficult, requiring alternative stimuli or practice in critical thought.

This chapter does not deny the existence of a hegemonic axis on which the state/chaebol partnership and opposition groups negotiated back and forth on the issue of human rights (better working conditions and hours, better pay, discrimination, and abuse issues). The state/chaebol apparatus did possess the means of representational production, however, which was an undeniably large advantage, and one which would presumably overshadow the ‘weapons of the weak’.

Much of the Park administration’s power stemmed from what Stuart Hall refers

\textsuperscript{72} Cor Baerveldt & Theo Verheggen. Toward a psychological study of culture: epistemological considerations. Paper presented at the 7\textsuperscript{th} conference of the International Society for Theoretical Psychology (ISTP) (Berlin: 27 April – 2 May, 1997) 4.

\textsuperscript{73} Cor Baerveldt & Theo Verheggen, 4.
to as control over representation. This form of power involves the giving of meaning to
events, thereby controlling the production of culture. If the elite are successful in
interpreting, for the public, the meaning of an event, they shall wield incredible power, as
they then possess the ability to invent and perpetuate tradition rooted in arbitrary
interests. “Every power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as
legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force, adds its own
specifically symbolic force to those power relations.”74 In other words, Park was able to
legitimate his regime rule and mobilize people for an industrialist agenda that would
perpetuate his rule through controlling how events were represented, and in effect,
controlled the production of culture – that is, the social thoughts, habits, practices and
standards of the South Korean people.

It is significant here that the possibilities and limits of representation be discussed.
Representation can be composed of multiple discourses and codes of intelligibility, which
often compete. The implications for the possibility of multiple interpretations are that
they can be contested. Thus, in order for hegemony to be continually inscribed and
interpreted within representations, it must be continuously and actively produced.75 But
how and in what context? What kinds of representations, when actively produced,
dominate and interpret social culture? Tomlinson, as cited in Cultures of Insecurity,
informs us that insecurities are produced in and out of the ‘context within which people

75 Weldes, J., Laffey , M., Gusterson, H., Duvall, R. (Eds.). “Constructing Insecurity” In
Cultures of Insecurity. (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1999), 16.
give meaning to their actions and experiences and make sense of their lives.\footnote{Weldes, J., Laffey, M., Gusterson, H., Duvall, R., 1.} As we shall see, the Park regime manufactured consent and controlled the ways in which the South Korean public encoded and decoded (to appropriate a term used by Stuart Hall) representations by manipulating social insecurities.

Park and his officials must have realized that a plausible way to mobilize laborers to sacrifice themselves for his large-scale economic feat was to ‘recreate’ or ‘redefine’ what it meant to be a Korean in South Korea – to reinvent a sense of nationalism that had seemingly new criteria of expression. Park must have assumed that he had to create incentives beyond wages and entice workers to morally commit themselves to the development of the nation.

To do so, the Park administration conceived of a development philosophy, Tong do sogi (morality of the East and technology of the West), which set out to accomplish three administrative tasks: modernization through capitalist industry, defense against communism, and the establishment of a national identity as a basis for promoting the other two goals. The Park regime created nationalist discourse, full of ideology and symbols that challenged Korea’s colonial history, war against communism and the threat of Western imperialism. The Park regime evoked romantic images and myths of indigeneity – of what it meant to be South Korean, both ethnically and morally – and tied this directly to the definition of what it meant to be a worker. One’s morality, in turn, was judged by how hard one worked. “Nations are formed on the basis of cultural myths of origin and national character, and one of the functions of cultural reproduction is to
develop and sustain those national ideologies.” 77 Thus, through historical referencing, or the recollection, reverence and condemnation of past events and traditions, Park created the new face of the Korean nationalist worker as a logical extension of and reactionary to past historical circumstances, insecurities, and cultural understandings. The following is a national statement made by Park soon after his coup:

The Korean tragedy is basically different from the tragedy of Western Europe. The Western European tragedy fights fate and dies gloriously... We do not have any of the manly tragic consciousness of the West.... The real national image of the great man was not that of a weak pendant but rather of a patriotic fighter who would readily die on the battlefield in defense of his country. 78

This speech is one of the first instances in which the worker is likened to the image of a patriotic soldier. This was commonly used to define and describe the characteristics and duties of the South Korean laborer, thereby appropriating the meaning of what it is to be a Korean worker. Although there was no actual war, there had been one in recent history (The Korean War, 1950-53), and by evoking images of battle and the need for national security, the laborer, through his physical endeavoring to literally build the national economy, became the soldering symbol of national defense – the savior of his country, not only from the Communist North, but from the Western imperialists who would see South Korea economically dependent upon them.

The administration’s justification for his yushin (revitalizing) reforms (1961-72) - an aggressive industrialization program interpreted as a “save-the-nation movement”, which resulted in the subsequent crackdown on dissent and ideological control of citizens

- alludes to the same type of imagery and rhetoric in which he problematizes the need to industrialize as a unified nation in memory of past oppression:

Throughout this [March First] movement, our forefathers were able for the first time in our modern history to achieve a broad unity of the nation --- The fundamental purposes of the October Revitalizing Reforms include achievement of an impregnable unity of the entire people, regardless of faction or class, on the basis of a broad national will, --- and --- enhancement of our national glory throughout the work. 79

This third and final excerpt of Park's second term inaugural speech in 1972 tactfully combines the evocation of nationalism and soldiering patriotism.

Our history of the past, spanning five millennia, was interspersed with moments of glory and shame; but our record of recent centuries was a steady continuation of tragic sufferings and misfortunes. The Revolution of May 16, 1961 was to be the point of departure from this past. The nation has begun in earnest to rediscover its great self, while we have striven against all odds to build national strength. We have turned the first and second Five-Year Economic Development Plan into successful realities. A solid foundation for an industrialized nation has thus been laid, and the curtain has risen on a scene of heavy chemical industry. Even as I speak, work is in progress in villages and towns on the four great river basins of this country, to realize their dream of abundance and prosperity. Armed with the spirit of diligence, self-help, and cooperation, the Saemaul movement is steadily narrowing the gap between urban and rural communities. 80

In organizing and labeling certain historical events as tragic and bringing them to the foreground, the Park regime also created a way for thinking about them that created a culture of national insecurity. It highlighted events that every South Korean should consider shameful to their country's history and implicated the public in these tragedies. As a line reads from Park's book titled, The Country, The Revolution, and I: "...who fails to realize that our present conditions should be blamed on the attitude of our people? We

have no will-power, no pioneering spirit, no zeal to improve ourselves. The most
deplorable thing is that we lack these vital elements, even this day."81 Such rhetoric
sought to mobilize people by distributing a sense of responsibility and duty for building
the nation and restoring what used to be a glorious Korea.

Of course, nationalist rhetoric and symbolism was not only inculcated into
Park's keystone political speeches. On the contrary, the post-War Korean laborer was
shaped in a very systematic and effective way through and within state-controlled
institutions such as the education system, the factory, the media, and the private
institutions of family.

The changeover from pre-industrial to industrial work requires a great deal of
physical and mental adjustment. Quoted in Korean Workers, E.P. Thompson writes, "it
entails a severe restructuring of working habits - new disciplines, new incentives, and a
new human nature upon which these incentives could bite effectively."82 When compared
with the early industrialists of Europe, the United States and even Japan, the South
Korean state and industrialists experienced a relatively easier time in getting workers to
adjust to new and incredibly self-exploitive working habits. According to Hagen Koo,
this was because a large percentage of the population had been schooled for centuries and
were still being schooled in Confucian values, disciplined in the military (every man was
and still is required by law to serve) and/or being initiated into a replicated, patriarchal
family structure on the factory floor. All three institutions governed by the laws of

(Honolulu: East-West Center Research Collections), 183.

82 Koo, 47.
hierarchy, obedience and endurance – three virtues that conditioned the worker for factory life. In this sense, it is evident that the Park regime wielded incredible influence over the lived experiences of South Korean men and women through acts of what Pierre Bourdieu defines as ‘symbolic violence’, where upon the inequalities of a social order are continually re-established by inflicting ‘painful’, ‘damaging wounds’ through the wielding of words, symbols and standards.83 In the case of South Korea, the words and symbols manifested themselves in the form of paternalistic Confucian ideology, anti-communism, and militarism, which was part in parcel of creating a nationalist discourse of subordination and sacrifice.

There is an important psychological process that needs to be introduced to the argument thus far, wherein people unknowingly contribute to the process of cultural transformation, to the benefit of the already advantaged and the further degradation of the disadvantaged. With regard to the self-determinacy of social structures, Bourdieu’s theory of the process of “collective misrecognition” may shed some light.

“Collective misrecognition” is a process whereby people unknowingly consent to their continued oppression, having been socialized or institutionalized into believing that upholding the status quo is in their interests and intrinsically holds some measure of merit or worth. Bourdieu likens people to the audience of agency who become so manipulated that they, in turn, manipulate themselves. The process of symbolic violence is, therefore, subtle, as the knowledge with which people recreate their own cultural boundaries must seem like a natural and logical progression or extension of their own

belief systems and social practices.

The quasi-magical potency of the signature is nothing other than the power, bestowed on certain individuals, to mobilize the symbolic energy produced by the functioning of the whole field, i.e. the faith in the game and its stakes that is produced by the game itself...the problem with magic is not so much to know what are the specific properties of the magician, or even the magical operations and representations, but rather to discover the bases of the collective belief of, more precisely, the collective misrecognition, collectively produced and maintained, which is the source of the power the magician appropriates.  

Agency cannot be successful in maintaining or reinventing the status quo without knowing and mobilizing the belief systems or cultural orientations within and by which people operate and abide. Agency must depend on the generative process of cultural reproduction as occurring amongst people within a certain structure that ensures its continued legitimacy. The ability to shape or influence the process by which people transform their collective heritages renders incredible power and domination.

Louis Althusser's discussion of the nature and functions of ideology is also useful for understanding the relationship between representation and the real conditions of material oppression. He is concerned with how people come to internalize State ideologies mediated through institutions of education, religion, family, legal systems, etc., and as a result, misrepresent or misunderstand themselves as unalienated subjects within the capitalist system. Althusser asserts that ideology is structural and works unconsciously through systems, which we inhabit, such as language. Ideology has the capacity to lend people an illusionary sense of freedom and choice within the capitalist system, and therefore distracts and distances society from the real, alienating conditions.

84 Pierre Bourdieu, The Field of Cultural Reproduction, 81.
of capitalism.\textsuperscript{85} Thus, ideology's precondition is material and produces material consequences.

The process of collective misrecognition is central to understanding how the Park regime was able to manipulate South Korean society for industrial goals, as well as to understand how society could be manipulated. The next section continues to enlist this reproductive psychological process in an examination of the Korean public education system, as a state-mediated institution of symbolic indoctrination/violence.

\textbf{Education}

It is agreed upon within developmental literature that South Korea's rapid economic growth and modernization was facilitated by the state's willingness to invest a great deal of resources in education for the sake of creating and improving upon 'human capital'. Between 1945 and 1970, the adult literacy rate had risen from 22 percent to 87.6 percent, which is largely owed to the state's aggressive efforts to take education policy out of the hands of provincial and city boards and centralize legislation efforts under the Ministry of Education during the 1960s and 1970s. The state curriculum concentrated significantly on scientific and technical skills in particular, in order to develop a generation of economic planners, technocrats, engineers, and other skilled workers that could drive the country’s industrial growth.\textsuperscript{86} The correlation between Korean economic expansion and education, as outlined in this paragraph, however, possesses an underside of state hegemony that has been wielded in nonmaterial form (although not without

\textsuperscript{85} Umberto Taccheri, \url{http://dept.english.upen.edu/~jenglish/courses/taccheri2.html}
\textsuperscript{86} Information Courtesy: The Library of Congress – Country Studies. \url{http://www.1upinfo.com-guide-study/south-korea/south-korea143.html}
material basis or consequence), which I would like to make central to this investigation. This section seeks to unveil and understand how educational institutions under the Park regime were mobilized and negotiated as mediums for symbolic violence in order to produce subordinate citizens and workers of the state.

After the Korean War, in an effort to prevent the consumption and dissemination of communist ideologies, a considerable amount of focus on the part of state educators was invested in deciphering how to prevent education from being used as a tool for political indoctrination. Thus, Section 1 of Article 5 of the 1949 Education Law was written to proclaim that “Education shall be carried out in accordance with its original purpose and shall never be utilized as an instrument of propaganda for any political, partisan, or other personal prejudices.”

Apart from the theoretical impossibility of separating education and the political act of meaning-making or, in other words, conceiving of education as tied to a purpose outside the realm of power or political function, the South Korean government managed to close up a space for debating future educational matters and for challenging motives of state authority. Foucault’s notion of ‘love and master’ puts this concept best. “The notion of ‘love of the master’ poses...[facilitates] a certain way of not posing the problem of power, or rather of posing it in such a way that it cannot be analysed.”

The products of this legally substantiated false logic – that education can be delineated from politics – procured a sense of public trust in the relationship between government and educational institutions; it created a


88 Foucault, Power/Knowledge, 139.
public inclination towards authority that was a conflation of the educator and state. By
the state's outright declaration that education and political agenda would never meet, and
by the public trust this impossible commitment fostered, the state had created - through a
discursive practice that limited – an environment in which Park Chung Hee could wield a
subversive form of representational domination via the public institution of education.

There are, of course, many other genealogies that contributed to the climate in
which Park Chung Hee could rise to power and be successful in his education campaign.
It might be said that Korean society's transition into such an intense national education
imperative had already been eased by similar nationalist experiences under Japanese
imperialism. In the first decade of the 20th century, the peninsula had already witnessed a
proliferation of 'modern' schools, some of which had been established by Christian
missionaries. When Korea entered the colonial period, Koreans expressed their resistance
by refusing to attend Japanese schools and continuing in private schools for as long as
policy would allow. In fact, student participation in underground as well as above ground
anti-colonial activities was fairly substantial. Private schools as well as churches
frequently featured as meeting grounds for nationalist activity organization. After
substantial crackdown on private schools by the Japanese in the latter half of the colonial
period, however, educational alternatives for the Korean populace had been severely
limited and by 1945, almost half (45 per cent) of the Korean youth were enrolled in
Japanese primary school.89 The nationalist imperative remained firmly tied to education,
however, which might be considered a contributing cultural/social factor to the generally
uncontested manner with which Korean society transitioned into Park Chung Hee's

89 Anne Booth. *Initial Conditions and Miraculous Growth*, 32.
education reforms that prioritized national independence premised upon national
development. In using Bourdieu’s and Althusser’s logic enlisted in the previous section,
we can see how people are easily mobilized and mobilize themselves against their best
interests when convinced that their action, predicated upon past experiences and familiar
boundaries, are morally and economically desirable.

Ann Arnett Ferguson instructs us that educational institutions are organized
around the interests of dominant societal groups; that school reflects and reproduces the
inequalities of a social, political, and economic system.⁹⁰ The crucial element for
re/producing social inequality is a “hidden curriculum that includes such taken-for-
granted components of instruction as differences in modes of social control and the
regulation of relations of authority”⁹¹ and “the valorization of certain forms of linguistic
and cultural expression.”⁹² “This hidden curriculum reflects the cultural hegemony of the
dominant class and works to reinforce and reproduce that dominance by exacerbating and
multiplying – rather than diminishing or eliminating – the ‘inequalities’ children bring
from home and neighborhood to school.”⁹³ When this theory is applied to the case of
South Korea’s public education system during Park Chung Hee’s industrial period, a state
agenda bent on re/enforcing a particular cultural hegemony is implicated in the
curriculum of that time.

It can only be assumed that Park was well aware of the power of education and
how it serves a political function. This can be gleaned from the new teachers manuals and

⁹¹ Bowles and Gintis in Ferguson, 50.
⁹² Bourdieu and Passeron in Ferguson, 50.
⁹³ Ibid.
curriculum changes that were in the press while the military staged its coup d'etat. Park had been a teacher for two years prior to his military/political career and his ability to mobilize political goals and activity in the form of educational practices was uncanny. In fact, Park himself composed several of the nationalist songs and allegiances recited in schools and in public rallies. Some of these included the *kukmin gyoyuk hwanjang* (the national subject's love of education), which was a requirement for 2nd grade elementary school children as well as the song titled, *jogukeh gundaehwa* (modernization of the Fatherland). Some of the songs and recitations had been revived and adapted from the Japanese colonial period, re-illustrating the ties between national subject and state, rather than colonial subject and empire.

The way Park and his administration systematically organized school curriculum and its contents is the ultimate proof of his agency and political agenda. The aim of Park's new 'democratic education', was to set the consciousness of the nation above individual aspirations and instill a program that would teach students practical skills. School curriculum and materials that received the most change was in the area of morals lessons and textbooks. The morals lessons were divided in four groups: ethical life (*yaejol sangwhal*), individual life (*kaein sangwhal*), social life (*sawhe sangwhal*), and national life (*kukka sangwhal*). In social life lessons, the Park regime played upon the historical legacy of

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95 Interview conducted 03/08/04. Male, Ph.D student at the University of Hawai’i.
96 Ibid.
97 Cole, 87. McCune-Reischauer romanization system used.
patriarchal Confucianism as a familiar orthodoxy according to which most Korean families lived by in varying degrees and multiple interpretations. Through a tightly controlled education campaign in the 1960s and 1970s the Ministry of Education imposed its agenda of building a nationalist mentality through the inculcation of Confucian discourse in school textbooks.

The conservative Confucian revival of *chunghyo* values (parent and state) during this campaign illustrated the state’s attempt to legitimate the “lack of civic freedoms under military rule in terms of Korean tradition”.98 The *chunghyo* education propaganda in the textbook titled the “Investigation of the Image of a Korean” is a good example of what Foucault referred to as “power/knowledge” — a conflation of two terms that describes the power wielded when controlling the dissemination of knowledge:

> According to Nature’s laws, the earth sprouts seeds, produces flowers And fruits. And old leaves fall, are decomposed, and become fertilizer for new lives. Ancestors infer the ethic of human relations from this and live accordingly. Parents love their children, and the children feel grateful to their parents and perform filial piety. A husband loves his wife, and she respects him. All of them consider one another constituting one body which cannot survive without the roles that they play. Therefore, antagonism makes survival impossible. It is not an issue at home whether parents come first, children come first or the wife comes first. All of them are masters by playing their roles.99

The messages in this passage are clear “Do not challenge the state”, “Play your role”, “Challenge will only bring oppression or obliteration”. The mixed and contesting sentiments evoked in the passage are those of family, harmony and responsibility on the one hand as well as those of subliminal threat and punishment on the other. Here, Foucault’s concept of normalization is meaningful for understanding how power works.

98 Moon in Choi and Kim, 51.
through discipline in schools to ultimately produce self-regulating, docile workers of the state. One way of maintaining conformity is through the social and cultural weight rules and lessons possess within curricula and education as a system. Conformity to rules and lessons within school is treated as a prior condition for student learning, and bear the weight of moral authority. This was particularly significant for Park’s educational reforms, as the Ministry of Education conflated ethics classes with education that directly legitimated moralizing methods and criteria. The classroom becomes a site for normalization of identities and social control over children via rewards and punishment, which Foucault terms the most powerful instrument of disciplinary power. Reward and punishment is not to suppress unwanted behavior or to reform it, but to:

refer individual actions to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation...it measures in quantitative terms and hierarchize in terms of value the abilities, the level, the ‘nature’ of individuals. It introduces through this ‘value-giving’ measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved. Lastly, it traces the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal...[it] compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes.

Thus, education acts as a facilitator of state and social violence. By this, I mean that schools need to be reconsidered, not as places of governance predicated on the idea of formal equality, but as state institutions that have the capacity to normalize inequalities and identities along state political lines. The South Korean state, through the creation of nationalist, Confucian discourse in textbooks, directly influenced and reframed the context in which students’ thought and spoke about family relations, gender relations, and in turn, hoped to relate, through familial metaphors, how students should view state-

100 Ferguson, 51-52.
101 Ferguson, 52.
102 Foucault in Ferguson, 52.
worker/citizen relations. The creation of this ideology empowered the state to assign specific meaning to the relationship of words and legitimate them as ‘knowledge’ through the education system. Alternatively, one can regard discourse and knowledge as always and already inscribed within ideology. “Language is pure textuality, but ideology wants to make a particular meaning...it’s the point where power cuts into discourse, where power overcuts knowledge and discourse.”

Above all programs, anti-communism featured most strongly in Park’s education reforms under the banner of “love of country and people” in social and national life morality lessons. In fact, the concepts of (Confucian/patriarchal) moralism and patriotism were featured as premises to anti-communism, and formulated the basis of Park’s education reforms and curriculum. Anti-communism and morality education over other subjects began with the Ministry of Education’s distribution of A Guide Book for Strengthening Anti-communism Education in 1961. The textbook of anticommunism and morality was subsequently revised to conflate the two in a particular education program titled pankong-todok kyoyuk (anti-communism morality education), which heightened in intensity after Park’s Yushin (Revitalizing) reforms. The characteristics of such education were primarily driven my hate propaganda, which normalized violent reactions toward North Korea and North Koreans. An excerpt from an elementary school song conjures feelings of militancy, past national tragedies and imminent national threat. Even at such young ages, South Korean children were indoctrinated with the message that the only solution to survival, or national survival, was to fight.

Ah ah, how could we forget
the day our enemies trampled on our country
blocking them with our bare fists and red blood
stomping on the ground, shaking with righteous indignation.
Now we will pay you back, our enemies of this day.
We will run and run after the retreating enemy.
And our country and people will shine
When we defeat each and every man among our enemies.

On a metaphoric level, such a message provides a second meaning in which students must prepare to contribute to the security of their country with their physicality, setting up an effective parallel with and inference to labor. As an interviewee reflected on his young school days in Pusan, he recalled the special military training he received twice a week. Boys were required to learn how to manipulate weapons (guns) in a class titled gyorun shigan (military drill period). Another interviewee recalled how she was encouraged by her school during the Saemaul Movement to perform community services such as picking up trash off the streets early in the morning before school, and planting trees to replenish what had been stripped or destroyed during the colonial and war period. Children were given awards for the dedication of their labor. The school became a site where the distinction of laboring for national growth and laboring for national security was blurred and overlapped. Park’s education curriculum symbolically interpreted laboring for the country as fighting for the nation.

By conflating ant-communism with militancy, and militancy with labor, the Park regime managed to create, for a while, a national security craze founded upon a kind of xenophobia which identified the enemy without, and that which would remain without if Koreans labored hard enough. As an example, the annual government slogan for 1969

105 Grinker, Korea and Its Futures, 135.
106 Interview conducted 03/08/04. Male, Ph.D student at the University of Hawai‘i.
107 Interview 03/12/04. Female, M.A. student at the University of Hawai‘i.
was *saumyunso konsahaja* (let’s work while we fight).\(^{108}\)

Reverting citizens’ eyes to the evil communist North was not enough to detract from the violences the Park administration wielded over its citizens and workers. It was also necessary to create the enemy within by constructing a reality in which it was sensible and common place to suspect one’s neighbor. Much in the way the Nazi party or Mao Zhe Dong’s rule created self-censoring watch dogs out of its own citizens, the Park regime rationalized the irrational with anti-communist slogans and discourse that resulted for many citizens in a ‘moment of extreme ideological closure’\(^{109}\)

The creation of common sense...depends on the implicit or explicit invocation of an empiricist epistemology...it depends on the implicit or explicit invocation of a correspondence theory of language and meaning in which words and concepts are thought to point to their ostensible empirical referents. By authoritatively defining ‘the real’, dominant representations of insecurity remove from critical analysis and political debate what are in fact particular, interested constructions, thus endowing those particular representations with ‘common sense’ and ‘reality.’ Conversely, anything outside of the discourse – statements expressing other possible worlds or forms of life, for example – is represented as implausible, ideological, or spurious and so often consigned to the realms of fiction, fantasy, or nonsense.\(^{110}\)

In fact, the ways in which the South Korean state framed the terms for thinking about and discussing communism can be likened to Foucault’s explanation of how fascism has become a misunderstood, reactionary blanket term to describe social deviance.

The non-analysis of fascism is one of the important political facts of the past thirty years. It enables fascism to be used as a floating signifier, whose function is essentially that of denunciation. The procedures of every form of power are suspected of being fascist, just as the masses are in their desires. There lies beneath the affirmation of the desire of

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\(^{108}\) Cole, 102.

\(^{109}\) Stuart Hall in *Cultures of Insecurity*, 17.

\(^{110}\) Ibid.
the masses for fascism a historical problem which we have yet to secure
the means of resolving. 111

By equating communist behavior with social deviance, and by deliberately
framing communist activity in an arbitrary way that left it upon for endless interpretation,
Park was able to create a culture of insecurity among society that divided them from each
other and that falsely necessitated state control under the banner of national security.

In the case of South Korea, the state’s need for industrialization fueled the
creation of a nationalist ideology grounded in certain historical or cultural events. This
ideology allowed the state to package contradictions of societal interests and, by
legitimating or normalizing them as ‘knowledge’, discouraged people from questioning
the status quo, or the contradictions that obscured the reality of their oppression.
Likewise, in assigning agency to society, it can be simultaneously put that the
internalization of anti-communist militarism and Confucian moralism allowed people to
reinterpret their experiences of hardship and poverty in such a way that hid the conditions
and facilitators of their abuse.

The Factory and Laborers

The same type of militant, hierarchical Confucian and familial vocabulary and
images were evoked and used towards laborers in the workplace. This has tremendous
implications for the relationship between government and big business, as the state paved
the way for the private sector to exploit labor by indoctrinating and thus preparing men
and women in public institutions (education system and military). The superficially

111 Foucault, Power/Knowledge, 139.
harmless and even slightly warm factory orientation speech hides the reality of physical and emotional abuse that workers experienced and indeed gave them a doctrinal framework within which to understand and interpret their experience:

Welcome to the KTE family. As everyone here must know, our company is one of the largest in the Masan Free Export Zone and it’s a most closely knit family. Everyone in this company is a family member and we are all extremely proud of that. Everyone here, regardless of our rank, wear our company uniform. Our company is the only one in the Zone where the employees feel such pride that we wear our uniforms not just in the company but outside the Zone too. You will soon feel the same pride and loyalty to the company that you will be happy to be seen as a KTE family member. 112

The effects of state-indoctrinated discourse, besides that of subordination or even revolt, are evident on a more culturally embedded level in terms of laborers’ framework of speech and thought. Even workers such as those in the example below, who had formed illegal unions, revived the precise metaphorical and rhetorical speech that the state had used to describe and suppress them. The Wonpoong Union, which was considered as one of the most independent and aggressive unions, issued the following union resolution in 1973:

1 We are the warriors of industrial peace and will make our utmost effort to increase productivity
2 We will make every effort to improve our working conditions with strong solidarity among ourselves
3 As champions of working people, we will do our best to improve the quality of the union 113

The state created a particular framework for talking about labour that limited the above workers to certain discursive practices that described their roles as workers. In discussing Michel Foucault, Stuart Hall explains that “a discourse...is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – i.e., a way of representing –

113 Koo, 141.
particular kind of knowledge about a topic... The discourse makes it possible to construct the topic in a certain way, [and] it also limits the other ways in which the topic can be constructed".114

Ashis Nandy’s expertise on the psychology of colonialism also lends a hand in understanding the power of linking the oppressor and the oppressed within a limited, specific discursive framework. Hegemonic power presumes a particular style of managing dissent. It wages that the subjugated will be induced, through various psychological punishments and rewards, to accept and internalize new social norms and cognitive categories set forth by the subjugator and retaliate within their confines.115

More simply put, the subjugated fight the oppressor according to the oppressor’s rules, which gives the oppressor the upper hand. This kind of resistance requires the subordinate to “identify with its aggressor” (as put by Nandy) and recognizes the superiority and legitimacy of the dominant power and thus further perpetuates its hegemony. As Luke notes, power “maintains that men’s wants may themselves be the product of a system which works against their interests”116 Although labor unions demanded certain rights and desires in resistance to the state-chaebol apparatus, they ascribed to and struggled within state-prescribed, polarized categories which further solidified their subordination. Laborers reproduced themselves as nationalists with the same state-goal of industrial development. They demanded improved terms and conditions for their employment, but until the dawning of the Minjung movement in the

114 Nevzat Soguk. States and Strangers: Refugees and Displacements of Statecraft (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 48.
116 MacKenzie, 75.
late 1980s, the state possess almost complete control over how the developmental agenda would be pursued.

**The Media**

The state-owned and operated institution of media also contributed to the situation whereby working class men and women’s identities as patriotic subordinates were perpetually reaffirmed via mass censorship and state control of program content. Upon taking power, Park Chung Hee proceeded to close 49 of Seoul’s 64 daily newspapers, using state-controlled radio and news agencies to promote the official line. The Park government also used the Press Ethics Commission Law of 1964 and, in the 1970s, relied on emergency decrees that penalized criticism of the government in order to keep the media censored. The KCIA was often deployed as the executor of state will where media control was concerned, stopping any reporting on government opposition groups and uprisings. The firing of several Donga-ilbo journalists and intimidation of the paper’s advertisers in 1974 is one such incident.117

Although there was no obtainable evidence of actual television or radio broadcasts aired during the Park regime, by considering that which it banned and censored, we can conclude that the regime was weary of disseminating knowledge through images, symbols and language that kindled anything other than nationalist sentiment. For a start, control of the media was performed in three different forms: (1) Legal control through the Ministry of Culture and Information and the Ministry of

117 Information Coutesy: The Library of Congress – Country Studies, pg. 1
Communications via the Broadcast Law and the Radio Frequency Control Law, (2) self-regulation through the KECB in accordance with codes of ethics as stipulated by the Korea Ethics Commission on Broadcast and the Korea Association of Broadcasters, and (3) extra-legal controls through pressure groups and organizations such as the Korea Cultural Commission on Arts, the Korea Association of Advertisers, and smaller sponsors. Statutory law authorized the government to control the electronic media. Thus, the Ministry of Culture and Information demanded a self-regulatory department within each statement that screened individual programs before going on the air.  

Among some of the stricter controls, all foreign media and music was banned. The Ministry of Information and Culture even produced a specific list of Korean artists who were deemed inappropriate by the regime. In the 1960s and 1970s, Park's administration largely controlled the content of films by means of censorship for their 'pro-communist' content, and after the Yushin system was imposed, went so far as to impose government rules on movie production. Among these rules was the a limitation to the number of movies that could be produced annually, as well as orders for movies to be made on behalf of national defense. The Yushin government also founded a public movie production corporation titled Yonghwa Chinhung Kongsa, which produced fervent anti-communist movies such as "Ulchi Anuli" (I will not cry) and 'Tulkukhwanun Piyonnuntae' (While wild chrysanthemums are blossoming). Movies, such as these, which promoted self-reliance for national defense, were required viewing material for

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119 Kwon, 50.
elementary and high school classes.\textsuperscript{120} Even the movies that were not directly produced by the government were preceded by the Daehan News, a pro-state news bulletin that rallied public support by informing them of presidential activities.\textsuperscript{121}

Radio and TV broadcasting were targets of even more government control and censorship than with film. Particularly after the on-set of the \textit{Yushin} reforms, \textit{Yushin} ideology became the public goal of most broadcasting networks that permeated all sorts of programming, ranging from daytime and educational shows to cartoons. For a month after the \textit{Yushin} proclamation, each broadcasting network covered \textit{Yushin} through mono-commentary 218 times, symposium 398 times, spot drama 1,268 times, and special programs to bring out perspectives on \textit{Yushin} 58 times.\textsuperscript{122}

An interviewee recalled watching a television drama titled "Horangi Sunsaengnim" (Tiger Teacher), that targeted Korean youth. Apparently the main character of the show, a teacher, was depicted as a patriarchal figure whose rigorous and generous endeavors on behalf of his students deserved to be rewarded with filial respect and diligence. The parallels that can be drawn between the authoritative state and patriarchal teacher figure must have proved meaningful to viewers precisely because the homologies of teacher/state: student/national subject or father/state:child/national subject suggested relationships that were either actual, similar to, or existent as concepts within their cultural worlds.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid, 51.
\textsuperscript{121} Interview conducted 03/08/04. Male, Ph.D. student at the University of Hawai‘i.
\textsuperscript{122} Kwon, 51.
With specific regard to laborers, the media was referred to as depicting workers in a particular light that later became an issue relevant to labor uprisings. Stewart Hall explicates media communication as a politicized act that creates more than it portrays social realities; media provides the context for identity formation. On the whole, laborers were apparently depicted as mechanical beings, who were incapable of independent thought. From this we can discern that the state used the institution of media to subordinate its workers and discourage uprisings through acts of symbolic violence that diminished self-confidence and morale. The effects of such words and portrayals cannot be taken back, for when they are disseminated, they have the harmful and almost unquestionable potential to shape or outright become the public reality. In recalling a reading on discourse by Foucault, Stuart Hall explicates that “Discourse is about production of knowledge through language…and language has real effects in practice: the description becomes” the source of what is true and what is false, and is thus instrumental in the articulation of the “normal” and “normality” in life, organized around specific subjects, relations, and institutions.

The Park regime subsequently invested money in the National Center for Traditional Performing Arts and encouraged the promotion of traditional Korean music through national universities and music programs with the intention that Koreans be constantly exposed to indigenous traditions that espoused feelings of ethnic nationalism. It was on the one hand ironic, and on the other predictable (depending on the mode of analysis one chooses), that participants of student and labor protests later on employed

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124 Rojek, 93.
125 Ibid, 49.
these exact traditional performing art forms, particularly farmers music (*minyo*) and masked dance (*tal chum*), as mediums for anti-government expression. Themes of corrupt officials and despotic rulers were often the center of such folk genres. In this case, one way to understand laborers’ discord with the state’s proliferation of national cultural images/music as happening not because they did not identify with it, but because they identified with it within a certain context and framework of meaning that made it undesirable. As discussed earlier, the interpretation of representations is varied, with multiple meanings capable of being extracted from and inscribed in them. While the power of state institutions increased the possibilities of favorable interpretations of certain events, images, and language, the capacity for disenchantment also lay among them should the circumstances and collective experiences create its condition of possibility.

Likewise, the employment of traditional performing arts as a tool for anti-government expression can also be viewed as dissent within the representational framework established by the state, just as the labor unions relied on militant discourse to define their disenchantment. The nationalist, as defined by a performer of the traditional arts, was continually reestablished. Both expressions of consent and dissent were manifested outwardly in the same manner that, perhaps, increased the possibility of psychological misdirection or convolution among the protesters and their audiences with regard to the meanings of the protests.
Chapter IV: Reproducing Gender

This chapter examines how representations of gender were mobilized, inhabited, and reproduced as a consequence of the South Korean state-chaebol industrial agenda to mobilize workers in the name of a nationalism that was defined by competing concepts of both a traditional patriarchy and modernity, the latter of which was (and still is) deceptively pitted in opposition to the first. More specifically, the concern here is to understand the processes and consequences of state-chaebol deployed representations that required young and middle-aged women to occupy the private sphere of home and family, and the public sphere of industrial work, while being punished for betraying a variety of conventional gender stereotypes held by Korean men in all echelons of Korean society.

Discussing the ways in which the South Korean state reproduced women throughout the industrialization era is an interesting project because of the variety and scope of feminist theory in existence, which can be applied to interpret the Korean working woman’s position within the male-created economic power structure. The Korean working woman’s body, as a site for double standards and competing ideologies, has been documented in the context of their roles as working mothers and wives, and in terms of sexual discrimination predicated upon gender and class. Kim Seung-Kyung’s *Class Struggle or Family* is an example of such work that combines solid investigative and empirical research. Choi Chungmoo and Elaine Kim’s analysis in *Dangerous Women* of the colonial nature of the processes by which women come to be represented within the Korean patriarchal, nationalist narrative is also compelling. What this section attempts
to do, however, is to push the international relations focus to the background and bring to the foreground the representations of working women circulated throughout the heavy industrialization period for analysis, specifically tracking how power works in and throughout such representations to produce the kind of cultural violences women experienced. I intend to outline the gendered representations that have actively as well as passively excluded working women from participating in public spaces and roles in a valued light. My chief concern here is to read between the lines of the representations themselves, or more accurately, to unravel the psychological process by which they get produced, projected, internalized, and reproduced, ultimately leaving in its wake a power grid that resulted in the degradation of the working class women despite the psychosocial damages their oppressors may have incurred in the process.

As a starting point for analysis, I would like to posit that gender is a social construction, with a mobile aggregate of traits. Gender is not a fixed or necessarily biological truth, but is constitutive of moving categories whose array of possible representations can be framed, mobilized, and capitalized upon by power and applied across biological lines. Within the political system of gender oppression, the feminine and the masculine are constructed through acts of inclusion and exclusion, delimitation, and through processes that compare and created difference via the use of discursive and symbolic signifiers that carry certain historical, social and, therefore, cultural meanings.

The categories of feminine and masculine were mobilized by the state (via representations) across conventional sex lines, ultimately trapping the working woman between gendered representations that moralized her as unfeminine (therefore not mother, not wife, not nurturing, not docile, unrefined) and simultaneously as filial (submissive,
sacrificial, obedient, weak). The result of such representations was not only submission to official state power, but recreated a public social culture in which working class women became demeaned and stigmatized by all men, including factory bosses and fellow male workers. Although the state did not directly deploy public representations of working class women as prostitutes, the conflation of class and images of physical, menial labor also pulled into relief an attached subnarrative of hypersexuality (promiscuous, not virtuous, not obedient, dirty, loud), that men quickly mobilized against women in defense of their own sexual insecurities. Besides the obvious physical abuses of rape and other forms of sexual harassment, women were labeled as Chonhan nodongja (a derogatory term for female worker predicated upon class and sex) or kongsuni chuje’e (being a mere kongsuni). Both of these terms implied that women factory workers were sexually loose, and helped to fuel rumors that “there is no virgin inside the industrial complex”.

Caught in the crossfire of state power that worked through such representations, the Korean working class woman was produced as a reflection of the national, patriarchal insecurities during a time of rapid economic change.

The power of the discursive and the symbolic’s ability to produce gendered categories is an important site for an investigation into how South Korean working women were recreated during the industrializing period, if the misinformed, positive correlation between industrial modernization and advancement in gender relations is to be circumvented. This is particularly so for a country like South Korea that simultaneously underwent the processes of both political decolonization and heavy

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126 Koo, 134.
127 Ibid.
industrialization, the overlapping of which created incredibly oppressive circumstances for women workers. They were not only doubly oppressed by gender and class in accordance with patriarchal, Confucian culture and militarism, which did not envision women as public participants in the construction the nation. They were also indirectly oppressed by colonial insecurities inscribed in Korean men by their former colonizers and present imperial ones, the latter of which fueled the culture of masculine, industrial competition.

Feminist analysis recognize that women are often reproduced as 'feminine' via representations that connote negativity, or suggest what they are not and what they do not do, whereas men tend to get reproduced in more affirming ways, assigning positive meaning to their existence by suggesting what they are and what they do. The reverse can also be argued, but the resulting consequences of reading representations in that way would not be much different. For present purposes, understanding representations of the feminine in the negative aligns with their absence in or exclusion from what constitutes the legitimate, politically, economically, and socially. The cultural signifiers that are mobilized in making such distinctions between the feminine and masculine are not necessarily biologically gender specific, but are significant as carriers that are dependent upon, and implicated in belief structures that are not easily or quickly changed. What is so powerful about women being represented in the negative/minus is that there is no active discursive substance around which positive representations of them can be created. Their oppression is thus easily pursued and maintained by such indirect processes of inference and connotation – that they are not masculine, that they are not feminine - that do not necessarily reveal the discrepancy between the grossly distorted representations of
women (which men create) and the way women might more accurately wish to represent themselves. Power and hegemony work through connotations, as Barthes recognizes. Connotations, as myth or representation, become naturalized and normalized through institutions, creating conceptual maps that turn cultural constructions into natural, biological facts. "Myths work by naturalizing culturally contingent codes into unchangeable common sense." The working woman's entrapment between the discursive practices that represent her existence and the contesting circumstances they have had to navigate as a result never get inserted into public awareness. Rather her existence is subaltern which enables the affirming representations of masculinity and its associations with the male body.

In Gender Trouble, Judith Butler employs Foucault's ideas about juridical power to explain how women get produced within a certain structure of politics through the regulatory and exclusionary processes that consequently get hidden and closed off for debate.

"the question of 'the subject' is crucial for politics, and for feminist politics in particular, because juridical subjects are invariably produced through certain exclusionary practices that do not 'show' once the juridical structure of politics has been established. In other words, the political construction of the subject proceeds with certain legitimating and exclusionary aims, and these political operations are effectively concealed and naturalized by a political analysis that takes juridical structures as their foundation. Juridical power inevitable produces what it claims to merely represent; hence, politics must be concerned with this dual function of power: the juridical and the productive."

The South Korean state exclusively took the role of publicly regulating representations,

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as we have explored throughout this chapter. The incredibly marginal space that working
class women occupied historically, politically(legal), socially(class), and
culturally(gender) allowed the state to easily wield its powerful economic agenda at their
expense via a kind of representational violence. This is not to ignore that state violence
was physical, for it was incredibly so, but the goal here is to document the processes of
violence that cannot necessarily be seen, or are obscured by what is taken to be normal or
natural.

South Korean working class women were caught between the façade of
constitutional equality on the one hand (under Article 10 of the ROK constitution) and on
the other hand the Family Law in Part Four and Five of the Civil Code enacted by Park in
1960, which regulated women's domestic and social rights in contradiction to the ROK
Constitution. Thus, women were formally denied an identity in the public sphere, but
were informally called upon to help build the economy in a male-envisioned society. This
almost helpless position women found themselves in made it easier and more excusable
for companies to pay women less wages and require more working hours because they
were not expected to participate in the military defense of the nation.

In turning to specific representations, women were cast as mothers, wives, and
daughters in their roles as workers, which had the simultaneous effect of subordinating
women as obedient state servants and empowering their image as public workers – two
contesting representations that produced, at very best, the illusion of legitimacy and
upward social mobility for women, as indicated by the increase in night-school
attendees\textsuperscript{130}, and at worse an unlocatable sense of male anxiety that resulted in the further degradation of women. A prize-winning essay written by a factory worker, Won Young-Suk, titled “I am a Textile Worker” in a 1975 worker’s magazine \textit{Nodong} (Labour), reveals her in the masculine role of family provider, but also as a dutiful, submissive daughter. She commented on her thirteen years in the light export industry:

I tried to convince myself to be responsible for my family and four younger siblings and told myself to carry out my duty as oldest --- I felt so proud of myself for helping my seven-member family --- And thus, I began to enjoy working (Won:1975:86)\textsuperscript{131}

From the state’s perspective, her selfless devotion to her family as a filial daughter with disregard for her own interests made Won Young-Suk the ideal factory worker and an example to all women laborers. The state and factories reaffirmed women’s obligation to the state and workforce by referring to them as “\textit{uri aedul}” (our children) or called by their first names (as opposed to their surnames) to create and maintain a sense of hierarchy between them and their male supervisors within a familial context. Women were particularly targeted with Confucian discourse, as they were a growing source of even cheaper labor that would be morally more obligated to withstand abuse and exploitation given their social position in its patriarchal orthodoxy and order. The state reinforced such representations via all communication mediums possible, including television programs, such as one titled “\textit{Yuro}”, which was intended as a series of women’s

\textsuperscript{130} The benefits of higher education for most women in Korea, particularly during that time, were a myth. Official statistics indicated that higher education does not provide women with better jobs and, in fact, the labor force participation rate of women decreases as their number of years of formal education increases. Night schools were in large a project on the part of the government in cooperation with the industrial companies to regulate anti-government activity and secure their longer term employment at a particular factory. Women were expected to study at night, which prevented them from participating in union organizations, and were expected to remain employed with the same company in order to graduate from night school. (Kim Seung-Kyung, 32)
\textsuperscript{131} Kim Seung-Kyung, 8-9.
'success' stories, which mainly related to enduring and/or overcoming economic hardship and keeping the family together.\textsuperscript{132} This was the type of imagery and discourse, which the government attempted to circulate via publications, to not only entice more female workers, but to legitimate and reinterpret their lived experiences in the factories.

Another resulting image of the working woman was a more defeminized one – an image that was in keeping with a patriarchal government and society that did not envision a rightful space for them in the public world. The perfect example of the working woman’s dilemma is captured in a poster for The Office of Labor Affairs Poster (1970). The poster illustrates a young woman smiling, wearing a hard-hat and masculine uniform with a factory in the background. The caption on the poster reads: “Come to our factory and you will learn the true value of labor”.\textsuperscript{133} In recognizing that women were a valuable source of cheap labor, the Park regime even began labeling them as \textit{sanup chonsa} (industrial warriors).

In another information guide published by the Ministry of Labor titled, “The Expertise of Man Power”, a female welder is represented as an exemplar worker even among men. Kim Hyun-ja, appearing between the ages of 35 and 45, is photographed welding a ship part while squatting on the ground. She has very short hair, and from the angle of the photo, it is difficult to determine whether she is physically male or female. The information pertaining to her reads:

\begin{quote}
Mrs. Kim is an exceptional performer. Since passing the test in 1974 which was held for the first time in Korea to recruit female welders, Mrs. Kim devoted herself to the job, realizing it as her calling. She
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{132} Interview conducted 03/08/04. Male, Ph.D. student at the University of Hawai‘i.

\textsuperscript{133} Kim Seung-Kyung, 5.
has twice passed the ABS welding qualification test that is well-known for its difficulty. At her first test, she was the only woman welder to pass the test. Supporting her son, who is attending a technical high school, she feels proud when she sees a huge vessel being launched, knowing that she has made great contributions, side-by-side with her male coworkers.¹³⁴

On the one hand, the Park government was heavily invested in recruiting women into the state labor force. This did not mean, however, Park or any of his officials was interested in emancipating women or allowing them a legitimate identity among men. To do so would have been counterproductive to the state goal of development. Thus, by simultaneously deploying multiple and competing representations of working women, the state managed to create and maintain a necessarily hostile social environment for women workers that ensured masculine supremacy and feminine inferiority. On the one hand, the Park regime continued to profit upon representations of feminine women, which assured the male public of their (women’s) rightful place as subservient wives, mothers, and daughters to their husbands, children, and fathers. Even though they worked in factories, they labored to maintain the private space and institution of family. On the other hand, women were represented as defeminized workers, who wore pant uniforms and hard hats. Their circumstances as heavy industrial workers were exaggerated as commonplace, even though most women worked in light export goods, such as clothing textiles and electronic equipment. The Park regime relied on and manipulated myths of masculinity and femininity to institutionally marginalize women as quasi-laborers. By unleashing gendered signifiers from both conventionally masculine and feminine spectrums and throwing into relief the aspects of women that insinuated them as male (in so far as their

ability to labor publicly), the state was able to rub out signifiers of femininity while leaving in tact their devalued status as wives and mothers.

As Hagen Koo remarks, working class women suffered from a double oppression of sexism and the degradation of manual work.\textsuperscript{135} The psychology of contempt on the part of their oppressors needs closer examination in order to understand why and how such representations of working women created such loathing. Carol Wolkowitz in “The Working Body as Sign” discusses the bourgeois Victorian man’s fascination with the bodies of working class women, particularly those who worked outdoors in masculine, menial jobs. She lends specific insight into how female manual workers became a contested site for gender anxieties.

Overt concern about moral danger, with respect to either the de-sexing of these girls or the way their work and costume led to the revealing of it – either way concern was saturated with disgust. Working class women played on unconscious anxieties. Their dress revealed their sexed bodies and challenged the inevitability of man’s difference from the superiority over the female; the trousers both reveal the artificiality of gender difference and makes evident ‘what happens between their legs’, sexual difference. What was threatening about working women was not simply the challenge to male social and economic privilege but the way fears about their bodies challenged the stability of masculine psychic structure.\textsuperscript{136}

While men were depicted as embodying the positive virtues of labor (ie. Hine’s “Men at Work: Photographic Studies of Men and Machines”), who functioned as the providers for the family, female laborers threatened the very core of the nuclear family, not just because of their ventures into the public work force, but because of the immoral transformation they would undergo by which they simultaneously became defeminized and hypersexual – transformations that are taken as a sign of resistance to the structure of

\textsuperscript{135} Koo, 134.
male sexual legitimacy.

Marx’s concept of alienation as it relates to gender provides explanation for why and how representational control is so powerful for both those doing the representing and those getting represented. In the context of a patriarchal system of representation, men, and male sexuality in particular, come to be alienated in the system of patriarchy, even though the system is normally beneficial to men and subordinate women. Marx believed that it wasn’t just the subordinated groups who became damaged, but the dominant group as well; alienation is the process whereby one becomes a stranger to oneself, and one’s powers range over and against oneself. The point here is that the symbolic violence exercised over women in the name of recreating the patriarchal state did much more than oppress Korean women, but created a system in which men – soldiers, police, factory managers, and fellow male workers - engaged in hyper masculine behavior resulting in a display of anxiety about masculinity. Such behavior exposes the real man’s reality as an achievement, not a biological fact. Through representing women in laboring positions and publicly changing the façade of their roles, men, who were the facilitators of such representation, became threatened by it. This unrealized insecurity and alienation is powerful because it brings all violences, physical, epistemological, etc. back to the subject of representation - women. Representation has unforeseen effects, and within the scope of gender/sexuality relations, has a damaging effect that is material and immaterial. The violences that resulted against women were particularly severe and proactive in their deliverance because “real or fantasized physical

138 MacKinnon, 5.
power becomes more acute when masculinity feels it is being eroded or in crisis". Historical change of the subordinate requires the hegemonic basis and technique to change, if it is not to be altered considerably. Masculinity continues to change, as a moving concept and not of biological fact, as it is an inhabited category. The violences that women experienced at the hands of their fellow male workers, factory bosses, state police, etc. was an indication of the conceptual flux and displacement of what conventionally constituted ‘the masculine’ in society.

Clearly, it can be said that the state was an active sponsor of discrimination against women workers. By publicly demeaning their social status and encouraging militancy among males (a sphere of behavior limited to men only), the state mobilized all males in the subordination of women, even including their male co-workers, not to mention the more obvious factory floor managers and the state police. The power of the state-produced representations of women that played upon gender insecurities were incredible, not only because they mobilized women, but perhaps more importantly because they mobilized men, who, although also state subjects, possessed the power to exploit women and ensure their social degradation. State violence against women was obviously physical, but without a doubt also symbolic in their portrayal of women as either submissive wives and mothers enslaved in their femininity, or defeminized industrial soldiers of the state.

Conclusion

This thesis has largely challenged the idea of monolithic power and of what might be conceived as conventional power. Not only have we discussed that power exists in many forms and that their combined employment wields incredible strength, but we have specifically assessed how the South Korean authoritarian regime of the 1960s and 70s was able to culturally reshape the lives of so many South Koreans through the power of the symbolic. As Michel Foucault reminds us:

"...relations of power are interwoven with other kinds of relations (production, kinship, family, sexuality) for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role... these relations don't take the sole form of prohibition and punishment, but are of multiple forms...[and]...their interconnections delineate general conditions of domination, and this domination is organized into a more-or-less coherent and unitary strategic form ..."141

The intention here was not to communicate that labor and other social forces were kept at bay throughout South Korea's industrial period merely through the cultural reproductive initiatives of the state. Had the Park regime been able to entirely manipulate the process whereby civil society psycho-socially tricked itself into living by the confines and standards prescribed by the state, we would not have seen the formation of such a strong labor class consciousness, or as Pierre Bourdieu would call *habitus.*142 A testament to the strength of cultural oppression, however, can be found in the counter-hegemonic uprisings of subsequent labor protests and even the *Minjung* Movement in 1980s

142 *Habitus,* a concept employed by Pierre Bourdieu, might be best understood as the ‘lived experience’ ‘or the system of modes of perception, of thinking, of appreciation and of action’ as discussed by Chris Jenks in *Cultural Reproduction.*

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The interrogation of the role of state ideology in shaping South Korea’s course of development has been valuable as an explicatory account of the socio-cultural experience of developmental actors and processes of exploitation – that which the developmental state literature tends to either discount altogether or quantify.

The imposed dichotomies of disciplinary knowledge seems to have disjointed and categorized the complexity of events. Moreover, disciplinary knowledge has privileged certain voices over others presenting certain interests and perspectives as ‘fact’ or ‘truth’. In this instance, economists and political economists have almost entirely passed over labor and civil society as a meaningful field for exploration while most sociological works have obscured the complexity of cultural relations by reducing culture to mere traditional practice. If anything, this essay has tried to drive the point that, more than a single event, industrialization is a series of complex and human experiences mediated and antagonized by multiple forms of power and resistance, which result in the perpetual, and often subtle, reproduction of culture. For as Hagen Koo puts it: “Korean workers’ grievances and resentment were derived from multiple sources of oppression rather than simply low wages and poor working conditions, and this was particularly so for women workers. They were not only economically exploited, but also culturally and symbolically oppressed.”

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143 A democratization movement that began in the 1980s in response to state-corporate hegemony. The movement combined with labor protestors to make up a diverse population of participants, including students, intellectuals and white-collar workers.

144 Koo, 16.
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