

The Biopolitic of North Korea: Political Crisis, the Body, and Visual Power

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This essay aims to critically examine body politics, which characterize North Korea as the hyper-feminine—as well as hyper-masculine—nation-state, and to contribute to a historical critique of our current inter-Korean situation, wherein South Korea's cultural superiority to North Korea is unquestionably presumed and legitimized. I discuss what I call the *biopolitical Otherization* of North Korea, which I define as the discursive formation of the incessant purification of degenerate, inferior North Korean populations along the lines of the problematic formation of national belonging. This discursive politics of Otherizing is located within the allegorical composition of eyewitness reports of North Koreans written by South Korean reporters during the historic first official post-war inter-Korea talks—emerging from the “July 4 North-South Joint Communiqué”—held in Pyongyang from 29 August to 2 September 1972, which hinder the subject's ability to deliberate anxieties about national identification.

Keywords: North Korea, allegory, biopolitics, visual power, the body

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