

The Discourse of the Socialist Grand Family Seen through the North Korean Film "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again"*

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This study aimed to know how the "Socialist Grand Family" discourse is expressed in North Korean art films. This study analyzed the North Korean art films "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," which were produced and aired between the 1970s and 1980s. Through the analysis of the two films, the form, change, and content of the North Korean authorities' discourse on socialist consideration were confirmed.

To analyze the two films, the narrative structure analysis method, which is a semiotic analysis method, and Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method were used. As a result of the analysis, it was confirmed that the content of the discourse on the socialist grand family did not change significantly depending on the period, but there was a difference in the focus of the discourse. In addition, it was confirmed that the propaganda about the superiority of the system and *Juche* ideology was strengthened by emphasizing huge structures, not only emphasizing the role of the people in the socialist grand family.

Keywords: North Korean film, North Korean Literary and Art Theory, The Socialist Grand Family Discourse, Our Family's Problem, Discourse Change

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I. Introduction

1. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to find out the content and forms of the discourse of the Socialist Grand Family ("Dae-ga-jeong") that the North Korean authorities want to convey to the citizenry through the North Korean art film "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again." In other words, I would like to examine through film analysis the form of North Korean socialist grand family discourse during the period between the 1960s and the late 1990s, when the discourse of socialist grand families appeared.

The North Korean authorities communicate the authorities' dominant discourse to the residents through literary and artistic works produced based on North Korean literary and art theory. Among the dominant discourses of the North Korean authorities, the socialist grand family theory is a discourse that emphasizes that North Korean society is a family and that the people, who are children, should devote loyalty and filial piety to the father as leader and mother as a party.

The discourse of the Socialist Grand Family, which first appeared in Kim Il-Sung's New Year's address in the 1960s, has become one of the major dominating discourses in North Korea so far and has affected North Korean society. It is known that the discourse of socialist grand family has changed with the times, such as "The Red Grand Family and The Revolutionary Grand Family," since its appearance in the 1960s, and has been emphasized during the fall of socialist countries in the East in the late 1980s and the 1990s.¹

The reason why the North Korean authorities convey the ideology that the authorities are aiming for is to make them "new human beings of the

1 Ministry of Unification North Korea Information Portal, accessed October 25, 2021, https://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/term/viewNkKnwldgDicary.do?pageIndex=1&dicaryId=114&menuId=NK_KNWLDG_DICARY.

Juchetype" and unite people as an organic combination of the leader, party, and the public.² In other words, the North Korean authorities tried to unite North Korean society or the socialist state as a "Socialist Grand Family" by conveying the discourse of the socialist grand family to the residents through films and other literary works. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the changes in the form and content of the socialist grand family discourse revealed in the art film "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" among North Korean films.

The North Korean art film "Our Family's Problem" series is about ten films, including "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," which were produced and broadcast from the 1970s to the 1980s. The "Our Family's Problem" series aired "Our Family's Problem" in 1973, followed by "Our Upstairs Neighbor's Problem" in 1979, and ended the first half of the series with "We Are All One Family" in 1983. Afterward, in 1987, the second half of the series began with "Our Family's Problem Begins Again." The newly started "Our Family's Problem" series is known to have completed production after the airing of "Our Uncle's Family's Problem" in 1988. Among them, this study selected the first screening of "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" as the first film in the newly started series.

Kim Jong-Il published *On the Art of The Cinema* in 1973, and in 1974 he became a political member of the Central Committee of the Party and was virtually confirmed as his father's successor. Considering the time of film production and the rise of Kim Jong-Il, the "Our Family's Problem" series was produced and aired during the period after Kim Jong-Il was confirmed as the successor or during the period of North Korea's "Supreme Leader" status. It is meaningful to analyze the films that Kim Jong-Il produced and broadcasted during the period when he was in the position of the "Supreme Leader" in North Korea to understand North Korean films and the

2 Ministry of Unification North Korea Information Portal, search word: Ideological Control, accessed October 25, 2021, https://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/overview/nkOverview.do?sumryMenuId=MENU_19.

domination theory contained in them. In addition, it is expected that the film analysis produced before the North Korean authorities emphasized the discourse of the socialist grand family will be able to confirm the changes in form, or changes of the discourse through analysis of art films during the period.

One of the preceding studies related to "Our Family's Problem" was a study of the attitudes of the North Korean middle class revealed in the "Our Family's Problem" series.³ This study argues that the North Korean middle class revealed in the "Our Family's Problem" series is similar to the "second society" that can be found in other socialist countries, that is, the market economy and civil society. Introducing the significance of finding the second society is revealed in the "Our Family's Problem" series by presenting the second society as the reason why the process of former socialist countries' transition to capitalism was relatively stable. After that, the possibility of the emergence of a second society in North Korea through changes in North Korean society is highly evaluated.

This study intends to analyze the discourse of the North Korean authorities that appeared in the series of "Our Family's Problem." In this study, Lee sees the *seeds*⁴ of the "Our Family's Problem" series to be faithful to "Continuation Revolutionization and Family Revolutionization."⁵ And considering that "Our Family's Problem" was aired as the second series starting with "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," it is argued that the social problem caused by the appearance of a second society in North Korean society has not been resolved.

3 Myung Ja Lee, "The Second in North Film 'Our Home' Series," *The Korean Journal of Unification Affairs* 19, no. 2 (2007): 403-428.

4 *Seed*: The basic problem that the film scenario writer wants to talk about and the ideological and artistic core of the film; Information Center on North Korea, Ministry of Unification, Characteristics of North Korean Film, accessed January 9, 2021, <https://unibook.unikorea.go.kr/data/movieSummary01>.

5 Myung Ja Lee, "The Second in North Film 'Our Home' Series," 406-407.

2. Literature Review

A previous study regarded "Our Family's Problem" as a film divided into two series and set the standard for "Our Family's Problem Begins Again."⁶ In this study, I also consider "Our Family's Problem" as two series and analyze the first film of the first series, "Our Family's Problem" and the first film of the second series, "Our Family's Problem Begins Again."

Another previous study selected and analyzed "My House of the Eldest Son of a Family Problem" and "Parents of My Son/Daughter-in-law House Problem" from the "Our Family's Problem" series based on Kim Jong-Il's *On the Art of The Cinema*.⁷ Most of the films produced and aired by the North Korean authorities at that time were made for the figure of the "Supreme Leader." However, they claim that the two films selected for this study were made based on the daily life of North Koreans. Therefore, it was possible to confirm the appearance of North Korean society through the two films.

Considering that the two films were produced in the 1980s, it is evaluated that the family films reveal the generational conflicts between the previous generations who experienced the socialist construction period and the generations afterward who did not experience it. Through the conflict between generations in the family revealed in the two films, it can be confirmed that a continuous revolution for the completion of socialism is important. In other words, the North Korean authorities are suggesting through the movie that to achieve socialism in North Korea, the family must be revolutionized.

In this study, the characteristics of the "Our Family's Problem" series were listed and analyzed by comparing them with the guidelines of Kim Jong-Il's *On the Art of The Cinema*. Furthermore, this study aims to examine

6 Myung Ja Lee, "The Second Society in North Film 'Our Home' Series," *The Korean Journal of Unification Affairs* 19, no. 2 (2007): 403-428.

7 Myeongsu Park and Hanna Ahn, "North Korean Family Film Research through the Work of the 'My House Problem' Series: Focused on My House of the Eldest Son of a Family Problem, Parents of My Son/Daughter-in-law House Problem," *Christianity and National Reunification* 11, no. 1 (2020): 71-100.

whether the "Family" of "Family Revolutionization" contained in the "Our Family's Problem" series should be regarded as a "(small) Family" centered on blood ties, such as nuclear family, or an "Extended Family" in "Socialist Grand Family" by expanding it to a North Korean-dominated discourse.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Research Method

To understand the discourses that the authorities would like to present through North Korean films, this study selected two types of analysis methods. One is the narrative structure analysis method, and the other is Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis method.

In the two studies that will be introduced later, Kim studied North Korean documentary films using a narrative structure analysis method. The narrative structure analysis method can be divided into two types. One is an integrated syntagmatic analysis to examine the surface structure of a film, and the other is a paradigmatic analysis to examine the structure.

Kim analyzed North Korean documentary films by using syntagmatic analysis, which divides films into "Opening-Development-Climax-Conclusion (Gi-Seung-Jeon-Gyeol)" in the study.⁸ The period from 1946 to 2011 was divided into four periods, and one documentary film was selected for each period. The four documentary films selected for the analysis were classified by sequence to identify opening, development, climax, and conclusion. As a result, the surface structure of the documentary films produced according to each period could be confirmed.

In another study, Kim tried to understand the ideology that the North Korean authorities wanted to propagate by presenting and educating

8 Seung Kim, "The Characteristics and Changes in the Narrative Structure of North Korean Documentary Films," *The Journal of Literature and Film* 17, no. 1 (2016a): 7-33.

citizens through films by understanding the binary opposition structure of documentary films.⁹ The binary opposition structure identified in this study is "Us: Them = Good: Evil." It was possible to confirm the ideology that "We(us)" are "guardians of the completion of the socialist revolution" and "They(them)" are "objects of overthrow."

This study aims to analyze the North Korean art film "Our Family's Problem" series using two methods of narrative structure analysis methods concerning Kim's research. Through this analysis, it is expected that we can effectively understand the discourse the North Korean authorities were trying to convey to their residents.

This study will use two semiotic analysis methods to analyze the selected films, which are the narrative structure analysis method and Roland Barthes' two levels of analysis method. Semiotic analysis is useful for discovering the meaning inherent in films. Therefore, a semiotic analysis of North Korean art films that propagate the ideology of the authorities to the residents is a suitable research method to find out the meaning inherent in North Korean films.¹⁰

To analyze the contents of videos such as films, the narrative structure of the films, that is, the story, must be dismantled. The narrative structure can be largely classified into surface structure and in-depth structure. The surface structure is a syntagmatic analysis object which can be identified by classifying a series of events according to the time order by the "Opening, Development, Climax, and Conclusion" structure. The in-depth structure can be analyzed by dividing it into a binary opposition of a specific concept as the target of paradigmatic analysis.¹¹ This is shown in a table as follows.

9 Seung Kim, "Ideology of binary opposition within the narrative structure of North Korean documentary films," *Korean Unification Studies* 20 no. 1 (2016b): 87-115.

10 Seung Kim, *North Korean documentary film* (Seoul: Communication Books, 2016c).

11 In Sung Whang, "An Approach to Understanding Television News Narrative," *Media Convergence Research* (1993): 421-441.

〈Table 1〉 Narrative Structure Analysis Method (Whang, 1993)

Narrative Structure Analysis	Surface Structure	Syntagmatic Analysis	Sequence Analysis (Opening-Development-Climax-Conclusion)
	Analysis of the flow and structure of films through sequence analysis.		
	In-deep Structure	Paradigmatic Analysis	Binary Opposition Analysis
	In-depth semantic analysis through binary opposition extraction.		

I would like to introduce syntagmatic analysis and paradigmatic analysis separately. First, syntagmatic analysis is a method of analyzing films. The structure of "Opening, Development, Climax, and Conclusion (Gi-Seung-Jeon-Gyeol)" is divided and analyzed according to the contents of the main sequence, the narrative structure of the film, and the flow and structure of the film.

〈Table 2〉 Syntagmatic Analysis Method (Kim, 2016)

Sequence	Contents	Structure
1		Opening (Gi)
	↓	
2		Development (Seung)
	↓	
3		Climax (Jeon)
	↓	
4		Conclusion (Gyeol)

Next, paradigmatic analysis is a method of finding and analyzing the binary opposition in the films. It is useful when used with syntagmatic analysis because it is possible to find out the in-depth meaning of the film through paradigmatic analysis. An example of a binary opposition analysis is shown in the table below.

〈Table 3〉 Example of Paradigmatic Analysis Method (Kim, 2016)

Binary Opposition	
Party or Supreme Leader	People
Parents	Children
Grace	Loyalty and Filial Piety

After the narrative structure analysis method, this study will try to see the in-depth meaning of the films by employing Roland Barthes' two-level semiotic analysis method. This analysis method is a well-known method for analyzing pictures or posters' in-depth meaning.

Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotics method was modified and developed under the influence of Ferdinand de Saussure, who first discussed semiotics and structuralist linguistics. In this study, I tried to analyze the structure of two films using Roland Barthes' two levels of signification. Through this, it is intended to understand how the "myth" prevalent in North Korean society interacts with the film to read the discourse of the socialist great family.

Before looking at Barthes' theory, I would like to briefly introduce the theory by Ferdinand de Saussure that influenced it. In his theoretical work, Ferdinand de Saussure distinguished between langue and parole. Langue means the structure, grammar, and rules of language and social commitments shared by members of the language. Parole refers to the language spoken by an individual. Therefore, it is necessary to study parole to know the langue and vice versa.¹²

Saussure further presents the concepts of signifier and signified. A representative example of Saussure's concept of signifier and signified is "dog." It is a social commitment to look at a dog and call it a "dog." If we choose to call a dog a "god" rather than a "dog," the nature of what we call a "god" does not change, but a "dog" is no longer a "dog" but a "god." For

12 Victoria D. Alexander et al., *Sociology of the Arts* (Gyeonggi: Sallim, 2020).

example, "dog" is a signifier, and the object we call such is signified. In this way, language is made by the promise of the members of society through the concept of signifier and signified.

This concept of Saussure's signifier and signified is deepened by Roland Barthes and develops into language level and myth level. As shown in Table 4 below, the signifier and signified exist at the language level to create the first level. The sign becomes a new signifier at the myth level by combining it with what it signifies to create a new sign. At this time, it can be confirmed that culture meets a mythical system in society and creates a new meaning, which means a new sign at the myth level. Roland Barthes suggests that this myth in society should be carefully understood correctly.

〈Table 4〉 Roland Barthes' Two Levels of Signification (Roland Barthes, 1972)

Level 1 Language	Signifier	Signified	Signifies	Level 2 Myth
	Sign			
	Signifier			
	Sign			

This study aims to use Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method also. This analysis of the two films, "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," is intended to understand how two films are read by meeting the myth system in society in the first analysis of meaningful actions presented by two films.

2. North Korean Socialist Grand Family Discourse

North Korean socialist discourse on the Grand Family is thought to have started with Kim Il-Sung's New Year's address in the 1960s, but in 1952, Kim Il-sung referred to the concept of a "Grand Family," which considered the entire socialist country as a family.¹³ Before Kim Il-Sung's New Year's

address in 1962, the Socialist Grand Family discourse presented by the North Korean authorities referred to the concept of "The Grand Family" like the "Grand Family" presented by the socialist states. Currently, the North Korean authorities present the idea that North Korean society is not a "Grand Family" but a member of a "Grand Family." This perception can be confirmed through the articles of the *Rodong Sinmun* during the period, from an article in 1957 that used the term "Grand family in the Socialist camp" to an article in 1959 that mentions that "the Chosun people are a powerful member of the Socialist Grand Family."¹⁴

From Kim Il-Sung's 1962 New Year's Day, the "Grand Family" in the "Socialist Grand Family" defined by the North Korean authorities has changed. Before the New Year's address, North Korean authorities also regarded socialist countries as a "Grand Family," similar to defining "Grand Family" in existing socialist states. However, after the New Year's address, North Korea's special "Socialist Grand Family" discourse, which is North Korean society, can be confirmed. As mentioned above, the "Socialist Grand Family," which can be found in the article of the *Rodong Sinmun* before 1962, is a concept that includes all socialist countries, and North Korea is only one of the members of the "Grand Family." On the other hand, in the articles from the *Rodong Sinmun* since 1962, the "Socialist Grand Family" means North Korean society. It can be confirmed that "Grand Family" means North Korean society with "our society, our country" in the articles from *Rodong Sinmun* since 1989.¹⁵ Table 5 below shows the changes in the "Grand Family" concept.

13 Il Sung Kim, "Proletarian internationalism and the struggle of the Chosun people," April 25, 1952; *Kim Il Sung Collection 7* (Pyongyang: Workers' Party of Korea Publishing House, 1980).

14 *Rodong Sinmun*, July 7, 1957; *Rodong Sinmun*, August 5, 1959.

15 *Rodong Sinmun*, November 3, 1989; *Rodong Sinmun*, October 8, 1992; *Rodong Sinmun* July 1, 1993; *Rodong Sinmun*, December 27, 2003, etc.

**〈Table 5〉 Changes in the Concept of North Korea's Grand Family:
As of the 1962 New Year's Address (Source by author)**

Before the New Year's address in 1962	After the New Year's address in 1962
Similar to the concept of "Grand Family" presented by the Socialist countries	Present the concept of a North Korean style "Grand Family"
Socialist countries = Grand Family ¹⁶ North Korea = One of the Grand Family members	North Korea = Grand Family ¹⁷

Until Kim Jong-Un became North Korea's "Supreme Leader," the socialist grand family discourse claimed by the North Korean authorities is a discourse based on the principle of collectivism.¹⁸ According to the collectivist principle of North Korea, an individual should first pursue the achievement of the collective family called society by belonging to North Korean society rather than achieving his or her personal goals. From this perspective, the North Korean authorities emphasize that they are not only individuals in traditional families based on blood but also members of the "Grand Family" centered on the Supreme Leader and are members of society.¹⁹

The discourse of the socialist grand family, which the North Korean authorities have argued, until recently, is a concept that individuals belong to a family connected by blood but also belong to the "Grand Family" of North Korean society. The discourse of the socialist grand family which the North Korean authorities have claimed until recently is like the relationship between father, mother, and child in the "(small) Family" that led to the bloodline, the relationship between the Supreme leader, party, and the people in the North Korean socialist "Grand Family."²⁰ Therefore,

¹⁶ *Rodong Sinmun*, July 13, 1957.

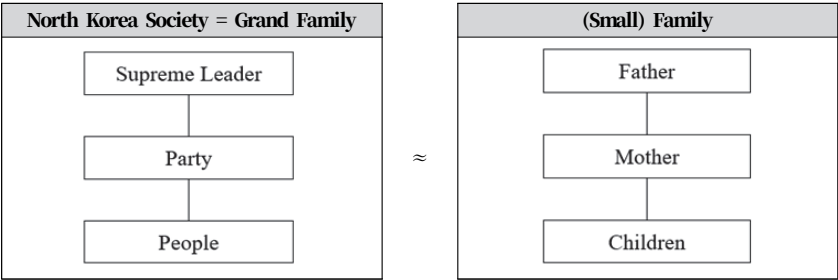
¹⁷ *Rodong Sinmun*, November 3, 1989; *Rodong Sinmun*, December 27, 2003.

¹⁸ Ministry of Unification, *Understanding North Korea 2021* (Seoul: Ministry of Unification, 2021); Il Sung Kim, *Kim Il Sung Collection 15* (Pyongyang: Workers' Party of Korea Publishing House, 1981).

¹⁹ S. Anne et al, *Reference to the Professor of Social Ethics (Third Grade of Elementary-Middle School)* (Pyongyang: Education Book Publishing House, 2013).

the North Korean authorities insist on the logic that "people," who are children in the "Grand Family," should serve the father of the "Grand Family," which means "Supreme Leader," and pay loyalty to the mother "Party," just as the (small) family pays loyalty to the father and mother. The concept of the North Korean-style "Socialist Grand Family" discourse is schematized in Table 6.

〈Table 6〉 The Socialist Grand Family Discourse²¹



The content of the North Korean socialist grand family discourse changes over time. The change in the contents of the socialist grand family discourse can be seen along with the process of ideologicalizing the discourse by the North Korean authorities. The socialist grand family discourse accepted the Soviet Union concept of a socialist grand family and transformed it into a North Korean style, and it became the dominant discourse of the North Korean authorities. Moon presents the socialist grand family discourse from the emergence to changes and the discourse's political implications.²² Through this study, it can be confirmed that the North Korean authorities have become and have used this opportunity to

20 National Institute for Unification Education, *North Korea Knowledge Dictionary* (Seoul: National Institute for Unification Education, 2016).
21 Ministry of Unification North Korea Information Portal, search word: Socialist Grand Family Discourse, accessed December 5, 2021, <https://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/term/viewNkKnwldgDicary.do?pageIndex=1&dicaryId=114>.
22 J. S. Moon, "Study on the Political Transition of the Theory of the Large Family in North Korea," *Korean Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 3 (2017): 49-68.

change North Korea into a family state through domestic revolutionization and socio-political organism theory. In particular, the North Korean authorities emphasized the need to "revolutionize the whole society" from the end of the 1960s and emphasized that families based on blood ties should be revolutionized.

The (small) family revolutionization, which is the basic unit of the socialist grand family revolution, can be confirmed through Kim Il-Sung's discourse in 1970 as the beginning of the "revolutionization of the whole society and becoming working class." Kim Il-Sung suggests achieving the family revolutionization based on blood relations and then revolutionizing the division, the working group, and the People's Group.²³ In other words, the revolution of the family connected by blood leads to the division group, the working group, and the people's class, leading to the socialist grand family revolution. Based on this, the (small) family revolution was linked to the "Grand Family" revolution, and the North Korean authorities became a family state and a socialist grand family.²⁴

The fact that the North Korean authorities have ideologicalized the problem of (small) family revolution can also be confirmed through Kim Jong-Il's collections. Kim Jong-Il emphasizes that all members of society should be educated and reformed to fit the socialist working class. To refine and reshape members, it is argued that the "outdated remnants of thought" in people's heads must be overcome and revolutionized, which can be solved through ideological culture and ideological struggle through works of art.²⁵

23 Il Sung Kim, "A Report on the Total Business of the Central Committee at the 5th Congress of the Workers' Party of Democratic People's Republic Korea," in *Kim Il Sung Collection 25* (Pyongyang: Workers' Party of Korea Publishing House, 1983).

24 J. S. Moon, "Study on the Political Transition of the Theory of the Large Family in North Korea," *Korean Journal of Political Science* 25, no. 3 (2017): 49-68.

25 Jong Il Kim, "Let's create more revolutionary films reflecting socialist reality – a discourse with writers and directors, June 18, 1970," in *Kim Jong-Il Collection 2* (Pyongyang: Workers' Party of Korea Publishing House, 1970).

Kim Jong-Il mentions to writers and artists who are involved in film production that they "must create a lot of revolutionary and militant films that can actively contribute to the revolutionization and proletarianization of the entire society by establishing the party's monolithic ideology system." At the same time, he emphasizes making a film about the "(small) Family Revolutionization" issue. In other words, to "revolutionize and proletarianize the whole society," it was suggested that the residents should achieve the (small) family revolution by making films about the problem of home revolutionization.

This study aims to analyze the films produced and aired by the North Korean authorities for "family revolutionization" to examine the content and change of the discourse on the socialist grand family, one of the dominant discourses of the North Korean authorities. The North Korean authorities produce and broadcast films according to the literary and art theory described above. In other words, North Korea produces films based on the authorities' governing discourse to educate its residents on the norms of the authorities. Therefore, it is appropriate to analyze films produced in North Korea to confirm the authorities' discourse on governance in situations where North Korean society cannot be seen, experienced, and analyzed directly.

The discourse of the socialist grand family, which regards North Korean society as a big family, a "Grand Family," is known to have been emphasized during the "Arduous March" period, which was a severe economic crisis in the 1990s. Following the conflict between China and the Soviet Union in the 1980s, North Korea suffered political difficulties both inside and outside the country with the death of Kim Il-Sung in 1994. Under these circumstances, North Korea, which suffered from natural disasters such as floods and droughts, has suffered serious economic difficulties since the mid-1990s and tried to solve the problem by emphasizing the unity of North Korean society. To this end, North Korean authorities intended to unite the "leader-party-people" by strengthening the discourse of the "Socialist Grand Family."

Many North Korean researchers claimed that North Korea would collapse if it did not overcome the "Arduous March." Nevertheless, North Korea has maintained its system to be relatively stable until 2022. Despite various difficulties, there will be various factors North Korea was able to use to maintain its regime. Among the various factors, this study aims to examine the discourse that unites society and the discourse of the "Socialist Grand Family." Unlike previous studies, the discourse on the socialist grand family emerged, but before the discourse was emphasized, it was intended to find out what contained the discourse of the socialist grand family. Through this study, it is expected it will help to understand the socialist grand family discourse in the 1990s.

III. Semiotic Analysis of the North Korean Film "Our Family's Problem" Series

The "Our Family's Problem" series was a series of art films produced and aired by the "Chosun 2.8 Arts and Film Studio" from 1973 to 1988.²⁶ The first film, "Our Family's Problem," was produced and aired in 1973. The second episode, "Our Upstairs Neighbor's Problem," was produced and aired in 1979. It seemed that the "Our Family's Problem" series came to an end with the production of "We Are All One Family" in 1983, but the second half of the series was released with the airing of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" in 1987. After that, it is known that the production of the series "Our Family's Problem" was stopped as of 2022, after "Our Uncle's Family's Problem" aired in 1988.²⁷

The "Our Family's Problem" series stopped production in the middle, but the reason why it is viewed as the same series is not only because the titles are similar but also because they have common characteristics for

26 Korean Central News Agency, *North Korean Yearbook 1974* (volume one) (Pyongyang: Korean Central News Agency, 1974).

27 Encyclopedia of Korean Culture, search word: Our Family's Problem, accessed December 6, 2021, <http://encykoea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Item/E0074407>.

the characters. The main characters of the first film, "Our Family's Problem," are the post office director and his wife Gil-Soon. And in the other series of "Our Family's Problem," the main characters are the couple's relatives or neighbors. Therefore, the second half of the series, such as "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" and "Our Uncle's Family's Problem," which started production and airing after the previous one was released, can also be classified as part of the "Our Family's Problem" series.

The "Our Family's Problem" series is known to have been written by Lee Hee-Chan, a representative scenario writer in North Korea. Lee is known to have written a scenario with the theme of the family revolution in North Korea. Lee's films are evaluated as instilling socialist lifestyles in people with humorous laughter and criticism.²⁸ In other words, Lee could be regarded as an excellent scenario writer in presenting socialist living culture norms presented by North Korean authorities through films.

Lee wrote scenarios for the "Our Family's Problem" series based on Kim Il-Sung's 1970 speech, "Our party members and workers should struggle to transform themselves into communists and revolutionize their families. The leadership groups especially should take the lead in revolutionizing themselves and their families."²⁹ Through the speech that Lee referenced when writing the scenario, it can be confirmed that Kim Il-Sung places the responsibility for the social revolution on individuals by expanding from being responsible for the family revolution based on his or her blood ties. In addition, according to the text of the "Literature and Arts Dictionary," the "Our Family's Problem" series is evaluated as "the textbook of family revolutionization, the mirror of life."³⁰ Therefore, it can

28 20th Century North Korean Art and Culture Dictionary, search word: Lee Hee-Chan, accessed February 6, 2022, <http://nks.ac.kr/Word/View.aspx?id=1500>.

29 Il Sung Kim, "A Report on the Total Business of the Central Committee at the 5th Congress of the Workers' Party of Democratic People's Republic Korea," in *Kim Il Sung Collection 25* (Pyongyang: Workers' Party of Korea Publishing House, 1983); Myung Ja Lee, "Series: The Family Revolution and the Middle Class of North Korea," KBS Unification Broadcasting Research, April 30, 2010, accessed June 28, 2022, <https://office.kbs.co.kr/tongil/archives/35505>.

be guessed from the fact that the "Our Family's Problem" series contains the importance of the family revolution and was produced based on the discourse of the socialist grand family.

1. Analysis of the Narrative Structure of the "Our Family's Problem (1973)" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again (1987)"

(1) Analysis of the Narrative Structure of "Our Family's Problem"

The main characters in "Our Family's Problem," the post office director and Gil-Soon, make mistakes repeatedly in the film. For example, Gil-Soon asks her husband's employee to install a phone without her husband's knowledge when her husband, the post office director, fails to install a phone in her house. The post office director knows that his wife Gil-Soon's behavior was wrong, but rather than correcting it, he is swayed by Gil-Soon's words.

First, to confirm the surface structure that is apparent among the narrative structure analysis methods, I would like to analyze "Our Family's Problem" through syntagmatic analysis. By dividing the contents of "Our Family's Problem" by sequence and analyzing the flow and structure of the film, it can be expressed in Table 7 below.

30 Science Encyclopedia General Publishing House, *Literature and Arts Dictionary* (Pyongyang: Science Encyclopedia General Publishing House, 1972).

〈Table 7〉 Syntagmatic Analysis of "Our Family's Problem" (Source by author)

Sequence	Contents	Structure
1	Gil-Soon wants to receive great treatment from the post office staff because she is the post office director's wife.	Opening
↓		
2	2.1. The post office director who has not worked hard to learn political studies, such as sleeping during learning hours at work, puts the arrangement of his studying duties on his subordinates. 2.2. His wife, Gil Soon, asks the post office worker, who is her husband's subordinate, to install a phone in the house secretly and use it personally. 2.3. Gil-Soon lies and uses a postal station car personally. 2.4. Gil-Soon likes to decorate her appearance in a luxurious way. 2.5. Gil-Soon alienates the " <i>Inminban</i> " ³¹ and her husband's colleagues. 2.6. The post office director and his wife Gil-Soon are not interested in the education and cultivation of their children.	Development
↓		
3	3.1. The post office director is unable to properly educate and cultivate his wife due to a lack of political learning. 3.2. Gil-Soon personally uses the phone, which disrupts the postal service of the post office director. 3.3. Newspaper distribution was disrupted by his wife Gil-Soon, who used the post office car personally. 3.4. Gil-Soon was unable to pay back her numerous debts after owing them to various places. 3.5. The post office director does not realize that Gil-Soon is driving a wedge, creating conflicts, and interfering with the company's work. 3.6. The children of the post office director and Gil-Soon lack learning at school because they don't go home often and don't go to school.	Climax
↓		
4	After realizing his errors, he reflected on himself and worked hard on his wife's culture and education. Gil-Soon was also self-reflective on her errors.	Conclusion

³¹ Inminban: It is the smallest administrative unit in North Korea and operates as a neighborhood watch that monitors its members (People's Unit); The Human Rights Policy Division of the National Human Rights Commission of Korea, *Korean-English Glossary of North Korean Human Right Terms* (Seoul: Neulpum Plus, 2016), 199.

As can be seen through the song lyrics from "Our Family's Problem," Gil-Soon has "outdated thoughts" that she wants to be treated as a high-ranking person because her husband was the post office director.³² Gil-Soon commits wrong behavior because she is trapped in "outdated thoughts." For example, using the authority of the husband to set up a phone at home and use it personally, or going to get a distribution of food using the post office's car by lying, she repeats the wrong behaviors. In addition, the film shows various conflict situations in families that do not properly care for their children, such as leaving a young child at home alone and going to a hair salon. As can be seen in Table 7, when the film is analyzed syntagmatically, it could be assumed that the cause of the conflict is the lack of political learning of the post office director, who is Gil-Soon's husband. The fault of the post office director can be confirmed through the binary opposition analysis below.

The film "Our Family's Problem" can be analyzed in a syntagmatic way, as shown in Table 7 above, as well as in-depth analysis through a binary opposition structure, as shown in Table 8 below. The binary opposition most clearly revealed in "Our Family's Problem" is the confrontation between the family of the post office director, who is the main character, and the family of the edit-bureau director who lives downstairs.

The main characters, the post office director and his wife Gil-Soon, continue to cause problematic behavior in the film. On the other hand, the edit-bureau director and his wife, who live downstairs, do not cause problematic behavior. In addition, they are leading an exemplary life enough to be selected as a model family for hygiene. After the edit-bureau director saw the conflict between the post office director and his wife, he continues to "revolutionize" his wife by saying, "Don't think about it as someone else's housework; you should do better whether you go to work or join the *Inminban*." On the other hand, the post office director cannot do

32 "That lady who turns around with nothing to do/Where did you get such a habit?/ Outdated thoughts are growing up and running wild/Does her husband know what she's doing?": Some of the lyrics of the insert song for "Our Family's Problem."

"home revolutionization" properly. For example, he is not criticizing his wife, even though he knows his wife's faults, but rather exacerbates them.

〈Table 8〉 Paradigmatic Analysis of "Our Family's Problem" (Source by author)

Binary Opposition	
Post Office Director's Family	Edit-Bureau Director's Family
Discord within the family	Peaceful family
Marital conflict	Harmony between husband and wife
The husband is not good at revolutionizing the family	The husband is good at revolutionizing the family
Husband interferes with company work	Husband works well at the company
Strong self-assertive wife	Calm and quiet wife
Poor relationship between children and parents	A good relationship between children and parents
Hygiene issues were pointed out	Selected as a hygienic model family

Through the analysis of "Our Family's Problem," if individual political learning is insufficient, it can cause the home revolutionization to not properly take effect, and the resulting "(small) family problem" could be caused by the problem of the "Socialist Grand Family," which is a social problem. It could cause a great loss in achieving the revolution of socialist state construction. In addition, the North Korean authorities are informing the residents through the film that it is their duty as members of the "Socialist Grand Family" to point out the problems rather than leaving things as it is on it as a problem with other families so that they can reflect on themselves when a problem arises.

(2) Analysis of the Narrative Structure of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again"

The film "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" begins with the misunderstanding that Sung-Hoon, who had given the post office director a guarantee of his membership to join the Workers' Party in the past, acted in a "Gongmyeong-principle"³³ way. Sung-Hoon intends to provide

delicious beverages to the people through a new technology that makes "liquid carbonation" using factory smoke. However, Tae-Sik is reluctant to use new technologies, worrying in advance about the dangers that may arise in building a liquid carbonation factory. Despite Tae-Sik's objection, Sung-Hoon conducts various experiments to develop new technologies with the support of others. Then, an accident occurs in the middle of building a liquid carbonated factory, and Tae-Sik, the on-site manager, passes his fault blames to Sung-Hoon and tries to bribe the "Jido-bureau" director to cover his mistake. Upon learning of Tae-Sik's behavior, the post office director greatly criticizes Tae-Sik and reflects on himself for misunderstanding Sung-Hoon. And while watching Sung-Hoon work hard for society and her fellow citizens and achieve results, the film ends by saying that a person like Sung-Hoon is necessary for this society.

To syntagmatically analyze the storyline of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," introduced earlier, it can be expressed as shown in Table 8 below when divided by sequence. Through Table 9, we can find the negative aspect of Tae-Sik who tries to avoid his responsibility. Tae-Sik does not try to solve the problem of people's lives but also passes the responsibility on to Sung-Hoon, who tries to solve the problem of people's living when the problem emerges. The North Korean authorities enact slogans in the Constitution such as "one for all, all for one" because they value the principle of collectivism. However, Tae-Sik's behavior is a problem that violates the spirit of collectivism. The post office director saw Tae-Sik's behavior and criticized him so that he could realize his mistakes. In the end, Tae-Sik realizes his own faults and looks back at his actions.

33 "Gongmyeong-principle" is a perspective of thought and business attitude that puts forward more of one's personal merit, honor, and success than the society, which means one cares more about their personal interests rather than "Socialist Grand Family's" interests; Social Science Publishing House, *Korean Dictionary (Enhanced Version) 1* (Pyongyang: Social Science Publishing House, 2017), 489.

(Table 9) Syntagmatic Analysis of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" (Source by author)

Sequence	Contents	Structure
1	Aim to build a liquid carbonation factory in the city.	Opening
↓		
2	The conditions are not good for making a liquid carbonation factory.	Development
	Tae-Sik wants to avoid the responsibility of building a liquid carbonation factory in case of an accident after considering various conditions.	
	Sung-Hoon works hard using his technology to achieve a result in the middle of building a liquid carbonation factory.	
↓		
3	Tae-Sik tried to take credit for Sung-Hoon's achievements with his achievements, but suddenly an explosion occurred.	Climax
	Tae-Sik visited a "Jido-bureau" director with a bribe to cover up the explosion problem.	
	Sung-Hoon criticizes himself in front of people regarding the explosion and tries to solve the problem.	
	The post office director found out the selfish nature of Tae-Sik.	
	Tae-Sik tries to blame the explosion on Sung-Hoon, and people criticize Tae-Sik.	
↓		
4	Finally, Tae-Sik realized his fault.	Conclusion
	The post office director looks back on himself through Tae-Sik.	

The biggest conflict in the "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," which was examined through syntagmatic analysis, is the conflict between Tae-Sik and Sung-Hoon. Sung-Hoon, who is expressed as a positive person, is a person who keeps challenging himself to make residents' life makes better even if they are criticized by others due to a lack of. On the other hand, Tae-Sik is a negative person who puts his safety first and prefers to be complacent rather than challenging himself. In addition, Tae-Sik continues to engage in negative behavior, such as bribing the "Jido-bureau" director to cover his responsibilities. The two characters are seen as having a binary oppositional structure. The binary opposition structure of Sung-Hoon and Tae-Sik can be classified below in Table 10.

〈Table 10〉 Paradigmatic Analysis of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" (Source by author)

Binary Opposition	
Tae-Sik	Sung-Hoon
Trying to pass the responsibility on to others	Trying to take responsibility for himself
He refuses to take on a challenge if he thinks it might be dangerous (Complacency with reality).	Challenge at risk (Challenge to solve real-life problems)
Complacency for personal safety	Working for society
Disbelief in the party	Faith in the party
Trying to solve a problem by giving a bribe	Self-criticizing to solve problems

The North Korean authorities suggest becoming a person like Sung-Hoon through "Our Family's Problem Begins Again." In addition, the post office director mentions the problem of Sung-Hoon is the problem of "Our Family's problem" because they suffered together during the war with Sung-Hoon.³⁴ It means Sung-Hoon and the post office director are not an actual family but think as a family.

In addition, the post office director, who sees Tae-Sik's problem as "Our Family's problem" and tries to solve it, once again emphasizes that he is a family member, saying he is a distant relative of Tae-Sik. For example, the post office director mentioned that his brother and Tae-Sik's brother met and talked about their family and found out that their grandfathers are about five degrees of kinship by blood.³⁵ The fact that grandfathers are five degrees of kinship means they are more than 8 degrees of kinship with each other. It means they are literally strangers.

Tae-Sik, Sung-Hoon, and the post office director are hardly considered a family, given that the 8th cousin or older is far enough to be considered living in the South according to the Constitution of the Republic of Korea.

34 Gil-Soon: No, but this isn't our family's problem. Post office director: Why isn't this our family's problem? When my friends who suffered during the war have problems in social life now, this is all our family's problem. The problem with our family!; "Our Family's Problem Begins Again (1987)"

35 Post office director: We're not all strangers, right? (...) Tae-Sik: I heard that grandfathers became almost fifth cousins.

However, in this film, they call each other "our family" and consider each other as one family.

Through this line from the post office director, we can confirm the North Korean authorities' discourse on socialist consideration, which sees North Korean society as a big family, "our family," and expresses the problem of society as an "our family's problem." On the other hand, "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" emphasizes throughout the film that people who believe in the party and follow the authorities and residents should be seen and learned from. Especially this difference can be seen in the binary opposition structure of Table 10 and the last scene of the film.

In Table 10, Sung-Hoon takes the risk to help the lives of other residents, takes responsibility for making mistakes, and sincerely criticizes himself. According to the film, these actions were possible because he trusted and followed the party. However, Tae-Sik did not believe in the party, so he did not try to take risks and did selfish acts that only caused worry about his safety. The fact that the cause of problematic behavior is seen as a difference in belief in the party shows that the film emphasizes that the residents must learn from Sung-Hoon, who believes in the party and does his best for society.

2. Analysis of the "Our Family's Problem (1973)" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again (1987)" Using Roland Barthes' Two Levels of the Semiotic Method

Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method are mostly used to analyze photos and posters. However, the "Our Family's Problem" series posters were not released. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the scene which is considered the most important in the film and in which the title appears.

(1) Analysis of Roland Barthes' two levels of the Semiotic Method of the "Our Family's Problem"

First, I would like to look at the scene where the title of the film "Our Family's Problem" is referenced, as shown in Figure 1 below.

〈Figure 1〉 "Our Family's Problem" Title Scene (Korean Central Television)



In Figure 1 above, we can see the post office director and Gil-Soon, and above them, we can see the title: "Our Family's Problem." As discussed earlier, in the film "Our Family's Problem," Gil-Soon is the "family's problem" that is revealed on the surface of the film. The reason why Gil-Soon is a "problem" in the family is because of her behavior. Gil-Soon causes problems by not being careful about what she says, such as lying or alienating the post office director, who is her husband, from the post office workers.

"Our family's problems" were expressed in the above Figure 1. The title scene shows us Gil-Soon continuing to talk to her husband and the post office director, even though her husband seems to not be listening to her. These signs can be summarized as shown in Table 11 below.

〈Table 11〉 Analysis of Roland Barthes' Semiotic Method of "Our Family's Problem"
Title Scene: First Level (Source by author)

1 st level Signifier	1 st level Signified
A man and a woman. A man and a woman sitting with their backs to each other. The title, "Our Family's Problem."	The appearance of a married couple. The wife whose husband turns his back on her but keeps talking.
1 st level Sign	
The wife who doesn't care what she says and keeps talking is "Our Family's Problem."	

As we can see, Gil-Soon's husband, the post office director, shows he is sitting with his back to her. This scene seems to mean the appearance embodies the husband who is indifferent to "Our Family's Problem." I will try to analyze this sign in connection with the signifier of Roland Barthes' second-level mythological theory. For this analysis, it is necessary to know the social situation of North Korea at the time of film production.

Kim Jong-Il was so interested in film production that he published *On the Art of the Cinema* in 1973. Based on this interest, Kim Jong-Il did on-the-spot guidance related to the film production several times. Among them, he mentioned the importance of making a film about the family revolution after seeing the production of "Our Family's Problem" during his 1972 on-the-spot guidance. In the same year, Kim Jong-Il also emphasized the cultivation of housewives, who are called "Gadu-Women." In detail, he emphasized the need to root out individualistic and selfish ideas from the heads of housewives through the family revolution. (Kim, 1972)

In addition, according to the "Literature and Art Dictionary," the series of "Our Family's Problem" is becoming a textbook and a mirror of life for the family revolution. Through this, it could be confirmed that the *seed* of "Our Family's Problem" is the family revolution. Based on that, the second level of analysis can be performed as shown in Table 12 below.

〈Table 12〉 Analysis of Roland Barthes' Semiotic Method of "Our Family's Problem"
Title Scene: Second Level (Source by author)

1 st level Sign	
The wife who doesn't care what she says and keeps talking is "Our Family's Problem."	
2 nd level Signifier	2 nd level Signified
The wife is "Our Family's Problem," and her husband is indifferent to "Our Family's Problem."	The <i>seed</i> of "Our Family's Problem" film is the family revolution.
2 nd level Sign	
A husband who didn't revolutionize his wife and turned away indifferently from her and the family's problem is "Our Family's Problem."	
The husband should revolutionize the family to correct his wife's problems.	

As we can see, "Our Family's Problem" tries to show how important the family revolution is. And this film emphasized the role of the father and husband in the family revolution. The *seed* of the film is that if the husband or father is indifferent to the family revolution, this will arise as a problem in the "(small) family," And the (small) family's problem could become the problem of the "Socialist Grand Family," as we could see in the above narrative analysis.

(2) Analysis of Roland Barthes' Two Levels of the Semiotic Method of the "Our Family's Problem Begins Again"

Second, I would like to look at the scene where the film's title is "Our Family's Problem Begins Again." The film title appears in Figure 2 below.

〈Figure 2〉 "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" Title Scene (Korean Central Television)



In Figure 2 above, we can see the tall buildings. It can be confirmed through the film's plot that this is the apartment where the post office director and Gil-Soon live. And we can see the title of the film "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" over the picture of tall buildings. Unlike in Figure 1, the title scene of the film in Figure 2 does not clearly reveal what the problem is. Therefore, I would like to analyze the film title scene by using Roland Barthes' two levels of signification method to identify our family's new problem.

〈Table 13〉 Analysis of Roland Barthes' Semiotic Method of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" Title Scene: First Level (Source by author)

1 st level Signifier	1 st level Signified
Tall buildings. The title, "Our Family's Problem Begins Again."	Tall buildings which look like apartments.
1 st level Sign	
The tall buildings are the apartment in which the protagonist, the post office director, and Gil-Soon live.	

As we can see in Figure 2, there are tall buildings that look like apartments under the title scene. It can be confirmed that high-rise apartment building is where the ordinary protagonists, the post office director and his wife, Gil-Soon live. This can be seen through the first-level analysis. And then, a new point can be found after the second-level analysis. Considering that the film was first screened in 1987, a second-level analysis can be performed, as shown in Table 14 below, by referring to the North Korean social situation at the time.

〈Table 14〉 Analysis of Roland Barthes' Semiotic Method of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" Title Scene: Second Level (Source by author)

1 st level Sign	
The tall buildings are the apartment in which the protagonist, the post office director, and Gil-Soon live.	
2 nd level Signifier	2 nd level Signified
"Our Family's Problem Begins Again" begins at a high-rise apartment where an ordinary protagonist couple, the post office director and Gil-Soon live.	North Korea makes propaganda about its regime's excellence through buildings.
2 nd level Sign	
Even ordinary couples could live in high-rise buildings in North Korea. It shows North Korea's high level of economic development and outstanding architectural skills.	

The film "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" was first released in 1987. North Korean authorities put a lot of effort into creating new high-rise apartment streets in the 1980s. Representative high-rise apartment streets created by North Korean authorities in the 1980s are Chang-Gwang Street

and Mun-Su Street. Chang-Gwang Street's first stage of construction was completed in 1980, and the second stage of construction was completed in 1985. Mun-Su Street is in the Dae-Dong River area of Pyongyang and was built in 1983 when a residential district was developed in the Mun-Su area. It is known that a 20 to 30-story high-rise building was built in Pyongyang at the time.

Judging from the fact that there was a competition for the regime between North and South Korea in 1980, the North Korean authorities tried to promote the superiority of the regime by building such structures. It is also seen from the fact that in the early 1990s, Kim Jong-Il created the theory of "*Juche* architecture" to promote the superiority of the *Juche* ideology.³⁶

With this aim, Kim Jong-Il built structures from the 1980s to the 1990s based on the "*Juche*-architecture" theory. Among the structures built at that time were Arc de Triomphe de Kim Il-Sung, which was built in 1982; the *Juche* Tower, built in 1982; and the Monument to the Party Founding, built in 1995. All three tall and large structures are designed to show the greatness of *Juche* Ideology, which is their own ideology, and the success of the socialist planned economy.

Therefore, as can be seen from Table 14 above, the North Korean authorities wanted to inform through the scene that even ordinary people could live in high-rise buildings. This can be analyzed as strong propaganda to promote the superiority of the system through North Korea's high economic growth and advanced architectural technology. Consequently, through the above analysis, it can be confirmed that "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" tried to contain the content of educating people about the socialist grand family discourse, but it was a film that emphasized the propaganda of the system.

36 Jung Il Kim, *On the Art of Architecture* (Pyongyang: Workers' Party of Korea Publishing House, 1992).

IV. Discourses on the Socialist Grand Family seen through North Korean Films

This study aims to investigate the contents of socialist grand family discourses through the analysis of the narrative structure and Roland Barthes' two levels of analysis method of "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again." The narrative structure analysis was conducted in two ways, sequence analysis and binary opposition structure analysis.

1. A Semiotic Analysis of "Our Family's Problem (1973)"

First, the surface narrative structure of the film was identified through the sequence analysis of "Our Family's Problems." In "Our Family's Problem," Gil-Soon, with "outdated thoughts," continues to make various mistakes. At this time, "outdated thoughts" are the "individual selfishness that must be rooted out." Kim Jong-Il asserts that when the remnants of "outdated thoughts" grow, "they will seriously infringe on the interests of society and corrode the socialist system" (Kim, 1970). Kim Jong-Il's perception is revealed in the film in a way that Gil-Soon's mistake with "outdated thoughts" negatively affects the post office director's work. The post office director is swayed by his wife's words and shows that he makes mistakes at work or does not finish his business properly.

When looking at the surface structure of the film, the mistakes are due to Gil-Soon's "outdated thoughts," in other words, selfishness that prioritizes individuals. However, it can be confirmed by examining the binary opposition structure of "Our Family's Problem" that the lack of political learning of the post office director is a fundamental problem.

The binary opposition structure that can be seen in "Our Family's Problem" can be confirmed through a comparison between the post office director and the edit-bureau director. While the postal director is insincere in political learning, such as dozing off, the edit-bureau director shows that he is diligent in learning politics. In addition, the post office director's

family receives poor evaluations from both his wife and children in "*Inminban*" and at school, but the edit-bureau director's family is evaluated as exemplary by all members.

The cause of the post office director's family problem, which can be confirmed through the binary opposition structure in the film, is the post office director's unfaithful and insincere political learning. The post office director has not cultivated and educated his wife due to a lack of political education. On the other hand, the edit-bureau director faithfully and diligently learns politics, showing that his wife is also well cultivated. Culturizing a wife is a good measure of "Family Revolutionization." Therefore, it shows that those who are good at home revolutionizing contribute to the socialist revolution by working well in the company.

The discourse of the "Socialist Grand Family" in the film can be confirmed through the analysis of the binary opposition structure of "Our Family's Problem." The post office director, who has not been faithful to political learning, fails to revolutionize the family in the "(small) family" that led to "blood ties." As a result, it has a negative impact on the "socialist grand family" work of the society. On the other hand, the edit-bureau director, who faithfully participated in political learning, shows not only good family revolutionization in a (small) family but also shows good performance in the "Socialist Grand Family" of society.

North Korean authorities evaluate the "Our Family's Problem" as "a great work" that shows how important the "Family Revolutionization" issue is.³⁷ In addition to this evaluation by the North Korean authorities, analyzing the narrative structure of the film in two ways confirmed that the (small) family revolutionization, which is connected by blood, is relevant to the "Socialist Grand Family" revolution. Through this, the film emphasizes (small) family revolution and suggests that the revolution should be successfully completed in North Korean society, which is a "Socialist Grand Family."

37 Korean Central News Agency, *North Korean Yearbook 1974* (volume one) (Pyongyang: Korean Central News Agency, 1974).

The film "Our Family's Problem" also tried to convey the importance of the father's role in the family through the binary opposition structure of the family of the post office director and edit-bureau director. The reason why the edit-bureau director's family is depicted as an exemplary family is that the father, the edit bureau director, is exemplary, so the (small) family revolution made up of blood ties has been well achieved. On the other hand, the post office director's family is expressed as a problematic family because the father, the post office director, did not revolutionize the (small) family properly while living an exemplary life.

Therefore, it can be confirmed that the role of the father is important through the binary opposition structure between the edit-bureau director and post office director. We can assume the emphasis on the father's role suggests the emphasis on the importance of the father's role not only in the (small) family, but also in "socialist grand family." In other words, *Su-Ryeong's* role, the father of the "socialist grand family," is in the discourse of the socialist grand family and is important in North Korean society revolution. Such analysis contents can be summarized as shown in Table 15.

<Table 15> Analysis of Narrative Structure of "Our Family's Problem" (Source by author)

	Surface structure	In-depth structure	
Cause	Gil-Soon, the wife of the post office director, continues to make mistakes	The post office director attends political learning unfaithfully	The edit-bureau director attends political learning faithfully
Result	Due to Gil-Soon, the post office director made a mistake or failed to complete the business properly	Fails to revolutionize his wife Gil-Soon	Successful in revolutionizing his wife
↓			
Cause	Gil-Soon's "Outdated thoughts" (Individual selfishness)	Failed to revolutionize the (small) family	Successfully revolutionizes the (small) family
Result	Gil-Soon's selfishness makes it difficult for the post office director to solve the social problems. (Socialist Grand Family)	Difficulty in the socialist grand family revolution	Helping the socialist grand family revolution
↓			
Lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must get away from "outdated thoughts" and live a life for the socialist grand family rather than the individual • To achieve the socialist grand family revolution, it is necessary to properly revolutionize the (small) family • The subject of home revolutionization is the father (Post office director & Edit-bureau director) • The subject of revolutionization in the socialist grand family is the supreme leader which means Su-Ryeong in North Korea 		

Previously, the importance of husband or fathers in the (small) family revolution and, furthermore, the importance of the Supreme Leader in the socialist grand family's revolution were confirmed through the analysis of the narrative structure. This could be confirmed once again through Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method. Table 16 below summarized the pervious analyzed contents in one table.

〈Table 16〉 Analysis in "Our Family's Problem" Using Roland Barthes' Theory (Source by author)

1 st level Signifier	1 st level Signified
A man and a woman. A man and a woman sitting with their backs to each other. The title, "Our Family's Problem."	The appearance of a married couple. A wife whose husband turns his back on her but keeps talking.
1 st level Sign	
The wife who doesn't care what she says and keeps talking is "Our Family's Problem."	
2 nd level Signifier	2 nd level Signified
The wife is "Our Family's Problem", and her husband is indifferent to "Our Family's Problem."	The <i>seed</i> of "Our Family's Problem" is the family revolution.
2 nd level Sign	
A husband who didn't revolutionize his wife and turned away indifferently from her and her family's problem is "Our Family's Problem." The husband should revolutionize the family to correct his wife's problems.	

In the scene where the title appears in the film "Our Family's Problem," we can see the appearance of the wife and husband as shown in Figure 1. Looking at the scene through two levels of analysis, "Our Family's Problem" is about a wife who continues to speak and act the wrong way. But the fundamental problem is a husband who didn't educate his wife on time. This lesson could be confirmed through Myth in North Korean society at the time. Furthermore, when looking at the analysis with the previous narrative analysis, it can be emphasized again that the role of the Supreme Leader in educating the socialist grand family is as important as the role of the husband and father in educating the (small) family.

2. A Semiotic Analysis of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again (1987)"

The reason for the title "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" was that the post office director considers Sung-Hoon and Tae-Sik as one of "Our house" members, which means (small) family members. The post office director calls the problem of Sung-Hoon, who signed a guarantee to join the workers' party and participated in the war together, "our family's problem." And the problem of Tae-Sik is also "our family's problem," even though he is not a real family member. Through this attitude of the post office director, not only those who are blood-related are part of the family. In other words, in North Korea, people who belong to society can be included as members of the (small) family.

Through the sequence and binary opposition analysis of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," the narrative structure of the film was able to be analyzed to identify the surface nar-narrative structure corresponding to the opening, development, climax, and conclusion of the film.

The film "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" shows Tae-Sik trying to pass the responsibility on to others. Tae-Sik tries to connect Sung-Hoon's achievements with his own. Not only that, but Tae-Sik also tries to bribe someone of high status to resolve his mistakes or pass the responsibility on to subordinates. And rather than trying to solve the social problems, he just lets things as it is. After seeing Tae-Sik's misbehavior, the post office director strongly criticizes him, and this causes him to look at himself back at himself.

The negative appearance of Tae-Sik could be confirmed through the binary opposition structure with Sung-Hoon. Unlike Tae-Sik, Sung-Hoon tries to take responsibility for problems caused by his mistakes. Through the contrast between Sung-Hoon, who criticizes himself in front of people and tries to fix problems, and Tae-Sik, who tries to solve problems by bribing high-status people, the binary opposition can be confirmed.

The film suggests that the difference in attitude between Tae-Sik and Sung-Hoon is due to the difference in the degree of faith in the party.

The film says that Sung-Hoon believes in and follows the party, so he strives to solve the problem at hand, challenges it, and tries to find a better solution through self-criticism if he has a problem during the challenge. On the other hand, Tae-Sik does not believe in the party, so he tries to settle rather than solve the problem and shows that he tries to pass it on to others if he has a problem. Through the binary opposition structure between Sung-Hoon and Tae-Sik, the film suggests that people should be more like Sung-Hoon, who trusts the party. The analysis is summarized as follows.

〈Table 17〉 Analysis of Narrative Structure of "Our Family's Problem Begins Again"
(Source by author)

	Surface structure	In-depth structure	
Cause	To find a way to make residents' lives better by using smoke from factory chimneys	"Gongmyeong-principle" ways of living & individualist personality	A Life Following the Words of Kim Il-Sung's On-the-spot Guidance
Result	Sung-Hoon trying to find a way and Tae-Sik being passive	Tae-Sik : Personal safety is the most important thing	Sung-Hoon : Efforts to solve problems of people's lives
↓			
Cause	An accident occurred while experimenting to build a liquid carbonation factory	Tae-Sik : Disbelief in the party	Sung-Hoon : Faith in the party
Result	Tae-Sik pays bribes to avoid taking responsibility for the accident	Trying to solve a problem by giving a bribe and putting off responsibility to others	• Successful development of new technology • Talking and reflecting on mistakes made during technology development in front of people
↓			
Lesson	• Criticism of Tae-Sik for passing the fault on to others • Criticism of attitudes like solving problems by bribery	• We should live a life for society, which means socialist grand family rather than individuals • We should live a life like Sung-Hoon, who trusts and follows the party and strives to solve problems in people's lives • We should live a life following Kim Il-Sung's on-the-spot guidance	

The "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" ends with the post office director in the final scene, where he realizes his mistake and states that a family problem can become a social problem. In other words, it emphasizes the revolutionization of the (small) family is important to

achieve a socialist grand family revolution. In the last scene of the film, Sung-Hoon, who solved the difficulties of residents by inventing new technology, refers to Kim Il-Sung's on-the-spot guidance, indicating that his actions follow the words of the "the Supreme Leader, *Su-Ryeong*, on-the-spot-guidance." In addition, through the lyrics of songs, such as "Always uphold the will of the party," it is more emphasized to follow the guidance of the party, the Supreme Leader, and the leader than to emphasize the discourse of the socialist grand family.

In this way, it could be confirmed that the North Korean authorities not only emphasized the discourse of the socialist grand family but also emphasized living according to the guidance of the party and the Supreme Leader. However, if the film is analyzed through Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method, it could be seen that the film was made to promote the superiority of the North Korean authorities than to educate the people about the socialist grand family discourse. Table 18 below summarizes the film's title scene of "Our family's Problem Begins Again" analyzed through Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method.

〈Table 18〉 Analysis in "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" Using Roland Barthes' Theory
(Source by author)

1 st level Signifier	1 st level Signified
Tall buildings. The title, "Our Family's Problem Begins Again."	Tall buildings which look like apartments.
1 st level Sign	
The tall buildings are the apartment in which the ordinary protagonist, the post office director, and Gil-Soon, live.	
2 nd level Signifier	2 nd level Signified
"Our Family's Problem Begins Again" at a high-rise apartment where an ordinary protagonist couple lives.	North Korea makes propaganda about its regime's excellence through buildings.
2 nd level Sign	
Even ordinary couples could live in high-rise buildings in North Korea. It shows North Korea's high level of economic development and outstanding architectural skills.	

Table 18 shows that "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" is the story of an ordinary couple who lived in a high-rise building. Such high-rise building construction was used to promote the superiority of the North Korean system and ideology, *Juche*. Various high-rise-lined streets in North Korea, including the high-rise apartment street according to Kim Jong-Il's theory of "*Juche* architecture," were used as a means to inform the world of the superiority of North Korea's "great" ideology, *Juche*. Nevertheless, the film also fully achieves the basic purpose of North Korean films, which is to educate the people. This could be confirmed through the analysis of the narrative structure. Kim Jong-Il's intention is to teach and educate the people about *Juche ideology* through architecture in North Korea's "*Juche* architecture" theory. So, we could find out the authorities' intention to educate the people in the socialist grand family discourse through the film "Our Family's Problem Begins Again."

V. Conclusion

This study aims to find out the contents of the socialist grand family discourse that North Korean authorities wanted to deliver to the residents through the series "Our Family's Problem," which was produced and aired in North Korea. This study tried to investigate the socialist grand family discourse propagated by authorities before the discourse was emphasized in earnest in the 1990s. Furthermore, by analyzing two films in the same series, this study tries to find out whether the content or form of the discourse on the socialist grand family has changed.

The subject of this study was the "Our Family's Problem" series produced and aired between the 1970s and 1980s. "Our Family's Problem" was produced and broadcast in 1973, and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" was broadcast in 1987. The narrative structure analysis method and Roland Barthes' two levels of the semiotic method were used to analyze the two selected films.

The narrative structure analysis method is a method of analyzing the

narrative structure of visual materials, for example, films, by dividing them into a surface structure and an in-depth structure. To analyze the surface structure, the flow and structure of the film were examined through sequence analysis corresponding to the "Opening, Development, Climax, and Conclusion." To analyze the in-depth structure, binary opposition was found and analyzed to find out the in-depth meaning inherent in the film.

Roland Barthes' two levels of semiotic analysis method is a method of analyzing pictures or posters to know society's myth. The two films I chose didn't release promotional posters. Therefore, at the beginning of the film, the screen that stopped and appeared with the title of the film was analyzed instead.

As a result of the analysis, it could be confirmed that both "Our Family's Problem" and "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" were produced and aired based on the discourse of the socialist grand family. "Our Family's Problem" introduces incidents in which a (small) family grows into the problem of the socialist grand family, which means North Korean society. This suggests that the problem of society and the problem of the (small) family are connected.

It is argued that the revolution of the (small) family, centered on the post office director, which is the role of the father in the family, should be successful. Also, the socialist revolution of the "Socialist Grand Family," meaning North Korean society, can be successfully continued. This argument emphasizes the role and political nature of the father, who is the subject of revolutionizing the (small) family, and emphasizes the role and political nature of the father, the Supreme Leader, *Su-Ryeong*, in the "Socialist Grand Family." Therefore, through the film "Our Family's Problem," the North Korean authorities argue that a socialist revolution can be successfully achieved when society is united around the father of a socialist grand family, which means the Supreme Leader, and revolutionizes it well.

The "Our Family's Problem Begins Again" also emphasizes the discourse of the "Socialist Grand Family." The film begins with the line of

the post office director who says that the problem of Sung-Hoon, not the (small) family, is a problem of "our family." As the post office director recognized Sung-Hoon's problem and Tae-Sik's problem as an "Our House" problem and tried to solve it together, as the film continued, the discourse of the socialist grand family could be found throughout the film.

As a result of analyzing "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," North Korean authorities are suggesting people see and learn from Sung-Hoon and the post office director, who consider social problems as "our" problems. This can be confirmed more clearly in contrast to the individualistic Tae-Sik. However, considering that the fundamental reason for the difference in Sung-Hoon and Tae-Sik's behavior is "the difference in faith in the party," it can be confirmed that they emphasize trusting and following the Supreme Leader and the party more than a society united as a family.

The film "Our Family's Problem," produced and aired in the 1970s, and the "Our Family's Problem Begins Again," which was produced and aired in the 1980s, were films that dealt with the discourse of socialist grand family in the same series. Through this study, it was confirmed that the contents of focusing on the socialist grand family discourses could vary depending on the time, even though both films are in the same series.

In addition, as we can see, it is possible to confirm the intention of the North Korean authorities is to promote the superiority of the system and their ideology, with buildings at the time of the production and airing of the film "Our Family's Problem Begins Again." Such propaganda by North Korean authorities was attempted not only in the 1980s but also in recent years by Kim Jung-Un. Immediately after becoming the Supreme Leader of North Korea, Kim Jung-Un tried to promote the superiority of the leader, which means himself, and the superiority of the country through building various constructions. For example, Kim built Ma-Sik-Ryeong Ski Resort and Mun-Su Water Playground in his early days. Also, Kim promoted his economic achievements by visiting and doing on-the-spot guidance at Kim-Chaek University's educational apartment, which began construction in 2013 and was completed in 2015. In 2022, this year, North Korea has

continued to promote its system through construction, building an 80-story high-rise apartment on Song-Hwa Street in Pyong-Yang and holding a completion ceremony.

North Korea is still emphasizing the establishment of the socialist grand family under the Supreme Leader to overcome economic difficulties. In addition, Kim Jong-Un is pushing ahead with the propaganda of the regime's superiority by creating large and magnificent buildings despite North Korea's economic difficulties. In this regard, it is meaningful that this study analyzed films that can be evaluated as textbook examples of family revolutionization and were produced and aired before the 1990s, which is when the discourse on the socialist grand family began to be actively emphasized, and examined the changes in the discourse and the propaganda of North Korean authorities.

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