6-30-2016

The Cultural Politics Of Affective Bureaucracy In Service Delivery To North Korean Refugees In South Korea

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THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF AFFECTIVE BUREAUCRACY IN SERVICE DELIVERY TO NORTH KOREAN REFUGEES IN SOUTH KOREA

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For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Anthropology
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2016

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been published without many others’ support. Greatest thanks should be directed to my dissertation advisor, Dr. Jennifer Reynolds. Her enduring patience and keen academic eyes on guiding the dissertation played a paramount role in the creation of this project. I also cannot thank enough to Dr. Marc Moskowitz, Dr. Drucilla Barker and Dr. Amy Mills, whose academic knowledge and passion provided several valuable insights to this paper. All of my committee members are truly my role models, who have showed academic integrity, deep empathy and warm caring which I cannot find any suitable words to express my full gratitude for.

I also would like to express my deepest thanks to those who participated in this research. Without their engagements, this project would have never been possible. My colleagues, staff and mentors at Department of Anthropology, my friends in and out of Columbia, my life-time friends, church members and families in Korea and my MSN community including pastor Tom Wall all sustained me through the seemingly unending doctoral project. These people have truly been my source of power, guidance and joy. This project is a tribute to you all.
ABSTRACT

This study explores the affective dimensions and intersecting politics of service operations for North Koreans, focusing on semi-government institutions, Hana Centers in two different regions of South Korea. It probes into how bureaucratic service institutions for North Koreans operate on the ground using affect-laden languages and practices in creating a specific type of clientele subjectivity. This study also points out how the state bureaucracies identifying themselves as “practical” and “neutral” agencies reveal contradictory and fragmented governing which is antithetical to how the state institutions are imagined. There are underlying politics working in the realm of a so-called neutral service agency, such as Cold War memories, imagined homogeneity regarding ethnicity, and neoliberal changes in the welfare area and beyond. Even though these are hidden on public and formal policy and statements, they inevitably emerge in unexpected contexts in forms of mistrust, conflicts and anxiety among the service providers and the recipients. Through ethnographic research, this study highlights flexible, performative and emotional aspects of the relationships between the service providers and the service recipients by attending to affective dimensions. It finds that desirable figures of North Korean clientship are represented differently, depending on distinctive characteristics of the locations as well as different modes of governing.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This study explores the significance of the national operation of Hana Centers, South Korean refugee resettlement agencies for North Koreans, spanning the years from the late 2000s to the early 2010s. It particularly zooms in on two local Hana Centers’ daily operations, highlighting how the complex politics of ethnic homogeneity, Cold War ideology, and the neoliberal arrangement of the welfare system permeate the Centers’ operational logics such as neutrality, practicality and professionalism. Through ethnographic research, this study explores the bureaucratic technologies of the institutions and affective service interactions between the service providers and service recipients in Hana Centers, and scrutinizes the socio-political significances of the practices. While the affective values of intensive care, brotherly love and trust are stressed but differentiated by the level of institution and the mode of service delivery, the state bureaucratic services reveal their contradictory, inconsistent and fragmented dimensions of governing which is antithetical to how the state bureaucracies are imagined. The study engages a critique of state bureaucracy and ethico-political operations of “practical” service delivery, by connecting the broader politics and ideologies with the analysis of mundane interactions, discourses and actual service operations in the space of welfare institution.

The main service recipients here are North Korean defectors – refugees or migrants depending on the socio-political contexts invoked. The presence of North Korean defectors in Northeastern China and Southeast Asia since the 1990s is well-known in global
humanitarian discourses. As their clandestine and destitute life conditions in the region gained international awareness, hundreds of missionaries, transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individual actors have been engaged with “save North Koreans” activities. Coupled with the images of North Korea as a failing and incomprehensible state (see Ryang 2010), the discourses and political claims surrounding North Korean defectors have been overshadowed by either “national security” or “international politics” discourses motivated by the Cold War ideology and US-led humanitarian efforts (Ryang 2009; B.Chung 2009).

South Korea, in the meantime, has seen a sudden increase of the people from “the North” since the mid-1990s, which sparked discussions and practices surrounding policy implementation to help North Koreans settle in the South. The early discussions reflect the urgent institutional needs in practical matters in treating North Koreans in South Korea. The recent scholarship and the popular media have dealt with more socio-culturally oriented matters associated with everyday life and identity matters of North Koreans as well as South Koreans’ cultural perceptions of the Northerners, many of which advanced the understanding of North Koreans’ lives from diverse perspectives, other than the issue of adjustment (see H. Lee 2012). By and large, being the “same ethnicity” has meant special treatment for them, which is distinguishable from multicultural citizens or foreigners in South Korea. Resettlement funds, affordable housing support, initial adjustment facilities and overall welfare service provisions are unrivaled compared to other foreign groups. Nonetheless, North Korean settlers in South Korea experience convoluted socio-cultural developments to their identity, not to mention the unique political-legal significance of their situation of the divided nations. North Koreans’ self-identifications disclosed from
qualitative studies show an ambivalence rather than a confirmation of the South Koreans’ imaginaries of kinship (Bell 2013; Chung et al. 2006).

In 2009, the Ministry of Unification launched a project to set up local resettlement agencies, Hana Centers, for North Koreans in different regions. As of 2015, they operate in thirty one locations across the country. The plan was laid out to fulfill an ambitious end: settling and integrating North Koreans into local communities stably and successfully. In addition to the initial settlement facility, Hanawon, the state aims to deliver additional education/service programs for North Koreans through Hana Centers (The Act 15:2, 22:2). Hana Centers are expected to provide the service with local knowledge, resources and experiences, with the operational values such as neutrality and practicality (Ahn and Lee 2007; S. Lee 2008; Y. Suh 2000, 2004; W. Yoo 2008). In addition, as they are designated by the government, institutional legitimacy and accountability are supposedly guaranteed, along with financial and organizational stability. These are what policy makers and law executers sought to achieve through the nationwide establishment of Hana Centers, because the service field for North Koreans has been muddied with competition, regional concentration and inefficiency in service delivery (Ahn and Lee 2007; Noh 2010; W. Yoo 2008). Recent studies affirm that Hana Centers have much potential to facilitate a decent local settlement for North Koreans through “individualized” and “efficient” service provision while creating a cooperative environment among diverse service agencies (S.Kim et al. 2010; Y.H.Kim 2009; Y.H.Kim and Paik 2010; H.S.Kim and D. Choi 2011). So to speak, Hana Centers are thus regarded as “the cure for all” to solve the deeply engrained problems. As a “total care” service agency for North Koreans providing a warm,
human touch,¹ Hana Centers are expected to serve the beneficiaries with the symbolic cultural values such as unified nation and ethnic homogeneity as well as operational standards of impartiality, practicality and efficiency of service delivery. The characteristics of the Centers being regionally located, utilizing the accumulated knowledge in services, attending to individual’s needs, boosting local networks and focusing on practical matters all look very promising in the complicated service area. However, more often than not, Hana Centers face accusations from both the clients and other kinds of service providers as being overly bureaucratic, stiff and inefficient. Why then does an institution that purports to be decentralizing power and serving the minority with good intentions end up being “just another” bureaucratic institution? Is it simply “cultural differences” between North and South Koreans who coincidentally end up being in an unhappy cohabitation and fail to communicate with each other? Or does the monstrous machine of South Korea’s version of a “national institution” make it so, no matter what identities the service providers and the clients possess? And which desirable figures of service recipients and providers emerge in the service scene?

This study approaches the service operations on the ground, focusing on the affective dimension of the service provision. It probes both the service providers’ and the clients’ assumptions regarding the role of the state in forging a unified nation. In doing so, it contributes to the literature of North Koreans’ desirable citizenship vis-à-vis the state and South Korean public, and develop research on bureaucratic practices of semi-state agencies which are utilizing aforementioned imaginaries to gain legitimacy and justify the kinds of services being offered. In probing into the South Korean service providers’ (lower-level

¹ Hana Foundation’s (Hana Centers’ supervisory institution) introductory image
bureaucrats’) and the beneficiaries’ expectations of the state, ethnic homogeneity and the desirable service-client figures in neoliberal welfare settings, the study intends to bring to the fore the features of institutional practices as contradictory and incoherent, apart from the preconceived notions of the state agencies as firm and consistent entities. It starts from the question of why the state agencies, with their humanitarian mottoes, claims of moral superiority, practicality and provision of total care for every need, still fail not only to gain North Koreans’ trust but also to satisfy their practical needs. Even worse, it also concerns North Koreans’ prevailing accounts of Hana Centers as unnecessary, “just an addition” to more bureaucracy, and as cold and distant edifice. This study does not, however, seek to accuse lower-level bureaucrats of inattentiveness or carelessness. On the contrary, from my fieldwork, it is fair to say that they are the ones who are working the hardest among those bureaucrats that we can see in any of the bureaucratic organizations. To probe these questions, I pay close attention to how the broader politics of the Cold War, beliefs about ethnic homogeneity and the neoliberal arrangement of the welfare regime infiltrate the interactive and affective space of service provision. By looking closely into the affective side of service delivery, which arises from everyday service interactions between both the service providers and the recipients, this study highlights the limitations and potentialities of the local institutions’ operations in creating specific North Korean clientele subjectivity. As it highlights how the local practices of the national agency mediate and elaborate imaginaries and expectations of the state agency, it addresses the anthropological questions of the state, neoliberal rearrangement of society, and the inconsistent nature of institutional operations and its ramifications. In the remainder of this introduction, I will explore how social sciences and philosophical traditions have discussed bureaucracy in relation to the
modern state, practices of institutional care for a social minority in the neoliberal welfare regime as well as the historical configurations of North Korean citizenship in South Korea. Finally, I will address the ethico-political significance of the bureaucratic practices in caring for North Koreans in the contemporary South Korea.

1.1. ANTHROPOLOGY OF STATE INSTITUTIONS AND BUREAUCRACY FOR CARING POPULATION

Bureaucracy and modern institutions have long been on the agenda for social critics and philosophers problematizing modernity. As is well-known, Max Weber examined the operational specificities of how modern institutions employed written documents and rules guarded by laws or administrative regulations (Weber 1947), which he viewed as the epitome of the modern rational-legal authority. The bureaucratic practices are “encroaching into almost every sphere of life” (Clegg 1994, 152) and exist “at all levels of society” (Graham 2002, 201). Weber conceptualizes the state in terms of “monopoly” of the use of legitimate force over a given territory, which successfully concentrates the economic and political means onto bureaucratic institutions of the state with the ideal of “rationalization” (Weber 1921, 397; Gerth and Mills 1946, 48). However, Weber neither explicitly designated which levels of bureaucratic administration were particularly critical in formulating the legitimacy and power of the state, nor did he inquire into how differentiated and fragmented operations of state institutions create a specific socio-political meanings or ideology in and out of the state. Meanwhile, the French Marxist tradition views nation-states as governing devices for the bourgeoisie’s control over the proletariat through religious, educational, correctional and media institutions featured as ideological state apparatuses (Althusser 1971). However, Marx himself and Marxist theorists do not provide
tangible answers to what the state is, nor what it consists of. As Philip Abrams puts it, “aridity and mystification” prevails in Marxist tradition and sociological traditions in scrutinizing the subject of state (Abrams 1988, 61).

The work of Michel Foucault, on the other hand, draws attention to how power and knowledge create orders and categories of normalcy through “governmentality,” reframed as “the conduct of conduct,” which regulate the population with bio-political measures (Foucault 1979; Lemke 2001). Even though Foucault does not specifically pinpoint the kinds of and day-to-day practices of bureaucratic institutions which exert power over each individual, he specifies that the state “is not a thing, but practices.” He pushes the notion of the state even further, as he sees it as “nothing more than the mobile effect of a multiple regime of governmentality.” (Foucault 1991, 87-104) By doing so, he underlines governmentality as being exercised everywhere through institutional or discursive technologies, rather than hammering on the specific kinds of state institutions. This convergence of power, or bundles of practices, rather than “a thing,” is what Foucault aims to bring to light when it comes to a matter of the state and governing. He provides an analytic means to think of the state as accumulative, multilevel and decentralized actions, rather than a physical entity, which can serve the understanding of the operations of state institutions. As Akhil Gupta also clarifies, the workings of bio-politics signify “the convergence of diverse institutions in different settings around a particular way of conceptualizing a problem,” which then search for ways to control and care for a population (Gupta 2012, 42).

Where Marxist, Weberian and Foucauldian traditions of thought have influenced recent scholarship regarding institutions and the state, scholars particularly in disciplines
of sociology and anthropology have contributed to unraveling the operations of the state and non-state institutions and bureaucracies of different sizes, levels and scopes of action. Richard Weatherly and Michael Lipsky (1977) stress how service providers exercise considerable discretion in performing their work leading to discrepant operations of bureaucracy, as they set forth the idea of “street-level bureaucracy.” Lipsky (1980) pinpoints the relation between written rules and practices on the ground. He argues that the actual operations of institutions often do not concur with written policies or organizational ideals, as individual bureaucrats establish their own work patterns and perspectives informing their work. The subsequent literature utilizing the concept of street-level bureaucracy has dealt with the complexities and discrepancies of the broader policies and rationales for service recipients (Hupe and Hill 2007; Sanfort 2000; Stacey 1996).²

Anthropological literature further offers rich ethnographic studies in developing the discussion of the state and bureaucracy. They particularly attend to the demarcation boundaries, reification practices of the state, symbolic and cultural assemblages as well as the concrete places where practices, discourses and imaginations are enacted. For instance, several studies have attended to how bureaucrats manage and negotiate the gaps between the stated policy and practices, and what the bureaucratic measures bring about in a broader political outcomes in a society (Deeb and Marcus 2011; Ferguson 1990; Gupta 1995; 2012; Herzfeld 1992; Heyman 2004; Hoag 2011). The anthropological perspective has revealed that inconsistencies and contradictions between policy and actual operations are the norm.

² Even though Weber already recognized the disparities among different institutions through his massive case studies, the adoption of his ideas has mostly contributed to the interpretation of modern society as impersonalized and mechanical.
in bureaucracy, rather than the exception, as they questioned the specific kinds of political and economic effects that these bureaucratic practices have brought to life. For instance, James Ferguson (1990) spells out the socio-political effects of collective actions that bureaucratic agencies put forward. In his study on the operations of development apparatus such as international agencies, non or quasi-governmental organizations in Lesotho, he contends that agencies end up creating powerful, unintended constellations of control, apart from what is conventionally considered about development: a practically good solution for the pervasive poverty problems. However, starting from the question of why these development projects are all failing in the country, he expands on the idea that unintended elements serve to exert “a powerful depoliticizing effect” (1990:21). Through the ethnographic data, he analyzes the particular sort of constellation functioning as “the anti-politics machine,” which echoes Foucault’s idea of the unintended effects of de-centered power (Foucault 1979). Michael Herzfeld (1992), on the other hand, spells out how bureaucrats and citizens of a society produce a specific ethico-political effect with symbolic properties. He explicates how institutional clients and officials together serve to present “indifference” to minorities as a way of maintaining a symbolic institutional and social order. Herzfeld accounts for the operation of democracy in modern nation-states as based on the justification of indifference by accepting the transcendent values of the nation-state. By using symbolic markers of insider/outsider and difference as well as by selectively choosing to pay attention to a certain agenda or a group, Western bureaucracy produces social indifference in a society. Akhil Gupta (2012) also develops the discussions engaging the state bureaucracies with the concept of arbitrariness, rather than indifference or hostility toward the service recipients. He shows the example of the best intentions of eradicating
the poverty still failing in caring for the poor in India. With a concept of structural violence, elaborated by Veena Das (2007) and Paul Farmer (2005), he elucidates that the specific mechanisms of corruption, inscription and governmentality produce arbitrariness through the bureaucratic work of poverty reduction. Heyman (2004) also adds to the discussion, as he examines the operational rules such as practicality and neutrality in the broader cultural analyses. Bureaucracies often act according to the rule of “practicality,” which does not seem to have any relation to the political interests, and they end up involving itself as a political-ethical engagement. However, quite frequently, neutrality and practicality, with their own specific ethical attributes, become the slogans of bureaucratic institutions seeking legitimacy and rational authority.

These findings of the unintended effects of bureaucratic operations, powered by both officials and clients, with the rationale of practicality and depoliticization are compelling presentations of the particularities of governmentality in modern institutions. The anthropological accounts on the state agencies offer pictures of them being far from consistent, rational and impartial organizations. By disaggregating and decentralizing the imaginations of the state, the previous literature provides rich accounts of how normalcy of a citizenship and markers of insider/outsider are identified. Without readily assuming the binary conceptualization of the state and civil society, previous literature also outlines at which point and in what circumstances the state agencies are failing to care for the beneficiaries. As exploring diverse kinds of bureaucratic works and governing, recent anthropological studies have further examined bureaucratic practices in different fields, such as supranational organizations (Anders 2008; Sandvik 2011), developmental agencies
Building upon the critical scholarly work on institutional engagement for social minorities, this study focuses on the institutions whose purpose is “caring for” social minorities in a society. Particularly, I engage Foucault’s framework of bio-political power as caring for a population, which is defined as “pastoral care” and which aims to improve the welfare of everyone (Foucault 1991). Pastoral care works in a way where “everything the shepherd does is geared to the good of his flock…. The shepherd acts, he works, he puts himself out, for those he nourishes and who are asleep…. He must also know each one’s particular needs” (Foucault 1986, 303). Throughout his study, Foucault focuses on the overall governing of individuals through bio-political measures, which attend to the welfare, health, and morality of the population. While this study aligns with Foucault’s conceptualization of pastoral care, it specifically depicts the unintended effects of “the specific modality of uncaring” (Gupta 2012, 23) and the fragmented and contradictory figures of pastoral care (Ong 2002, 146), while the crucial mission of the institutions lies in an intensive “caring.” As opposed to other kinds of institutions, the organizations particularly geared towards “caring for minorities” in a society show unique characteristics in operating service, which I will connect it to the discussions of “affect” as a specific mode of governing and simultaneously, as something rendering potentialities and “anticipations.”

As several scholars so far have discussed, affect signifies interpersonal capacity to “be affected” and “to affect,” as it encompasses bodily compositions and receptivity of bodies (Anderson 2009; Clough 2007; Massumi 2002; Seyfert 2012) Deleuze interpreted
Spinoza’s idea of affect as two different aspects: the bodily experience depending on its affects and the power of the affect changing our capacity to experience. In so doing, affects are crucial in the establishment of knowledge (Deleuze 1988). Clough outlines the discussion of affects as the body’s capacity to “act, to engage, and to connect, such that autoaffection is linked to the self-feeling of being alive – that is, aliveness or vitality” (Clough 2007,2). Thus, it seems apparent that the scholars of affect highlight the point that affect involves bodily matters as well as mental and emotional workings of an individual. However, more importantly, it goes beyond the boundaries of the physical body, which is implied in its reference as a way of affecting and being affected. It can escape “confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction.” (Massumi 2002, 35) In this regard, affect is continuously in formation and the process of formation brings forth the “unforeseeable newness” (Anderson 2009, 116). It is used to refer to processes and connections, rather than essences and significances. Michael Hardt analyzes affect as “an exploration of these as yet unknown powers” (Hardt 2007, x), from which potentials and arbitrary connections are created. As discussions of affects have brought up the matters of relationships among bodies, experiences, technology and energetic transfers (Massumi 2002; Puar 2011), they help us examine specific affective intensifications and connections in the cultural, economic and political realms (Clough 2007), encompassing numerous “powerful technologies”(Thrift 2007), or “atmospheres” (Brennan 2004), while involving unexpected “events” or “ruptures”(Negri 2003).

Affects are interrelated with governmentality – if the bodily capacities, emotional workings and any events emerge in conjunction with the “population.” As maintaining of the population is the crucial mantra for the modern state, presentations of collective affects
are important junctions that require attentions, and “a set of differentiated affective publics” (Anderson 2012, 32) can become targets for governmentality. From a different angle, geographer Nigel Thrift sets forth the idea of bodily interactions constituting a series of operations and technologies, developing Foucault’s idea of biopolitics. As he puts it, affect is the subject of “numerous powerful technologies which have knotted thinking, technique and affect together in various potent combinations” (Thrift 2008, 182). Thrift further suggests conceptualizing affect from the perspective of “microbiopolitics,” which becomes “visible and so available to be worked upon through a whole series of new entities and institutions” (Thrift 2008, 187). It opens up multiple potentialities and anticipations that are inherently political, and becomes “explicitly political through practices and techniques which are aimed at it specifically” (Thrift 2008, 187). Institutions here are seen and analyzed in a view that their practices and techniques as explicit presentations of politics, where bodily functions and interactions are points of multiple anticipations. With the concept of affect, the subjectivity configured in the institutional space can be traced in more tangible ways, which can open up much richer ethnographic illustrations.

Anthropologists have been engaged in the discussion of affects through their ethnographic studies in institutional spaces. Hoschchild’s (1979) pioneering work examines the realm of care and its affective dimensions in work places, and more recently Ong’s work (2006) on how the American welfare institutions deal with refugees shows the mode of “feminist pastoral power” is instilled in operating the notions of self-discipline and empowerment. Predicated upon female refugees’ dependence on the welfare system, and racial and gender relations between the clients and the service providers in the region, social workers and health service providers encourage Cambodian refugee women to be
independent, empowered and autonomous which promotes the American idea of independence and materialism. Linguistic anthropologist Summerson Carr observed more closely the different modalities and spaces of institutional talks, such as board meetings, individual counseling, empowerment programs and group meetings required to place poor women living with addiction in welfare services. In these different spaces, speaking activities reveal how subjects continuously forge their identities, perform like addicts, and therefore draw unexpected gains (Carr 2011). She also attends to the regulating governance of this caring agency, as revealing particularly how the evaluation techniques in measuring sobriety of the recovering addicts in welfare institutions are based on affective and performative expressions such as exaggerations or fancy which are used for referencing “inner states” (Carr 2011, 4). More broadly, at a state level, Shoshan (2014) investigates how a penal institution practice affective governance in dealing with young right-wing extremists in Germany, which she frames as “political delinquency.” The mediation and elaboration of the management of hate reveals itself as “inscribed within cultural and political aporias,” which is aligned with discussions of affects as “anticipated” atmosphere and “yet unknown powers” (Hardt 2007, x).

These studies show how the various levels, modalities of techniques as well as ethical standpoints are intermingled with affects in institutional spaces. In a Foucauldian sense, the affects are to be regulated and disciplined by certain modes of technologies. However, these studies show how the space where affects are enacted is not completely subsumed under the overarching technologies of governing. Affective practices entail something that has not happened, but still reside in people’s collective memory, feelings, and possibly emerge in ruptured events. Similarly, this study pays attention to how affects
emerge and are spawned in the particular caring institution that is geared towards the enhancement of the welfare of North Koreans.

There are three different dimensions that this study is concerned with: 1) Diverse affect-laden expressions are utilized, when the institutions attempt to promote positive images to the clients and South Korean public. For instance, imaginaries of a unified (one) nation, a fair and good welfare agency, and images of harmless North Koreans are advertised. 2) In terms of internal operations, which service providers and volunteer workers are expected to perform, the affective imaginaries of nationalism and state agency are particularly materialized. 3) The ways in which service providers show pastoral care, influenced by uneven ethnic relations and the neoliberal logic of self-reliance, leave space for unexpected outcomes to arise. In a nutshell, this study focuses on how these different technologies of managing affects and applying ethics with different subjects emerge, are juxtaposed and inscribed. The focus of affects will enable us to see how the bodily interactions among service providers and the clients generate specific configurations of governing and subject-making, and how service providers and recipients elaborate, perform and present the desirable symbolic values as participating in these cultural and political aporias. Hence, the study focuses on the ruptures and anticipated expressions in the welfare space, which will serve to advance understanding of the particular affective governing of South Korean welfare bureaucracy.

1.2 NORTH KOREAN IDENTITY AND ETHNIC HOMOGENEITY IN THE DIVIDED NATION

North Koreans have been “special” subjects to South Korean society and its people (B. Chung 2009) because of the notion of the same ethnicity and the unique situation that
the two Koreas have had to face since the Korean War in the 1950s. South Korea has presented itself as a modern defender of “liberal democracy,” in contradistinction to the anachronistic communist North. Since the national division, South and North Korean regimes have competed to assert the “state legitimacy (cheje jeongdangseong 체제정당성)” of their own regime over that of the other (Abelmann 1996; Cumings 2007; Grinker 1998). South and North Korean governments have shaped a strong animosity to each other, which mainly emerged as claims of state legitimacy. If ethnic identity is constructed and preserved through dynamic social practices (Calhoun 2006; Barth 1969), two Korean states are more likely to form their national identities in opposition to each other. The conditions that South and North Korean people have been forced to endure - separation of the country, separation of individual families, complete closure of the border, different social systems as capitalism and communism, and a highly antagonistic political relationship between the two countries – did not provide shared experiences, but nurtured enmity toward each other. The augmented sense of “differences” and animosity however, seems not to disrupt the notion of fraternity and the passion toward national unification, at least on the surface level.

It looks odd at first glance, why the South Korean government would try hard to incorporate North Koreans into South Korean society, considering the cultivated perception of North Koreans as “enemies.” Discourses of ethnic homogeneity and the unquestionable aspirations for unified nation are used frequently to justify the “special” treatment of the people. To South Koreans, homogeneity of ethnicity is something natural and taken for granted (Grinker 1998; H.Kwon 2004; Shin 2006). Hegemonic nationalist discourses of “ethnic homogeneity” are present in both official and unofficial discourses,
and North Koreans are often referred to as people of the “same blood” or “wooridongpo” (우리동포, our brethren) separated by unfortunate historical circumstances. Despite the antagonistic political and discursive relationship between the two Koreas, ethnic homogeneity functions as a primary group identity in contemporary Korea (Shin et al. 1999). As Roy Grinker (1998) attests, unification is often imagined as “recovery of (ethnic) homogeneity” in South Korea (Grinker 1998, xiii). Gi-wook Shin also observed that ethnic nationalism plays a major role in generating desire for national unification, a strong sense of “oneness” predominates in the discourses of race, ethnicity and nation-state in South Korea (Shin 2006). Ethnic homogeneity is hardly a new concept or discourse in South Korea; though, it is never fully scrutinized and questioned critically in the society. As several scholars argued, ethnic nationalism is constructed by mobilizing the aspirations of purity and homogeneity in a modern state (Anderson 1991; Verdery 1994; Williams 1989). As an “imagined community,” politics of nationalism and ethnicity promote a rethinking of spatial and historical boundaries. This imagined community conceives itself as a “deep, horizontal comradeship,” where “this fraternity makes millions of people …willing to die for such limited imaginings” (Anderson 1991, 7). Such feelings and sentiments of being one and homogenous create sovereign and exclusive “national order of things,” by pathologizing heterogeneity and differences within national boundaries (Malkki 1992). Based on shared perceptions of historical memory, language and cultural traditions, ethnicity becomes a crucial ground for modern nation-states and nationalism.

Compared to multicultural citizens in South Korea, North Koreans still take up a significant position in the society. With accelerated globalization, South Korean demographics became more noticeably diverse and created a discourse of “multicultural
citizens” (see S. Kim 2000; Seol 1999, 2000; Shin 2006), and North Koreans are in some cases positioned as a de-facto “multicultural” group (Rainbow Youth Center 2013; I. Yoon 2003). However, it does not gain much popularity in real life, even though there have been conscious efforts to incorporate them through the multicultural field of research and practices (Rainbow Youth Center 2013; I. Yoon 2003). This hesitation could be attributed to the popular rationale of the “same ethnicity,” or “national unification” rather than situating North Koreans as “different” or “other” within the national community. More often than not, they are differentiated from multicultural groups and instead considered the same as South Korean nationals. In the changing geography of the national identity and ethnic nationalism in recent times (Moon 2000; J. Seo 2014; S. Kim 2003), how this dynamic based on the notion of homogenous ethnicity shift will be another important site to look into. More notably, a few scholars have discussed how the politics of ethnicity and kinship regarding North Koreans are imagined and complexly presented in the societal level, apart from the state’s tenuous claim of ethnic homogeneity. North Koreans are not considered “the same” as their Southern counterpart due to the lack of psychological capacity to become autonomous citizens (Sung 2010). They are “welcomed” on their arrival just as other foreigners, but experience hearing confusing messages as the same

3 With the skyrocketing rate of international marriages in recent years (mainly due to the reproduction need of rural communities), multiculturalism in South Korea has largely come to represent “multicultural families” (damunhwa gajok 다문화가족) made up of South Korean men, foreign women and their formed families. Much recent scholarship in diverse disciplines reflects upon this phenomenon, examining issues of cultural recognition of new others (Y.O. Kim 2007), the political-economic effects of migration (J. Hwang 2011; Y.O. Kim 2007; H.M. Kim 2008), the characteristics of Korean multiculturalism (E.R. Jun 2011), and citizenship issues and multiculturalism (Y.O. Kim 2007; J.M. Hwang 2011; 2012) as well as the overall living conditions of migrant women.

4 For instance, D.H. Seo and J.M. Seo (2014) observed that South Korean ethnic nationalism changed from dichotomy – inclusion and exclusion – to hierarchy in its operations, as the country tries to embrace different nationals and ethnic groups into their society albeit with assigning different positions, thus creating hierarchy in the system.
ethnic group from the society (Chung et al. 2006). North Koreans themselves are aware of
this blurry line of categorization, and sometimes they expressed their identities
interchangeably to accommodate themselves better within welfare frames and socio-
cultural discourses. This project will address how the recent multicultural discourse and
practices are interpolated in constructing North Korean subjectivity, which is often
convoluted by ideological landscapes and ethnic politics.

Just as ethnic homogeneity is obfuscating and unfounded, North Koreans’ legal and
cultural identities are defined with “ambiguity and arbitrariness” (B. Chung 2009,3) and in
a similar sense, they become “circumstantial citizens” (I.Yoon 2011) whose conditions of
citizenship depend on particular political and social circumstances. They were defined in
distinctly different ways at different periods – or “events” – of time. In the post-Korean
War period, “system selective migrants (chejesuntaekijumin 체제선택주민)” was the term
used for the people who moved from the North to the South with the intention of settling
in the capitalist South instead of the communist system in the North. Later, “war refugees
(pinanmin 피난민),” or “people who lost their hometown (silhyangmin 실향민)” were
widely used spanning from the 1960s through the early 1990s. They were also called
“heroes who returned to the state (guisoonyongsa 귀순용사)” in this period. They became
“heroes” who could witness the supremacy of the South, and served well the national
propaganda during the rule of militaristic and antagonistic political regimes in the South.
Among the small number of heroes, high-profiled political people were the majority who
moved to the South and they were treated exceptionally well in the South due to their
political values. In the early 1990s, when the Cold War-style competition between the
regimes started to dwindle, South Korean society began to locate these North Koreans in the lower rung of society. As South Korean citizens saw North Korean regime decline in its political and economic power, the term “defected people from the North (talbukja 탈북자)” for North Korean defectors gained much popularity in society, which has negative and pejorative connotations. North Koreans then were called “brethren who returned to the state (guisoonbukhandongpo 귀순북한동포)” and “defector (talbukja 탈북자).” Since this period, the definitions started to lose an ideological significance, and instead indicated under privileged and under-served demographics of the population. These popular terms were associated with a lower social class or in some way criminal activities. In 1997, North Koreans gained the name “ordinary residents who escaped from North Korea (bukhanitaljumin 북한이탈주민)” following the new act that the Kim Dae Jung administration launched.

Invariably, scholarly findings regarding the identities of North Koreans and their relationship to South Koreans suggest that North Korean citizenship is dominantly shaped by division politics, and co-ethnic politics (Chung et al. 2006; J.Jo 2010; Y.Jo and Jeon 2005; J.W. Kang 2003; K.S. Lee 2006; Y.S. Park and I.Yoon 2007; I.Yoon 2007). Previous studies often guide our understanding of North Koreans’ unsatisfactory lives in post-settlement period as they are employed in lower-paying and unstable jobs, suffer identity crises and face discrimination in South Korea (J.A. Jo 2010; J.W. Kang 2011; Y.S.Park and I.Yoon 2007; Sun et al. 2005; I.Yoon 2007). The prejudices of South Korean society have positioned North Koreans as “second-class” or “inferior” citizens in myriad subtle ways (Choo 2006; J.W.Kang 2003; J.W.Kang 2011; I.Yoon 2004). Ordinary South Koreans often distinguish themselves from this new “cultural other” in their daily lives via
various mechanisms of distinction (J.W.Kang 2003; Y.Song 2007). North Koreans are also frequently associated with figures of personhood such as untrustworthiness, criminality and backwardness (B.Chung 2004; K.Lee 2003). South Korean society does not seem to be ready to accept “different” citizens who will help to diversify the concept and practices of South Korean citizenry (H.Lee 2012; H.Park 2010) in the perspective of “recognition politics” (Taylor 1994) and “cultural citizenship” (Rosaldo 1994).

1.3 NEOLIBERAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE SOUTH KOREAN SERVICE REGIME

With drastic changes in the political climate regarding Cold War politics worldwide in the early 1990s; the economic and social crises of the North in the post-Kim Il Sung period; in addition to the change in administration in the South, inter-Korea relations entered a new era of understanding between their peoples and society. The new leader Kim Jeong Il attempted to attune the society to the changing international politics surrounding his country, so that social, political and economic changes accompanied his reign of the country. South Korea, on the other hand, elected the first oppositional party leader, the relatively progressive Kim Dae Jung as president in 1997. The socio-political environment of inter-Korea relationships looked to change imminently.

The recent surge of North Korean migration is due to social crises stemming from the leadership change and natural disasters in North Korea in the mid-1990s, North Koreans started to defect from their country for survival and better opportunities (Kwak 2000; Lankov 2006). In the early period of migration, a majority chose to stay in the vicinity of North Korea even after their crossing the national border between North Korea and China, and they gradually moved deeper into mainland China. Some of these migrants
remained as a refugee-like people, and reportedly about 20% of those migrants chose to come to South Korea (Good Friends 1999; Lankov 2006). Since the beginning of significant numbers of North Korean settlements in the late 1990s, the annual influx to South Korea has been approximately 1,000 to 3,000 throughout the 2000s (Ministry of Unification 2015). As a result, the number of North Koreans residing in South Korea reached 20,000 in 2010 and as of 2015, it reached approximately 28,000, with the number of North Koreans incoming yearly at around 1,200 (Ministry of Unification 2015). This is a significant rise, compared to immigration statistics before the North Korean social crisis became critical.

The Kim government devised a new policy package and the supporting Act, which was geared particularly towards North Koreans, as it saw North Koreans as a distinctively new group of people who could play an important role in the future unified Korea. With the Act of the Protection of and Settlement Support for North Korean Defectors in 1997, the South Korean government legally and politically aimed to transform its definition of North Korean citizenry. The Act stressed that newly settled North Koreans are neither ideological subjects targeted for political gains regarding inter-Korea relations nor helpless welfare recipients dependent on South Korean welfare benefits (Ministry of Unification 2015). This was a critical development regarding North Korean resettlement policy and North Koreans’ identity as well as a relationship building opportunity with North Korea. In a nutshell, the North Koreans were given a new, proactive and positive identity by the definition of the law. Common terms referring to them signify this change. “Unification protagonists ( tongileui juche 통일의 주체 )” and “cultural mediators for unification ( tongileui gyodubo 통일의 교두보 )” are just two examples of the state’s rhetorical
definition of the defectors which signal changes in the way North Koreans were treated in the South. This policy towards North Koreans was aligned with the Kim Dae Jung administration’s overall policy of inter-Korea relationships, as it pursued national unification as a realistic and possible political process, which was expected to happen in the near future. The unification discourse started to become more concrete at the policy level after the first-ever two-summit meeting took place in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital city, in 2000.

Since that time, the policy on recent North Korean resettlement has seen modest changes. Several South Korean administrations with different political stances have taken office over the last fifteen to twenty years. In the Kim Dae Jung and the following Roh Moo Hyun administrations, the basic foundation for North Korean resettlement remained the same. Following the Kim Dae Jung government’s welcoming policy for North Koreans and an amenable stance toward the North Korean regime, the Roh administration amended it with focuses on the cost-efficiency of the programs and the self-sufficiency of the target population. The Roh administration took a motto of “productive welfare,” making North Koreans and other welfare recipients more self-sufficient and self-reliant mainly through active job seeking. When the conservative Lee administration took office in 2007, the North Korean resettlement policy was turned in a more market-driven direction, where cost-efficiency and the increase of employment among North Koreans was highlighted and competitions among the civil groups serving various groups of social minorities were encouraged. Stressing North Koreans’ economic self-sufficiency through strengthened

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5 Before this period, North Koreans were at best welfare recipients, if not an ideologically stereotyped group of people. Unification was addressed only rhetorically, and the Southern government had maintained an adversary position towards the North (Grinker 1998).
employment and education programs, the Lee administration further privatized the welfare sector, mainly by launching the “social enterprise” program to reduce overall expenditures in welfare areas for social minorities.

Aligned with the overall neoliberal arrangement of the welfare system in South Korea, the “workfare”, which highlights enhanced productivity and employment, works hand in hand with reducing the cost for social minorities by co-opting civil forces, and outsourcing the ground operations. By promoting individuals’ efforts and self-reliance, it presents neoliberal logics permeating through the service system. As discussed in terms of the technologies of subjectivity (Foucault 1979, Ong 2006), self-responsibilization (Ferguson and Gupta 2002) becomes the disciplinary tool for subjects themselves in neoliberal times. They are continuously asked to be “self-motivated, self-reliant and entrepreneurial” (Rose 1992, 147). Hana Centers, the main site of this research, are organizationally hybrid, as a form of the state’s decentralized governmentality. As contracting-out institutions (minganwitak 민간위탁), Hana Centers operate as a mixed governmental and non-governmental form of service provision. Banding together with popular social enterprise projects, Hana Centers’ transformation is not unfamiliar to the North Korean service industry. This is not just limited to the Korean case, but similar cases are found in other parts of the world, which shows what were once exclusively state services are now outsourced to civil and social organizations (see also, Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998; Kamat 2004; Ong 2006; Postero 2006; J.Song 2009). It is an example of the state’s neoliberal partnerships with civic groups for cost-efficiency and privatization of public services, which springs partly from historical trajectories of the relationship between the state and civil society in South Korea (J.Song 2009). In this milieu, Hana
Centers are undoubtedly set up as institutions for resource efficiency, which could possibly reduce the cost of material support, institutional mediation processes, and competition in securing funding which all speak to the neoliberal arrangement of the national welfare service. As a state agency for supporting North Koreans, Hana Centers are positioned as local supporting agencies with the goal of “total care” for North Koreans with individualized forms of service.\(^6\) As a social welfare Center, Hana Centers are not expected to engage directly in political issues. Rather, they are to provide “practical” service for North Koreans’ daily lives such as support in education, employment, housing and psychological health. This project, nonetheless, recognizes how overall changes in Korean society regarding the dynamic between civil society and the state in supporting social minorities follows a neoliberal trend in the pursuit of “institutional efficiency,” albeit with more personalized and micro-disciplinary service practices. Furthermore, it acknowledges how all efforts to be efficient as an institution can affect the construction of (new and distinctive) North Korean subjectivity which may have unanticipated outcomes at different institutions and through different modes of governing.

Hence, this study also focuses on Hana Centers contributing to formulating neoliberal types of “independent” and “self-sufficient” North Korean subjectivity particularly in relation to service client-ship – which is driven by market logic. By addressing subjectivity and institutional power, the study is aligned with Foucauldian discussions on neoliberalism, modern institutions and governmentality. In discussing this

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\(^6\) It is well-documented in governmental web document in 2010. Total care here means that North Koreans can get aid for nearly every aspect of their settling life, such as economic, educational and psychological needs so that they do not need to visit other places to receive necessary aid. See the website of Ministry of Unification, [http://www.unikorea.go.kr/CmsWeb/viewPage.req?idx=PG0000000162](http://www.unikorea.go.kr/CmsWeb/viewPage.req?idx=PG0000000162) accessed in April, 2013
subject-making process, I borrow Ong’s discussion of cultural citizenship as a dialectical process of subject-making and self-making in the webs of power (Ong 2003). The overall politico-cultural rearrangement of society into neoliberal time and space has contributed to creating a new (national) subjectivity of North Koreans as “independent” and “self-sufficient” citizenry (J.Jung 2010; J.Lee 2015; M.Sung 2010) and these are highlighted more in some ways than others which depend on the practices of particular institutions from my observation. As an ethnographic study, it also addresses the affective dimension of service delivery, which enables us to see across and beyond discussions of governmentality. In order to find these convergences of different analytical approaches, I focus on the bureaucratic languages such as “professional relationships,” “efficiency,” “practicality” or “trust,” and different institutional spaces such as individual counseling meetings, programs for volunteers and the clients, and informal gatherings. It will attend to how the affective languages are used disparately depending on the “scales” and “levels” of institutions - such as national/central vs. regional/local - and at the same time compare and contrast how the same term is utilized in delivering different meanings. Contesting expectations on and identities of the Centers show the efforts of negotiation and elaboration as well as inconsistency and contradiction in both individual and institutional levels. The micro-politics configuring North Korean subjectivities and different modes of affective expressions are key ethnographic sites for this study to examine translocal and regionalized specificities of institutional arrangements.

Chapter organization
In the remainder of this dissertation, Chapter 2 will discuss ethical issues such as an anthropologist researching institutions in her home country will be touched upon and then the methodology this research has adopted will be addressed. Chapter 3 will further delve into the historical and policy-based context in which Hana Centers are situated. Chapter 4 will analyze how a local Hana Center is managed and administered by state bureaucrats on the ground which does not necessarily adhere to the national policy statements, but instead shows affective interactions configuring the overall service environment and revealing the broader politics surrounding the service industry for North Koreans. Chapter 5 will connect a conceptualization of affect to uneven operations of Cold War politics. In Chapter 6, I will address the regulating and formulating practices of the desirable clientele figure of North Koreans through individual management programs as well as the anxiety of service providers in the midst of a competitive service environment in the neoliberal welfare regime.
CHAPTER 2
ETHICS AND METHODOLOGY

Anthropologists have been engaged in topics examining how institutions exert power through governments, supranational organizations, NGOs, and various other forms of organizations. The engagement of anthropologists with public policy or modern institutions starts with an acknowledgement that these powerful institutions are increasingly crucial to the organization of contemporary society (Shore and Wright 1997; Wedel 2005). In this vein, anthropologist Laura Nader’s famous claim, “study up” has been underscored, as she emphasized the urgency of studying up as well as down in the discipline of anthropology (Nader 1974). For anthropologists, to “spell out the processes of power” (Wolf 1974) and to ask different questions pivoting around power and accountability are important to understand a society because doing so develops a holistic picture rather than simply featuring those impacted by power brokers.

Conducting a research on national institutions such as Hana Centers, which have served North Korean clients since 2009, is significant for several reasons. To locate the matter in its proper context, the Centers were established in the post-Cold War period, but by politically conservative administrations (in terms of North Korean matters). This was also a period when social welfare was gradually cut back while neoliberal social structuring was taking place (Song 2009). South Koreans were no longer as interested in North Koreans as they were at the beginning of the national division, and apart from popular rhetoric on unification and recoverable homogeneity, South Koreans came to have
a weakened sense of homogeneity with North Koreans (Hahm and Han 2000; J.Song 2009).

Institutionally, Hana Centers are hybrid organizations of both private and public institutions and are considered to be better alternative than many social organizations on issues of organizational stability and accountability in serving targeted populations in recent times. The Hana Center, as a form of both private and public institution, plays a significant role not only in the public presentation of the institution, but also in interactive dynamics among the service participants. Having a dual identity confuses service providers on the ground in understanding the missions and the relevant policy. It also makes it hard for the service providers to build internal consensus on what the Centers are supposed to do. On the other hand, that ambiguity ironically allows service providers to negotiate their scope and kinds of service and to produce their own working knowledge. Another crucial property of Hana Centers is that they are associated with different levels of institutions – ranging from central and local government, to non-state and non-profit organizations, and to individual professionals who are involved with service for North Koreans. Thus the service participants – both service providers and service recipients – are aware of the position of Hana Centers in the wider assemblage of welfare and service to North Koreans, and the service activities taking place in Hana Centers can be understood beyond the organizational boundary of the Centers.

The aforementioned characteristics of a Hana Center - state and non-state agency, nationally set up but locally operating, being situated in intricate organizational networks, and a caring institution for North Koreans (a social minority) – are elements to consider in probing questions as follows: How do the processes of power, regarding resource distribution and symbolic power, work in a variety of institutional scales? How do the
everyday practices reveal both the entrenchment of and the breach of larger politics – i.e. ethnic/gender politics, Cold War ideology and neoliberal structuring? My ethical standpoint in conducting research and analyzing the Hana Center institution stands in recognition of its position, particularly within the milieu of service provision for North Koreans. Equally importantly, researching this resourceful institution, rather than underprivileged populations, requires a different kind of ethical engagement from anthropologists.

2.1 Ethics

Research in collaboration with the national institution

Anthropological tradition has demanded that researchers be mindful of ethics and methodology as the discipline can be intrusive and revealing of the people or groups on whom we conduct research. Doing research in a collaborative relationship with a national and legitimate institution challenged me to think of different sets of questions, as the institution itself is socially influential and politically significant in the lives of the population served and the result of analyzing the institution can be sensitive on the political, cultural and social fronts (Gupta 2012; Herzfeld 1992; Hoag 2011).

Institutions have their own bureaucratic structures, political/ideological standpoints, and different kinds of networks in their regions. The institutions of the focus of this study are national social centers, which are mostly expected to provide service to social minorities in the local communities. Hana Centers are national institutions, but they are distinct from other institutions such as research, consultancy or administrative institutions. Through my research I could sense the Hana Centers have more authority,
legitimacy and power than local NGOs and individual agents in the service network. They are also supposed to take care of the underprivileged, marginalized and mostly poor, with limited resources from government subsidy; local corporate or independent donations; and local volunteer labor forces. Thus, the workers at a Center have their own work ethic and a specific mentality as a local social/service provision Center and as a Center nationally assigned by the Ministry of Unification.

Given these particular socio-political characteristics of Hana Centers, I was careful not to take the official statement of the Hana Center as a factual description of what the Center was actually doing. I also had to be flexible and mindful in establishing my role and position vis-à-vis the Center when meeting with my research participants. The gap was most significant among the different groups of research participants, such as Hana Center workers, North Korean clients, and NGOs or individual patrons. Depending on their positions in the Centers – years of working for the Centers, job positions, degrees of personal commitment and work history, and types of employment in the Centers - the Hana Center workers had differing accounts of their work ethics and their institutions. Their perception of me as an external researcher also factored into their descriptions of their work, which varied along lines of religion, gender, work hierarchy and accountability. The research participants showed me varying degrees of closeness and openness as they talked about their commitment and perspectives regarding the Centers.

Collaborations with the national institution gave me another challenge in approaching and building relationships with the North Korean settlers. Since this project is specifically designed to examine the institutional engagement with North Koreans in South Korea, I purposefully entered the field through the Hana Centers. I met the new North
Korean settlers to the region while participating in the Center’s activities, so most of the new North Korean interviewees built an institutional relationship with me. However, it was not always clear-cut which of my roles I should highlight most in any given situation. For instance, when one Center had its group activities, I could briefly introduce my intention to participate in the activities throughout and draw a general consensus based on my participant observation and potential interviews later. Even though the social worker at the Center allowed me to interview the North Korean clients, the clients did not necessarily step up to participate in the research. The social worker tried to help me further and encouraged the North Korean clients to volunteer for the research. However, their sense of keeping their identities safe and my position as an institutionally connected researcher could have been a hindrance in setting up a separate meeting for an in-depth interview or in participating in different activities at a Center. I sometimes had to compromise by interviewing a client for a very short time due to his/her limited hours of involvement in a Center. Suggesting research participation to North Korean clients was not as straightforward as I thought it would be. Interviewing long-term acquaintances or friends is definitely different from conducting interviews with North Korean clients with whom I did not have personal relationships but to whom I was introduced by the Center. Since my focus was Hana Centers’ institutional engagement in overall service provision, I tried to engage with current clients who could provide me with their experiences and reflections in the specific time period and the location – people who are in their first year of resettlement, the recommended period of service provision by Hana Centers. In any case, I tried my best to be transparent and honest about my research intention in explaining informed consent and the voluntary nature of their involvements with my research, but it was impossible to
explain beforehand every possible situation that could happen because of my dual positions. I had to use my “local knowledge” and my familiarity with the North Korean service-related field in order to be appropriate and proper with the Center and the clients in situations happening in and outside of the Center.

When I interviewed individual patrons, government officials and NGOs, none of whom are directly connected to Hana Centers, I faced different kinds of challenges and responses. For instance, some NGO workers responded in a disgruntled manner when asked about the operations of Hana Centers. They were not very satisfied with the state’s rearrangement of the service agencies aiding North Koreans, since Hana Centers were assigned as central organizations in the field with national legitimacy and accountability. These issues were touchy subjects to many NGOs, which operate without much support from donors or the government; so I had to learn to be adept in expressing ideas about Hana Centers without necessarily advocating the Centers unequivocally. I tried to be very compassionate concerning how NGO workers might feel facing the shrunken support and networking among NGOs due to the concentrated resource endowment and legitimacy attached to the Hana Centers. Some government officials whom I met, on the other hand, expressed concern and sympathy towards the Centers as they expect the Centers to shoulder more responsibility and develop better programs to efficiently use the resources. I conceded all their ideas and discussed the matter as someone who was trying to be a better volunteer at the Centers while simultaneously serving as a researcher who could benefit the Center as a middle-person. I adopted this attitude in accordance with the practice of reciprocity in Anthropological studies.
Collaborating with Hana Centers by taking an institutional position necessitated different kinds of ethical concerns and responses toward diverse groups that I encountered in the field. Holding the position of both volunteer worker and researcher was advantageous to my being involved with relevant activities outside of the Centers, as well as to my being both an insider and an outsider to the Centers at the same time. However, it also involved difficult positioning and latent risks in exploring sensitive topics in regards to ethical issues, as the Center staff could mistake my volunteer involvement as abusing my position for personal research; and the North Korean clients could think of my approach as intrusive to the Centers’ staff members.

**Informing research participants and representation of the subject**

My position as an anthropological researcher in Korea has yielded some important ethical questions, particularly in relation to local knowledge and informing the subjects. As other recent anthropologists have done, I encountered a situation where I questioned the efficacy and the materiality of informed consent: how could I speak truthfully about my position at the Centers? Interpreting and locating informed consent in the context of South Korean service provision was another challenge that I encountered. I was required to ask institutional workers about their ethical and political standpoints as well to ask for concrete examples of how the Centers’ operations actually work on the ground. Since asking about a staff person’s political, religious and cultural values and perspectives was particularly delicate in the service field for North Koreans, and since some staff members expressed discomfort in answering the questions, I had to follow up with service activities with them instead of directly asking further relevant questions. Even when they mentioned
their perspectives and personal thoughts, some workers asked me to keep these off the record due to the sensitivity of such topics to the moral and political implications of the national institution.

To North Korean clients, different issues arose in terms of informing them of the research and representing their voices in my paper. Their lack of social knowledge in the beginning stage of resettlement put them in a vulnerable position as research participants. I tried to be less intrusive and personal with them than with other groups I interviewed, and instead I took the stance of an impartial volunteer trying to be helpful both to the Center and to the clients by asking them of the difficulties and barricades to finding proper services. Fortunately, some North Korean research participants were more-or-less informed of South Korean society and of what to expect from the Center because of their family members who had settled in the South first. It made my research into their service experiences and my reflections upon them easier, although I have to mention the existing differences in terms of cultural competency within the group.

For representation of the subject, I had to decide what to disclose and what not to disclose. To begin with, research on North Koreans requires particular caution due to their legal status and socio-cultural position in South Korea. It should be noted that North Korean settlers’ citizenship is not simply straightforward across the board. They become legitimate citizens in South Korea after going through institutional interrogation processes. Meanwhile, their status in North Korea is categorized as criminal due to the antagonistic relationship between the North and the South. Their legal status in South Korea does not provide safety or legitimacy in North Korea or in China. In other words, they are protected in their identities only locally. Their identities as North Korean settlers in the South could
be used against their remaining family members in the North. Thus it is logical that North Koreans would feel insecure and uncomfortable in dealing with their identities and legal status.

Just like other refugee groups, North Korean settlers in the South have experiences of institutional interrogations regarding who they are. This posed challenges to my study, as they were sensitive about inquisitions and an interview format. Ethnographers researching a social minority should be particularly careful on the issue of representation. As Spivak (1988) famously points out in “Can Subaltern Speak?,” cultural, social, and political accounts should all be considered in the representation of marginalized populations. With a politically charged position in South Korea, North Koreans still find themselves positioned oddly within a national, and at the same time, localized Center. Whether or not North Korean clients actively participate in the Center’s services, they have a somewhat collective understanding and critical stance towards the Centers. In a given service site, North Koreans and South Koreans often find themselves misunderstood by each other because of different expectations, understandings of institutional help, and disparate lifestyles. In this vein, social institutions and research could be the place where “epistemic violence” (Spivak 1988:78) takes place against socially marginalized people. This study understands the potential risks in interpreting Others’ voices, and the researcher herself is situated in power relations which construct and influence the conversations and interpretation process between the interviewers and interviewees. Due to this concern, I tried to analyze and understand the structure of the Centers which both enables and inhibits the agency of North Koreans. I attempted to immerse myself in North Korean settlers’ particular culture by living with them and engaging in various types of informal activities.
and talks in addition to formal interviews. Even though the ethnographic studies may entail risks of distortion or exaggeration in representing “Others,” I believe that reflexive and dialectic processes are key in producing ethnographic knowledge. With this in mind, I tried not to lose sight of the performative as well as the restrictive aspects of speech during my interviews. I was careful of my position as a South Korean researcher, staff member, and service provider so that I did not construct a particular perspective that would then be projected onto the North Koreans, which is aligned with what Haraway (1988) called “situated knowledge.”

For the workers at the Centers and other service providers, I also tried to be careful in using their interviews and information as much as I could in terms of distribution and representation of the data. Based on my knowledge from previous experiences with GO and NGO workers in South Korea, the service institution workers are wary of being used and manipulated for research purposes. Additionally, due to the different degrees of staff openness about relevant matters and their closeness to a given researcher, representation of the institutional workers could be only partial and reflective of the kind of relationship I built with each of them. I will try not to dismiss their endeavors and passion in delivering the service, but rather I will depict how each institutional worker is positioned in the Center differently according to his or her cultural, religious and political values on top of years of experience. For the same reason, I will instead pay more attention to how the bureaucratic structures are constructed through the participations of the service providers, clients, and external groups as well as legal processes, institutional hierarchies and document production.
2.2 Methods

As stated earlier, Hana Centers are established to optimize the efficient distribution of resources to North Koreans and to aid in their local adjustment, as the state attempts to handle the increase of the population settling in diverse regions of South Korea. In this dissertation, I attempt to show how the staff and the specific bureaucratic culture at two different state institutions provide their respective services. To represent the dynamic process of the actual service provision as well as to situate each Hana Center in a broader social and political context, I chose to adopt various kinds of qualitative research methods. More specifically, I aimed to scrutinize 1) state policy as well as Hana Centers’ programs, 2) ground-level service delivery to North Koreans, 3) different scales and localities of the service provision, and 4) North Koreans service experiences on axes of time and place.

These research interests necessitated processes as follows: 1) the identification and analysis of policy documents, photos, video materials and public statements of Hana Centers, 2) participant observation in two Hana Centers with active involvement in all relevant programs, 3) semi-structured or unstructured in-depth interviews with the Center staff and with North Koreans. In addition, I ventured 4) site visits to different regions and other Hana Centers and institutions to triangulate the data, 5) brief phone interviews with staff at both government and non-governmental organizations, 6) a survey and a focus group interview with North Korean program participants, and 7) informal talks at the main research sites. This study attempts to grasp the regional micro-dynamics, while being attentive to how nationalized policy and governance are interwoven in everyday practices of service delivery. It proposes to look into how institutional engagements with a nationally constructed arrangement are locally situated, how various affective interactions formulate
specific service scenes and contribute to the broader realm of socio-politics, and the specific kinds of service provider/recipient relationships. To see how a national institution works differently depending on the regional dynamics, institutional history, amount and quality of resources, bureaucratic culture and political and ethical standpoints, I selected two distinctive Centers for the main research sites. I chose Wonju Hana Center and Seoul Bukbu Hana Center for my comparative research sites, due in part to my research capacity with limited funding and time, but also due to the high potential for comparability between the two different service operations.

The factor of “a city” was taken into a consideration, as it is well known that North Koreans aspire to settle in the capital city owing to their preconceptions that living in the capital city is equivalent to having a privileged position in society. Owing to this factor, I decided to study one Hana Center in Seoul and another in the region outside of the Seoul-metropolitan area. The table below shows how unequally distributed the population is. Seoul only has a quarter of all settlers, but if Seoul and metropolitan area are combined, the percentage reaches to approximately 64% of all North Korean settler population.

Table 2.1 Settlement of North Koreans by region (Ministry of Unification 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Seoul</th>
<th>Gyeong Gi</th>
<th>Incheon</th>
<th>Busan</th>
<th>Gyeongbuk</th>
<th>Gangwon</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>719</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>7,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4,493</td>
<td>5,534</td>
<td>1,731</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>18,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,748</td>
<td>7,497</td>
<td>2,450</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>26,020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Seoul Bukbu Hana Center serves the highest number of North Korean clients per Center and is well-known for its advanced knowledge and practices in providing services to North Koreans. The other Center in Wonju, Gangwon province serves a much smaller population and is located outside of the Seoul-metropolitan area. It is one of three
Centers in Gangwon province. Wonju is still relatively close to Seoul compared to other cities, but nonetheless, the socio-cultural influence of Seoul and the metropolitan area on this region is seemingly insignificant. Being surrounded by high mountains, this small city appears to maintain its own cultural and socio-economic character. In addition, I had already established good rapport with potential research participants located in the city before starting the project; and it was still commutable from Seoul within a day, rendering comparative research feasible.

Beginning in August 2013, I divided my week into two segments: 3-4 days in Wonju and the remaining days in Seoul. This involved many roundtrips between Seoul and Wonju while staying in South Korea. With regular schedules, such as staying in Wonju from Sunday through Wednesday and in Seoul from Thursday to Sunday, I arranged meetings with social workers, clients, and counselors on top of participating regularly in the meetings, workshops and education programs. When I stayed in Wonju, I also worked for an alternative school for North Korean youth. The school recently established its new location in Wonju after leaving its original home place in Seoul. I had already worked with the school and had known the staff and students since 2006; hence, I could easily take part in teaching students. I taught anthropology, yoga and English during the day time and had much free time in the evening. By staying at a dorm with students in Wonju, I could get closer to them in their daily lives. We would often sit at a table for dinner talk about the school, their relationships, or occasionally dorm rules or personal histories, etc. This setting also allowed me to follow my young North Korean students’ routines, such as studying, hanging out, shopping, cooking and eating, and interacting with one another, thus helping me to grasp one part of North Korean settlers’ lives and concerns in the proximity. In Seoul
I rented a small studio room which was relatively close to Seoul Bukbu Hana Center, taking me about 25 minutes to get there by public transportation. Since I was a registered volunteer for the Center, I was expected to visit or call each client at least once a week to make sure of his/her well-being in the new place. In addition, the Center held volunteers’ meetings once a month, and hosted irregular events or daily retreats which I also took part in consistently throughout my fieldwork period of over one year. I was also allowed to do participant observations during the initial two-week education/training sessions both in Seoul and Wonju due to my flexible schedule and my clients’ and my students’ presence in the program. These other meetings and events in addition to my regular visits to the Center provided me with a good ground for understanding the dynamics of the Center’s work and relationships between the workers and the clients. Written and presented materials are also important media in this research, as there are “educational” and “training” materials provided for North Koreans in each program to teach them the proper/normative ways to enter into the South Korean cultural and social rubric.

Table 2.2 Summary of research methods and field sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Sites and personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site visits and formal/informal interviews</td>
<td>A police station in Seoul, Daegu Hana Center, Incheon Hana Center, Gumi Hana Center, Chunchon vocational school for North Koreans, Wonju alternative school for N.K youth, Wonju collaborative conference on servicing North Koreans, a conference on North Korean education in Seoul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short phone interviews</td>
<td>NGO staff in Wonju (conservative), Hana Foundation staff, a police officer in Seoul, staff at another Hana Center in Seoul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth interviews</td>
<td>37 service providers and recipients in and out of Hana Centers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field site

In addition to the main field sites, Seoul Bukbu Hana Center and Wonju Hana Center, I visited several other sites to enrich my data through comparison and contrast. I chose Hana Centers in Daegu and Gumi (both in Gyeongbuk province), plus one Center in Incheon, all in consideration of their populations served, their organizational history and the perspectives of the institutions. Incheon is another big city housing a couple of thousand North Koreans; two Hana Centers are in operation there. I visited one Hana Center which used to be a religious organization mainly engaged with charity work in the region. It is considered good comparison example because it is still located within the Seoul-metropolitan area, while being a different city. Daegu Hana Center used to be an international NGO helping with North Koreans; and is also known as one of the most exemplary Hana Centers in the country, utilizing its previous extensive international network in advocacy and publication work, and promoting multiculturalism in the region. Gumi Hana Center is fairly small as opposed to Daegu or Incheon Center so I chose it as another good comparison to Wonju Hana Center in terms of size and population served. It has been operating as a regional social Center, thus sharing characteristics with Seoul Bukbu Hana Center and Wonju Hana Center.
I met public servants in municipal and district governments who are in charge of social minorities including North Koreans; and I visited a college, a vocational school and an alternative school for North Koreans in Gangwon province. I also visited a couple of NGOs and interviewed several staff in hopes of getting an outsider’s viewpoint in terms of Hana Centers’ position and operations in the service field.

Table 2.3 Field sites categorized by organization and city

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>Hana Center</td>
<td>Main research site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>Police station</td>
<td>Western part of Seoul, to gather information on job referencing program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>NGO for North Korean advocacy</td>
<td>A well-known NGO in international advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>Nowongu district office</td>
<td>The staff in charge of North Koreans in the district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonju</td>
<td>Hana Center</td>
<td>Main research site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonju</td>
<td>Alternative school for N.K.</td>
<td>The place where I worked as a part-time teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonju</td>
<td>City Hall, municipal gov.</td>
<td>Municipal government to gain data about supportive programs for North Koreans in the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonju</td>
<td>Yonsei University</td>
<td>The university has a program to boost global connections, and North Korean students were invited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuncheon</td>
<td>Vocational school for N.K.</td>
<td>A vocational school aiming to train male North Korean youth in job skills. Still in process of recruiting students and gaining government permission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daegu</td>
<td>Hana Center</td>
<td>Another Hana Center, used to be international NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incheon</td>
<td>Hana Center</td>
<td>Another Hana Center, used to be religious charity NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paju</td>
<td>NGO for North Koreans cultural understanding / manufacturing business</td>
<td>An NGO run by North Koreans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gumi  |  Hana Center  |  Another Hana Center, used to be a social Center

The map below shows the geographic locations of each of the cities I visited. Since South Korea is a mountainous country, and roads developed in a more complex way than most US cities, travel takes more time than what it normally takes in the US. Paju (about 18 miles away) and Incheon (about 17 miles) are all in Gyeonggi province, and they were the closest cities to Seoul in my research. They each took me about one hour to reach by public transportation such as a train or a bus. Wonju is about one hour and a half to two hours from Seoul, depending on where I departed from in Seoul. Daegu is about three and a half hours away from Seoul by bus (about 150 miles); and Gumi is slightly north to Daegu, which took me about three hours from Seoul.

![Map of cities](image)

Figure 2.1 Cities visited for the research

- Seoul Bukbu Hana Center (Seoul Northern Hana Center)
Seoul is the capital city of South Korea. In the South Korean context, Seoul is more than an administrative center. It plays a significant role, not only because nearly half of all South Koreans reside in Seoul and its metropolitan area, but also because political, economic, social and educational centers are concentrated in this area, even though the government has tried to disperse its ministries and governmental departments throughout South Korea in recent times. More than a hundred universities are located in Seoul, and there are more than ten lines of subways running daily, but still people use terms like “hell-subway” during the commuting hours. All the big broadcast companies, headquarters of organizations, and businesses are located in central Seoul. Scenes of political actions taking place in front of the National Congress building, the Blue House, big companies, or other political hot spots are almost everyday occurrences in the Seoul landscape. Seoul has expanded geographically over the years, and one would need almost two hours to go from one end to the other by public transportation. Foreigners make up almost three percent of the population of South Korea now, and the number of tourists has been growing; thus it is not a rare incidence to come across foreign languages spoken on the street. Not surprisingly, newcomers such as North Koreans find it more attractive to live in a more diverse, glitzy, crowded and metropolitan Seoul.
My primary research site, Seoul Bukbu Hana Center, is located in the northeastern area of Seoul. Northeastern Seoul is a relatively underdeveloped area, but still heavily populated with many urban poor living in big apartment complexes, as well as middle-to-upper classes who tend to reside near mountains and less accessible regions. Northeastern Seoul is surrounded by mountains and is close to the suburban metropolitan area. Its housing and market prices for necessities are relatively low compared to the central Seoul area. One is more likely to find older generations passing by and making their livings here than to find younger generations. Living in this area normally implies that a person is lower-to-middle class rather than middle-to-upper, and residential conditions look much humbler compared to well-off regions such as the southern (Gangnam) and central parts of Seoul. Owing to these conditions, there are many government-subsidized apartment complexes. These subsidized apartments are very attractive options for lower-income households, because they rent for only a third or a quarter of the average. There is a very competitive market for lower-income Seoul citizens to live in these apartments, owing to its convenience as an inner-Seoul city and its relatively comfortable residential conditions.
at a lower price. North Koreans are usually assigned residence in these kinds of apartments, which could appear to be a huge benefit in the eyes of South Korean citizens or immigrants. However, North Koreans, as newcomers to the country, charged with hope and new opportunity could find the region unsatisfactory, since it is still not “the real center” and living in this region automatically positions them on par with lower-class South Korean citizens.

Figure 2.3 A picture of Nowongu area (author taken)

Seoul Bukbu Hana Center has been cited as the most developed Center in terms of its supporting programs. Because Northeastern Seoul has maintained a concentrated North Korean population since mid-1990s, it devised its own programs to support North Koreans even before Seoul Bukbu Hana Center was officially designated as the first model Center for North Korean resettlement in 2009\textsuperscript{7}. The region that this Center serves has the largest population of North Koreans among all who have resettled in Seoul. As of December 2013,\footnote{A news report on Seoul Bukbu Hana Center \url{http://www.unityinfo.co.kr/sub_read.html?uid=17856&section=sc4}}
the population was 1,763. This region includes six districts in Seoul: Dobong, Gangbuk, Nowon, Jungrang, Seongbuk, and Dongdaemun. According to published statistics, 4.3% of all North Koreans reside in this part of Seoul, the highest regional density in South Korea.

Figure 2.4 The Seoul Bukbu Hana Center's introduction page on serving population

This concentration is mainly due to governmentally subsidized residences and the social networks that North Koreans have previously built with their families and friends. Because of its history and service dedication to the North Korean population, many other Hana Centers try to learn from this Center’s mistakes as well as its achievements. As of 2014, Seoul and the metropolitan area host twelve out of a total of thirty-two Centers, and Seoul Bukbu Hana Center is one of four Centers located in Seoul.

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8 Seoul Northern Hana Center (Gongneung Hana Center), http://www.gnnkcenter.or.kr/Introduce/Region.aspx accessed in April, 2013
9 Seoul Northern Hana Center (Gongneung Hana Center), http://www.gnnkcenter.or.kr/Introduce/Region.aspx accessed in April, 2013
Seoul Bukbu Hana Center has one of the longest histories of serving North Koreans in South Korea as it first began to support North Koreans in 2000. The fact that this area drew many North Korean settlers to the region factored into the early start of this service, and the Center’s conscious effort to help the population played a part in its becoming the most active service provider to North Koreans. The Center lists its aims as “1) To provide comprehensive service for new arrivals in their initial stage of settlement, 2) To provide services according to different needs of age groups, genders, issues etc., 3) To provide services in consultation with North Korean immigrants and in liaison with other community organizations, 4) To elicit change of perceptions among South Korean citizens in order to achieve integration.”

Thus, the concentrations of this Center are providing comprehensive, intragroup, difference-based integration into South Korean communities and personalized service in collaboration with other organizations. Compared to other Hana Centers, Bukbu Hana Center has quite explicit goals stated in terms of its focus and philosophy of service provision. This Center is currently staffed with two counselors, five

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social workers and approximately sixty volunteer workers for the North Korean population in the region. I mainly worked as a volunteer - a “settlement helper” - for the Center, meaning I was expected to help North Koreans with their everyday errands and guide some institutional processes. I was also a participant observer in the initial education sessions offered to new North Korean settlers in the region, and I joined in other irregular events and activities.

- **Wonju Hana Center (Kangwon Namdongbu Hana Center)**

  Wonju is a small-to-mid-sized city in Gangwon province in South Korea. With an estimated total population of 300,000, Wonju is located 87 miles away from Seoul. The city can be reached from Seoul by either train or bus in approximately one and a half hours. Even though it is relatively close to Seoul and its metropolitan area, it provides its own distinctive scenery and rich agricultural and mountainous culture. Its main economy is based chiefly on the service industry, followed by agriculture and manufacturing. It is thus a city geared more to industries for consumption than for production. It is also known for its vibrant civil society, especially when the democratic movement was on the rise during the 1980s. Even before the democratic movement arose throughout South Korea in this period, Wonju had its own strong grass-roots movement of farmers led by Catholic leaders. During my period of fieldwork, I heard a lot about Wonju’s “openness” to outsiders and “diversity” in terms of residents’ origin. Wonju is not one of the biggest South Korean cities, but still it is well-connected with other major cities through public transportation, and people can travel to Wonju relatively easily. The percentage of the population not born in Wonju is higher than in other cities. Residents who claim Wonju as their natal town are
generally aware of the fact that they have many incomers residing in their city and are comfortable with that situation. It is also culturally rich; one of the most renowned Korean authors, Kyoung-Ri Park claims Wonju as the major home and her workplace for her writing. Toji Cultural Center in Wonju commemorates her works and attracts writers and artists across the world to the city. Gangwon province, in which Wonju is included, borders on North Korean territory, and it has an allegedly similar landscape to the countryside and small cities of North Korea. Interestingly, this province also has a long, troubled history of provocation such as spy infiltrations into Southern territory and underground tunnels made by the North Korean government.

Figure 2.6 The location of Wonju in Korea

However, Wonju is not a major city attracting a large number of North Korean settlers. Younger generations would quickly find it boring to live there, without sufficient
job options, just as they would any other small-to-mid-size city in South Korea. Older generations could find it more comfortable to live in, as it is similar in size to most North Korean mid-range cities but still provides convenience for daily living.

Figure 2.7 Wonju Hana Center's introductory webpage

Wonju had a total of 173 North Korean residents as of 2013, when people in their 40s and older made up more than 60% of all settlers (Gangwon Namdongbu Hana Center 2013). This is only equivalent to 10% of Seoul Bukbu Center’s targeted population, which makes a big difference in their respective service provision. In 2013, the Hana Center in Wonju was appointed as the “Gangwon Southeastern Hana Center” by the Ministry of Unification, reflecting the slight increase of North Korean population and the activeness of the Center’s service delivery. It now serves six cities in the province: Wonju, Hoengsung, Pyeongchang, Yeongwol and Jeongseon.11 The Center has been involved in North Korean settlement service since the early 2000s, which is a common time frame compared to other

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Hana Centers. The area that the current Hana Center is nestled in is the place where most early North Korean settlers found their home. Among the 173 North Koreans in this city, nearly half of the population live near the Center since it is located inside their apartment complex. The other half of the population is dispersed throughout the central residential area of the city. The Center describes its mission as follows: “We support North Koreans in their settlement through initial adjustment education programs, career counseling, information sharing for daily necessities and employment support service so that they can enter into the labor market and the local community successfully and systematically.”

Their mission statement is similar to that of other Hana Centers.

Figure 2.8 Wonju Hana Center (picture taken by the author)

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In Wonju, I was mostly involved with the Center as a collaborative observer. I would visit the Center for lunch and stay there observing social workers’ consultations with North Korean clients in addition to participating in several educational/training programs. The overall environment of the Center was very congenial and less busy than in Seoul. Staff would always welcome me and usher me into their offices whenever I visited the Center. I was first introduced by the principal of the school for North Korean youths where I had worked for a long time, and the staff at the Wonju Center all respected the school’s efforts to make an impact on the local community as well as on North Korean youths’ education. My background played a big role in our building a collaborative relationship with each other. The Center would ask how the school was running and the school would get better information regarding the Center through me. I played a sort of “messenger” role for each institution, which helped each Center to understand the other’s operations.

Since both organizations all recognized that the local communities in Wonju still needed much help in increasing their awareness about North Koreans and related issues, they could be more cooperative than competitive with each other. For instance, in Wonju there were only a couple of NGOs involved in North Korean matters, including a Catholic church in town and an old grass-roots organization that began by promoting ideas of national unification. This situation contrasted sharply with Seoul, where many NGOs, countless churches and individuals seek access to North Koreans for valid reasons. The Wonju Center also welcomed me as a researcher who was interested in the local settlement of North Koreans, a rare sight in a region like Wonju. As opposed to the Seoul Center, no other researchers had been interested and involved in the Wonju Center’s work. I was able to pass time in the Center by reading relevant publications or newspaper in a casual
environment. There were some busy days when clients of all kinds – the elderly, the disabled, multicultural groups, and North Koreans – swarmed in at once, but this only happened occasionally; it was not a daily scene at the Center. Most of time I was casually talking with staff members, helping them with chores, chatting with clients, and having lunch with other people. For a more professional engagement, I requested the Center to allow me to work as a volunteer teacher or a mentor for younger generations, but there was not enough demand. Instead, I was allowed to participate in a Korean class and a Chinese class that opened in winter and spring respectively, and I also took part in weekly theatrical workshops that ran from January 2014 to August 2014. These different kinds of involvement provided me with insights into diverse aspects of the North Korean support program and interactions among different participants.

**Sampling strategy of subjects**

For this research, I used non-probability sampling which collects samples based on the subjective decision of the researcher. Specifically I employed purposive sampling and snowball sampling to better answer my research questions. A purposive sampling is a method by which a researcher chooses a sample based on the people whom she thinks will be the most appropriate for the study. Since this study particularly aimed to analyze the data gained from two institutional sites and their service providers and recipients, there was a limited number of people who had proper knowledge in the targeted areas. Hence, it was logical for me to adopt purposive sampling rather than random sampling. Snowball sampling is based on referrals, which enhances the effectiveness and the chance of selection (Bernard 2013). These two forms of sampling were preferred in this research,
particularly when I needed to go beyond the two research sites to better situate the Centers’ operations in the larger context of institutional support for North Koreans, as well as to gain knowledge from older settlers who could take a historical approach to Hana Centers. I was able to find the best subjects to develop the research questions and to find new significance in the service practices through these samplings, based on the engaged research methods.

As the research required engaged relationships with the institutions, I first focused on familiarizing myself with each Center’s work environment and culture. For the initial two months, I signed up as a volunteer and received training in Seoul, I focused on finding out the different tasks performed by the main staff working for North Korean matters and I became acquainted with active volunteers. In Wonju, it took less time to get to know everyone, due to the smaller scale and lesser workload of the staff, and to get permission to audit or participate in programs.

After the initial period, I planned a potential interviewee list and sampled the research participants in consideration of several factors. Since I intended to be engaged with the two Centers for a prolonged time, I focused on building deeper relationships with the main staff and volunteers at both Centers. Thus, I was exposed to their work patterns and knowledge of their work by participating in activities on top of interviewing. Interviews with staff at the Seoul Center were mostly formal, since most of them were well aware of how such research was conducted and how they were expected to answer. For this reason, interviews did not reveal much of the information I sought, so instead I asked the interviewees about the Centers’ public stance and the institutional processes they used in performing their jobs. However, as bureaucrats, they could not provide me with either
fundamental, philosophical answers or answers regarding how different levels of institutional operations work. Sometimes I found my initial questions were too general or not directly relevant to their work; I had to be very specific in my questions each time, so that they could give me tangible answers. Following is one segment of interviews.

I: So what do you think about Hana Center’s role in terms of promoting local integration of North Koreans in the community?

SW: You mean, their settlement program?

I: Not necessarily… I meant the overall impact that Hana Centers in the region have on the North Koreans’ lives in the local community.

SW: I don’t know how to answer to that. You mean my personal opinion or the Hana Center’s operations?

I: (with hesitation) You can answer in both ways.

SW: What we do in the Center, as you know, we do initial adaptation program, employment support, one-on-one consulting with the clients…

This was my second in-depth interview with the social worker at the Wonju Center; and since we had built up rapport and a congenial and collaborative relationship, I expected more informal, less institutional answers from her. However, she was apparently puzzled by my questions and asked for more specific questions directly concerning her own tasks. I sensed that it was less a matter of rapport building than characteristics of bureaucratic work which troubled her in answering. It was challenging for her to provide me with a general answer in regards to the Hana Center’s position, social roles, philosophical background and so forth. I found this to be a limiting setup, as I wanted to use in-depth
interviews to hear how insiders felt about the overall operations of Hana Center in their daily working lives, and how they dealt with institutional contradictions and hurdles to accomplish their missions.

Overall, in interviewing the staff, I found that Seoul Bukbu Center was a little more formal and cautious in dealing with me as a researcher and a volunteer than Wonju Center. Even though our informal interactions allowed us to converse about more diverse and deeper subject matters, it appeared that there was a big gap between our informal talks and our formal conversations during interviews with the staff at the Seoul Center. For instance, a staff member at the Seoul Center who accompanied me during government office visits to register settlers for initial residency mentioned how much her religious faith had helped her in her work and how North Korean clients needed the same kind of faith to survive in South Korea. However, when I brought this topic up in the interview, she said this was a personal matter, so the conversation on faith ended quickly. I learned that interviews with institutional workers required a multi-pronged approach, rather than being limiting to regular formal interviews. The workers’ familiarity with the interview format, their established knowledge of how to give “proper” answers, and their bureaucratic patterns of work left little room for more in-depth conversations. These issues, as well as their sensitivity toward giving a false impression about the institution, all factored into the limited conversations in the interviews. For these reasons, I tried to find other complementary standpoints to explore my focus of interest. I conducted interviews with staff members at the initial time of contact and again when I was almost finished with my fieldwork to see if building rapport with them softened their initial formal and representative voice and gave them a less formal but more personal voice about the
program. Also, it was beneficial to observe the differences between the structured and official talk of the interviews and what the Centers’ staff actually do when they handle matters happening in the Center.

Notably, from participating in the activities that the Centers provided, I recognized the need to consider intersectional identities to recruit interviewees and informants. Service providers varied in their experiences in the field, perspectives on North Koreans, education/training background, work ethic and attitude towards their coworkers and clients; as well as in age and gender. The differences were more evident at the Seoul Bukbu Center where staff were more diverse and volunteers’ engagement was more active than at Wonju Center. I purposely recruited my interviewees based on their age, years of work and gender, knowing that these factors contributed to different accounts of their service engagement. Table 4 is the list of interviewees for this research, with their occupation, national origin, gender, age and place of residence.

Table 2.4 Interviewee for the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Gender/Age</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kwonho Lee</td>
<td>SW, Seoul</td>
<td>M/20s</td>
<td>A relatively new staff member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Soojung Kim</td>
<td>C, Seoul</td>
<td>F/50s</td>
<td>Has about 10 years of experience in North Korean-related field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yonhee Kim</td>
<td>V, Seoul</td>
<td>F/60s</td>
<td>A member of a local church who has been working with North Koreans for about 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jeongil Kwon</td>
<td>V, Seoul</td>
<td>M/30s</td>
<td>A newly trained volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hyomin Park</td>
<td>V, Seoul</td>
<td>M/50s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Siwon Yu</td>
<td>V, Seoul</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kyesuk Ha</td>
<td>V, Seoul</td>
<td>F/40s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jeonghee Ryu</td>
<td>NKC, Seoul</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Seryeon Yang</td>
<td>NKC, Seoul</td>
<td>F/40s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hakyu Son</td>
<td>NKC, Seoul</td>
<td>M/20s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Minki Kim</td>
<td>NK, Seoul</td>
<td>M/20s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Minji Kim</td>
<td>NK, Seoul</td>
<td>F/30s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hyungyu Lee</td>
<td>NK, Seoul</td>
<td>M/30s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jiseop Soh</td>
<td>I, Seoul</td>
<td>M/20s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sohee Ji</td>
<td>SW, Wonju</td>
<td>F/30s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Jaesun Lee</td>
<td>SW, Wonju</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Jinseung Kim</td>
<td>SW R, Wonju</td>
<td>F/40s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Hajin Wong</td>
<td>T, Wonju</td>
<td>F/30s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Kyunghe Lim</td>
<td>V, Wonju</td>
<td>F/50s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Minkyu Suh</td>
<td>PO, Wonju</td>
<td>M/40s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Affiliation</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Occupation/Career Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Sunha Choi</td>
<td>PO, Wonju</td>
<td>F/30s</td>
<td>Wonju police officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Hee Jin</td>
<td>City council official, Wonju</td>
<td>F/40s</td>
<td>Involved in policy making for North Koreans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Jinsil Hyun</td>
<td>NKC, Wonju</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td>Theatrical class attendee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Jiwon Ha</td>
<td>NKC, Wonju</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td>Initial adaptation program attendee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Hana Kim</td>
<td>NKC, Wonju</td>
<td>F/50s</td>
<td>Mother of Jinsil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Hyang Choi</td>
<td>NK, Wonju</td>
<td>F/30s</td>
<td>Has lived in the South for 5 years, looking for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Kumchul Park</td>
<td>NK, Wonju</td>
<td>M/20s</td>
<td>10 years of South Korean residency, a musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Yeon Cha</td>
<td>NK, Wonju</td>
<td>M/30s</td>
<td>A factory worker, Has lived in Wonju and South Korea for 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>TaeJung Lee</td>
<td>I, Lawyer, Wonju</td>
<td>M/50s</td>
<td>A sponsor for a couple of North Korean youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Hyun Cho</td>
<td>I, Wonju</td>
<td>M/40s</td>
<td>Volunteer instructor at an alternative school for North Korean youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>SunJeong Ji</td>
<td>NK, Paju</td>
<td>F/50s</td>
<td>An entrepreneur of an NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Inha Kang</td>
<td>Staff, Daegu Hana</td>
<td>F/30s</td>
<td>Has worked for over 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Yerang Han</td>
<td>Staff, Incheon Hana</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td>Has worked for over 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Jonghee Yang</td>
<td>NGO staff, Seoul</td>
<td>F/20s</td>
<td>Has worked for the NGO for a couple years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Yunhee Kim</td>
<td>NGO staff, Seoul</td>
<td>F/40s</td>
<td>Has worked for a related field for over 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Seulki Choi</td>
<td>NGO staff, Wonju</td>
<td>F/40s</td>
<td>Has worked for a NGO for a couple years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I conducted thirty-seven interviews in total, including two regular staff, five volunteers, three North Korean clients, three long-term North Korean residents from the Seoul Center; and three regular staff, one part-time worker, one volunteer, three North Korean clients, and three long-term North Korean residents from the Wonju Center. As a result, the number of people who are either working for or receiving services at the two Hana Centers is twenty-four. In addition, to obtain the best data for locating the Hana Centers in the service field, I recruited two police officers, one city council official, three individual sponsors, five NGO workers and two staff members from different Hana Centers. Twenty-five female interviewees and twelve male interviewees participated, which shows the dominance of women in the service field and among the North Korean population. Twelve people were in their 20s, nine people were in their 30s, eight people in their 40s, seven in their 50s and one in her 60s. In the field, professional workers such as social workers and general staff at the Hana Centers tended to be young, ranging from their 20s to their 30s, whereas volunteer workers and counselors tended to be older, mostly in their 50s and 60s. North Korean clients tended to be younger rather than older, as these people tended to utilize the service more actively than older generations. The age and gender differences did make a difference in their service participation, both from the providers’ and recipients’ standpoints. Among North Koreans, opinions in terms of
institutional service provision and the needs of North Korean communities diverged according to their settlement period.

This recruiting of subjects was based on the researcher’s subjective judgment about whom to interview and who would be the best fit for the research. For instance, at the Seoul Bukbu Center, one social worker was selected owing to the fact that he was the most engaged in assigning and training settlement helpers (volunteers) and was responsible for initial adaptation programs for North Korean clients. Volunteers were chosen based on their outspokenness and experiences displayed in the ten monthly meetings I attended, and I was able to interview only one counselor of the Center owing to her availability and willingness. At the Wonju Center, I chose three staff members since two social workers were in charge of programs for North Koreans, and the vice president was the first person who introduced me to the Center. I couldn't contact many North Korean clients, due to the small number of program participants. I chose my interviewees through referrals from the Center’s staff and from the school I worked for.

Those interviewees indirectly involved with the Hana Centers’ operations were chosen to triangulate the data. Several non-governmental organizations and individual sponsors were chosen to gain knowledge of non-state or non-institutional actors in service provision, and several more North Koreans were recruited to explore the mission of state service agencies from a historical perspective and to investigate the differences in terms of resettlement experiences, aspirations, and community involvement between older settlers and newer settlers to South Korean society.

In addition to in-depth interviews, I conducted many informal conversations with Hana Center staff, clients, volunteers, local residents, Hana Foundation staff and police
officers. These informal conversations helped me most in triangulating the data. I also conducted a short group interview and questionnaire-based survey to gain different perspectives and expressions from the clients through diverse methods. I conducted phone interviews when the staff and NGO workers could not afford to have separate meetings with me, or when they expressed little interest in meeting in person. Interviews with Hana Foundation staff and one NGO in Wonju were conducted this way, but since I was not able to obtain informed consents on paper, I did not include these people in the interviewee list. In setting up each interview, normally I provided each person in advance with an informed consent form and a list of the main questions which I planned to ask. I did so to ensure that their consent to participate was indeed informed. This also gave interviewees firsthand information about what the research focused on and the kinds of questions to be addressed.

Positionality and different kinds of relationships

Donna Haraway (1988) asserts that knowledge is situated. In other words, there is no “god’s eye” view on any set of phenomena. In particular, researchers, as positioned subjects in a certain locale and time within situated relationships, will go into the field and find themselves fortified in some ways and limited in others. My position in the institutional field was multifold. I was a researcher, a 30-something female graduate student studying in the US, a teacher for North Korean youth, a collaborator with the Hana Centers, an engaged volunteer and a participant observer of social programs in two different locations for about a year. These multiple positions allowed me to have distinctive levels of relationships with people involved, and thus to have variegated knowledge and perspectives regarding my research subject.
For the social workers in the Centers, my position as a volunteer - in a direct translation “a settlement helper (jeongchakdowumi 정착도우미)”¹³ - invariably helped me to participate in all levels of activities which would have been impossible for me to access otherwise. As we shared the task of helping clients, the social workers and I were engaged in both formal and informal interactions. Our conversations included a range of topics from the social workers’ opinions of the Centers’ programs, the institutions and networks, other workers, workload, and the tricky nature of responsibility; on North Korean clients; and on practical information regarding potential resources in the regions. Through informal as well as formal interactions with the staff, I was able not only to grasp the big picture of the Centers but also to ruminate on little details that the staff encounter in their working lives.

When it came to North Koreans, however, the issue of access was a different story. Since we would meet as “service provider” and “service recipient” - even though I had a low level of institutional engagement as a volunteer - there was always a latent risk that I had to face, depending on how the North Korean clients considered the Hana Center specifically and the governmental system of support broadly. North Korean interviewees who had a favorable opinion about Hana Centers and overall support programs would allow me to step into their daily lives where they needed help or tips. As I was officially a registered and trained volunteer in Seoul, I could also legitimately ask for their opinions on their service experiences. However, if the North Korean clients were not comfortable with the service in any one of a number of ways, they could be more blocked-off toward

¹³ This volunteer system for North Korean settlers was first introduced in 2005 to alleviate the heavy workload of police officers who at the time were responsible for North Koreans general resettlement lives in South Korea, and to provide North Koreans with more personalized and direct care which could possibly accelerate their adjustment process. However, as this research also found out, the success of the system is heavily contingent on volunteers’ knowledge, responsibility and how they thought about their “volunteerism.”
my inquiries and attempts to establish a relationship. Either way, I would only have been able to engage with North Koreans as a settlement helper, conversing about different services and benefits that they could receive from governmental or non-governmental institutions. Because of these factors, I could only meet well-disposed clients who frequented the Center and espoused favorable opinions about the Center and the governmental service overall. Aware of this bias, I also reached out to North Koreans who normally did not come to the Center and did not participate in the activities for in-depth interviews. Overall, North Koreans expressed relatively ambivalent opinions about the service programs. This was to be expected due to the position of the Center, which strives to be seen as a practical and neutral vessel of service to North Koreans, while in actuality, it is another intermediary and reflection of South Korean bureaucracy and neoliberalism afflicted by fluctuating and often confrontational politics.

- Volunteer – social worker relations in Seoul and Wonju

As a volunteer in Seoul, I could witness competing idealized notions of the proper relationships between the regular staff and the volunteers working for the Center. This form of relationship was rather blurry, as there were many factors affecting interrelations. Experiences and length of service provision to North Koreans, as well as age and gender, could all affect the relationship.

First, there were clearly differences of age. Among volunteers in Seoul, there existed more experienced people in terms of serving North Koreans outside of the Hana Centers than within them, and the majority of volunteers were women in their 50s or 60s. As time went by, we had more men volunteer in their 30s through 70s, whereas social
workers who were in charge of managing volunteers were in their 20s and early 30s. Even so, social workers had more legitimacy and authority to handle the issues arising in and around the Center; this situation created some necessary hierarchy in the relationship, but sometimes it created tensions and contrasting viewpoints. Ideally, the relationship was supposed to be complimentary as volunteers and social workers were both engaged in the business of helping North Koreans, with clearly assigned roles for each. In actuality, the relations were more complex and dynamic. Volunteers had very different backgrounds in their religions, ages, genders, classes, education and political stances. There was not always a direct correlation between their opinions on North Korean service and their intersectional identities, but those factors certainly influenced the dynamics among volunteers and between social workers and volunteers.

As a volunteer, I attended monthly staff meetings with other volunteers and an initial settlement program for North Korean incomers. In those encounters, I noticed how divergent political ideas and perspectives in gender, age and religions particularly clashed in both explicit and implicit ways. There was, however, not enough time for me as a volunteer to build relationships with other volunteers and social workers; social workers in Seoul were caught up in their daily tasks and other kinds of activities outside of the Center. The relationship between volunteers and social workers was rather formal and unidirectional, for social workers did not have enough time to interact with volunteers. Also, volunteers were much busier in their lives than people in Wonju. We often found it hard to set dates for outings and socials on top of monthly meetings. I could still sense that social workers tried their best to humanize their service and the overall relationships they built in their workplaces. However, work-related stresses – mediating volunteers and clients,
misunderstandings and miscommunications with North Korean clients and a significant amount of bureaucratic paperwork could easily lead social workers to burn out and could hinder them from engaging in the service area in more humanized ways. Also, social workers were expected to know everything from politics, to potential job markets, to social organizations, to legal issues, and so on. They spent a lot of time learning about these areas through education, training workshops, meetings with other Centers’ staff and non-governmental organizations’ meetings in their off-work time. Due to the demanding nature of their work, social workers’ job turnover was high. I witnessed that two out of five social workers leaving their positions during one year in Seoul. Social workers in Wonju might have had similar difficulties, but they had a significantly smaller number of clients than in Seoul, so the work was less stressful work for them. There was also a high turnover of volunteers in Seoul, in comparison with Wonju.

- Volunteer – client relations in Seoul and Wonju

Volunteers in Seoul were supposed to help clients register with the system as well as to help clean their new residences during the first and second day of moving in. Afterwards, we were expected to keep in touch with the clients once a week for at least six months, mainly to monitor how they were doing. With this amount of contact, volunteers usually could not maintain long-term relationships with the clients other than with a few North Koreans who desired to maintain those ties. The relationships were mainly oriented toward handing out some items that the clients would need; guiding them to local administrative offices, the Hana Center, markets and second-hand stores; and visiting their
places regularly to see what was needed. Volunteering was a good gateway to connect with North Koreans on a regular basis despite my assigned role and position.

I officially served two North Korean clients at the Seoul Hana Center during the period of my stay in South Korea from August 2013 to August 2014. I attended an initial two-week education program designed for settlers as well as several irregular events in order to meet other North Korean clients in the region. Through this involvement, I established rapport with new North Korean settlers in the region and gained multiple perspectives on the service activities. Overall, the North Korean clients whom I met provided me with good feedback about the volunteer system. It seemed like North Koreans received some comfort in terms of building relationships with South Koreans and having firsthand help from an individual who lived nearby.

However, there were also some cases in which either a volunteer or a client manipulated the official relationship. I witnessed some North Korean clients acting as if their volunteers should fulfill their requests regardless of the time of day. Also, there was the possibility of each person thinking of the other as a potential dating partner or as means of satisfying curiosity. Sometimes volunteers intruded in the lives of clients to the extent that clients barred them from future contact, refusing to answer further questions. In these cases, social workers intervened and gave each party some guidelines. However, overall misunderstanding or mistrust about the other party still informed some of these interactions. My first client did not trust the institution from the beginning, and after receiving initial support in cleaning her house and buying groceries and furniture, she cut off contact with me and the Center. Even though there was not much interaction involved other than helping her move in; make necessary registrations; and fill out documents for
housing, utility service, residence and setting up a bank account, she might have felt all the institutional involvement was intrusive and unnecessary. This was not very surprising since I had previously heard her telling another North Korean client that the police officers and Hana Center were usually trying to pry into their lives. There was obviously a sense of mistrust between the North Koreans and their South Korean service providers.

In Wonju, the monthly number of incoming residents was not consistent. Usually it was only a few people. Over my seven-to-eight months’ stay in Wonju, there were ten people served. The initial program was held sporadically because of this inconsistent number. The Center did not need new volunteers to assist social workers, unlike the Seoul Bukbu Hana Center, which had high volunteer turnover. Since the Wonju Center had had the same volunteers for several years, I wasn’t able to become a volunteer. Instead, I asked permission to observe and participate in some meetings of volunteers and other programs designed for North Korean clients. Those programs included a standard Korean class (in Seoul accent), Mandarin Chinese class, and theatrical workshops. In addition, I was also allowed to sit in where general counseling and consulting were taking place, or simply to hang out in the Center while other social workers were engaged with their work. I was sometimes viewed as a plain South Korean participant to the programs, or a sympathetic individual or as a staff member of the Hana Center. Overall, I felt the North Korean clients at this Center had a more favorable opinion about the Center and the staff with less of a politically entwined sentiment, owing to their relative closeness to the staff.

- Volunteer – volunteer relations in Seoul
As previously indicated, there was high turn-over of volunteers at the Seoul Center. At every monthly meeting, there were always new faces, and sometimes the new volunteers outnumbered the older ones. The work required volunteers to be available during the day, so the demographics skewed toward part-time workers, housewives, entrepreneurs of various sorts and retired people. The majority of volunteers espoused religious motivations for getting involved. There were a total of 60 people registered as volunteers, but active ones in a given month numbered between ten and fifteen people. One condition for volunteering required availability for at least six months, due to concerns regarding the lack of responsibility among volunteers and short periods of involvement. This condition also reflects the reality of volunteering in a region that shows a high turn-over of volunteers for the Center. Because of the high turn-over and individually designed working conditions with clients, it was hard for volunteers to build ongoing relationships with other volunteers, unless they had been working together for a long time or they already knew each other.

In monthly meetings, I observed people clashing over differing ideas about being a volunteer at a governmental Center and the Center’s main duties, as well as about their initial motivation for involvement and their perspectives on North Koreans. Diverse backgrounds were inevitable since there were few limitations to becoming a volunteer, and the Center needed volunteers at all times. There was not much chance for me to become very close to other volunteers, as all of them were pretty busy, and volunteers’ emergency contacts were always social workers, rather than other volunteers. When we tried to build a support network amongst ourselves, offering tips and advice, the effort was not sustained.

Volunteers whom I met for the first time typically asked me if I was also Christian. Even though I differ from them in ideas about faith, my research participants assumed that
we shared some core values and opened up to me comfortably. Older volunteers treated me as a person less experienced in life, so they took an attitude of generosity and guidance towards me. Contrastingly, my academic position as a PhD candidate gave some volunteers the impression that I was a specialist and a potential policy changer, so that helped in building trust between us. Because of my position as a PhD candidate trained abroad, I was given more authority in interacting with male volunteers particularly, as the notion of gendered hierarchy still exists among older generations.

In sum, the aforementioned multiple positionalities created through different significations and relationships are the bases to analyze affective relationships that arose in the institutional spaces that this study has taken as the main research sites.

2.3 DATA ANALYSIS

I used both deductive and inductive data analysis for this research. I used deductive research methods when I first investigated how the institutions promoted their ideas and planned actions for their service delivery, as well as how the central government proposed the Hana Center project and developed its programs. Then I applied inductive analysis mainly to interpret the data on micro-practices of the Center and interactive service operations to formulate theories connected to larger socio-political ramifications.

I set up initial categories for research questions as 1) institutional changes over time, 2) the geopolitical importance of the Centers, 3) the impact of overall neoliberal restructuring of the society with regard to social welfare programs, 4) intersectional identities of service providers and service recipients, 5) micro-practices of each Hana Center, and 6) local specificities of each Center’s service operation. I followed these
categories in sketching and locating the significance of the establishment and operations of Hana Centers in my initial period of fieldwork. Then I zoomed in on the specifics of service delivery, particularly focusing on the both inter-group and intra-group interactions between the service providers and the recipients, as well as interactions among service providers and among service recipients. When I reached an overall understanding of the social, historical and political significance of the Centers, I focused on the gaps between the stated intentions of the Centers’ policy and the actual operations of a Center. When I found a certain theme arising frequently, I probed it through participant observation and interviews. When the fieldwork was done, I transcribed all the interview data and reviewed the transcripts multiple times to identify any new categories that might emerge and need reorganization. As inductive research, I categorized groups of interviews by code words that appeared often and attempted to formulate theoretical frameworks, a common process in ground theory methodology. Those code words have multiple meanings which needed “a thick description” (Geertz 1973).

I performed content analysis on the different sorts of data collected and created categories to structure the data: audio and video sources of the Hana Centers’ introductory materials, public materials published both in print and on websites, audio-based interviews, note-based interview data, field notes, notes of group meetings and informal talks, site visit notes, phone interview notes, class and education materials, and conference publications. I sorted these materials into broader modes of data as follows: archival sources in print and on the web, audio recordings, visual recordings, and personal field notes of all sorts. These data were all utilized in analysis.
For archival sources, I paid attention to their particular characteristics as institutional materials. Commonsensically, bureaucratic operations are based on documents and legal statements, in a Weberian sense. But these are not just media of bureaucratic operations; they “are constitutive of bureaucratic rules, ideologies, knowledge, practices, subjectivities, object, outcomes and even the organizations themselves” (Hull 2012). The documents mediate, lead people to actions and sometimes transform and modify the meanings that they are supposed to carry (Latour 2005). In analyzing the materials published by Hana Centers and their advisory institutions such as the Ministry of Unification and the Hana Foundation, it is important to note this ethnographic study is not merely to identify what a document is. I will look at how the users of the documents appropriate them to mediate their actions, how different genres and forms of writing/documenting are employed in the Centers, and how these documents are “performing” in the actual groundwork of the institutions.

Thus to analyze the written data, I paid attention to 1) the different technologies adopted in formulating documentation, 2) how different genres and forms of published materials were aligned in their institutional settings, and 3) how these published materials attempted to represent their institutions and operations. Later I will explain how these representations are distorted and used by the service participants.

To analyze the interview data, I was able to quickly categorize sections of interviews into bigger groups following the pre-established categories of the research. After the initial categorization, I broke the transcriptions down into smaller groups to further interrogate the data. Particularly in the second stage of categorization, I aimed to find both explicit and implicit expressions manifest from the data on micro-practices of the
Center such as daily routines of service delivery, interactions among service participants, intersectional identities of service participants, and the conflicting ideas between service participants and the processes of negotiation and compromise. This process can be identified as thematic analysis which focuses on the content of narratives and on identifying patterns within data, which can interpret various aspects of the research topic (Braun and Clarke 2006).

Summary

This chapter described the methods employed in the research. I adopted archival research, participant observation, in-depth interviews coupled with a questionnaire survey and informal talks to triangulate the data. Research participants were recruited via non-probability sampling using both purposive and snowball sampling through referrals and subjective decisions based on participant observation. Analysis is based on the methods of grounded theory, content analysis, and thematic analysis. The following chapters will detail the results of the research.
CHAPTER 3

POLICY ANALYSIS ON NORTH KOREAN SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES OF HANA CENTERS

In this chapter, I will first map out how settlement support policy for North Koreans has changed over the last 60 years in South Korea, and I will describe the political and social significances of the policy changes. In the second part of the chapter, I will elucidate the organizational and service-operational location of the Hana Centers in the whole assemblage of service provision to North Koreans. This will lay the groundwork to examine the Centers’ ethical and disciplinary operations that are in line with broader politics – ethnic homogeneity, post-Cold War politics, neoliberal restructuring of social welfare – discussed in the earlier chapter.

3.1 THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT’S POLICY CHANGES REGARDING NORTH KOREAN SETTLERS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

In the anthropological framework, policy is something to be questioned and contextualized, rather than be taken for granted as a mere conveyer of truth. Anthropological research regarding policy have dealt with topics such as the methods by which organized powers are implemented, or the ways in which actors participate in the process through social institutions and policies. As policies “encapsulate the entire history and culture of the society that generated them” (Shore and Wright 1997:8), they need to be assessed and analyzed in the social, political and cultural contexts. Albeit their purpose is
to promote efficiency and effectiveness of actions, they are fundamentally political as they are “masking the political under the cloak of neutrality (Shore and Wright 1997, 8).” In this section, I will approach policy on North Koreans in multiple temporalities and scales, acknowledging that the study of policy “incorporates the full realm of processes and relations involved in the production of policy” (Wedel 2005, 34).

As I touched upon earlier, the South Korean state has shifted its rhetoric and policy in defining North Korean settlers since the founding of the nation in the 1950s. As this study focuses on a much later period of North Korean settlement – particularly after the greater settlement began in the late 1990s – I will not inspect the policy, legal processes, social practices or political imaginary of the earlier period in detail. However, it should be noted that this historical legacy has persisted in discourses, people’s consciousness and different kinds of social/state practices, all of which permeate neutral welfare agencies such as Hana Centers; and I will incorporate this legacy into my analysis later.

The socio-political treatment of North Koreans can be divided into a few significant periods by the terms used to define North Koreans. When ideological and political competition between the communist and the capitalist systems shaped national politics and social consciousness extensively, the North Korean regime and its people were generally viewed as “enemies,” people who were to be feared and who exhibited no human qualities.
The term *Bbalgaengi* (빨갱이,  Reds) was often used to refer to North Koreans instead of calling them “North Koreans” (the common form for referring to national citizens), and the penetrability of the communist Reds was real in South Koreans’ imaginations (S.J. Lee 2005). As a consequence, the exceptional people who moved to the South mainly for political reasons were recognized as “heroes (*yongsasa* 용사)” who turned to the “humane” and “warm” (capitalist) South. They were treated in a special manner by the administrations of the time, being granted higher social and economic status in the South. “The warm Southern state” was the common epithet the Southern society used for itself, implying an alternate form of authority to the cold Northern state.

The kind of North Korean settlement since the mid-to-late 1990s has been qualitatively different from the previous migration from the North to the South. If the high-profile politicians, diplomats, and expatriates searching for political exile in the South comprised the majority of settlers before the 1990s, the recent migrants from the North are contrastingly characterized as low class, less educated and originating from the border area.
between North Korea and China. Many factors contributed to an abrupt and notable North Korean defection in the early to mid-1990s: the global spread of a post-Cold War atmosphere, significantly reduced support from important allies such as Russia and China, the rise of the Chinese economy, the North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung’s death and socio-economic crises due to natural disasters and a famine in the North (Choi 2008; K. Lee 2003). However, the majority of these defectors stayed in the vicinity of the national border between North Korea and China, owing to their inclination to be close to their land, families and friends (Good Friends 1999; K. Lee 2006; I. Yoon 2003). A smaller number came to South Korea in hopes of gaining citizenship and the social benefits that went along with it (B. Chung 2006; I. Yoon 2003). Because of the nature of migration, the more male-dominated migration before the late 1990s contrasts with the feminization of the movement after this period. Women, who comprise the majority of border-area traders and have primary responsibility for their households and childcare, were the first to arrive during the North Korean migration that began in the mid-1990s (K. Lee 2003). The size of the movement has also changed: each year, the number of people coming to the South has numbered in the thousands. As a consequence, the number of North Koreans residing in South Korea has reached 28,000 as of 2014 (Ministry of Unification 2014.12), whereas there were only about 1,000 settlers from the North before 1998. Among North Korean immigrants, women make up 70%, a trend which has been consistent since the early 2000s. North Korean settlers have been referred to as North Korean defectors (talbukja 탈북자), North Korean immigrants (talbukijumin 탈북주민), or new settlers (saeteomin 새터민) since this period.
Table 3.1 Number of incoming North Koreans (Ministry of Unification 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>8,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>2,195</td>
<td>1,811</td>
<td>1,098</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>19,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>1,285</td>
<td>2,803</td>
<td>2,402</td>
<td>1,502</td>
<td>1,396</td>
<td>27,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female %</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The migrants to the South in the early-to-mid-1990s did not receive as many social benefits as those who came before or after them. During this “window” period, the settlers were not seen as valuable ideological/political subjects, nor as socio-political subjects or intermediaries for the prospective unified Korea. They were taken as “the underprivileged (saengwhalbohodaesangja 생활보호대상자)” by the society, which placed them in the same social status as other social minorities of the South. Even though the political rhetoric and the legal definition of North Korean settlers in this period were replaced by the new Kim administration with a more compassionate appellation of North Koreans as exponents of unification, the view of North Koreans as “socially marginalized” and “poor” was not uncommon, and it particularly emerged in conjunction with the neo-liberal economic policy and the social welfare regime for the population.

The facilities, services, and institutions assisting settlement began to demonstrate significant transformations in the rhetoric of their legal statements as well as in the quantity and the quality of accessible services, after the first presidential victory of a rival political party in 1997. It is no exaggeration to say that the North Korean settlement service area has exploded since the late 1990s, as the state began to recognize the role of North Koreans as unification intermediaries. With a milestone shift in the domain of South Korean

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14 B. Chung (2009) and J. Jung (2010) also demonstrate this change in policy and perspective. With the new Act in 1997, each adult was provided with 36,960,000 won (approximately US$ 36,000). In addition to this, social workers and policemen were assigned to each North Korean in order to effectively help North Koreans’ secure housing and employment. See also, Ministry of Unification http://unikorea.go.kr
politics, economy, and socio-cultural recognition of the Northern regime, diverse kinds of social institutions and individuals commenced supportive activities for North Korean settlers inside and outside of the nation. Hundreds of regional and international/transnational civil groups, religious institutions, social and educational centers and even corporate companies have tried to join in the service of supporting North Koreans, with diverse practices and perspectives. In this way, North Koreans were made into an “object of knowledge.”

Table 3.2 provides an at-a-glance summary of major policy imperatives regarding North Korean settlers since the early 1990s. This study focuses on the period from the Kim Dae-Jung administration to current times. The Kim administration is an important period for examining how institutional service assemblages have been formulated and have shifted, as national leaders concocted different political, social and moral dispositions which helped to formulate a new type of North Korean subjectivity.

Table 3.2 Relevant laws and policy changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Related law</th>
<th>Specific contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kim Young-Sam (92-97)</td>
<td>귀순북한동포보호법 (Guisoonbukhando ngpobohobeob, An Act on the protection of North Korean Nationals-author translated)</td>
<td>&lt;Service provision to people in need&gt; Initial resettlement support: 8.6-15M won Employment: Training, referrals Housing: Down-payment support:8.4-12 M won</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Dae-Jung (97-02)</td>
<td>북한이탈주민보호 및정착지원에관한법</td>
<td>&lt;Unification policy based support&gt; Initial resettlement support: 33M won Establishment of Hanawon resettlement Center Residence protection (up to 5 years) Employment protection: job training program, employment encouragement support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Policy Details</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Roh Moo-Hyun (02-07) | Housing: Public housing  
Education: Up to Secondary education  
**<Incentive-centered support>**  
Initial resettlement support: 19M, selective support for those in training, certificate, long-term employment  
Employment support: 1st year 0.5M, 2nd year 0.7 M won.  
Customized settlement support: School establishment  
Regional and NGO participation: Expansion of resettlement helper, regional Center cooperation |
| Lee Myeong-Bak (07~12) | Establishment of North Korean Refugees Foundation, Hana Centers and preschool for North Koreans, expansion of employment program |
| Park Geun Hye (12~present) | Enhanced protection of North Koreans’ revenue, employment and education |

As stated above, the Kim Young Sam administration was the first to enforce the legal processes of North Koreans from a perspective of them as “people who lack abilities to make a living on their own” (in Korean, the term used is “saenghwalbohodaesangja” 생활보호대상자) so they were categorized as people in need. The Kim Dae-Jung government introduced more extensive programs of support, facilitating a new role for North Korean defectors as “unification protagonists (tongileuijuche 통일의주체)” following his proactive political standpoint towards unification. Accordingly, the new law allocated a large sum of money for a “resettlement fund” to support housing, education and work in the state’s budget. During the Roh administration, this service took a neoliberal turn aimed at helping North Koreans to become more “self-sufficient” as a form of “productive welfare” for service recipients (B.Chung et al. 2006; Sun et al. 2005), an approach that is aligned with the administration’s overall welfare policy turn regarding social minorities. The government’s welfare paradigm focusing on productivity highlights
incentivized types of support meant to increase employment. Specifically, the government reduced the resettlement fund – which is given to all incoming North Koreans unconditionally and equally – by 53% while expanding incentive programs in job training and employment. Later the Lee administration continued to focus on North Koreans’ economic independence and self-sufficiency through support in employment and education. What is unique about the Lee administration in terms of serving North Koreans is that it shifted toward an entrepreneurial type of welfare, epitomized as a “social enterprise” project. This term signifies that the government delegates and privatizes the welfare responsibility of the state to the non-state area and encourages competition in social service for minorities. Not surprisingly, many NGOs with unstable financial structures applied to participate in this project, and they hired North Koreans following the project’s propositions. Each year, these NGOs have to submit documentation to qualify for the next year’s funding, while also struggling to make enough profit and achievement in the hybrid market-civil sphere (C. Park 2011). This means that the NGOs registered as social enterprise organizations need to attune their organizational structures more closely to the government’s ideas imposed by the contract. As a result, not only North Korean

15 The Lee administration promoted “social enterprise” projects as an alternative economic system to serve social minorities in general. It launched the project for North Koreans as specifically through “North Koreans’ stable adjustment through economic stability” (Ministry of Unification 2011). For this project, the government allocated 287 million won (approximately 0.3M USD) to set up “a support center” and 738 million won (approximately 0.7M USD) for those social enterprises for North Koreans. This amounts to almost one third of all government subsidies money to support all NGOs and NGO-related projects in 2011. (For more information, see the website of the Ministry of Unification, http://www.unikorea.go.kr/CmsWeb/viewPage.req?id=PG0000000346&boardDataId=BD00002 17017&CP0000000002_BO000000033_Action=boardView&CP0000000002_BO0000000033 ViewName=board/BoardView accessed April 2nd, 2013)

16 The standards for selection as a social enterprise are accountability of the agency (20%), presented outcome of the project (30%), plans for the project (40%) and the strong will of the organization (10%). The enterprise must employ North Koreans at a minimum rate of 30% of the
employees, but also civil groups are made to be more competitive and marketable actors by following the state’s neoliberal governance. The NGOs are pressured to become more (bureaucratically) organized and outcome-oriented, to secure stable funding. It is expected that the change in the nature of state-civil organization relationships will affect North Korean subjectivity through management and regulations of the service programs. Another point to note in the settlement policy of the Lee administration and the following Park Geun Hye administration is the promotion of equal distribution of migrants across the settlement region in order to lessen the concentration of migrants in the Seoul-metropolitan area. By giving more incentives in settlement and job placement outside the Seoul area, the policy ensures that other local Hana Centers see small but steady increases in number of incoming settlers. The figure below is similar to the one above, but it offers more details regarding the settlement policy change since 1997. As an official document outlined by the Ministry of Unification, the figure demonstrates that there were no significant changes other than the increased focus on employment and education for the settlers.

Figure 3.2 Settlement policy change since 1997 (Ministry of Unification 2015)

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total staff for a large agency, or 50% if the organization has fewer than 10 staff members (Ministry of Unification, the notice board, 2011).
As figure 3.2 shows, the changes directly related to Hana Centers are the settlement helper system and counseling system, which were first proposed in 2004 as personalized services for North Koreans. Hana Centers, or the comprehensive local settlement agencies, were proposed and tested in 2009 and were implemented across the nation in 2010.

The following table 3.3 shows the comprehensive contents of the service program for North Koreans provided by the central government. This service package was first introduced and implemented during the Kim Dae-Jung administration, and it went through several minor changes over the period as I described above. The categories of service are as follows: settlement fund; residence; employment; general welfare (including health care and education service); and personalized services such as counseling, settlement helpers, and police officer appointment.

Table 3.3 Settlement support system (Ministry of Unification 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Support</td>
<td>Initial Financial Support</td>
<td>7M won (KRW) per household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouragement Support</td>
<td>Max. of 24.4M won for vocational training, certificate achievement and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Additional Financial Support</td>
<td>Max. of 15.4M won for senior citizens, disabled and long-term medical treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>Housing Placement</td>
<td>Introduce rental apartments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential Supply Support</td>
<td>13M won per household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>100,000-200,000 won per month during vocational training (by Ministry of Labor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Support (Provided to employers)</td>
<td>Half of the wages (less than 700,000 won) are subsidized for up to 36 months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job Security Officers</td>
<td>55 designated Centers provide job placement and counseling nationwide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Welfare</td>
<td>Living Allowance</td>
<td>For the recipients of Minimum Living Standard (420,000 won per month for each household)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>No payment required from the most in-need healthcare recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Pension</td>
<td>National pension is paid for those aged over 50 and less than 60 upon entering the South.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Admission to College</td>
<td>Applicants admitted as a special admission case.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid for Education</td>
<td>Registration fees exempted for secondary educations and national university, 50% coverage for private universities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement assistant</td>
<td>One or two assistant(s) for each household’s initial settlement (1,300 assistants nationwide)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>211 residential security officers, 55 job support officers, approx. 800 personal safety officers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this extensive service package for North Koreans, the Hana Centers are in charge of implementing nearly all the described service processes. For instance, when a North Korean is released from Hanawon (the initial settlement agency), a designated Hana Center is required to pick up the client and drive him or her to the local city/district office for registration in the system before sending the client home. The counselors and settlement helpers moreover provide services from the Centers as well as assisting clients to apply for a matching fund or specific service programs offered either by the Centers or by external sources. Most service provision to North Koreans is now operated through Hana Centers. One peculiar characteristic is that Hana Centers have dual identities as service agencies: government and non-government. Upon appointment as a Hana Center, each Center is expected to follow the supervision of the Ministry of Unification and its service contractor, the Hana Foundation. The shift of a civil organization to a state agency can not only change the service programs but also shift its institutional values and missions. At the ground level of service provision, this change appears to be even more challenging and confusing than written policy statements suggest.

In the next part of the chapter, I will describe the specific ways that Hana Centers are set up according to the government-led service provision, and how the vertical (hierarchical) and horizontal (associative) governance of Hana Centers operates through
organizational structures. I will also demonstrate that the self-claimed neutrality of the service provision for North Koreans is an invalid statement: by explicating the particular ethical and regulatory agenda that the supervision agency presents, and how Hana Centers mediate and process the particular socio-political agenda in delivering service to North Koreans.

3.2 The organizational positions of Hana Centers in the web of service provision

If service provision to North Koreans can be viewed as points of arrival and departure along a trajectory or pathway, the Hana Centers are in charge of the last stop of service to North Koreans in the South. Hana Centers were established first in 2009 by the government to delegate the supportive role of local settlement of North Koreans to local institutions following the special act regarding North Koreans in 1997. Hana Centers were established to bring coordination of resources through efficiency and neutrality, with a hope to lessen over-competition and fix the problem of poor resource management. With qualities such as being locally based, politically neutral and professionally operated, Hana Centers are expected to facilitate a successful North Korean settlement through personalized and efficient service programs (S.H.Kim et al. 2010; Y.H.Kim 2009; H.S.Kim and Choi 2011). Chronologically, the Hana Centers’ service is located at the end of the whole service process for North Koreans’ settlement, where localized, divided labor and individualized service activities are performed. The institutional set-ups for North Koreans are depicted in Figure 3.3.
The state-sponsored service provision for North Korean settlement involves the following: Once North Koreans arrive in South Korea, the National Intelligence Service and the National Police Agency examine them to screen out all except “pure North Korean defectors” (i.e. those who are not political spies, Chinese, Korean Chinese, or other foreigners) and to classify each North Korean defector by his/her political involvement in the North. Screening is also used to gain current information on the North Korean regime and its society for the purpose of “national security.” The screening process has been criticized for its unfavorable treatment of North Koreans, and North Korean settlers commonly report it to be a distressing experience. After this screening, North Koreans are transferred to and housed in the government resettlement Center “Hanawon” for 12 weeks. The education and training at this Center are intended to help ease North Koreans’ adjustment to the South. Hanawon programs include basic social orientation, vocational training and career advice, educational programs for youth, and medical services (Ministry of Unification, web source 2015). During this initial stage, state agencies try to classified defectors and place them with appropriate types of care. After this period, North Koreans

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17 Source: Jeongchakiwoneopmu silmupyeonram [정착지원업무실무편람 Resettlement Task Catalog], Ministry of Unification 2012

are finally transferred to regional settlement agencies, Hana Centers, where they meet assigned policemen, settlement helpers and social workers to go through various kinds of service registration and applications.

The more dynamic picture of Hana Centers’ location in the web of official service to North Koreans is as follows.

Figure 3.4 The organizational position of Hana Center

Seeing the success of some model Hana Centers in 2009, the government quickly expanded the system nationwide. As of 2014, Hana Centers have opened in thirty-one locations. Though the appointment of Hana Centers is new, the agencies and personnel are not new service providers. The majority of Hana Centers throughout the nation have previous experience providing service to North Koreans.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province/city</th>
<th>Hana Center</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Red Cross Seoul branch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busan</td>
<td>Busan</td>
<td>YWCA</td>
<td>Christian NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incheon</td>
<td>Southeastern</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Bupyeong</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daegu</td>
<td>Daegu</td>
<td>North Korean immigrants support Center</td>
<td>NGO (international)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daejeon</td>
<td>Daejeon</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulsan</td>
<td>Ulsan</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwangju</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>North Korean immigrants support Center</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwangju</td>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Red Cross Gwangju/Jeonnam branch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyeonggi</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Counseling education Center for youth and parents</td>
<td>Education agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Cultural Center for adolescents</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>Woorim welfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangwon</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Self-help Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Jayoo Chongyeonmaeng</td>
<td>Political organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chungbuk</td>
<td>Chungbuk</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chungnam</td>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>Ssangyong welfare Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>South-central</td>
<td>Jayoo Chong</td>
<td>Political organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeonbuk</td>
<td>Jeonbuk</td>
<td>YWCA</td>
<td>Christian NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeonnam</td>
<td>Jeonnam</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyeongbuk</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Social Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>Center for immigrants</td>
<td>NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gyeongnam</td>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeju</td>
<td>Jeju</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 3.4 reveals, Hana Centers have diverse histories, as many used to be local social Centers run by the Red Cross; faith-based organizations; or, in rare cases, political organizations. For instance, Wonju Hana Center was a Buddhist-based social Center serving the local population, whereas Daegu Hana Center was an international NGO helping North Koreans in the region from a humanitarian perspective and Seoul Bukbu
Hana Center used to be a local social center. The service was operated based on different religious, political and ethical standpoints: but their being “social centers” seems to be the main incentive for the government to designate them as the main service agency for the North Korean settlers.

Semi-governmental and semi-civil Hana Centers – In pursuit of flexibility and efficiency

By definition, a Hana Center is an institution that contracts for services (minganwitak 민간위탁) and that definition serves as its identity in both its governmental and non-governmental functions. It is expected to operate in a flexibly efficient way, taking benefit from both its designations – civil and state – in delivering service. As expected, Hana Centers cannot be homogenous agencies, as they maintain their own traditions and customs of service operation, philosophy, networking, and work relationships. In addition to the heterogeneity the organization possesses due to the Centers’ diverse histories and institutional structures, the staff members of Hana Centers across the country also have diverse perspectives and work experiences, as they all worked for North Korean settlers before the organization was appointed to become a Hana Center.

Because Hana Centers contract for services, they are expected to follow the same basic structure: the central government plans and supplies the service activities and funds, and the civil organizations provide service content - preferably in person and in a designated local area. Banding together with popular social enterprise projects that began during the Lee administration, the Hana Centers’ transformation is not unfamiliar in the North Korean service area. Instead, Hana Centers are the actualization of the government’s strategy of utilizing preexisting local resources and networks rather than providing direct
government service to North Koreans (Ministry of Unification 2013). As we see in the background histories of each Hana Center, most Centers are equipped with knowledge about resource management and networking, and also about service delivery to North Koreans in the local area. Despite the diversity of their organizational histories, the Hana Centers by and large maintain networks to maximize their service efficacy; and find resources to operate on their own. With the benefits they receive as civil organizations, Hana Centers can flexibly utilize local networks and resources. On the other hand, since they have become national and government organizations, they can assure accountability for their clients. Sociologist Jin Woong Kang (2011) asserts that the organizational form of governing represents a change from the hierarchically controlling and politically intense style to a more “cooperatively disciplinary” style between the government and civil society in dealing with North Koreans. In its treatment of North Koreans, the administration is characterized as rational yet humanistic, despite micro-regulatory aspects (J.W.Kang 2011,192; See also S.J. Kim 2012). According to Kang’s observation, the example of the Hana Centers can be seen as a cooperative operation between the state and non-state actors, yet accommodating different dimensions of disciplines. While the assertion that Hana Centers’ operations are “cooperatively disciplinary” is disputable, what the state does pursue is efficient use of government revenue, cutting down social costs by co-opting civil resources, and increasing a bureaucratic structure focused on consulting and supervising. This trend of the government’s co-optation of civil force is not uncommon in the current international arena (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998; Clarke 1998; Harbeson, Chazan and Rothchild 1996; Kamat 2004; Ong 2006; Postero 2006), owing to the shrinking sector of government welfare service to minorities and NGOs’ transformation favoring stability
and security over challenging the system. The South Korean case of refugee resettlement agencies displays these sorts of features, particularly in the post-IMF period,\textsuperscript{19} with its own historical relationships between the state and civil society (Joo 2007; H.R. Kim 2000; Koo 2002; Kim and Moon 2000) and the recent governments’ attempts to reduce welfare costs for social minorities (E.Kim 2009; J.Song 2009).

\textit{Organizational structure of Hana Centers : vertical and horizontal governance}

Each Hana Centers’ operation is theoretically up to its autonomous capacity and resources, but in large part, they all have to follow the supervision of the Ministry of Unification. The Ministry of Unification and the regional/local governments have the voting power to designate an organization as a Hana Center: and the Ministry of Unification, or more specifically the Hana Foundation, is in charge of conducting the evaluation and supervision of each Center. The Ministry of Unification then delegates most of the administrative tasks to the Hana Foundation, which is a partnership institution that serves as both a civil and state agency. Nominally the headquarters and supervising agency of all Hana Centers, the Hana Foundation promotes itself with a specific kind of moral and operational outlook. Its main operations are listed as 1) initial resettlement support, 2) self-sufficiency and independence support (employment support), 3) educational support and research, 4) networking and raising awareness, and 5) administration. Its organizational attributes as both state and civil agency disclose seemingly dissonant elements in the display of its identity: campaigning, organizing activity-based advertisements for civil

\textsuperscript{19} Ministry of Unification (2012) has publicly announced Hana centers are established in a form of active “public and private partnership.”
support, awareness and fund raising at one end; and carrying out legal and administrative tasks at the other.

The emblem of the Foundation includes components proposing warm interest and care, freedom and peace, and unification as its values. These values are iconized in the shapes of a heart, a dove and the *Taegeuk* (태극) mark. Such affective description of the agency is exemplified in its representative materials, such as pictures of government officials’ helping activities, formal and informal meetings, and civic-participatory events.

![Figure 3.5 Hana Foundation Emblem (Hana Foundation 2015)](image)

In addition, the Foundation established its brand as “*ChakHan*” (착한) which generally means “good” and “nice/kind” in Korean; but the Foundation created a new meaning of “settling in South Korea” by intentionally using Chinese characters. *Chak* (착) means “settle down,” and *Han* (한) means Republic of Korea. As the word commonly entails a moral capacity in Korean, it tries to draw public support by applying neutrally good morality to both the service providers and their clients. In other words, the Foundation deliberately applied this brand to the service area to give itself a positive image with

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20 Taegeuk usually signifies Korean nation, or the Korean state.
morally good service intentions, and to give North Koreans a harmless image, by calling them “good” and “well-settled” people. Thus the North Korean subjectivity highlighted here is that of well-settled, successfully-adjusted people who follow ethical and social principles, as well as the political and economic norms of South Korean society. By calling them “good,” the Foundation aims to wipe away the negative images of North Koreans as former citizens of a communist country, poor and disadvantaged and thus possibly generating social problems. Therefore, it has to dress the North Korean image as a morally harmless and unthreatening figure while nevertheless relying on an incident that is yet to come: national unification. Since national unification has been consistently equated – via highly emotional rhetoric - with moral “goodness” for the Korean nation, it does not need further explanation to the public. National unification still denotes something that must be desired and pursued in order to recover ethnic homogeneity in South Korean society (Grinker 1998). Thus it accentuates North Korean subjectivity as a future-oriented human resource for national unification. The people whom the Hana Foundation advertise as “successful” resettlement cases are North Korean entrepreneurs, young North Koreans who succeeded in graduating from good colleges, and those who overcome all the difficulties of settling in South Korea.
Figure 3.6 Introduction of Hana Foundation's "ChakHan" brand21

Here in this introductory image, the Foundation refers to these exemplary North Koreans as “good neighbors” who are in the process of preparing for unification.22 I have translated the flow of sentences as follows: 1) North Koreans are a valuable resource to prepare for practical unification in the future, and 2) we have made many brave attempts so far, by focusing on the self-sufficiency and independence of North Koreans rather than on material support. 3) For North Koreans to play the role of a bridge to a unified Korea, we need to support them to be successful in their own right. However, it depends on us “to make them either North Koreans dwelling in the past or the protagonists for future unification.”

These remarks are linked to an employment site and regional career fair. Clearly, this representation emphasizes economic independence, as the method by which North

21 North Koreans as "good neighbors" (Source: http://www.koreahana.or.kr/goodstory.do accessed in March, 2015)

22 In the introduction of its logo, the Foundation even mentions North Koreans as “us” a designation which is even more radical than “neighbor” or “brother.” The logo is “From Brethren to Us (dongpoeseo wooriro 동포에서 우리로)” as it signifies North Koreans as part of “us.”
Koreans can become useful human resources for national unification. This representation also tries to convince its audience of the need for South Korean service providers to make concentrated efforts in helping North Koreans to become employed. This rationale is common in institutional engagements with North Korean settlers; they underline employment exclusively without mentioning all the other aspects of life, namely politics, social systems and culture. As a whole, institutional support has reduced direct support for North Koreans in terms of material and cash benefits, while the budget has ballooned to finance establishing support Centers, recruiting counselors and social workers, aiding social enterprises and providing job training to give North Koreans self-sufficiency. Through this new method of oversight by discipline and consultation, the state aims to create a morally good subject of a capitalist society who does not make trouble and who is employable, culturally well-mannered, and independent.

The strategies that the Foundation takes for “contributing to the creation of a unification environment and self-support of North Koreans” are “outcome and future-oriented service provision through selective and concentrated effort,” “client-centered, customized support,” and “increased efficiency through collaboration with other agencies.” These terms represent the obvious trademarks of a market society and the neoliberal style of government, which stresses self-sufficiency, is client-based, outcome-oriented and striving for efficiency. In a nutshell, the Foundation presents itself as an efficient, outcome- and future-oriented agency pursuing the creation of “good” North Koreans who will become self-sufficient through the South Korean service providers’ warm hearts and care. Since the year 2011, after changing its organization from an aid association (Hoowonhoi 후원회) to a foundation (Jaedan 재단), its financial and functional operations have
changed to those of a more formal state agency. The organization consists of seven departments: management, planning, networking, self-sufficiency support, living support, education development and finance departments. The organizational budget is now 10 times the size it was before (Ukorea news 2012). With approximately 28 billion won (28 million USD), it is placing one fifth of the Ministry of Unification’s annual budget on resettlement support for North Koreans. It is safe to say that the Foundation has made large gains in authority and legitimacy from the government in its service to North Koreans over the years.

Structure-wise, there are several departments in the Hana Foundation to supervise and manage the evaluation of each Hana Center, to provide education and training materials, and to network with various kinds of institutions. The Living Support department at the Foundation trains and appoints the counselors for Hana Centers, and it is in charge of those counselors’ employment, an element of potential conflict with the local Hana Centers. The Networking department is in charge of convening regular meetings of the representatives of each Hana Center, and of providing training materials and manuals. The Management department superintends Hana Centers’ financial planning (Foundation 2015). Additionally, as the website says, Hana Center is designed to act as a national platform actualizing a “collaborative model” in the service area with diverse actors: governmental ministries, Hanawon, Hana Centers, The Republic of Korea National Red Cross, NGOs, The Committee for 5 Northern Korean Provinces (ibuk5dowiwonho이북 5 도위원회), The National Unification Advisory Council and the Presidential

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24 The Hana Foundation http://www.koreahana.or.kr/eGovHanaOrg.do (accessed 2015-03-10)
25 The Hana Foundation http://www.koreahana.or.kr/eGovHanaMOUInfo1.do (accessed 2015-03-10)
Committee for National Cohesion. As the characteristics of these institutions infer, they are of diverse levels and types: governmental, non-governmental, volunteer-based NGOs, community-based NGOs, social centers and governmental settlement centers. Additionally, all of them have significantly different histories, and their functions and populations served are distinctively disparate.

Through these operations, each Hana Center is under the supervision of the Hana Foundation and the Ministry of Unification; and each also works collaboratively with local/regional governments for its regular funding, evaluation process and resource utilization. Local/regional governments usually assign a person whose primary responsibility involves increasing employment and oversight. However, the personnel who are in charge of these tasks normally do not develop close personal relationships with North Korean settlers in the region. The staff in the local governments – municipal or district office – exhibit high turnover, which does not guarantee the most knowledgeable and efficient service provision to the group. Moreover, during my fieldwork, I learned that the range and the contents of the service provision are up to a city mayor or provincial governor’s “enthusiasm and interest.” High-profile officials who are interested in offering more benefits to North Koreans and who are genuinely concerned about the social issues related to their lives in South Korea are likely to give more support than others. Thus the local governments’ operations on North Koreans are contingent upon high-profile officials’ wills and opinions rather than on policy, paperwork, and legal stipulations. Nevertheless, local governments are still supposed to work in collaboration with Hana Centers. Particularly when a Hana Center has a reputation of being professional and efficient, a local
government will show more cooperative gestures and become involved with service activities.

The funding for a Hana Center comes from several sources, mainly the Ministry of Unification, local and regional governments, and other donors. The Ministry stipulates the size of funding as around 0.2 billion won (approx. 200,000 USD) for each Hana Center. The appointment of Hana Centers is also under the government’s custody. The conditions of appointment as a Hana Center are based on several categories: the previous experience and achievement of the organization, the quality of the staff and education facility, and the overall networking and access to resource from the local communities. The Ministry of Unification lists the qualifications for the appointment as follows (Ministry of Unification 2015).

Table 3.5 Qualifications for Hana Center Assignment

| (1) Previous experience and achievement  
*at least a year of consistent experience and outcomes  
(2) Interest and experience of the representatives about North Korean resettlement service  
(3) Quality of staff and volunteers (minimum 10)  
(4) Financial stability and ability to secure funding  
(5) Educational facilities (training space, counseling office, conference room, restroom etc.)  
(6) Access to educational facilities (by public transportation)  
(7) Collaborative ability to recruit resources in the local communities  
(8) Efficacy and comprehensiveness of service planning  
(9) Potential of the regional/local government for collaboration and interest |

This contract of designation is valid for three years, after which each Center is obliged to be reevaluated. Hana Centers are expected to follow certain policies and restrictions that the central government imposes, even though Hana Center staff do not necessarily see themselves as employees of governmental agencies. Although no policy studies have addressed this issue yet, the workers’ identity of Hana Center staff is a
complex issue, because providing service to their clients involves both political and ethical dimensions, as I will deal with later in this dissertation. The three-year contract was intended to guarantee quality and competitive service to North Koreans using local resources, which tend to fluctuate according to circumstances. Thus, each Hana Center is expected to work hard to achieve certain standardized goals, and at the same time to ensure the Center’s funding and operational stability. However, this form of contract and the designation as a Hana Center itself can lead to complications issues several areas of service operation: conflict between the national supervising agency (such as the Ministry of Unification/Hana Foundation) and the Center in terms of staff hire, foci of service provision, and work hierarchy; the identity of workers and the representation of the Centers to the clients as both governmental and non-governmental agencies (which can be a point of misunderstanding and conflict); the relationships with local/regional governments, NGOs and other individual actors; and internal conflict among the workers.

Therefore, each Hana Center is obligated to undertake all of the following:

1) Take part in the regular meetings with other Hana Centers under the supervision of the Hana Foundation

2) Turn in monthly/yearly reports to the Hana Foundation, local/regional government, and the Ministry of Unification

3) Collaborate with police officers/Hanawon/municipal and district government’s assigned workers for North Koreans

4) Take part in a consortium (local committee) meeting

5) When hiring staff and making position changes, use a different hiring system for counselors and social workers
The standardized supervision and appointment by higher level institutions can make each Hana Center susceptible to tight budgeting, heavy documentation of work and scheduling conflicts. Furthermore, the Center’s own missions and agenda must yield to the standard evaluation criteria.

On the other hand, Hana Centers are supposed to serve as a local polestar where the information and networks of all the service actors are concentrated and distributed at the same time. The kind of horizontal governance is put stress on Hana Centers’ operations, since they are the epitome of “local governance,” which implies particular socio-cultural values: being democratic, autonomous, and providing equal participation for all the actors rather than having a top-down and hierarchical management. From an economic perspective, Hana Centers’ local governance serves to reduce the state’s cost for administration and resource management. With the Hana Centers’ local knowledge and wider networks in their individual regions, this management structure connotes better resource recruitment and efficient operation. In the service area for North Koreans particularly, where over-competition; redundant service activities; and manipulation by ideological, political and religious interests have been identified, the qualities of being local, practical-needs based, and better connected with local resources are particularly appealing in the recent welfare governance of South Korea. As it is shown in the categories for appointment, the organizations that Hana Centers deal with are central government ministries, local government such as provincial/municipal/district governments, police departments, Hanawon, the Hana Foundation, and non-state and local/trans-local service providers such as welfare Centers, schools, district offices, NGOs and churches. The scope
of actual “networking” can be immensely wide, as the Centers are commissioned as semi-state agencies specially designed for North Korean resettlement.

Therefore, the dual organizational positions of Hana Centers as government and non-government organizations continually pose questions, conflicts and confusion in service provision, while they do serve certain purposes. The way each Center manages these dual positions in its daily interactions with its clients, supervisory institutions, and partners draws us into a distinctive phenomenon taking place in current-day Korea. The ambiguous and ambivalent identities of Hana Centers ironically provide them with rich sources for the actors in service provision to enact their own mediation and elaboration of desired social agenda, through affective and equivocal works. The next chapter will illuminate how the affective dimension of service provision to North Koreans is presented through day-to-day service operations.
CHAPTER 4

AFFECT-LADEN SERVICE DELIVERY FOR NORTH KOREANS IN HANA

CENTERS’ PROGRAMS

As examined in the chapter 3, the Hana Centers are hybrid state, civil society organizations. They are also local as well as trans-local (national) agencies. The mixed characteristics of the Centers give rise to distinctive dynamics in the delivery of services, particularly regarding their affective and symbolic representations. This chapter will discuss how various forms of affective interactions become present through a specific mode of governing and a mode of interactions between the service providers and the recipients. The modus operandi of Hana Centers, individualization and standardization of services, set forth particular dynamics of affective interaction and governing. These affective elements are also entangled with the imaginaries and practices of “the national” and “the local” institutions, as each institution brings to the fore different foci in their service provision. The two main operational modes, however, do not necessarily function in opposition to each other. The following discussion will demonstrate how the seemingly contrasting modes of service operation work together in actuality, and eventually serve broader interests and politics of the state.
4.1 Hana Centers’ Modus Operandi: Standardization and Individualization

The establishment of Hana Centers was a result of the critiques about the North Korean service area: overlapping and disorderly arranged service contents for North Koreans, poor resource management, over competition and lack of efficiency. Since the mid-1990s, the North Korean service area has been saturated with many forms of service, material support, human resource investment and NGOs’ figure prominently. Hundreds of regional and transnational NGOs flocked to “rescue,” or “support” North Korean defectors in and out of the South Korean territory arguing with a voice of humanitarianism and call for brotherly love. The NGOs authorized by the government and registered as relevant agencies for North Koreans number more than 50, as of 2012. As Korean anthropologist Byung Ho Chung depicted the situation, the amount of support provided to North Koreans is “unprecedented for any refugee group in the world” (B.Chung 2009, 10).

For solving the problems of disorderly, inconsistent and overlapping service delivery, Hana Centers were set up to perform as the regional polestar to concentrate the services and centralize communication among different actors. With organizational stability and accountability as national service agencies and with locally-based knowledge and resources as local agencies, the Centers are supposed to provide the idealized services with their loving care for North Koreans. As is known by the scholarly and policy work, North Koreans are also the subjects who need thorough care due to being complete strangers to the country and being “deprived of psychological capacities” to become responsible citizens (Sung 2010, 127). Each North Korean individual needs to be handled in a careful way, as their human capital, mental and physical capacity and migration backgrounds are all different from each other. This is what Foucault deemed “care of the
population” (Foucault 1991) that has to be performed in an individualized way to increase efficacy and efficiency. As reviewed earlier, integrating North Koreans to South Korean society has been performed rather complicated and ambivalent ways as previous scholarship has discussed (Bell 2013; Choo 2006; B. Chung 2006; J.Jung 2010; H.Lee 2012; J.Lee 2015; Sung 2010; I.Yoon 2011). On the policy level, however, the Centers are called to provide “total care” for North Koreans, aiming for a full integration into society in an efficient and prompt manner.26

To achieve these goals, Hana Centers operate according to two main organizational logics: 1) taking care of North Koreans with individualized, localized delivery attending to their needs; 2) standardizing service provision to North Korean clients on a national level. These two poles of operational development are designed to concentrate services into the Hana Centers for efficient local resource management, as they reduce unnecessary steps and service items. Individualization of care means that South Korean providers categorize the client’s needs in order to provide optimal services. Standardization signifies that the state tries to reduce gaps in resources and rationales among the different regions. Continuing from the last chapter on the institutions’ dual identity as both state and civil, I will look into how the modus operandi of standardization and individualization works and fails in the institutional context.

Furthermore, I will attempt to link these operational logics to both the affective and symbolic expressions of service delivery. Continued from earlier discussions on affect, I follow Spinoza’s idea of affect and Deleuze and Guattari’s development of the theory, viewing affect as constitutive of bodies that are to affect and to be affected, where

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26 Ministry of Unification, media briefing
http://www.unikorea.go.kr/content.do?cmsid=1557&mode=view&cid=14036
interactive and connective dimensions are underscored (Anderson 2009; Clough 2007; Massumi 1995; 2002; Seyfert 2012). In this sense, bodily experiences are constantly defined and reconstituted through various forms of affective interactions, such as non-cognitive components (Thrift 2000), atmospheres (Bredekamp 2010; Brennan 2004), psychological dimensions or something beyond human senses (Bennet 2005). As Thrift (2008) suggests, this study delves into the points where various technologies and affective interactions are combined and made visible in the institutional space. In doing so, this chapter particularly focuses on how the specific governing at Hana Centers can be addressed in the framework of affect. The study also suggests to see the space of interactions between the service providers and recipients not merely imagined as a unidirectional governing imposed on the population, but as an open-ended space where new entities and new configurations of power are constantly constituted.

To analyze these focal points, I will investigate 1) bureaucratic statements and official policy to enhance efficiency and organization; 2) the delivery of affective service at Hana Centers to pursue the goals through programs; 3) affective rhetoric and practices of Hana Centers’ everyday operations; and 4) lastly, what the institutional politics and practices mean to a larger discussion of ethical and technological powers.

4.2 SERVICE PROGRAMS AT HANA CENTERS

Service provision at Hana Centers is comprised of three different elements: a local social adaptation program (initial education program), a counseling/settlement helper system, and other welfare services, such as housing, employment, education, medical
support etc. Below I describe what each element is and how Hana Centers implement the different service activities.

**Housing/Employment/Education/Others**

Local Hana Centers are in charge of North Koreans’ initial settlement in the region, which first starts with guiding the clients to their houses. Centers compile all clients’ information in terms of incoming and outgoing population to predict flows of people to better tailor future services.

For delivering the service, the Centers usually circulate information relevant to North Koreans’ social needs in the realms of education, medical services, or job options. Also, a large part of a Center’s service activities is helping clients apply for matching grants and scholarships provided by diverse kinds of organizations – churches, local NGOs, local government, etc. The Seoul Center provides information and receives applications online, whereas at the Wonju Center the clients usually call the social workers and visit the Center for help filling out the forms and making sure the process is done right. A typical scene would involve a couple of North Koreans coming to the Center and to consult with social workers when filling out institutional forms. The social workers would walk each client through the process and make sure to have the administrative documents filled out correctly so that the clients receive the right kinds of benefits.

Among these aforementioned services, employment support is most highlighted in public representations at each Center. Given that the majority of scholarly and policy literature discusses the problems and challenges North Koreans face when it comes to
working, it is predictable that government Centers would focus on employment support programs (Park and Yoon 2007; Sun et al. 2005). The government runs a separate department and a webpage for job seekers and openings, showing a concentrated effort to support North Koreans’ employment. Career support programs are comprised of four main parts in overall settlement support packages: 1) job training and introductions through individual consultancy or job fairs 2) the Ministry of Labor engages in linking the clients with job training Centers and bridging career programs 3) assigning 55 specialized officers to local employment support Centers to guide North Koreans in finding jobs and 4) the government subsidy of North Koreans’ salaries (Hana Foundation 2014). Employment support programs are also where the neoliberal mantra of self-sufficiency and self-reliance is the most highlighted. The Hana Foundation describes career support as “an individualized job training and bridging career program to encourage North Koreans’ self-sufficiency and self-support.” This presents the state’s belief that North Koreans’ self-sufficiency is best achieved by placing them in jobs. This makes more sense to the bureaucratic apparatus, since jobs are computable and assessable; not to mention that North Koreans’ participation in economic activities means generating profits. However, job training for North Koreans receives criticism, because programs are limited and only include computer-related certificates, training for driver’s licenses, and caretaking or cooking certificates. Nevertheless, the financial rewards of employment look quite appealing to North Koreans. Subsidized job training and employment seems to work for

27 The webpage is http://www.nkrf.net/customer/info02.jsp
some clients, if not all. These programs are expected to expand further, as they seem easily measurable and appealing to government officials than other programs.

Invariably, I heard that the Centers’ foremost task was to inform the clients of job opportunities and provide them with enough resources to help with employment. Even during my interviews with staff at the Seoul Bukbu Center, this assistance was regarded as natural and necessary. However, while the Centers present employment support as the foremost urgency, the Wonju and Seoul Bukbu Hana Centers’ approaches are different. The staff’s response and their presentation of important issues show this distinctiveness, and they were unexpected since I considered them to be armed with the rhetoric that the state stresses over and over.

“Park: I know you guys are mostly focusing on employment and job training programs.

Staff: (with a smile) That’s what the Ministry of Unification cares about.

Park: You mean, the Ministry of Unification only? Not the Wonju Center?

Staff: I’d say yes... (with a laugh) I cannot speak for other workers, but if I can speak out of years of my experience, I think the psychological condition and cultural adjustment are the most important things, if they (North Koreans) are planning to stay here longer. Even those people who have been staying here and working longer still have problems and conflicts with people because of the cultural understandings.”

The staff at Wonju talked to me in an honest and personal way when I asked about operational aspects of the Center’s service delivery. This was quite different from the Seoul
Center, where the staff members told me that employment and initial education program are their top priorities. In the Wonju Center, the employment element was still deemed important, but it was rarely a central agenda during my formal and informal interviews. In the Center’s published material, it also stipulates that the primary goal for North Koreans to achieve is, “being a desirable and proud citizen of the community.” One instance also shows the Wonju Center’s focus as being citizens who can live harmoniously with locals.

“I kind of gave a hint to the speakers who are invited and have been working stably for a long time, by asking them to deliver a message like ‘you cannot just live by settlement subsidy from the government. To hold up the dignity and be proud, you should find a job and continue working in one place.’ Also I ask them to give the audience more concrete examples” - a social worker at Wonju Hana Center

This staff member asked invited speakers to speak more forcefully on the importance of being employed for a North Korean to be a good and dignified citizen of the community, which is related to a moral aspect of the citizenship, rather than an economic citizenry. This staff also expressed the limits of the scope of service provisions that Hana Centers can provide, and she believed that the Hana Center’s services need to be geared towards psychological and ethical operations, such as giving North Koreans motivation, and encouraging them to become fully integrated citizens in the local society. Apart from giving clients detailed information and knowledge about career, education, or more capital-building categories, the Wonju Center tries to devise programs in a way that their clients
feel comfortable, motivated, and competent in the city. Living comfortably and blending well with community members are taken more seriously in a small community like Wonju.

I participated in some programs at Wonju Hana Center, such as Korean and Chinese language classes and theatrical play workshops. According to the staff at Wonju Center, Korean and Chinese language certificate prep classes were designed for North Koreans to be equipped with the proper standard Korean language to understand the society and to communicate well, and to feel self-esteem through preparing for a certificate of the much-needed foreign language. The theatrical play workshops designed by the Center focused on creative and interactive dimensions, rather than “practical” and material help. The workshops, however, were not popular and eventually did not last for long. They were also at the danger of being cut off from the main programs for North Koreans owing to the uncertainty of government funding. The most wanted class was Chinese language class – North Korean clients were passionate, and engaged participants, which certainly seemed to boost their self-esteem and confidence. I could observe that Wonju Center’s staff were particularly interested in raising self-confidence, increasing the chance of interacting with South Korean neighbors, and in increasing cultural knowledge. They rejoiced when the clients’ turnout was good but lamented about the closure of certain service programs to satisfy the nationally standardized evaluations, which determine the continuation of funding.

Wonju Hana Center’s service programs and the foci in service delivery are examples of localized services for North Koreans. In terms of devising programs, Wonju Hana Center focuses more on the cultural and psychological integration of North Koreans, rather than information offering and skill acquisition, whereas Seoul Hana Center focuses
more on increasing employment and advertising job opportunities. This can arguably be attributed to two different localities in relation to proximity of “the Center” and the size of the target group for services. The Seoul Center has to offer programs applicable to higher number of North Korean clients, while the Wonju Center can afford to be more liberal designing programs owing to the small resident population of North Koreans. The proximity to the central government, and the organizational position that the Seoul Center possesses seem to create more pressure to the workers to meet the standards and to be representative of the Hana Centers across the country.

**Settlement Helper / Counseling**

“You are asked to follow the state’s policy and the Center’s instructions and respect their supervision and opinion: a settlement helper’s tasks are closely related with human rights, national policy and inter-Korea relations, so that the activities need to comply to the national policy and rules, processes and standards of the Centers.”

(Ministry of Unification, Manual for Settlement Helpers 2010,14)

The settlement helper system is one of the core practices for the “individualized care” that the Ministry of Unification purports to achieve, but is implemented on a national scale. It started in 2005 with a nationwide call to support North Koreans more personally and locally (Hana Foundation 2011). All Centers are encouraged to provide a civil volunteer workforce, therefore, it is part of standardization of the service provision by the state as well. Under the supervision of Hana Foundation, some NGOs were chosen to be in
charge of recruiting volunteers to help North Koreans settle in the region. The settlement helpers are called to serve national purposes: be mindful of human rights, fraternity, inter-Korea relations and national policy and rules. These rather grandiose statements are hard to explain, as they do not specify the elements of each agenda.

Seoul Bukbu Hana Center voices similar assertions on the roles that settlement helpers are supposed to play, as it introduces settlement helpers mainly as local guides who can assist North Koreans in the community.29 Below is the first page of the guideline, published by Hana Foundation. This exemplifies what the settlement helpers are supposed to bear in mind when dealing with North Koreans.

1) I will support North Koreans in enjoying freedom and living with hope as democratic citizens who fulfill their social responsibilities and duties.
2) I will try hard to enable South Korean citizens to accept North Koreans as neighbors without prejudice.
3) I will help North Koreans very closely to grow as desirable citizens of the society, with hope and dreams.
4) I will make an effort for South and North Koreans to accept differences and accomplish the integration of Korean ethnic nationals.
5) I will work for national and ethnic unification with brotherly love.
6) I will work for world peace and the happiness of humankind by practicing humanitarianism.

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29 Seoul Bukbu Hana Center’s introduction of settlement helpers
http://www.gnnkcenter.or.kr/Business/Incomer.aspx
7) I will practice and learn to love North Koreans for their resettlement here in South Korea.

In this oath for settlement helpers, both affective and ethical dimensions of ethnic homogeneity, fraternity and humanitarianism are displayed. Even though the settlement helpers are expected to provide warm and humane caring for each individual North Korean, the rhetoric has a strong sense of nationalism and depicts South Korean service providers as dutiful citizens. To make North Koreans well-integrated and desirable citizens, settlement helpers need to have “brotherly love” and a “humanitarian” mindset without any prejudice. This echoes the Hana Foundation’s public rhetoric that “we need to guide them well to be good citizens.” The oath shows specific socio-cultural values that North Koreans need to embody through the intervention of service providers: responsibility, freedom, democratic citizenship, hope, and dreams. These are significantly capitalist South Korean values, which Center on individual responsibility, positivity and autonomous effort. Words such as "freedom" and "democratic citizens" deliberately indicate counter-values to those of communist North Korea, with its presumed surveillance, regulation, and stiffness. In this oath, North Koreans are already imagined and presented as homogenized subjects, whose construction of subjectivity is subject to socio-political powers of capitalism, anti-communism, ethnic nationalism, and the South Korean version of democracy. In this way, North Korean issues are invariably cast as ones that need state intervention and institutional engagement, rather than merely being an issue of local integration. Apart from the introductory and general remarks about North Koreans as “us” and as part of the same
ethnic group, these statements show, ironically, how different North Koreans are from South Koreans.

In 2012, the Hana Foundation handed its consignment power over to the individual Hana Centers. Other than social workers and counselors, settlement helpers are the institutional workers – albeit unpaid – who work most closely with North Koreans and contribute to carving a specific North Korean citizenship. They are asked to adhere strictly to Ministry of Unification and their Hana Center’s instructions and supervision, as they are also representatives of governmental service provision. The Hana Foundation also underlines that settlement helpers are expected to 1) build a collaborative relationship with the police officers who are in charge of “protecting” North Koreans, 2) solve residence-related issues, and 3) provide information on the local community and guidance for new community members (Hana Foundation 2011:56). These statements are more “neutrality” centered remarks as they, at least on the surface level, do not embed value-oriented assertions. In several kinds of published materials, the state invariably expresses the expectation that settlement helpers will play the role of close caretakers who can guide North Koreans’ local lives.

Represented below is the settlement helpers’ training material. Training materials include institutional dos and don’ts, specifically in terms of what areas the semi-state institutions must focus on, and how such institutions choose to distribute resources for service providers and recipients. In each Center, these training programs are required and regarded as essential steps for both regular and voluntary service providers to recognize the Center’s main provisional programs of care and to identify the scope and limits of service activities. A training book describes the settlement helper system, and a small
plastic-coated memorandum details the specific tasks needed on the first and second day that a client moves in. Additional guidance and training were provided during monthly meetings. The orientation meetings covered many topics. The first meeting was an overall introduction to the imagined characteristics of North Korean settlers, while the others focused on other topics, including things to be wary/watchful of owing to “cultural differences” between the settlement helpers and the North Korean service recipients. In the orientation material that the Seoul Bukbu Center provided, things to be wary of are categorized as follows:

Table 4.1 A guideline for settlement helpers

| 1) Personal info and security |
| 2) Religion |
| 3) Job |
| 4) Expect to be stood up for an appointment |
| 5) Encourage them to be self-sufficient |
| 6) Play the role of friends or family members |
| 7) In viewing North Koreans - it’s wrong to view them as inferior to South Koreans |
| 8) Keep track of monthly reports |
| 9) Financial interactions are prohibited |
| 10) In case any particular things happen |
| 11) Responsibility. |

The list can be grouped into sections that exhibit three different dimensions. The first three categories give information on subjects to be aware of. The next four are cultural lessons to help service providers understand North Koreans’ behavior. The final four are
mostly about bureaucratic processes and duties. Jobs and religions are characterized as part of “private lives,” and settlement helpers are expected to merely relay information as “information transporters.” The last four categories, 8 through 11, point to what settlement helpers are expected to do for the bureaucratic operation of the Hana Center as an institution.

Digging into the details, the first part of the manual for settlement helpers has an informative tone. The helpers' job is “letting North Korean clients know” about kinds of things, in terms of jobs and religions that are categorized as “private lives.” Settlement helpers were expected to simply relay information as “information transporters.” They were not to encourage North Koreans to join any specific religious groups or participate in any security-compromising activities, particularly those related to helpers’ personal opinions. Categories 4 through 7 present more social and cultural guidelines for settlement helpers to follow, but they also show selected characteristics of North Koreans to be corrected. Settlement helpers are supposed to take active roles in teaching cultural and moral lessons. The last four categories, 8 through 11, point to what settlement helpers are expected to do as part of the bureaucratic operations of the Hana Center as an institution. Settlement helpers need to keep track of monthly reports, reporting any problems directly to the social workers who double as the settlement helpers’ supervisors. Settlement helpers are asked to be part of the bureaucratic system, making detailed written records of their activities with North Koreans. Compared to the previous items, these categories are conveyed in a drier, task-oriented tone, describing what to keep up with in terms of sorting, recording, reporting, and getting feedback in the institutional setting.
Overall, settlement helpers play the role of intermediary between locals and the institutions, simultaneously fulfilling the role of a civil and a volunteer staff person. The way each Hana Center adopts this state rhetoric and runs the settlement helper program is, however, dependent largely upon the local institution. Each Center has its own way of operating this system, and the effectiveness of the volunteer system depends on several local factors. For instance, the Seoul Bukbu Hana Center emphasizes the settlement helper system more than the Wonju Hana Center, as the Seoul Bukbu Center has a much larger North Korean population to cover, and the tasks tend to be more open to the public, more specifically, volunteer force. The program's effectiveness is also related to the availability of local resources, such as potential pools of volunteers, active involvement of civil or religious organizations, and the overall efficacy of the Center’s other assisting activities.

Seoul Hana Center uses the manual in its one-on-one orientations, but does not stress the points made in the manual, particularly regarding any moral or ideological statements. Quite the opposite: the Center channels settlement helpers’ attention into practical areas, such as helping to clean the clients’ houses, ushering them to administrative offices etc. The kind of statement found in the oath, such as democratic citizens, freedom, humanitarianism and ethnic homogeneity is already value-ridden as discussed earlier. These have been read as “codes” to distinguish the capitalist-democratic South from the communist North, in modern Korean history. As they can provoke unnecessary arguments, the “impartial” institution avoids raising these issues unless the circumstances required it. Later in the dissertation, I will show how these principles were sporadically referenced and

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30 To be more specifics, Seoul BukBu Hana Center has served almost 2,000 North Koreans with about 60 volunteers, and Wonju Hana Center has served 200 North Koreans with 15-20 volunteers. (Seoul B. Hana Center [http://gnnkcenter.or.kr/Introduce/Region.aspx](http://gnnkcenter.or.kr/Introduce/Region.aspx) )
cited during monthly meetings of settlement helpers, and became points of conflict. The state intends to solidify a national identity as a capitalist democracy, which seems to conflict with what Hana Centers purport to enact: morally good, neutral and practical agency with motherly care. These contrasting messages permeate into the ground level of service provision, which leaves workers with ambiguity about the rationale of their services.

The way the Centers arrange pairing a settlement helper with a client is in considerations of gender and age. The setting is considered optimal if the assigned settlement helper is the same gender as but older than the client – which reflects a cultural politics of age and gender in the service area. Due to this arrangement, the settlement helpers often tell the clients to call them as mother, father, older brother or older sister, which allows a service landscape of filled with tropes of familial and pastoral care. In comparison to the national level of /love rhetoric presented by the Ministry or Hana Foundation, the local Hana Centers utilize more of “motherly” love than “brotherly” love, predicated upon uneven gender roles in the service and volunteer workforce.

Monthly meetings of volunteers were held in Seoul Center as the experienced frequent volunteer turnover. Volunteers exhibited diverse demographics in terms of age, gender, social position, education, and purpose for volunteering. A majority of the volunteers, however included middle-aged women. In each meeting, diverse motivations ranging from a religious purpose to a particular personal history were expressed. Some people told the group that the pastors at their churches emphasized the importance of serving North Koreans and encouraged them to participate in the Centers’ activities. Some were exposed to stories about North Korea during their military service. Other cases
showed that they had separated family members in North Korea. A few expressed research interests, and others mentioned TV programs about North Koreans as their motivation. When the meetings were not specifically themed, conversations centered around what the settlement helpers experienced while interacting with North Koreans and the way to solve issues. In most cases, volunteers shared their “difficulties” in dealing with North Korean clients. Difficulties were generally categorized as cultural differences, trust issues, and distance between service providers and recipients, which signal the affective dimensions of challenges that volunteers faced, as well as physical burdens in service provision. The Center constantly emphasized the importance of engaging as a cultural teacher, mentor, and quasi-family member or friend while maintaining a professional relationship. However, in addition to interpersonal problems coming from many different matters, settlement helpers appeared to have issues that the Centers try to avoid: ideological, politically intricate and religiously related topics. I could observe these issues were not resolved even among the staff, which is reflective of how politically and religiously entangled the North Korean issues are. Even though the Centers emerged as “new” agencies with idealized missions on the policy, the ground level operations reveal the Centers are not free from enduring problems. The main difference, however, was that settlement helpers were charged with handling the complex issues born out of the contradiction in operational logic, delivering affective care while maintaining their distances as effective bureaucrats.

In Wonju, the Center did not provide such detailed documentations of what settlement volunteers need to do or not do. The settlement helpers in Wonju were also supposed to provide emotional and moral support, playing the role of quasi-family
members with “motherly” or “parental” love. However, all the administrative works involving visits to other social institutions or registration were social workers’ tasks, not settlement helpers’. Generally, all the task assignments and updates were handled directly between social workers and the volunteers as needed. This was due to the experience level of the volunteers – the majority had at least couple years of involvement, and some had nearly 10 years –, and the small size of the target population. The meetings were held in an informal and friendly manner, ending with lunches or dinners together, which I felt was very different from Seoul.

As such, settlement helpers in two Centers were assigned different positions and tasks – the foci and the operational procedures diverged depending on the Center’s local situations even though the Hana Foundation and the Ministry of Unification attempted to build standardization into the system. The standardization of the system is stressed in two ways – one as ideological and the other as evaluative. Ideological standardization still required affective interactions with North Koreans, and this was expressed in the guiding materials for settlement helpers published by the Ministry or Hana Foundation. The language utilized in the Centers, however, demonstrated divergent presentations. The Ministry or Hana Foundation present democratic, free, responsible North Korean subjectivity with South Koreans’ brotherly love, whereas local Hana Centers generally focuses on the operational behaviors such as punctual, participatory subjectivity with motherly care. Evaluation criteria, clients’ checkup report and rewards system for the

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31 It is common in Korean culture for close relationships to borrow familial terms, such as aunt, mom, father, uncle, and older sister or brother.

32 This was also the case in two different Hana Centers in other cities that I visited. I analyze this as institutional structural necessity, which is needed when social workers cannot provide direct service to all the clients owing to the disproportionately large client population. In addition, it can be a result of each Center’s history of serving North Koreans.
settlement helpers are common throughout the Centers, but the ways each Center positions and assigns settlement helpers are quite distinctive.

Counseling service is an area where the urgent need is underlined by the Ministry, but also is the most troubling part in the Center’s operations which I could witness during the fieldwork. The counselors are still assigned and hired by the Hana Foundation – previously by the Ministry of Unification – not by each Hana Center, which causes friction with other staff in the Centers’ day-to-day operations. In terms of division of labor and staff accountability at each Center, counselors told me that they were situated in an odd position. The staff also expressed a similar opinion. Even with the best intention from both parties – Hana Center staff and the counselors – there could always be misunderstandings and conflicts in administering specific tasks. The factors such as age gap between social workers and counselors, political views and religious intentions could all be points of conflict, in addition to differences in their job positions and tasks. Counselors tended to be much older than most of social workers, and I could observe some counselors express their religious and political opinions overtly in the education programs whereas social workers tried hard to mitigate expression of their opinions. The issues of disagreement were addressed several times over formal and informal interviews with the social workers and counselors, but the staff members overall appeared to deal with the issues by avoiding them. This case also shows incongruity between the state’s pursuit of standardizing the service and each Center’s own operational and philosophical inclination.

*Local Social Adaptation Program*
Seoul: This program was started as a demonstrative project in 2009 for North Koreans’ early self-reliance and self-support through matching career and employment support and counseling. We support acquisition of knowledge in economics, law, and medical treatment, and encourage field experiences so that they can settle in the region without difficulties. 33

Wonju: The systematic local guiding education for 3 weeks and case management for a year will enable North Koreans to enter the labor market smoothly and to strengthen the competency and collaborative capacity of local government and non-governmental organizations. This will create a local settlement system with low cost and high efficiency as we prepare for the increase of the North Korean population.34

The initial training program, or local social adaptation program (jiyeokjeokeung gyoyook 지역적응교육) that each Hana Center must provide as part of the national plan for North Koreans’ local settlement lasts 70 hours, over a two-week period. As exemplified in the statements translated and reproduced above, each Center explains the goal of education for local adaptation through both its public websites and brochures. This is part of the standardization of the service delivery to North Koreans throughout the country, as the Centers are expected to deal with certain sets of topics over the 2-week education period. In performing the program on the ground, however, each Center has its own emphases. While the Seoul Center highlights the Center’s activities on self-reliance and

33 Seoul Bukbu Hana Center’s introduction of the program
34 Wonju Hana Center’s introduction of the program
self-support, Wonju emphasizes the initial education program as “strengthening the competency of local government and non-governmental organizations.” Both Centers highlight career seeking and employment as important components for North Koreans’ resettlement, and the Wonju Center particularly mentions “low cost and high efficiency” and collaborative efforts with local government and NGOs in accomplishing tasks. The Seoul Center focuses on more bureaucratic and professional support programs, whereas the Wonju Center highlights characteristics of a typical NGO such as “low cost and high efficiency” and collaborative activities between the Center and multiple institutional agents.

The basic programs are organized into five areas: career and job search support; social adjustment; emotional stability; education preparation and management; and guide for living in local communities. Each category has some detailed subcategories included in the training. These items are designed to convey what is considered important for North Koreans to achieve in adjusting to and successfully settling into the new communities. The explanations are simply descriptive overall, regardless of their subjects.

I participated in the local adaptation program at Seoul Center. They ran from nine in the morning until around five in the afternoon every weekday for three weeks. The social worker told me that this regular schedule was designed to adjust the North Korean clients to standard working hours. At the session that I participated in, the total number of the trainees – North Korean settlers to the region – was 11. The clients looked simultaneously excited and nervous. I was already familiar with some of them through the very first day’s introduction, when I helped with cleaning houses, registering the residences with the local government, and buying daily necessities. We greeted each other in class. The social
workers who helped with the first day’s chores smiled and greeted the clients with friendly remarks. While we sat at a round table, some clients asked social workers questions regarding cell phones, basic livelihood subsidies, bank accounts, and public transportation services. Overall, it was a congenial environment, where social workers and all the other staff made an effort to make friends with the clients, in both formal and informal settings. The clients also looked lively and somewhat excited. When the first session started, they were given a souvenir coffee mug with a heart-shaped decoration saying, “We root for you, who is the only one in the world!” and the director and the vice director of the Center introduced themselves with cheerful remarks. The clients were also given several books and handouts to be used throughout the training programs, conveying various kinds of information.

Figure 4.1 Souvenir cup and education materials

On the first day of training, the Center provided guidelines for classroom manners and a list of activities planned for the entire training period. These rules of conduct centered
around punctuality, consistent attendance, concentration during the session, and being considerate of others.

Below are listed the specific guidelines for classroom manners.

(Guidelines for classroom manners) (from my field notes)

(1) The program begins at 9:30 AM everyday. Be sure to be on time.
(2) Don’t be late or absent. If you cannot make it, you need to contact the office or the assigned teacher (social worker). Rules: Being late by 1 hour will be counted as one absence, 3 instances of lateness or early departure will be regarded as one absence, no exceptions.
(3) Turn off cell phones or set them on vibrate before the training. Use break time for phone calls.
(4) Leave your personal work at home.
(5) Be confidential with sensitive information of others.

Figure 4.2 Presentations on classroom manners
These categories are centered on disciplining North Korean bodies by means of teaching socio-cultural manners that North Koreans are expected to follow. These are the by-products of what staff and the broader literature had discussed in terms of North Koreans’ maladaptive and problematic behaviors: they are condemned as forgetful, tardy, and inconsistent. Social workers tried hard to get them to understand how important these rules were to observe. Above all, punctuality and consistent attendance were the most emphasized categories, and social workers mentioned these rules several times, even during sessions on different topics. In other words, this conduct is the fundamental comportment that all participants are supposed to observe, regardless of the contents of their studies. Suggestion of how one conducts oneself is underlined constantly (Foucault 1982), with social workers’ passionate and encouraging remarks. There was even a monetary reward system for punctuality and consistent attendance, given as a stipend at the end of the program. Because of their measurability and traceability, attendance and punctuality became the criteria for standardized evaluations. Unsurprisingly, this monetary reward system applied to all the Hana Centers. Along with coming to the Centers at a regular time and behaving in accordance with the rules, the North Korean clients needed to arm themselves with cultural knowledge on various areas of society before actually “going out to society.”

There were also schedules for visiting relevant administrative offices, banks, groceries and popular local places which are designed for North Koreans’ affective learning of local society. Those visits were arranged by the Centers with collaborative performances among different service actors. However, not all the service providers clearly
knew what their tasks were in terms of service provision to North Koreans. Normally those agents in different institutions expressed the difficulties to draw a clear picture of tasks. On the other hand, I found North Korean clients to be willing participants, but it was not uncommon to hear their complaints about the training program being a “waste of time.”

“There is so much unnecessary education, and I told social workers about this. But all they said was that the programs were already designed by an upper institution, so they had no choice but to operate those as a regional Center. I think what you should do is training us in the field right away, rather than seating us in the office for couple weeks for useless education. Cell phone operation? Going to get groceries together? Do you really think people who crossed many boundaries and made it here don’t know how to do those things?” – North Korean male in his 30s, Wonju

In the short period of time, it is more likely that the Centers can only provide a limited scope of knowledge and small range of services. The initial training programs are designed to provide general knowledge as the Seoul Hana Center explains, “We support acquisition of knowledge in economics, law, and medical treatment, and encourage field experiences so that they can settle in the region without difficulties.” In this context, teaching clients to embody the traits of capitalist citizens and to acquire general knowledge about the South Korean social system appear to be the most critical goals for the initial education program. Sociolinguist Allan’s work (2013) depicts a problem of institutional programs for migrants in Canada in quite a similar fashion to this study. The English program designed for the migrants with goals of enhancing communication skills and
professional development only depoliticizes and decontextualizes the structural and discursive barriers, while requesting them to become ideal worker-citizens. In the ground level service at Hana Centers, social workers and volunteers try hard to engage with their beneficiaries by ways of encouraging and dissuading certain attitudes as well as establishing close personal relationships with the clients. However, the affective service delivery in the caring institution was not always successful in sending out the intended messages. North Koreans who just resettled in the regions might care more about making their lives back to “normal” as quickly as possible, through learning the “real” society. To them, the “educational” period of a couple months to several at Hanawon followed by another month of local education program at Hana Centers can be tormenting and tedious, or even remorseful. The mandatory processes for North Koreans illustrate that South Korean governance of North Koreans are centered around shaping an efficient, punctual and economic subjecthood, through close and affective types of care promoting behavioral and attitudinal changes. However, the state’s intention of creating the new subjectivity of North Koreans through standardized programs and individualized care does not seem to be effective, but rather, it more likely generates anger, frustration and distance between the North Korean service recipients and South Korean service providers.

4.3 MEANS OF AFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

In this part, I will show how affective languages and practices emerge in different locations of Hana Centers’ administrations, not only in the programs described above. The dual identity as both state and civil agency, and the dual locality as translocal and local organization give each Hana Center room for its own elaboration and creation of a desired
agenda, as well as cause conflicts and confusions. Also, the operational bottom line of standardization and individualization intensifies certain affects as “assets” more than others.

Seoul Bukbu Center, for instance, created the motto “SMILE” for serving North Koreans. SMILE stands for Sensitive, Movable, Impressive, Limitless and Energetic. Surely, there were intended goals in establishing this logo associating it with a social Center for the minority: smile, being kind, treating them nicely. The use of affective methods adopted by caring service agencies is not a new strategy, as these service programs entail human needs in the realm of psychological and physical health as well as economic support. As several anthropologists already explored, operations of governance are not merely sites of optimization and control, but they are social fields where political and cultural elaborations take place (Aretxaga 2003; Mazzarella 2010; Shoshan 2014). The affective style of governance displays uncertainty, heterogeneity and elaboration, which are related to the complexity of North Korean refugee subjectivity in relation to the South Korean service regime. In this part of the chapter, I will address the ways that Hana Center workers try to maintain positively affective attitudes through the service operations, under the contradictory organizational structure. I will also probe into some cues of why North Korean clients still feel they are misunderstood, distanced and misrecognized even after they receive “familial caring.”

Distancing
“A settlement helper referred her client to a job placement, but it did not work out very well, so it put the settlement helper in a difficult situation. Thus it is always best to ask the social workers at the Center and let the Center take care of it.”

Intentional distancing is one of the most valued assets that both volunteer and regular staff are (surreptitiously) encouraged to perform. In this statement specifically, settlement helpers are advised not to build deeper relationships with their clients. The reasoning is that North Korean clients could take advantage of support and possibly do harm to settlement helpers. The solution set up by the Center is “to ask social workers and let the Center take care of it.” Distancing is also translated into the term “professional relationship” between the clients and the service providers. This professionalization of the process is premised upon a notion of North Korean’s dependency.

In Hana Centers, professional relationships are expected in all interactions: between social workers and volunteers as well as between service providers and clients. Training programs and monthly meetings for settlement helpers present which codes of conduct are more important in interactions.

“It is good to help them out of an innocent intention, but it will make North Koreans depend on you and this will end up being negative to them. Furthermore, it can come back as a big burden to settlement helpers, so it is better to guide them to do it on their own…”

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35 The Seoul Bukbu Center’s orientation material for settlement helpers
36 The Seoul Bukbu Center’s orientation material for settlement helpers
In this specific situation, self-sufficiency is a trait needed to block the possibility of “North Koreans building dependency” and thus “being a big burden to settlement helpers.” It implies the importance of maintaining distance when dealing with North Korean clients, and simultaneously demonizes the qualities of dependency and accepting help. This is again echoed in the “professional relationship” touted by the manual (Ministry of Unification 2010, 15). This type of relationship implies establishing boundaries with clients, responding to only certain categories of their needs, and avoiding emotional attachment so that the clients do not come back with exorbitant requests. Thus settlement helpers, social workers, and counselors all need to make a concerted effort to make North Korean clients self-reliant, encouraging them to learn lessons in a “professional relationship” that avoids mental and physical overburdening.

“You can just think of it as a professional relationship. Between the settlement helpers and clients, between the social workers and the clients, and also between the settlement helpers and the social workers, it should run by that idea. No personal interests should be involved. You can handle pretty much all the occasions through the perspective of professional relationship.” – a social worker, male in his 20s, Seoul

In ushering them into the new capitalist society and equipping them with cultural and moral norms, institutional workers are asked to teach North Koreans to be self-sufficient. Under the category of self-sufficiency, what is emphasized for settlement helpers is proper distance from the clients. This distancing stands at odds with the Centers’ mission as being caring and personalized service agencies. However, when staff are asked
to deal with the complicated issues regarding North Koreans – muddy ideological politics, unquestioned ethnic homogeneity, a call to be efficient and competitive, there is not much choice other than distancing themselves from the clients and also from their co-workers. It is related to the preexisting notions of North Koreans’ “dependency” on institutions and support programs, social workers’ experiences of burn out, and mistrust about North Koreans being “unpredictable” or “bizarre.”

The strategy of distancing emerged in the relationships between the counselors and social workers as well. As previously pointed out, owing to the different hiring system, and the conflict between the call for national standardization in service and the call for localizing the service, the mentality of the staff members in the Centers is directed towards consciously or unconsciously ignoring the potential tension.

“That has been criticized so far… It is a problem I cannot deny. However, I will just focus on my work and will not mind about the politics there. If you have to think about even that element, you cannot really work here.” – a counselor, woman in her 50s, Seoul

“We had to fire him. He just didn’t know anything about the local situations. As we heard, he used to work as an intelligence agent and is now retired and found the job as a counselor. We couldn’t really trust him and we used to have a lot of conflicts… As he had some sexual harassment issue with one of our clients, we just fired him.” – a vice director, Wonju
As the counselor at Seoul Center talked about the issue of emotional and physical drain as a counselor for North Koreans, she admitted the difficulties in dealing with the different expectations of the workers and a confusing division of labor in the Center. The vice director of the Wonju Center told me about the incident regarding a counselor in the past. Considering the fact that the counselor used to work in a national intelligence agency, his socio-political stance was more likely to be against the North Korean regime and its people following the old Cold War ideology.

Under the greater theme of “efficiency” and “neutrality” in running the organization, Centers’ staff utilize and internalize the discourse of “professional relationships” to create distance from coworkers who potentially have disparate political, religious, and ethical perspectives, and from clients who are imagined as demanding subjects. Distancing is one of the affective means by which the service workers can handle any vexing socio-political tensions that might arise through the service provision.

_Erasing the complexity_

There were usually comments on North Korean clients’ characteristics in the Centers: they were neither punctual nor responsible in keeping appointments. For instance, the Seoul Center cautioned volunteers to expect to “be stood up” for appointments and not to be discouraged from continuing to help. According to the Center’s reasoning, North Koreans' behaviors need to be corrected in the long run, but regarding the early period in their resettlement, service providers are advised to be patient and congenial. In dealing with these cultural and moral “problems,” service workers are asked to enact paternalistic care
as if they are “parents,” since North Koreans “do not know things yet.” The manual goes on to say,

“North and South Korea developed differently in every aspect of society – politics, institution, ideology, and society… Owing to these differences, settlement helpers must inform North Koreans of local culture, customs and life overall, as they would face heterogeneity, antagonism and mistrust in the South” (Hana Foundation 2011,57).

Apart from the sustained reiteration of “the sameness,” the Foundation recognizes the obvious differences in different social contexts. Settlement helpers are expected to be aware of the clients’ experiences of antagonism, heterogeneity and mistrust. They are also in charge of informing North Koreans of local culture, customs and everyday life. However, it does not specifically address how and when these differences emerge, and how the experiences of mistrust and antagonism can affect North Koreans’ lives negatively. The matters are now all collapsed into a big theme of de facto “differences,” which paralyze further discussions by making them as differences in “every aspect of society.” In alignment with the unquestioned and unelaborated logic of sameness, the point made here regarding differences operates in the notably same way. By simplifying the complexity of becoming a certain subject in a new society, the national agency does not promote understandings based on more careful interpretations of culture (Geertz 1973). Just as anthropologists have to approach a certain cultural behavior in the perspective that it embeds deeper meanings and consists of complex symbols so that a researcher has to be more descriptive and interpretive, workers who provide services to different kinds of
people need to approach the matter more interpretive and descriptive ways, rather than being objective and technocratic. The perspectives shown in the materials of the national agency, Hana Foundation, however, merely gloss over North Koreans’ “differences” or “difficulties.” North Koreans’ dispositions, multiple positions in the society and their claims are understood simple and flat, as they “don’t know things yet.” The descriptions never go deeper and thicker than the immediate emotional and perceptive responses. This comment is followed by a request for settlement helpers to be “kind neighbors, relatives, and friends, who can open their hearts and be sensitive guardians.” They are supposed to provide pastoral care, with qualities like patience, generosity, tenderness, and acceptance, whereas North Koreans are imagined to be less adult, less independent, and less responsible.

In the meantime, North Koreans are susceptible to criticisms in the context of their institutional participation – not showing up, not trustworthy, likely to betray us, easy to detach themselves from people (especially guardians or settlement helpers), only attending to financial and material gain, oblivious of the social system, or stuck in a more traditional ideology – all attributed to either their having been refugees or their North Korean-ness. These negative expressions are found frequently in the Centers’ day-to-day life. Hence, it is quite clear that these comments are inconsistent and disorderly as they are instantly made as expressions of emotional distress. For instance, the common connotations of North Koreans being “too cunning” in gaining their interests does not cohere with their being too “oblivious.” Leaving the place and people easily doesn’t necessarily match with “traditional” or “backward” behaviors. This mixture of logical nonsense still thrives in the service industry through the Centers’ programs and interactions with the clients, even
though it tends to be hidden from any public statements. By depicting North Koreans’
predispositions thinly and attributing them to coming from “totally different society,” the
Centers do not appear to make progress in gaining North Koreans’ emotional trust. Service
providers do care, with an individualized care in their best capacity, but at the same time
they elusively express pity and mistrust – although it being subtle and unconsciously
expressed – which can be interpreted as condescending and paternalistic.

In this chapter, I unpacked two distinctive operational logics that Hana Centers
adopted nationwide: standardization and individualization of the services. However,
regional performances of Hana Centers are distinguished from the national policy and
statements, which shows the ambiguity and contradiction in their identities of being both
civil and state organizations, and the elaborations in their locally adjusted service
 provision. In this space of ambiguity and ambivalence, affective service operations emerge
as different kinds of governance. However, they can cloud the complex workings of the
politics and does not advance the mutual understandings between South Korean service
providers and North Korean clients.
CHAPTER 5

COLD WAR, TRUST AND PROTECTION IN INSTITUTIONAL SPACE

In this chapter, I will discuss how undercurrent politics of Cold War and division politics are relevant to the ground operations of the services provided to North Koreans in South Korea. Hana Centers and other government service agencies continue to try to convince the public of the irrelevance of politics to the welfare services provided to North Koreans: instead, the practicality and political neutrality of services are often accentuated values to maintain institutional accountability and legitimacy. Drawing on the discussions of affect in institutional spaces in the previous chapter, this chapter will delve into affective interactions in relation to larger political and cultural practices and discourses presented with the terms like “trust” and “protection.”

5.1 MEANINGS OF COLD WAR IN SOUTH KOREA IN THE 2010s

The Cold War has been explained predominantly as a historical event, which was only associated with two major power blocs and ended with the collapse of the Soviet Bloc. With the culminating event of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, the world was ready to set out on a new era of diverse relations of power rather than the bifurcated contest of world powers. Heon Ik Kwon (2010), however, suggests a perspective of “relation-of-domination” (2010, 2) to view the Cold War in more diverse and interpretive ways. As he challenges the notion of a global Cold War, Kwon stresses the multiplicity and plurality of its nature. In discussing the origin and the end of the Cold War, it is
important to acknowledge that it “entails the unequal relations of power among the political communities that pursued or were driven to pursue a specific path of progress within the binary structure of the global order.” (Kwon 2010, 2) Tracing the uneven trajectories of the Cold War in different places in the world necessitates undoing the unilineal analysis of it merely as the contest of power.

Many scholars in political science and North Korean studies also presumptively assume the Cold War is a finite event and primarily focus on how North Korean regimes responded to the loss of their biggest allies – the Soviet Union and China – and how North Korea has continued to survive in a post-Cold War period as a communist nation. In a majority of the literature, North Korea is portrayed as choosing to fight against the now unified liberal world, highlighting the “closure” of their society to the rest of the world. The US plays a major role in crafting the depiction of North Korea as a uniquely bizarre and irrational state that doesn’t follow the “global flow” of culture and politics – which justifies US exceptionalism and its ruling power over “rogue” nations or politico-religious groups. The dominant news coverage has dealt with North Korea in connection with nuclear weapons, terrorist attacks, and human rights violations, in addition to eccentric exchanges of power. In this regard, US politics in regards to North Korea still stand in the shadows cast by the Cold War plot, which highlights moral and ethical supremacy, demonizes the “other,” creates fear among the public and justifies expansion of military. For this reason, it is not totally uncommon to connect post-colonial critique with Cold War practices (Christina 2003; Greg and Klein 2011; J. Kim 2010).

In America, the Cold War played a significant role in formulating a romantic model of the family, exhibited by the blossoming white middle-class home culture and the rise of
baby boomers (De Hart 2001; Kuznick and Gilbert 2001). Cold War practices drew the American focus “homeward bound” (May 2008). Family life represented a liberal, free, democratic state of capitalist society that was placed in opposition to the picture of hardheaded, cold and unfeeling communist society.

Everyday practices of the Cold War era in both private and public spheres are more complexly deployed in South Korea. Owing to the proximity of military confrontation and its geographical vicinity, the fear of its counterpart was more intricately developed and enhanced in its level of tension (Kwon 2010). For instance, in the South Korean context, the word “Cold War” is not explicitly expressed or discussed but it is unquestionably entangled with everyday lives as well as the real politics. Indeed, a so-called “Red Complex” has brought devastating social, political and cultural consequences to South Korean society (J.M. Kang 1997; H. Kwon 1999; H. Son 1991). Hyuk Bum Kwon (1999) analyzes the political culture of South Korea as an “anti-communist circuit,” which yields automatic associations of certain political events with the frames of binary and antagonistic political claims. His analysis embeds an argument of hegemony, which highlights the participation of the general public through everyday life practices, rather than seeing it as a far-flung political contest between the two powers. Soo Jung Lee examined the everyday experiences of the Cold War through the narratives and experiences of separated families by national division in South Korea. Through the years, the families’ telling or not telling of their experiences were closely contingent on the political climate of the period. The feelings of shame, fear, antagonism and hate are not only present in these families – albeit in a severe and extensive degree within them – but also in the general public, as the
depiction of communist “others” and fear-generating, propaganda education and public advertisement have been explicitly present.

Recently, military confrontations between the North and the South are suggestive in proving that the fear against each other and the antagonistic politics are alive and well. The shelling of an island adjacent to the North and the South border area and the shipwreck dispute of Cheonanham 천안함 incident in 2011 and 2012, respectively, show how current politics might well be affected and divided by Cold-War instilled politics and military settings. Quite unnervingly, the series of spying accusations by progressive politicians and political parties have disrupted South Korean society with the enlivened Cold War spirit and deeply divisive politics. Words such as “spy (gancheop 간첩),” “North Korean sympathizers (jongbuk 종북)” and “red (bbalgaengi 빨갱이)” frequently dominate mass and social media, particularly in the current Park administration. Because of these political events and schemes, North Korean settlers have never been free from being accused, or suspected of spying or any relevant crimes. The spy accusation of refugee civil servant Yoo Woo-sung in 2013 through 2014 shows that North Korean settlers are still susceptible to public suspicion and political schematization. Undeniably, it is still fair to argue that the Cold War has not ended in South Korea. Rather, it has been and will always be used in any circumstances possible, to create an “enemy” for convenient political and ethical gains. In the next section, I will discuss how the discourses of “protection” are

http://www.newminjoonews.com/sub_read.html?uid=9422 “the Grand political party’s claim on jongbuk is reactionary politics turning the time back to 1960s” (Newminjoo 2015.3.31)
directly and indirectly circulated regarding national security that fears North Koreans are still enemies, not the unification heroes.

5.2 “PROTECTION” IN ADMINISTERING NORTH KOREANS

The South Korean legal system for North Korean settlers shows paternalistic rhetoric in a welfare frame, yet a dubious stance towards the group. “Protection” is a term worth drawing attention to, as it has multiple connotations. The arrival and settlement process listed by the Ministry of Unification is described in Table 1. As it frequently uses the word “protection (boho 보호)” it addresses the needs of screening, interviews and asylum housing for North Koreans.


|   | Request for protection and transfer to South Korea | - Upon request for protection, report and notify the situation to appropriate government agencies  
|   |                                                 | - Accommodate refugees in foreign diplomatic offices or temporary shelters in a host country  
|   |                                                 | - Negotiate with the host country and support the immigration of refugees after verifying their identity  
| 1 | Joint interrogation                              | - Upon entrance, conduct joint interrogation with appropriate government agencies, including the National Intelligence Service  
|   |                                                 | - After interrogation, transfer refugees to the custody of Hanawon, the education center for social adaptation  
| 2 | Decision over protection                         | - Decide through deliberation by the Consultative Council to Deal with Dislocated North Koreans whether to grant the refugees protection  
| 3 | Hanawon                                         | - Education for social adaptation (12 weeks): Relieving cultural difference, psychological well-being, and basic vocational training  

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<td>Residence support (five years)</td>
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<td>- Transfer refugees to their residence after registration of family relations and arrangement for housing</td>
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<td>- Vocational support: vocational training, employment incentive, employment subsidy, etc.</td>
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<td>- Educational support: special admission and transfer to schools and support for tuition</td>
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<td>- Apply special cases for basic livelihood security (social security)</td>
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<td>- Support workers system: community services (local governments), employment (employment centers), and personal protection (police stations)</td>
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<td>Non-governmental participation</td>
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<td>- Designate and operation regional adaptation centers (Hana Center)</td>
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<td>- Hana Foundation (governmental funding): Provide information on everyday life, psychological and career counseling services, and education to help refugees adapt to their community</td>
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<td>- Manage volunteer settlement helpers</td>
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As table illustrates, North Koreans must undergo different kinds of interviews and screenings. The process lasts anywhere from one to several months, depending on the complexity of an individual’s case or any involvement in political activities in North Korea and China. Some Korean-Chinese are occasionally excluded through screening, which underscores the value of automatic endowment of South Korean citizenship. Under the thematic use of “protection,” they are imagined firstly as victim subjects who have been stateless and now granted their lawful status in South Korea. Since they went through hardships crossing multiple boundaries without any protective legal means or status, they are deemed to be the rightful citizens based on the premise that they are also of Korean ethnicity to be guided into the new society. This “protection” secondarily implies that North Koreans are suspicious subjects, necessitating regular monitoring. It is accompanied by intensive interviews in which North Koreans are interrogated for any signs of spying...
activities or political suspicions that might affect the “national security” of South Korea. Even after this process of heavy scrutiny when coming into South Korea, each North Korean is assigned a policeman who will watch them in their everyday life and ask them what they are doing during their lifetime. Following the pervasive image of the North Korean regime as a bizarre and irrational authority in the post-Cold War space and time, North Koreans are undoubtedly imagined as political subjects who reside in a by-gone-era’s social system of communism, embodying an even more eccentric ideology of “Juche (주체).” Those who defected or were imprisoned are also seen as witnesses to the bio-political power of the irrational authority, and are supposed to be saved, but any and all races of communist influences must be undone. Thus, these victims need to prove themselves completely disconnected from and concerning with these communist, outdated and belligerent communist orders.

North Koreans, on the other hand, interpret the “protective” maneuverings as surveillance, expressing helplessness and feelings of disempowerment by the very act of “protection.” These are presented in the bureaucratic forms of “institutional protection,” “report,” “mandatory meetings,” and “visits,” which put North Koreans in an ambivalent position as institutional clients explicitly and as potential threats implicitly.

Q: So you are not on good terms with the policeman now?
A: Precisely not. The new one just asked me about all these pestering questions like what I did today or yesterday. He asked me also about any relations with Yoo Woon-sung thing, and it made me enraged. Now I’m a resident of 10 years living here. I don't know how North Korea is doing now, and I’m a very different person from what I was
ten years ago. I don’t even have many ties left in the North. I told him not to call me often anymore. Just ask formal questions and that’s it about us, I said. – S.H., North Korean male in his 20s, Seoul

However framed these “regular calls” or “meetings” are, policemen are institutionally obliged to inspect North Koreans’ day-to-day lives. Even though an individual North Korean as a service recipient would argue and resist against the disruptive operations of policemen and information agencies, there are not many ways to avoid the regular check-ups. The policemen are to “protect” North Koreans from potential threats or harms, possibly from both the North and the South owing to their sensitive political status, but their tasks are more often than not closely related to surveillance in the frame of national security. No other multicultural or social minority groups will be assigned a policeman entrusted to protect and watch them. Even with all this rhetoric about difference, unification protagonists, and “the new neighbor” to South Koreans, North Koreans are still political subjects with red print on their bodies.

Hanawon and Hana Centers are agencies designed to help North Koreans to adjust to a different society quickly and efficiently. Hanawon is a particularly unique governmental institution in that it provides only for North Koreans among all the other foreign citizens in South Korea. As discussed briefly in previous chapters, its missions are to wash away “cultural difference (heterogeneity),” to build “psychological stability,” and to offer “career guidance” to North Koreans. Hana Centers’ emphasis on providing “good,” “practical” care to reach these goals in local areas presents something far from bold Cold-War rhetoric. However, these institutions cannot be considered purely neutral and practical.
They are officially in collaboration with the NIS (National Intelligence Service) and the National Police Agency, which conduct intense interviews and unnerving screenings to “identify” North Koreans. The fact that the centers are linked to these agencies can allow the clients to have different interpretations about the purpose and meaning behind the Hana Centers.

5.3 AFFECTIVE OPERATIONS OF “TRUST”

“The Trust Building Process on the Korean Peninsula is a policy aimed at building trust between North and South Korea based on ensuring reliable national security, establishing peace on the Korean Peninsula and laying the groundwork for eventual unification... by establishing a firm stance on national security that does not allow military provocation from North Korea, South Korea aims to uphold peace and encourage the North to be open to building mutual trust.” – Ministry of Unification, announced in 2012.

Recently, trust has gained salience in conjunction with the larger discourse on unification due to the current Park administration’s policy of “Trust Building Process on the Korean Peninsula (Hanbando sinroeguchuk proseseu 한반도신뢰구축프로세스).” With the word “trust” representing the capitalist ideal of exchanges and mutual benefits based on an equal level of power, the politically-conservative South Korean government announced “trust” as a core value in its unification policy, highlighting national security. Trust becomes a viable option only if North Korea does not create any disruptions between the
two countries. It is conditional, as it accompanies strong national security, which ironically implies an increase of military force against North Korea in case North Korea “disrupts the peace.” The term “peace” here is also a partisan word implying a critical stance to the North Korean government’s closure to the (capitalist) world and an accusation against North Korea for its military provocations. Ironically, but not surprisingly, the discourse of trust here is based on the competition for power, a capitalist idea of benefits and exchanges, and a mistrust in North Korea after all.

Trust at nationally circulating discourses, however, is cast back to discourses on an institutional-interpersonal level. At Hana Centers, trust is addressed quite often, but not necessarily with a precise implication. The term “protection” is employed to signify a legal definition and used by higher-level institutions, whereas the term “trust” is used to refer to operations performed by a lower-level, small scale and local institution like Hana Center. Within the frameworks of organizational research in disciplines such as business management, social work and organizational sociology, trust is a word used frequently in regards to social institutions providing various services to clients. Anthropologists have discussed trust in association with social values, knowledge, moral crises or political ethics (Jimenez 2011; Strathern 2005; Power 2004). Here I will take a look at how trust is framed and performed in the area of the social institutions charged with serving North Koreans. As opposed to a discourse of “protection,” trust signifies more interpersonal and mutual relationships based on a premise that participants are equal in their social positions.

As the current service regime requires service workers to be more personal and affective, words such as “relationships,” “trust” and “case management” (as opposed to group training/education) were familiar terms to be cited and heard. Although trust is
mostly used to address organizational challenges and difficulties in building relationships among service participants, it has multiple layers of meaning depending on the context in which it is spoken.

For North Koreans, trust is more closely related to their migratory life experiences as undocumented migrants, refugees, and new South Korean citizens. Having crossed many kinds of boundaries, North Koreans have to face the different levels of their legal status, to manage their livelihoods, and to comprehend drastic shifts in cultural frameworks to make sense of the world. In such socially and politically vulnerable positions, trusting people can lead to either fatal or life-saving choices. Anthropologists Daniel and Knudsen’s (1995) work exhibits critical issues regarding mistrust that refugees could experience on structural and personal levels. On arriving in South Korea, North Koreans are put into a system that categorizes, diagnoses, and regulates them through interrogations, trainings, and counseling. In drastically different social settings, they have to learn new ways to cope with things, as the previous cultural practices they have trusted do not work anymore. As North Koreans experience institutional processes at a greater intensity during their initial settlement, various kinds of contacts with institutional workers occur, which accompany affective interactions. Trust, mistrust, avoidance, blaming and exhorting can happen in the course of training, counseling, and reporting activities. On stepping into South Korean territory, North Koreans are asked to change their identity from clandestine to legitimate South Korean citizens, to be adjusted to subjects who deserve special “welcoming,” and simultaneously to prove themselves as capable of unlearning their communist ways by becoming good capitalist-democratic citizens.
In the rest of this chapter, I will explore how different ways of negotiating, strategizing or reacting are presented in the institutional settings of the Hana Centers, focusing on the theme of trust. I will set up an argument around three different sets of relationships: 1) mistrust between North and South Koreans at the site of service provision and consumption; 2) trust and mistrust among North Koreans; and 3) regulating actions among South Koreans. As it is expected, the matter of trust entails tensions of power relations, confounding assumptions that trust is based on the notions of equality and even, beneficial exchanges. I will also address how it is possible and impossible to build trust in the very context of the antagonistic political culture of the Cold War. Particularly in the relations of institutional engagement, this will bring light to a discussion of how bureaucratic operations of a national authority are intersecting with the personal relationships and the ideal of desirable citizenship.

1) Mistrust between North and South Koreans

From the point of first encounter, South Korean service providers and North Korean newcomers find each other having different expectations and experiences with regards to social institutions. Social workers commonly interpret North Koreans’ “misbehavior” as their lack of understanding of social norms as well as old habits from the North.

“At first they have a different ideology and expectation. They kept demanding things from us, and regarded us as labor party members…³⁸ For instance, if they are fired, they blame us for that. They believe we should be able to control whatever and whoever…”

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³⁸ referring to North Korean labor party members, who are positioned in the high rung of the society
so even if we explain, it is hard to get them believe… But now as we have more younger
generations coming, and they already have information with them through SNS (Social
Network System) or other social media, it is gradually getting better, I think…” – a social
worker, Wonju Hana Center

From the social worker’s perspective, North Korean clients do not understand what
it means to help and receive help from volunteers or any institutional workers in the first
place. Basically, North Korean clients would misunderstand “how the system works” in
South Korea. To the South Korean social workers, the Hana Center is seen as a
governmental center with a centralized authority to distribute all the social necessities and
have a control over the other legal, political or economic matters. As North Korean clients
are accustomed to the old practices of the North, the Hana Center has to do everything for
them. Young North Koreans are believed to be “better” because they are exposed to foreign
media and are better informed of the capitalist social system. These kinds of rough
analogies of linking misunderstandings with the people’s habits and practices of the North
are not uncommon. Usually around Hana Centers, these kinds of misunderstandings and
cultural differences are often framed as the clients’ “high expectations” of the institution
as an all-powerful authority. The comments also reflect the workers’ feelings of being
overwhelmed, as they think they are expected to provide their North Korean clients with
“total care” and as they experience the frustration of being “less than perfect” in the
services they provide. The need to control the clients’ claims to a reasonable extent is often
attributed to the undesirable qualities from the North – viewing a social institution as “the”
institution, having grown up in a highly controlling society, uninformed of other possible
societal forms, etc. However, this kind of misunderstanding and mistrust can arise from North Korean clients’ need to feel legitimate rather than from their communist North traits. North Koreans could have difficulties in figuring out how the social institutions make use of their information and how they can be inserted into a system to their benefit. Being somewhat aggressive or exhortative can come from different intentions: negotiation strategy, confusion or desperation. However, those actions are interpreted as “North Koreans’ traits,” and the different perspectives from both sides often end up creating mistrust at Hana Centers.

“A: Actually they don’t understand the settlement helper system. If they are ‘helpers,’ it is just about helping, right? But they seem to feel uncomfortable. They think settlement helpers are the watchdogs, so trusting them fully does not seem to be easy... Probably it is because they used to live in a highly controlling and suspicious society, so everybody is watching each other and suspecting each other… I suppose it can be hard for them to adjust to a society of more freedom…” – a social worker, Seoul Center

“They don’t really understand what counseling means... Particularly those who are in the initial period are even worse. Even though we introduce this service in the training sessions, they don’t seem to remember anything about counseling... It is really hard to counsel North Koreans, compared to South Korean clients, because they don’t have wide enough social network and simply live alone, which exacerbates the symptoms… To build trust, it seems to take almost a year which is much longer than their Southern counterparts.” – a counselor, Seoul Center
To understand a segment of cultural practices, it is essential to be immersed in the society as a whole. Quite naturally, North Koreans cannot be very adept in dealing with all kinds of relationships and tasks that arise in the center. However, to gain the trust of North Koreans is challenging for the service providers, due to as South Korean service providers would think North Korean clients’ unwillingness and stiffness in collaborating with, and responding positively to, South Korean service providers. In these talks, South Korean service providers express disappointment with making the North Korean clients understand plain things, such as their role as “just helpers” or “counselors.” They also express displeasure in failing to get recognition for their efforts and in taking a longer time to gain the trust of North Koreans than South Koreans. These things appear to be basic social knowledge and manners to the workers, thus generating friction and irritation with the workers. The workers feel it is hard to respond to North Koreans’ needs, due to the characteristics that originate from North Korea. To South Korean service workers, North Korean society is a highly controlled society, where individual freedom is hijacked and everyone is suspicious of each other.

“They don’t listen to us. They instead go for their friends and sorts… They create stories, and my client just swings back and forth following her friends’ stories… Even if I told her to follow this and that, she just decides to do things beyond my imagination. I have no idea why they trust only their North Koreans but not us!” – a settlement helper, female in her 50s, Seoul Center
The settlement helper’s story is rather accusatory, suggesting that North Koreans are not collaborative enough, and do not make efforts to mingle with South Koreans. Instead, they will rely on their friends and families and “create stories.” The settlement helper’s good will and intentions are not read by North Korean clients, and this frustrates her. On this level of service exchange, the South Korean service providers appear to have more say in what North Koreans are supposed to do to adjust to the new society. They also have more knowledge of their native society, so naturally have more power in handling things. This kind of mistrust and distance from each other creates more gaps between the two agents. Even after the official end of the Cold War, South Koreans imagine North Korean society as a perpetually totalitarian, inhumane, cold and unlivable place. As Cold War practices have been in existence for a long time, South Koreans are not entirely stripped of antagonistic, enemy-generating and Red complex politics and mindsets. In the course of building a close relationship with each other, South Korean service providers often hold paradoxical positions and sentiments about themselves as well as their North Korean counterparts.

A: He recently got a smart phone, as he says that he needs to call his sister in North Korea so with his old phone he cannot connect… So I asked if that is even possible, and he scorned me, and I… cannot even understand how that is possible.

Q: Yeah… with brokers and everything, right?

A: Yes, it seems that they need to pay a lot for those. I don’t really get it… how is it possible? The network is all state sponsored connection, isn’t it?
Q: I think so… and what do you think about that? Do you think the South Korean government needs to block it entirely?

A: Ah… Honestly, I don't know… I can’t really say anything about it. I only know this person superficially. We’ve known each other only couple months… I don’t know what to say… if a bad person comes and doing a spy thing, what should we do… but I believe he is not the one... I hear him criticize the North a lot.”

- a settlement helper, male in his 50s, Seoul Center

The volunteer worker expressed his perplexity about what to do as the center’s worker. The person he is responsible for is clearly doing what is, in a traditional sense, considered as “spying” activity. Contacting with someone in the North is still strictly prohibited by the South Korean government. The general public does not even imagine that it can be possible, so this volunteer’s surprise is not a strange response. What is present in this conversation is the volunteer’s hesitation and empathy towards his client, which is simultaneously accompanied by suspicion and fear. He is firstly astounded by the actions of his client, which cannot be imaginable to an average South Korean in terms of its risk to an individual and the loose border control of the state (even virtually). His talk also shows an ambivalent stance on where to draw a line between private and public, in terms of how the state is supposed to respond to these kinds of acts. Thus, he is still debating his stance on the matter between the very personal concern for the North Korean’s keeping familial ties and the national concern of information leakage or collaborating with the Northern government. His evaluation on the person finally is founded in the weak idea of “I hear him criticize the North a lot.” His beneficiary’s hatred and criticism of the Northern
regime is proof of anti-North and anti-communism which is considered to be safe – the only viable political opinion to take, in his perspective – in the South.

As more and more global and transnational activities take place even in North Korea, as a practice of “time and space compression” (Harvey 1989) these accounts are expected to happen more often than not. With the development of communication and transportation, North Koreans utilize the technology to be connected with their loved ones or to serve other kinds of purposes. We now see how forms of globalization associated with digital technologies and communication systems is happening in the cultural-political stage of the Cold War, which is conventionally deemed to exist in two different times and spaces (Holm and Sørensen 1995). Both states now have looser control of information flows between their people. In the South, it cannot regulate all the activities, since it houses almost 30,000 Northerners. However, this kind of transborder activity embeds risky consequences, as it sometimes becomes a sensitive political target, used as a claim for the need to enhance national security.39

“That’s not rare (referring to the recent spying accusation of a high-profile North Korean defector) I heard from my investigator friend that a lot of people in South Korea are actually spies. Probably even the one living next door…! North Koreans are

39 The recent accusation of high-profile North Korean defector’s espionage shows how the complex politics around North Korea and defectors can bring about social turmoil at almost any time. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/in-south-korea-high-profile-defector-is-accused-of-spying-for-the-north--by-his-sister/2013/05/18/71aae366-b3cc-11e2-9a98-4be1688d7d84_story.html (Washington Post, 2013.05.18)
Korean media has dealt with this incident for a long while, speculating on its different contexts and backgrounds. The spying accusation in 2013 through 2014 in South Korea was rather an outrageous political schematization, as it shook the political arena involving the presidential election in 2012 and overall NIS authority.
out of question. He said almost two out of ten are actually spies. I think we should be really careful in accepting North Koreans and should do stricter screenings, accepting only those who can benefit us..... We give and give them everything like Hana Center and stuff, but what good is it when these North Koreans do not fight for us, but instead fight for them (North Korea) when a war break out? You know, they should serve as mercenaries for us! If we continue building the system like this, they will all desert us and follow the other side. We are literally making the enemies within...” – an individual sponsor and lawyer, male in his 50s, Wonju

A lawyer who has been helping North Korean youth in the city expressed his fear and concern of North Korean spies, quoting his investigator friend’s words. He seems to firmly believe there are frequent spying activities going on, with a sizable number among the North Korean population - a “two out of ten” ratio. He even has doubts about his own North Korean beneficiary, and insists that the country should not accept all the incoming applications of North Koreans but instead it needs to selectively choose the people. In actuality, the state has a system of screening North Koreans to sort out Korean-Chinese and political spies in the initial period of settlement. However, even after a long time of relationship building, mistrust of each other clearly remains, likely stemming from old Cold War type suspicions and the sentiment of hostility that has been nurtured through the period. Furthermore, he criticizes the system for making North Korean clients turn their backs against “us,” as the institutional services do not play a proper role in making them into loyal South Korean citizens. He accentuates the point by using an example of a wartime scenario dealing with a mercenary, which points to his ideas of North Koreans’
rightful functions in South Korea as foreign citizens. Fearing and scorning North Koreans in South Korea based on the notion that Northerners can always turn into our “enemies,” as they are strange, communists, and untrustworthy, is still present in the site of service provision.

In the initial encounters between North Korean clients and South Korean service providers at Hanawon and Hana Centers, where the first steps toward trust and relationship building should take place, suspicions of and fears about North Koreans in large are intermingled with sympathy for an individual beneficiary. This may have affected the actual operations of service delivery, as the volunteer at the center was rather hesitant about giving the North Koreans many benefits, and the lawyer becomes highly critical about Hana Centers’ operations, as suggesting that the overall support system will eventually create “enemies within.”

Another important thing to note is the fact that the institutional markings of each North Korean including medical diagnoses are another subset of Hanawon and Hana Centers’ service provision. The center categorizes each North Korean client by their family relations, marriage status, social status/position in North Korea and psychological problems. Some clients will receive “specialized care” or follow-up consultancy depending on both mental and physical conditions and the potential closeness to the North Korean regime. The Center also checks the family history and the individual’s history such as their army service, labor party membership or other sorts of experiences. Whereas the public presentation of the education programs is “educating and facilitating earlier settlement of North Koreans,” it also accompanies diagnosis, categorization, surveillance and subjectification of a kind, based on the both explicit and implicit suspicions of the people
as potential enemies. These figures are well experienced by North Koreans, and they express their anger or a sense of deep mistrust towards the system as a whole. The morally good and practically helpful images that these institutions attempt to establish set up expectations that are often unmet by the North Koreans who engage with these institutions.

“You know they are just scared of us being the “trouble makers” of the society. We should just live quietly following whatever South Korean society would want us to do. What constitutes our lives here is based on three things - North Korean nuclear weapons, North Korean human rights or North Korean sympathizers. Other than those, we are of no worth and they don’t really care.” - a North Korean male in his 20s, Seoul

2) Regulating other South Koreans – political culture, anticipating the unexpected

When I visited a police station hoping to get more information on their collaborative activities with a local Hana Center in Seoul, I was faced with enhanced screening upon entering the station and followed by interrogative inquisitions. As opposed to how the news coverage presented the event that I found relevant to this research with photograph of smiling faces among policemen and Hana Center staff, the checking and screening processes to get to the main office were lengthy and arduous. The police officers were all suspicious of me as a researcher and a volunteer at the Hana Center, asking identity-related questions while keeping my ID card in their hands. Even when answering my questions, it seemed they were suspicious of my research intention and any potential connections that might be of concern. I also felt that I was threatened, and could at any time be in a risky
situation, as I felt I was being interrogated to prove my “innocence” only by establishing I was anti-communist and anti-North. This experience automatically made me ponder how North Koreans would feel after all the processes of official interrogations and regular “check-ups.” I was questioned and suspected in my intention, even as a South Korean and merely because I was asking about North Korean defectors’ support services.

Under the institutional system of the Hana Centers, citizens who participate in the service industry are expected to provide practical and physical service free from political, economic or religious interests. Particularly as a governmental institution, a Hana Center should present itself as a neutral agency, which is only supposed to take care of the urgent economic and physical/psychological wants of those in need and North Koreans. Being a civil and governmental institution at the same time does not make a huge difference, considering staff members at Hana Centers already identify themselves as non-governmental (mingan) institutions. Whether it is a civil or state force that is engaging in the North Korean service industry, the operations should focus on treating either physical symptoms and psychological anguish or economic needs. However, even in this space dedicated to neutrality and impartiality, the antagonistic political culture of the Cold War permeates through the unclaimed territory. The interactions between volunteer workers and staff at the Seoul Center show how tensions and conflicts can be always deeply engrained in the sites of this “neutral service” industry.

“V1: When things go wrong, they will blame us, so I would just guide them and let them know that if you have a job earning more than this, you will not be able to receive
the governmental living subsidy anymore. So they go for those job places where they can earn cash, you know.

V2: I don’t think that is the right thing to do! We shouldn’t tell them the loophole and how to avoid those jobs paying more than a certain amount. They are legitimate citizens, and we cannot tell them to abuse the law and the system!

V3: I agree with you.

V1: But honestly, they need to pay a lot of money to their brokers, they need to save their families in the North and in China! We should understand that part… I am just concerned with their survival in the beginning...

V3: As a good citizen, you cannot do such things. Of course a volunteer worker at a national center cannot even think about doing that. Brokers or whatever is not an issue to talk about!

SW: I don’t think you can say it is not an issue. It is a very important matter to them.”

This segment of conversation reveals tensions, the conflicting ideas and different positions that each conversant has. It also involves emotional reactions attached to national security as well as what it means to be good South Korean citizens. When one volunteer mentioned she had to give advice on the best way to get state benefits, the other two male volunteers were almost enraged, thinking the settlement helper encouraged the North Koreans to manipulate the system. As a volunteer, he or she as a volunteer cannot even mention the “broker” system, which is a necessary component for North Koreans to come to South Korea and to be in touch with their loved ones in North Korea. The overwhelming emotions towards each side reflect the fear and anger about the broken unity in a political
perspective as well as in values of normative citizenry. As a “legitimate” and official volunteer, one cannot be a model of welfare dependence, a system abuser, or a threat to national security. The pressure of homogeneity or conformity is what aggregates a certain group in such service groups, since service providers at a national agency need to demonstrate unified and homogenous ideas in regards to national security and democracy, particularly in the context of a truce situation between North and South Korea. The social worker then intervened with a rather factual and neutral statement such as “that is a very important matter to them” and gave the advice to “hand over the case to the Center” so that social workers could take care of it. As social anthropologist Heon-ik Kwon (2010) asserts, Cold War society forces people to think in a binary framework formulating a sense of “either/or.” In this setting, people are divided into and are pushed to homogenize with either one group or the other. If there is anything in another person inconsistent with one’s own perceptions and expectations, he or she would feel threatened in their value system and react in highly emotional ways. There are not enough negotiations or compromises in this regard, so this results in rifts, chasms and ongoing conflicts among group members.

Anti-North Korean and anti-communist stances, having a good heart or a dedication to serving others (i.e., being a devoted Christian), being a good law-abiding citizen and being a good model to North Korean clients are qualifications expected of volunteers that they mentioned above. These expectations are the constructed boundaries that Hana Centers knowingly or unknowingly set up through their service provision, as a neutral and practical service agency. The Hana Center as a state institution needs to present itself as impartial, as serving those in need, and as an order keeper. In an antagonistic political geography, it still tries to maintain its neutrality and practicality of welfare but oftentimes
it faces conflicts between political stances. In the Habermasian sense, this “civil sphere” is supposed to be a place where people can freely express their ideas apart from the state or market’s force, with all different ideas and perspectives clashing, sharing and being negotiated for public good. However, in a society where a Cold War spirit is still factored in, this concept of model civil society doesn’t reflect the realistic struggles and the resonant structural violence.

“You know… we are living in a lawful society. We are living in a democracy. So when we tried to put Lee Suk Ki into jail, it took a long time. You know he is a total freak, promoting North Korean agendas and such. Those spies are still receiving decent treatment from the government!” – a settlement helper, male in his 50s, Seoul

This settlement helper’s account on a “spy” case, which happened in 2014 when a progressive party’s politician was accused of espionage for North Korea and was jailed later on, reflects existing Cold War politics among the general public and in the actual political arena. He was interrogated, and the whole political party was forcefully shut down, which had not happened since a non-military government seized power. The sudden shift in politics and social atmosphere to another “red hunt” in recent years shows how susceptible South Korean politics are to the antagonistic Cold War style of governing,

40 A politician of the former United Progressive Party in Korea, being accused of his espionage for North Korea
41 In 2014, there had been whole political conflicts between the ideologically contrasting political powers in South Korea. It ended with the state’s disbanding a progressive political party, which had not happened since the democratization of the country. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/20/world/asia/south-korea-disbands-united-progressive-party-sympathetic-to-north-korea.html?_r=0
whenever it is needed for its political gain. As long as the divided political system exists, this kind of collective suspicion over another group with oppositional perspectives will revive (ChoHan and Lee 2000). The way that hegemony works, the general public takes sides and firmly believes their own perspective is right, and in this antagonistic setting, being opposite means to be an enemy which will threaten values, community and life. This sort of backward politics seems to have become exacerbated after the two consecutive administrations of the progressive government took power. Many conservative civil forces have appeared since Kim Dae-Jung’s administration, creating a different political geography as a result.

As such, there are many situations where various kinds of conflicts and clashes emerge, but overall, the volunteers and social workers tend to agree on the potential conflicts. These volunteers and social workers identify themselves more as “service providers” who need to keep their “neutral” stance rather than act as activists of sorts. In constructing the normalcy of the institution, social workers discourage volunteer workers to express political statements or religious beliefs. Volunteer workers also participate in constructing this normalcy as well, as they try to avoid situations where they might be held accountable, share “practical” difficulties in the meeting, or discourage other volunteers from being engaged in unlawful activities and expressing their own perspectives in terms of political stances or religious beliefs. The cases described above show how the practicality and neutrality of Hana Center’s public motto could be easily fractured by the complex nature of the issue in South Korea. In addition, those qualities required for service providers in the current time are not neutral but also invested with values, as they are asked
to tend to only specific issues – such as physical and psychological health, and economic well-being – in pursuit of a healthy capitalist citizenry.

3) Mistrust and trust among North Koreans

North Korean settlers are known to have a small network of friends and family since many of their relationships have been broken or lost along the way, or they have not been in a friendship-conducive atmosphere while in China or in other countries. In addition, because of their previous experiences of life-threatening incidents and series of betrayals, they built mistrust rather than trust in relation to strange people, or people who approach them offering “help.” Stigmatization and social discrimination in China and South Korea do not help North Koreans to trust each other, so most of my interviewees and research participants are open and share their personal matters only to a few close friends or relatives but do not seem to be interested in expanding their scope of friendship or in joining larger North Korean communities.

New relationships can be developed in the common institutional spaces such as international prisons in Thailand, Hanawon and Hana Centers, but these relationships can always turn into unstable ones due to physical difficulties – sudden departure and separation, unexpected accidents – or any personal matters. When North Koreans come to South Korea, they sometimes find themselves in different positions and aspirations from their fellow North Koreans. They also learn how South Koreans treat them as “Others” and often view them as poor, communist and belligerent. In the space where governmental and non-governmental institutional intervention is prevalent, it can be harder for the group to formulate eclectic communities with their own diverse knowledge and experiences.
Congregating with other North Koreans is not a desirable activity and is frowned upon by South Korean neighbors, institutional workers, and even other North Koreans. This can bring about challenges in building lasting and trustworthy relationships among North Koreans. Rather, they tend to despise their fellow North Koreans and distance themselves from “those stereotypical North Koreans.”

“Sometimes I meet the classmates of Hanawon, for their weddings, or their children’s birthdays, something like that. But I feel there’s a gap as big as one between the sky and the earth. If one doesn’t interact with the outside (meaning South Koreans), he is no different from the time he was in Hanawon. They just watch TV, drink every night, so it’s the same. I don’t hang out with them often because you cannot learn anything from them. They are all the same.” – a North Korean male in his 30s, Wonju

A sense of “no benefits” from a relationship with another North Korean is quite detectable among North Koreans. Even though it is true that when one wants to integrate more into the other society, he or she might go out with the local people rather than people from the same background, in North Koreans’ community, there exists a sense of contempt and disdain.

North Koreans see themselves in a similar way to how South Koreans see North Koreans, and it is performed both consciously and subconsciously; as Frantz Fanon (1952) earlier explained the mind of the colonized re-inscribing that of the colonizers. Being divided in their self-perception, they try to adjust themselves to become the majority, or the colonizers. In a similar way, North Koreans grow to aspire to economic wealth and the
capitalist consumerist culture – sometimes even while they were in North Korea and China – and try to become more like South Koreans as desirable capitalist citizens. When they settle in South Korea, they feel this even more acutely, as they face social discrimination and stigma towards the North Korean regime and people. On the other end, it adds to North Koreans’ unwillingness to be service recipients, which inevitably marks them as North Korean.

“We cannot know all the North Koreans who are actually living here. We have education programs for those who first registered here and decided to settle, but there are not many things to do for those who moved later into this region and do not say anything to us. There are also some cases where North Koreans reject our service as a whole, saying they don't want to be called North Koreans and don't want their kids to grow up as North Koreans, so they tell us not to contact them at all.” – A social worker, Wonju Center

I was able to observe that among North Korean clients coming to the Center there are people who do not want anyone to recognize them or get close to them. In the classes that I attended, they did not hang out with other North Koreans or get to know more about each other; instead they just attended the programs and left. Overall, there is a sense of “uselessness” and “risk” in socializing with other North Koreans. Consequently, building communities through attending programs and social events was not effective even with the social workers’ efforts to help them build their communities. North Korean service recipients looked as if they felt the need to tackle the problems alone or to solve them within a very small community of their own.
“Some of these guys just call you and say, ‘Do you recognize me?’ or ‘Do you know me?’ and I would say, ‘How can I know who you are, you are not even introducing yourself!’ And then there was a mid-aged man who called me and said, ‘I heard your mom is beautiful. And I am interested in your mom.’ I carried on a conversation with him for a while, but hung up on him a short while later because I thought it would be no good.” – a North Korean female in her 20s, Wonju

North Korean women, in particular, tend to receive such phone calls or messages in SNS by North Korean men, in an attempt to approach them as potential love interests or for other personal reasons. These kinds of in-group activities further make North Koreans not trust each other and make the settlers in their earlier settlement period have the impression that all others are the same. Even before introduction of a variety of convenient means of communications such as smart phones and other technological advancements, there was a wide amount of open sharing of contact information among North Koreans. When they stayed in Hanawon, they could meet lots of people who were housed together, and on an occasion, they could get information on their families or friends from whom they were parted involuntarily. With the development of social network service media (SNS) and other multimedia, North Koreans can access other people more easily, but most people seemed to be disturbed by strangers contacting them. Because of the frequency of the strangers’ contact, some people change their numbers and block some contact’s names and details. Due to their inability to protect their identities from the state or state institutions, they demonstrate concern about the vulnerability of their information. The hostile and
discriminatory social environment that North Koreans have to encounter in the South doesn’t help the situation. Their hesitation to be open about their identity and to be connected to other North Koreans can be the natural outcome of their vulnerable position.

North Koreans are imagined as a homogenous group as they are “all the same” and “have nothing to learn from.” Social discrimination is based on a homogenous and pejorative depiction of the group, and it is logical that North Koreans themselves do not want to associate with the negative images of themselves. This homogenization gives rise to mistrust within the group. Even though South Korean service workers complain about North Koreans’ dependence on their peers, North Koreans do not think their fellows are in any way beneficial or good for their adjustment to life in the South. This leads North Koreans to be in a peculiar position, where South Korean service providers do not understand them well and often are dubious about North Koreans. On the other hand, North Koreans want to keep their peers at a distance because gathering in groups reinforces the negative connotation. Furthermore, North Koreans are considered to be maladjusted so that nothing could be learned from a relationship with their peers.

In this chapter, I examined the ways which discourses of “trust” and “protection” are situated in diverse social contexts. “Trust” and “protection” are common terms for considering the institutional involvements of refugees, particularly in relation to different scales of institution and modalities of significations. Trust and mistrust appear in the lack of mutual understanding between the agency workers and the refugees, in the perpetual overflow of new information that refugees have to face through extreme uncertainty in their lives, and in the systematically identity-neutralizing establishment of refugee camps.
and asylums (Daniel and Knudsen 1995). The previous chapter discussed that the social workers’ affect-laden interactions with North Korean service recipients erased the complexities of North Korean subjects in addition to distancing. This chapter showed that this phenomenon is reproduced by North Korean themselves as they regard other fellow North Koreans as “all the same.” The South Korean case is unique because the topics of trust and protection are even more politically charged due to ongoing political tension between the two countries and are perpetually embedded in the everyday life of South Korean society – outside the settings of camps or asylums: languages of trust and protection saliently emerge in various levels of institutional intervention in the treatment of North Koreans; suspicions and mistrust in popular media and in service areas appear unexpectedly but assuredly. In addition, the underlying tension between the warm, humanistic interactions related to ethnic homogeneity and the aggressive antagonism from the Cold War spirit often yields intricate and contradictory practices and expressions from the service providers. Due to the sustained memories and experiences of the Cold War, the policy making processes, service operations and everyday interactions render distrust and suspicion to be intensified in some institutional relations more than others, which speaks to the multiplicity and relational characteristics of the Cold War. This chapter analyzed how discourses and practices of trust and protection are enhanced and materialized in particular locations that pivot around the scales of institution in South Korean resettlement system for North Koreans.
CHAPTER 6

NEOLIBERAL ARRANGEMENT OF HANA CENTERS AND NORTH KOREAN CLIENTELE SUBJECTIVITY

Earlier in this dissertation, I showed how Hana Centers’ workers mediate, expand on and optimize major operational logics through affective and localized governance. In this chapter, I will examine the intricate relationships between the neoliberal arrangement of Hana Centers’ service delivery and North Korean refugee-clientele subjectivity. In relation to institutional engagement, North Koreans form a specific kind of subjectivity—which echoes neoliberal governance of the Korean welfare regime. As a contemporary form of governance, Wendy Larner (2000) has categorized scholarship of neoliberalism into three types; neoliberalism as a policy framework, it as an ideology, and as a perspective of governmentality. In her analysis, literature that deals with neoliberalism as a policy framework sees market-oriented operations are favored in a post-welfare state, while the decline of the welfare state is attributable to globalization of capital. In this body of literature, characterizations of neoliberalism is based on five values such as “the individual; freedom of choice; market security; laissez faire, and minimal government.” (Larner 2000, 7) Larner poses a question of how the scholarship can account for the success of neoliberalism in implementing policies and individual subjectivities when the policy agenda is based on weak empirical data and absence of intellectual endeavor. Scholars who have examined neoliberalism as an ideology highlight its complex nature, as they assert that neoliberal configurations are the articulations between “hegemonic and oppositional
claims.” (Larner 2000, 11) Based on Gramscian and neo-Marxist perspectives, the scholars of this stream have examined how groups of people resist and respond to the process of restructuring, with particular political identities. Scholars who discuss neoliberalism through the lens of governmentality, on the other hand, distinguish government from governance, as they trace new specifications of governance which Larner identifies as “market governance.” (Larner 2000, 12)

Following Larner’s categorization, this section will deal with two streams of scholarship on neoliberalism; 1) how the policy framework works to engender neoliberal welfare, and 2) how the lens of governmentality aids in understanding the new North Korean subjectivity.

First, I will analyze how Hana Centers, as semi-state North Korean resettlement agencies, adopt neoliberal policies and operations using market-oriented language to minimize the cost and responsibilities of welfare. In this analysis, I will assert that Hana Centers do not necessarily represent one coherent entity of neoliberal governance, but instead, the governance is configured through seemingly inconsistent and contradictory operations and values. Hana Centers perform the state service of promoting of North Koreans’ self-sufficiency and responsibility, but they do so by using the ideals of fraternity, familial care, and motherly love.

Secondly, I will draw attention to North Korean subjectivity. In the Foucauldian sense, contemporary post-welfare societies give rise to the “responsibilization of subjects,” where reduced state power accompanies the production of a non-state governmentality and the modality of government changes to “enterprise” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, 989). At
the same time, the “technologies of subjectivity” vary widely as (Rose 1985,9) “a more radically individuated sense of personhood” becomes apparent (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000,15). These discussions, relevant to the formation of North Korean subjectivity as North Koreans are encouraged to become consumer-clientele individuals. In relation to the institutions’ mediations, North Koreans are called upon to become self-managing service consumers, while at the same time, expected to remain compliant service receivers under the paternal care of Hana Centers. However, in probing the North Korean subjectivity, I do not readily assume that subjectivity is created by firm and coherent institutional engagement. Rather, I believe it arises in the institutional space as a system of meaning-making which shows disjuncture and contradiction, rather than as a system that shows coherence and top-down governance. Scholars who deal with governmentality in relation to neoliberal arrangements of a contemporary society have pointed out various ways in which juxtapositions of seemingly contradictory or incoherent descriptors are made. For instance, as they make distinction between the government and governance, they assert that the reduced significance of state does not necessarily mean less governance (Burchell, Gordon and Miller 1991; Barry and Rose 1996), the state is comprised of “bundles of social practices” rather than a fixed mode of control (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). In explaining “neoliberalism as exception,” Ong also postulates that the “neoliberal exception allows for a measure of sovereign flexibility in ways that both fragment and extend the space of the nation-state”(Ong 2006,6). However, as the sovereign power increasingly asks populations to work for productivity in a way that best engages market interests, it uses “forms of governance that encourage both institutions and individuals to conform to the norms of the market” (Larner 2000,12).
Particularly in this chapter, we will witness how North Koreans are subject to the kind of neoliberal citizenship produced by institutional mediation. In this regard, I will develop upon the previous literature on North Korean citizenship formulated through various kinds of institutional intervention (Bell 2013; J.Jung 2010; J. Lee 2015; Sung 2010). For instance, J.Jung’s ethnographic study on a Christian institution reveals how North Koreans’ religious conversion process is intertwined with nationalist and neoliberal rhetoric, which is largely a cultural project to transform North Koreans into desirable capitalist citizens (J.Jung 2010). J. Lee’s study underscores how diverse kinds of NGOs’ operations contribute to creating a disciplinary power to formulate active and responsible North Korean citizenship, which is well aligned with the state’s policy framework in dealing with North Koreans. This chapter will discuss the matter of North Korean subjectivity in the space of Hana Centers, while pointing out the disciplinary power of the semi-state agency does not always emerge cohesive and consistent. Furthermore, I will demonstrate how affective expressions of discontent and “anxiety” arise in both clients and service providers, as the Hana Centers face competitions in the service industry for North Koreans, and how they play by the rules of clients’ needs and the market logic of efficiency. I will demonstrate that service providers’ showing “frustration” from their own affective care is connected to the broader politics of a market-oriented welfare regime. In this way, I will develop the previous discussion on the North Korean citizenship by not only focusing on the disciplinary power of the institutions, but also zooming in on the interactive and participatory side of the neoliberal service governance enacted by both the service providers and recipients. Thus, I will attend not only to how market logics such as cost-efficiency and professionalism shape and limit the way individuals perform within these
institutions, but also to how it encourages both clients and institutions (and institutional workers) to conform to and participate in the establishment of the neoliberal norms surrounding these institutions.

6.1 NEOLIBERAL WELFARE REGIME AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVICES FOR COST-EFFICIENCY AND PROFESSIONALISM

In this part of the chapter, I will look at how the neoliberal drive in national policy on social minorities in general and on North Koreans in particular has percolated through the Hana Centers’ daily operations. The ideal of professionalism and the mission of individualization are articulated in the operations such as case management and counseling services of Hana Centers. Developing upon the earlier discussion of professionalism in the perspective of affective governing, this part will expand the significance of professionalization in the frameworks of policy and bureaucratic processes.

Since the 1960s, the South Korean welfare regime had been rest upon a developmentalist frame which had heavily focused on a rapid economic development through the authoritative and centralized control of the government (H. Kim. 2000; Moon and Kim 1996). The uniqueness of South Korean welfare system is that it was concerned with creating valuable human resources through universal education and employment rather than through social protection (Chang 2007; Kim 2002; Kwon 2011). For the most part, each individual family was held accountable for the family members’ welfare and protection in Korea, as a hegemonic response to individuals’ success and class mobility was largely dependent upon education (Abelmann 2003).
Recent scholarship of Western social democratic societies have argued these state in general have transformed themselves from Fordist welfare states, where states played a major role in securing full employment and in standardizing welfare services to everyone, into post-Fordist workfare states, which places a greater importance on the civil sector in the delivery of public services and localization of welfare responsibility (Jiwani 2000; Morison 2000; Peck 2001). Appealing processes of globalization and neoliberal ideology, services for social minorities have been placed “outside the reach of state bureaucracy” (Morison 2000, 105), as the welfare state has been scaled back, while market forces have become more important in organizing overall societal life (Jessop 2002; Larner 2000).

The South Korean regime of social welfare echoes this trend in Western society, as the Ministry of Health and Welfare has redefined welfare as “social services”, rather than “social welfare” in recent years. It emphasizes, “expanding welfare services for consumers and focusing on creating jobs,” so that the new welfare regime can “contribute to increasing female social participation by supporting reconciliation between work and family” (Ministry of Health and Welfare 2015). This implies changes in the demographics of South Korean society, due to low fertility and aging population, but also it spells out the need of the social service sector to become a job-creating sector. It explicitly says that welfare services have to meet “the needs of consumers,” efficiently use welfare budgets and reduce unnecessary administrative costs. Since the 2000s, this trend in state welfare has been central in South Korea, and it parallels social scientists’ observations that Korean society is turning into a more “neoliberal welfare state” (Chang 2007; Kwon 2011; Song

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42 Ministry of Health and Welfare, South Korea
2009). The new welfare regime encourages the consumption of social service, cost-efficiency and state bureaucratization. This is somewhat comparable to what Western societies have experienced in their welfare regimes in neoliberal times, as South Korean government has exercised strong state bureaucracy in organizing social service. In dealing with the social crisis which emerged from the “IMF crisis,” the state has gained legitimacy and hegemony from the wider public in embarking on a new welfare regime (Kwon 2011; Song 2007). Thus, on the one hand, the state seeks ways of reducing costs, by outsourcing most parts of operations to civil agencies and corporate forces. However, this doesn't mean the governing force is completely transferred to the civil sector – rather, the state has been trying to influence the methods by which market forces are incorporated into the state welfare system via shifting technologies of governing. The Hana Foundation is a perfect example, as the government established the consultancy and supervising agency that create discourse and ideology in addition to managing the sub-agencies’ administrations.

Discovering and meeting “needs” (yokgu 욕구) are already market behaviors, and as the definition previously stated, they are more for “service consumers” than anything else. It actively borrows the concepts of consumer and producer, exchanges of goods and highest profitability. Furthermore, the South Korean version of welfare emphasizes values such as the needs of consumers, self-assessment, job creation, and cost efficiency; all of which are instilled by the neoliberal ideology of welfare service.

As another characteristic of the new welfare regime and its concomitant fashioning of neoliberal subjectivity that informs state policies advances the autonomous and decision-making agent. In a legal document, it goes,
“Social services guarantee a decent living to all citizens in need of assistance from the state, local municipalities, and the private sector in the areas of welfare and health care... by assisting with counseling, rehabilitation, ...skill development, and social participation support.” (Article 3 of the Social Welfare Services Act)

Under this recent definition, social welfare hinges more upon individualizing service through “counseling,” “rehabilitation,” “skill development” and “social participation support.” These services are geared towards individualist needs and self-management, as they encourage service recipients to accumulate marketable human capital. To give another example of this voluntary, willful individual subjectivity, the Ministry adopted an electronic voucher system, where each individual investigates, applies for and accesses proper services by themselves. The users share the costs (in a “co-payment” system) with the government, which helps the state lessen the expense (Ministry of Health and Welfare 2015). Habermas’ observation was right in this case, as he asserted that “welfare-state capitalism” in part “inflates the consumer role and deflates the citizen role,” and positions its subjects as clients. In so doing, welfare state capitalism produces system-conforming citizens, and this system refers to a bureaucratic and state-regulated capitalist economy. This leads to “colonization of the lifeworld” by a bureaucratic system of the market and the state (Habermas 1987). Even though his discussion centers on welfare-state regimes rather than the recent neoliberal welfare regimes, the Korean case shows the relevance of Habermas’ argument, as Korean programs exhibit the state-led style of welfare management.

Zooming in on the types of service for individualization and professionalization offered by Hana Centers, the case management (saryegwanri 사례관리) and counseling
services are good examples for exploring the specific welfare framework that the state has adopted. In this broader frame of social welfare, or “social service” in South Korea, Hana Centers began to focus on individualized care, highlighting individual “needs.” To actualize the goal, the Centers placed counseling, the settlement helper system and case management at the core of their programs. Even though they are different categories of service, their goal is to implement individualized care. To meet this end, they need research on customers’ needs, paperwork with detailed reports and evaluation, and more importantly, workers’ minds and attitudes geared towards the discourse of personalization.

Seoul Center categorizes its services in the medical, economic, and legal area. Services are administrated by social workers, who are in charge of sorting out general cases from crisis intervention cases. Case management consists of home visits, phone calls to the clients and monthly case managing meetings (Seoul Bukbu Hana Center 2015). This system of operation shows which areas a local Hana Center considers important, and how it directs service to “practical” and “therapeutic” needs. As Nancy Fraser also observed, bureaucracies like this one and especially “therapeutocracies” disempower clients through “preempting their capacities to interpret their own needs, experiences and life problems.” (Fraser 1989,130)

“Social worker: Case management is stressed more in this year, actually it has been important already, but more. 

Park: What are the ways the Center tries to implement it, if it is an important area?

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43 On case management: http://www.gnnkcenter.or.kr/Business/Example.aspx
Social worker: Actually, settlement helpers’ work is very important… they need to find out what North Koreans’ needs are since they are the closest workers. Then we (social workers) will be able to plan and operate the system accordingly… so that means settlement helpers are supposed to play more active roles than now.”

The social worker at the Seoul Center emphasizes the settlement helpers’ roles as close to that of the case managers – social workers and counselors – and he expresses his presumption that North Koreans’ needs are identifiable through close engagement with their daily lives. As the current welfare system highlights the call to identify the needs of the clients/consumers, it is important to discover pending needs and satisfy clients through providing the proper care.

The peculiarity of the term “case management” is its flexibility and ambiguity. Depending on a variety of factors – clients’ condition, relationships among service providers and recipients, clients’ moving out, etc., the definition of case management can vary to encompass different types of care. Still, the case management paradigm implies value placed on individual care, personalized service and targeting the specific needs of clients’ everyday lives. There have been critiques that the Centers are neither able to catch clients’ needs, nor equipped with effective tools to actually execute case management at the site. Ministry of Unification conducted research on North Koreans’ “needs” and on the case management services meeting those needs. The resulting report confesses that support policies and practices fail to use realistic measures for individual clients who are enmeshed in diverse relationships (Ministry of Unification 2008). Additionally, few Centers have
conducted research on identifying North Koreans’ needs (Park et al 2012; Yoon et. al 2005), and several studies mentioned that the Centers are in need of systematic evaluation, executive structure, professional supervision, professional labor division and work relationships among the staff to successfully practice case management (S.H.Kim 2007, Park et al 2012). Where these studies all emphasize the importance of case management in service provision for North Koreans, they stress the operation aspects of the case management system – “how-to”s –, instead of what it signifies in the broader socio-cultural settings. As a push towards more technocratic devices to effectively operate services emerges in the critique, the Hana Centers are probably going to instead develop the procedures and management skills of operating current services.

Table 6.1 Monthly Report Card for Settlement Helper (Ministry of Unification, accessed in April 2015)

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<tr>
<th>Monthly report card for settlement helper (2015/_)</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Period of service</th>
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<tr>
<td>Client’s address</td>
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<td>Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Relationship to the client</td>
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<tr>
<th>Service contents</th>
<th>Material support (___times)</th>
<th>Home visit (___times)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>Birthday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>Wedding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dining together</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Entrance/Graduation</td>
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<td>Spending holidays</td>
<td>Funeral</td>
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<td>Etc.</td>
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<td>Local Guidance</td>
<td>Refer to professional counselor (___times)</td>
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<td>Living convenience</td>
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<td>Public institution</td>
<td>Housing</td>
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<td>Cultural Centers</td>
<td>Education</td>
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Aligned with making the work more systematic and professional and making the needs more detectable, the Seoul Center requires settlement helpers to fill out detailed information on their North Korean clients every month. In the monthly report card, the elements for settlement workers to check are listed in detail. Additionally, it shows the collaborative tasks to be done with counseling care and closer case management. The Center asks settlement helpers to answer questions in these sections: employment, education, health, and particular concerns of the clients and service activities, such as home visits, material support for special occasions, local guidance, phone calls and professional counselor references.

Through asking the settlement helpers to fill out the form, the Centers and the volunteering staff are encouraged to closely monitor their clients’ everyday lives, particularly those areas manageable by the Hana Centers’ service operations. Family, employment, work, relationships, education and living subsidy are the main concerns. The psychological aspect is also included as a category that the settlement helpers need to keep in mind, because the Centers and by extension the state, presume North Koreans have psychological/mental as well as physical/material issues that need to be treated to facilitate successful adjustment to society. Using evaluation system on what to watch out for, the settlement workers and social workers can focus on what they have to do, what they need

<table>
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<th>Special concerns: main activities and/or North Korean clients’ reaction to the service</th>
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<td>Medical care</td>
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<td>Law</td>
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<td>Phone Call (____times)</td>
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to pay attention to. Instead of “taking care of everything” with motherly love, individual
volunteers follow up with the needs listed on the form.

Ms.Kim: In those days, we used to do everything, nearly everything… We had to
drive them back and forth to everywhere, I gave them Kimchi and all the food, I took
them to the church so that they can meet more people… you know. Two among them
are still very close to me, they call me mom, as I told them to. I told them, here in the
South you have me, I am your mom. If they had anything happening, they would
come to me.

Park: wow, it must have been a lot of work for you all.

Ms.Kim: It was a lot of work! Now it became much more convenient. After the
Center took over the work what we used to do and they arrange the task overall, so
it is just a piece of cake now.

Park: what do you think about the Center’s professionalization? The social workers
told me it is an important element…

Ms.Kim: I think we need to talk about this, (cautiously speaking) the social workers
are young and they all change frequently, so they really don’t know how to handle
things. They are cold, and the worker *** did not even greet us. I mean… I have
worked for them this many years, and I am probably the most experienced in here,
but they don’t really respect us. It is just that we have meetings, dinners sometime,
and that is all.
The settlement helper I talked to had already worked for North Koreans even before the Hana Center came into existence. As one of the oldest members, she recognizes changes in the service delivery in the region. In her experience, professionalization did divide labor among the workers, so it became easier for each volunteer to handle the work. However, she also mentions that the relationships have become “cold” since the Hana Center “professionalized” the process. She has decreased contact with her clients, and fewer areas that she has to take care of. She also testified that she did not feel she was welcome or that her work was appreciated. Usually at the Seoul Center, settlement helpers were assigned time to fill out their forms when monthly meetings were held, and social workers encouraged volunteer workers to fill them out more thoroughly and specifically. Detailed descriptions of clients were deemed to be critical for thorough and more accurate case-management, and the Center tried to implement the “individualized care” through settlement helpers’ detailed documentation of their clients’ personal details. Over time, the responsibility for the management of work has shifted away from individual volunteers as members of civil organizations or local churches. The work has also changed from an individual volunteer’s physical and emotional capacity for caring, to institutional establishment of quantifiable and detailed evaluation reports. This shift reflects changes in the North Korean service area, towards systemization, bureaucratization – epitomized in increased paperwork – and division of labor. However, it also shows localization of governance, as the Seoul Center allocates the case management work more to settlement helpers while other Centers hold social workers accountable for the same kind of task. For instance, at one Center in Gyeonggi province, a social worker told me that four counselors were working as case managers in addition to their psychological counseling work. While
the rhetoric and actual goal of “case management” in the current welfare regime has the national goal of optimizing productivity with less cost across the country, the way it is operated differs by local situation. Even with the identical documentation that the central government requires each Center to do, each Center implements the task in different fashions, in terms of collaboration and distribution of labor.

However, knowing what the “needs” are and how to implement personalized service to fulfill the needs usually lack substantive discussion. As one social worker admitted,

“They actually do not know what they need for living here… even if we ask them what they need, they don’t know what to say, and they would say different things from what you expected. So I’d say that you should just go and visit their home. If you visit their home, you will know what they need and what they don’t.” – a social worker at a regional Hana Center

As the social worker acknowledges, North Koreans do not consciously express their “needs,” particularly in the initial time of settlement. This necessitated social workers visits to assess the needs of the clients. Needs are recognized by the social workers and agencies, not by the clients’ conscious efforts to find their needs or verbalize their desire for support from state agencies. These needs and their corresponding programs are the fundamental reason for Hana Centers’ establishment – which also generate funding for North Koreans from the state, local governments, or any other funding agencies. However, finding and case managing according to North Koreans’ “needs” requires calculated considerations and understanding the society in a broader level. As I discussed in previous chapters, these
elements contribute to the misunderstandings, mistrust and miscommunications among the service providers and between providers and recipients.

Counseling service is another area of case management. As the service is acknowledged as a legitimate, scientific approach to evaluating North Koreans’ overall well-being, it takes center stage throughout the initial settlement period, both in Hanawon and Hana Centers. Counseling is implemented in all the Centers as mandated by national law. Scholars have noted that psychotherapies are inherently de-politicising and individualist practices (Furedi 2003; Lasch 1980; Sennett 1977), yet there are also discussions of the practices not necessarily being so (Parker 2003). Where psychological service and counseling do not have to be per se individualist, the technologies of psychotherapy seek to “align political, social and institutional goals with individual pleasures and desires, and with the happiness and fulfillment of the self.” (Rose 1990, 257) It is positioned as fundamental for North Koreans, as they are considered to be people with various kinds of trauma and life-threatening incidents that could lead to many psychological and physical problems. Overall, their social and cultural adaptation “problems” are thought to be curable and treatable by this specific form of individualized, scientific care. Nevertheless, the stress on counseling services for North Koreans as implemented with professionalism, which is deemed to work with “a distance” (Fournier 1999; Larner 2000) and detachment, is another element of neoliberal governing. Based on the quantifiable features of the human mind, the state service industry can dependably detect and alter the individual’s characteristics and anticipate the emergence of a desirable subject. This is another example of how the state approaches North Koreans’ adjustment to society, which is aligned with the individualist, neoliberal trend in social service.
Because of its presumed significance, counseling services are supervised and administered by the Hana Foundation, rather than local Hana Centers. Arguably, the state has control over North Korean clients through direct hiring and management of the counselors.

By adopting different technologies of governing, the state and each Hana Center try to create a therapeutic, individualist, and consumerist subjectivity which speaks to neoliberal governance. The next part of the chapter will close in on the aspect of “responsibilization of the self” induced by Hana Centers’ service operations, while the government nonetheless embeds heterogeneous and contradictory features within its logics and practices.

6.2 RESPONSIBILIZATION OF THE SELF – A CALL FOR NORTH KOREAN REFUGEE-CIENTELE SUBJECTIVITY AND ITS CONTRADICTION

“There are the “smart” ones who are very informed of different kinds of service and who can gain those benefits. Those tend to be young women, women with young children. They need to know about the system for their kids’ education and household management, so they try to get to know the system quickly. It is that they are using the system very well. I can say that they are the ones adjusting well here.” – a social worker, male in his 20s, Seoul Center

This social worker touted the “smart ones” among the North Korean clients, who are well informed of service provisions in diverse agencies and actively seek those forms of help to stabilize their lives. These happened to be “young mothers” who show passion in enhancing their children’s lives as well as their own. This positive light on client-ship insinuates the types of clients seen as desirable as well as the Hana Centers’ long-term
goals. This social worker’s story is well aligned with the state’s initial intervention in North Koreans’ resettlement as it encourages each North Korea to cite his/her own “needs” and desires in a responsible, rational and independent manner. The “smart,” well-behaved and responsible North Korean clients would benefit in this service industry. This specific figure of service client-ship is underlined in the very initial period of state and non-state institutional service industry and it formulates the ethics and norms of North Koreans’ citizenship as well as the overall service landscape (see also J.Lee 2015; J.Jung 2010; Sung 2010). As Ong earlier observed, “technologies of subjectivity rely on an array of knowledge and expert system to induce self-animation and self-government so that citizens can optimize choices, efficiency, and competitiveness in turbulent market conditions” (Ong 2006,6).

“Being smart” is also defined as personal traits and behaviors such as appearing responsible, appreciative, docile, and overall being “good enough”. In order to be good service recipients, North Koreans are called on to be responsive to Centers’ and other agencies’ service programs, but also to avoid giving the impressions of taking advantage of them. The call for being smart echoes “responsibilization of subjects” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002), which is a prevailing mode of subjectivity in neoliberal spaces. The “impressions” that North Korean clients need to make in interpersonal communications are also dependent upon social workers’ and social agencies’ cultural understandings of what constitute “proper” attitudes and manners. The encompassing claim for North Koreans to become active, responsible and self-sufficient citizens is easily detected in different spaces such as NGOs (J.Lee 2015; Park 2011) and Christian-run agencies (J.Jung 2010) through their guiding, nonetheless disciplinary practices. Young North Korean women, who have
multiple dispositions of identities (H.Y.Lee 2012, see also Kwak 2000; I. Yoon 2011) as they have experienced commercial activities such as trading goods and their labor, and had to constantly negotiate the economics of sacrifice and gain through their migrations could be on the winning side when they go through another interpersonal negotiation process in the South Korean welfare system. Compared to older, “rough” and “inflexible” North Korean male service recipients (Choo 2006), young North Korean women are the easier and “most rewarding” clients in the “humanized” system of support. A counselor at a Center explained how she treats her clients when they make a visit for counseling services:

Counselor: If they visit me, I just adore (yebbeohanda 예뻐한다) them and praise them for the effort that they are making.

Park: I see. … Who are the main clients?

C: They are usually young educated ones, who seek for better skills for their social activities.

In her story, the Korean term “yebbeohanda (예뻐한다)” entails a rather hierarchical and gendered love, which can be used by a senior person to a younger one. It conjures images of a mother to a child or a teacher to a student, and is often associated with favoritism, without necessarily having negative connotations. Because of that term, I asked who the main clients are, and as it turned out, they are mostly young people in their 20s to 30s. As most cases show, those who are young and flexible in their thinking and attitude are the main service recipients, and those who do not hesitate in receiving counseling service. By giving the clients highly affective responses – adoring and showering accolades
–, the counselor can be reassured of their returning to the service. Such encouragement is also related to the specific skills needed to create a desirable subjectivity of North Koreans, as caring service becomes effectively mobilized through individual caretakers’ affective care. Similar to how American welfare service providers show “refugee love” by assigning refugee figures to a specific ethical contour (Ong 2003,146), South Korean service providers show their “North Korean love,” which is sometimes predicated upon judgements and suspicions.

A point of contradiction sometimes appears in the discourses about North Koreans, particularly about their “service consumerist behavior.” It is widely known that the North Korean service sector is inundated with an overlapping and disorderly flock of service. For instance, if North Koreans use their stories as a witness at a church service, they get a cash reward worth $200 each time. If they attend a planned event punctually and consistently, they also get a “scholarship” with many NGOs, churches and education or training sites. Because of stories like these, services for North Koreans are widely thought of as excessive. North Koreans are easily marked as “spoiled” because they “do not know how to appreciate what they receive.” They are judged based on the free services that they are given. Their consumerist behavior in searching for different kinds of service provision or shopping around for providers is often criticized. Their reputation as “privileged” service recipients makes North Koreans susceptible to criticism. It generates public resentment and academic critique towards them, in comparison with other social minorities or groups of multicultural citizens (I.Yoon 2012). North Koreans are then presented as “service shoppers” who go for the best and the most beneficial service goods. If they leave for
another service agency, another person who cares them “better,” service providers feel they are used and unappreciated.

“We get those claims. They somehow heard from their friends or acquaintances that our Center provides a TV as a present when they move in, but when our funding from the municipal government ran out, we were not able to provide that anymore. Some North Koreans got infuriated over that change and they said they would have never settled here if they knew there was no TV gift.” – A social worker at Wonju

In explaining the frustration she had with North Korean clients, this social worker took an example of her clients’ complaints about the Centers’ service and search for another agency for the service contents that they want. The criticism works in turn as a regulating tool to correct North Koreans’ behavior as service recipients. Even though the vast service industry has created the consumerist subject, the bureaucrats and the volunteer force that are working closely for North Koreans try to exercise their power to create a moral figure of the rightful service recipients. “Spoiled,” “demanding,” and “unappreciative” are the common terms used to address North Koreans’ less than perfect service behavior. In sum, there is a fine line between “system manipulator” or “system dependents” and smart users of system. This discourse concerns efficiency in distributing state resources and self-sufficiency, which echoes neoliberal modes of welfare (Comaroff and Comaroff 2000; Rose 1985).

On the other hand, Hana Centers and service workers are also in the grips of neoliberal forces. Technocratic measures such as writing grants, checking attendance, collecting expense receipts and keeping up with evaluation reports are the Center’s daily
job. Not surprisingly, many social workers and counselors commented on the heavy load of paperwork. Under the assessment and direction of the Ministry of Unification or Hana Foundation, each Hana Center pays the price for being a more “stable and official institution for North Koreans” with overwhelming paperwork. Thus, not only clients, but also service providers are evaluated and assessed in their tasks. Another social worker interviewed is always on the verge of being rejected by his clients and to keep his job, he needs to find a way to accommodate all the possible issues that North Koreans might bring to him.

“I sometimes get questioned by the service recipients about my professional capability. They sort of test you whether or not you can provide whatever they want. They can still come to me unofficially and I can treat them comfortably as person to person… I can understand that they take the practical part into consideration. They should get what they need to get, so they want to make sure if I am a capable, and knowledgeable social worker who can provide them with the best services and information. Also, they need to build trust in Hana Center so as to trust workers in the Centers.” – a social worker, at Seoul Center

This social worker has to deal with clients’ trust in his capability as a professional social worker. Being professional means being knowledgeable of all the processes of daily necessities as well as bigger issues like the legal processes of family formation, adoption, divorce, living subsidy, conflict resolution, sending remittances, and so on. The heavy demands burn out many service providers. Unlike other social minorities in South Korea – the elderly, low-income households, foreign workers, marriage migrants, etc. – North Koreans are deemed to be deserving of “total care” (M.R.Yoon 2007). This means that
North Koreans are entitled to receive all kinds of care in the issues that arise from their resettlement lives - family issues such as divorce, marriage, adoption, and registering their children; labor issues such as job training, getting wage support, and finding relevant careers; residential and living subsidy issues such as moving in and out, and registration at local government; and education issues such as choosing schools and securing funding. This certainly factors into the burdens of social workers on the ground. In addition, each social worker faces the challenges of knowing and understanding everything, while managing each client’s case, as the new welfare regime requires localization of service and service providers’ own interpretation of their work.

In this chapter, I explored what it means to be a North Korean client in the neoliberal arrangements of Hana Centers’ services. If the case management and counseling services are the Center’s “technocratic” dimensions of service provision established as formal programs of the Center, tending to individual needs, then discourses of “smart client-ship” and actions of encouragement and accolade are the affective dimensions which guide and direct North Koreans’ minds and actions to suit the neoliberal figure of the “responsible self”. In the processes of service delivery and reception, heavy competition and a call for enhanced professionalization in North Korean services make both service providers and recipients vulnerable to criticisms and mutual mistrust: North Koreans are easily marked as “spoiled and unappreciated” service consumers whereas service providers face anxiety attached to their job performances and worry about their level of professionalism and competitiveness.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

This research is based on year-long ethnographic fieldwork in two local Hana Centers, South Korean refugee resettlement agencies for North Koreans, and uses qualitative research methods. I have explored the ways in which the institutional establishments for North Koreans, such as programs and the relationships between service recipients and providers, have contributed to forging a specific North Korean service-client subjectivity. In particular, I zoomed in on the kinds of bureaucratic operations that emerged out of the socio-political contexts of neoliberal arrangements in the South Korean welfare area, where affective service provisions are encouraged and animated to realize the co-ethnic love and care for the less.

Hana Centers are sites where divergent ideas, expectations and practices are expressed and magnified, as the organization possesses pairs of contrasting characteristics: state and non-state; national and local agencies. When Hana Centers were introduced in 2009 across the nation, there were expectations that they would eradicate the decade-long problems in the service field such as inefficient delivery of services, politicization of the non-state actors, and Seoul-centeredness of resource distribution. As a semi-state organization, Hana Centers appeared to be the ideal service agency for helping North Koreans to settle in the regions of South Korea, through promoting neutrality and impartiality as well as organizational efficiency and professionalization.
However, this research has found that the preexisting problems in this service field still persist; moreover, new obstacles have appeared with the establishment of the Centers. This research was motivated by investigating why the service agencies that have ideal intentions and goals still fail to achieve the stated goals of integrating the North Korean newcomers successfully into the Southern regions. The common issues that the Centers across the nation experience include: the ambiguity of the Centers’ identity generating confusions and different work expectations among service providers; bureaucratic and redundant services leading to inefficiency and mistrust of service provision; both explicit and implicit conflicts in political and religious interests. One North Korean settler I interviewed said, “They are just creating buildings and offices here and there, hiring South Korean people who don’t hear or understand us. Eventually all the system will fatten South Koreans, not North Koreans.” Apparently North Koreans’ deep mistrust of South Korean bureaucracy and administrators was not overthrown by the quantity of the services provided by the state, which are “unprecedented for any refugee group in the world” (B. Chung 2009, 10). The central government and the supervisory agency attempt to “standardize” the quality of the services, but the local Centers view that attempt merely as a bureaucratic process that considers only measurable and quantifiable criteria of services. In the meantime, the other goal to “individualize” the services does not seem to satisfy North Koreans’ needs, particularly with regard to the general programs and interactions between the service providers and the recipients.

In order to parse this problem, I adopted the theory of affect, which has been helpful to analyze beyond the material and physical dimensions and to underscore the interactive creation of subjectivity. I used affect as an analytical tool to advance the discussions of the
state institution, bureaucracy and governmentality, as they open the space of governing to
the interactive field of “affecting” and “being affected” (Anderson 2009). Throughout this
dissertation, I used the theory of affect to analyze two major dimensions: as a mode of
governing and as a mode of interaction between the service providers and recipients. For
instance, the Hana Centers use affect-laden expressions to promote their images as caring
agencies and to guide and control North Koreans’ bodies and minds in more
“individualized” and “humanistic” ways. In the site of affective interaction, both North
Korean service recipients and South Korean service providers evaluate each other through
neoliberal logics of self-sufficiency and competitiveness as well as participate in sustaining
various kinds of “mistrust,” influenced by the antagonistic socio-political environment
albeit with their shared notion of brotherhood or “the same blood.”

The over half-century-long national division has bred not only political conflicts
between the two countries, but also antagonism and suspicion between their peoples. While
the social discourses of homogeneous ethnicity are still resonant in the abstract senses of
“oneness” and “unity,” the suspicion and enmity towards each other easily seep into the
relationships in the service field. These entangled emotions are augmented by the
neoliberal arrangement of the South Korean welfare regime and the ambiguity in the
organizational identity of the Hana Centers as both state and non-state agencies.

While each Hana Center has to follow bureaucratic standards, the nationwide
operations of the semi-state agency also give each Center room to emphasize their own
ethics and cultural values. Thus, even though the state tries to actualize the “total care” of
North Koreans through the operational standards of individualization and practicality of
Hana Centers, the local Centers’ operations show inconsistent, contradictory and value-
laden services. The two poles of the operational goals of the standardization and the individualization of services to enhance efficiency and competitiveness only appear to increase the documenting workload and the anxiety of each service provider as a responsible professional on the ground; this echoes what anthropologist David Graeber (2015) provocatively suggests with regard to the contradictory relationship between the neoliberal efficiency and the increase of bureaucracy.

This ethnographic research on the national refugee resettlement agency in South Korea contributes to the previous literature on bureaucracy, governmentality, state institution and caring services for refugees. It emphasizes that the multiple and yet unknown powers of affect operated on the institutions in the neoliberal and post-Cold War South Korea, where they created particular landscapes of service delivery and reception. However, this research is also somewhat limited in a couple of aspects regarding the institutional engagement and North Koreans as a social minority and refugees: considering that the North Korean service area is comprised of diverse types of institutional support such as religious communities, political or grass-root NGOs, and local governments, this study is limited in that it does not capture the dynamics and interconnections among the diverse service providers in the service assemblages sufficiently. The intersectional approach in terms of examining positionalities and the relationships among service providers and recipients could have been applied even further. As Jasbir Puar (2011) asserted earlier, discussion of intersectionality and the analysis of affect and assemblage do not have to come into conflict. As this study focuses on the locations where affect-laden expressions and interactions emerge as a salient governing and simultaneously as a contradictory force from the bottom, it does not explicitly incorporate intersectionality of
identities into an analysis. However, intersectional analysis based on different positions in the service area could provide valuable questions to raise, if it is used in an open-ended way: questions related to this analysis could address matters of the self-identification of North Korean service recipients in relation to their engagement and participation in institutional activities; the dominance of woman service providers with considerations of care labor and the imaginaries of the state agency; the differences between the Seoul and the Wonju Centers in terms of formality in interactions and the self-identifications of workers. As these points of interest will benefit the research on North Koreans who are situated in these complex webs of institutional support, I hope my project contributes to future research on these matters.
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