The atomic bombing marked an end to World War II and triggered the evacuation of the Japanese from the Korean peninsula. In its wake came parallel occupations by the USSR and the US, under which North and South Korea dedicated themselves to rebuilding from postwar destruction. Science and technology had a central role to play as the means through which to meet economic goals and achieve military, political, and social ideals. In North Korea, the investment in science and technology revealed itself in young reader magazines, where scientific content made banal the exceptional power of nuclear energy and made the natural world knowable through formulas and data. At the same time, science and fiction took an interest in the relationships between the self and the collective, and between humans and nature, and re-configured these relationships in moral terms. This paper argues that scientific knowledge had to be framed by, and injected with, strong moral guidance to assure accurate and appropriate applications of the technical and scientific. Moral restructuring was the ground zero of social and economic reform, and the narrative form was recognized as the best way to shape the most elusive frontier of all: the fantasy of the young.

Keywords: science; youth; narrative; morality; North Korea