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# The Personality Profile of North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un

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“Nothing better defines Kim than how little we actually know about him. When asked, even the most respected outside experts on North Korea in the United States and in South Korea — not to mention inside the White House — invariably provide details that turn out to be traceable to Dennis Rodman or to a Japanese sushi chef named Kenji Fujimoto, who was employed by the ruling family from 1988 to 2001, and who now peddles trivial details about them.”

— Mark Bowden (“Understanding Kim Jong Un, the world’s most enigmatic and unpredictable dictator,” *Vanity Fair*, February 12, 2015).

## **THE PERSONALITY PROFILE OF NORTH KOREAN SUPREME LEADER KIM JONG-UN**

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## *Abstract*

### **The Personality Profile of North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un**

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This paper presents the results of an indirect assessment of the personality of Kim Jong-un, supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, conducted 2013–2018 from the conceptual perspective of personologist Theodore Millon.

Psychodiagnostically relevant data about Kim was collected from open-source media reports and synthesized into a personality profile using the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC), which yields 34 normal and maladaptive personality classifications congruent with *DSM-III-R*, *DSM-IV*, and *DSM-5*.

The personality profile yielded by the MIDC was analyzed in accordance with interpretive guidelines provided in the MIDC and Millon Index of Personality Styles manuals. Kim's primary personality patterns were found to be *Outgoing/gregarious* and *Dominant/controlling*, supplemented by secondary *Ambitious/confident*, *Dauntless/adventurous*, and *Accommodating/cooperative* features. Given his *Outgoing–Dominant* primary personality composite, Kim may be classified as a *high-dominance extravert*.

*Outgoing* individuals are dramatic attention-getters who thrive on being the center of social events, go out of their way to be popular with others, and are confident in their social skills; they may have an impulsive tendency and be prone to boredom. *Dominant* individuals enjoy the power to direct others and to evoke obedience and respect; they can be tough and unsentimental and often make effective leaders. *Ambitious* individuals are bold, competitive, and self-assured; they easily assume leadership roles, expect others to recognize their special qualities, and may act as though entitled. *Dauntless* individuals tend to flout tradition, conventional standards, and cultural mores, dislike following routine, and may act impulsively and recklessly; they are resistant to coercion and may exhibit a strong need for autonomy and self-determination. *Accommodating* individuals are notably cordial, cooperative, and amicable; they are willing to adapt their preferences to be compatible with those of others, to reconcile differences to achieve peaceable solutions, and to concede or compromise when necessary.

Kim Jong-un's major personality-based leadership strength is a distinctly outgoing tendency, supplemented by an accommodating inclination, a fitting descriptive label for which would be *congenial–cooperative*. Leaders possessing this personal quality can be expected to be jovial, socially gregarious, agreeable, accommodating, and obliging in their relationships with others; they are characteristically gracious, neighborly, and benevolent, preferring to avoid conflict and seek harmony with others. These attributes could serve North Korea well with respect to greater openness in the international arena.

## Introduction

This working paper reports the results of a psychodiagnostic case study of Kim Jong-un, supreme leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK; North Korea), conducted 2013–2018.

In a *World Politics* article titled “The Dictator and Totalitarianism,” Princeton Sovietologist Robert Tucker (1965) wrote that totalitarian regimes serve as conduits for dictatorial psychology because of the weak structural constraints their political machinery impose on the leader. Considering the DPRK counts among the most totalitarian of contemporary regimes, one would think it would be a simple matter to assess the personal psychology of its top leader, Kim Jong-un.

Not so. It has proven extraordinarily difficult to gather reliable information pertaining to Kim's personal psychology. The first obstacle is the secrecy surrounding the Kim dynasty, exacerbated by the state-sponsored cult of personality and deification of the Kim family. Second, and equally problematic, is the tendency of news reports and media commentary to conflate Kim's personal traits with regime behavior. Thus, characterizations of Kim as “erratic” or “unstable” at times turn out to be spurious attributions of regime behavior to the person of Kim Jong-un — and occasionally turn out to be either unfounded or grossly exaggerated versions of the truth. As Mark Boden wrote in *Vanity Fair*,

In the world press, Kim is a bloodthirsty madman and buffoon. ... He is said to have had his uncle, Jang Song Thaek, and the entire Jang family mowed down by heavy machine guns (or possibly exterminated with mortar rounds, rocket-propelled grenades, or flamethrowers), or to have had them fed live to ravenous dogs. He is reported to have a yen for bondage porn and to have ordered all young men in his country to adopt his peculiar hairstyle. It is said that he has had former girlfriends executed. (Bowden, 2015)

Our initial study (Chen, Kim, Skudlarek, & Immelman, 2013) of Kim Jong-un at the Unit for the Study of Personality in Politics, conducted a little more than one year after Kim assumed the mantle of supreme leader upon the death of his father, Kim Jong-il, on December 17, 2011, found him to be generally congenial and cooperative, with no indication of remarkable aggressive tendencies or an unstable personality.<sup>1</sup>

A follow-up study (Keaveny, Cromett, Stang, Jacobs, Fiedler, Arrington, Granger, McMahan, & Immelman, 2017) was conducted four years after the initial pilot study, by which time Kim had presumably consolidated his power. Amid increasingly bellicose rhetoric emanating from the regime and escalating military provocations on the part of North Korea, we specifically searched for evidence that could link the DPRK's costly signaling (Fearon, 1997) to Kim's personal attributes. However, Kim was found, at most, to have only a moderate predisposition to aggressive behavior.

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<sup>1</sup> See Figure A1 for a comparison of the current profile of Kim Jong-un with the initial 2013 personality profile.

The current research report, which combines data collected during the past year with data from the two previous studies (Chen et al., 2013; Keaveny et al., 2017), is conceptually informed by Theodore Millon's (1969, 1986a, 1986b, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2003; Millon & Davis, 2000; Millon & Everly, 1985) model of personality as adapted (Immelman, 1993, 1998, 2002, 2003, 2005) for the study of personality in politics.

*Personality*, as construed in the present study, may be concisely defined as “a complex pattern of deeply embedded psychological characteristics that are largely nonconscious and not easily altered, expressing themselves automatically in almost every facet of functioning. Intrinsic and pervasive, these traits emerge from a complicated matrix of biological dispositions and experiential learnings, and ultimately comprise the individual's distinctive pattern,” over time and across situations, of thinking, feeling, acting, and relating to others (Millon, 1996, p. 4).

Greenstein (1992) makes a compelling case for studying personality in politics: “Political institutions and processes operate through human agency. It would [therefore] be remarkable if they were *not* influenced by the properties that distinguish one individual from another” (p. 124).

That perspective provides the context for the current paper, which presents an analysis of the personality of Kim Jong-un.<sup>2</sup>

The methodology employed in this study involves the construction of a theoretically grounded personality profile derived from empirical analysis of biographical source materials (see Immelman, 2003, 2005, 2014).

A comprehensive review of Millon's personological model and its applicability to political personality has been provided elsewhere (e.g., Immelman, 1993, 2003, 2005). Briefly, Millon's model encompasses eight attribute domains: expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization (see Table 1).

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<sup>2</sup> The implications of the personality profile with respect to international relations, including threat assessment, deterrence, and prospects for diplomacy, will be addressed in a separate paper.

**Table 1**  
*Millon's Eight Attribute Domains*

| Attribute                | Description   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Expressive behavior      | The individual's characteristic behavior; how the individual typically appears to others; what the individual knowingly or unknowingly reveals about him- or herself; what the individual wishes others to think or to know about him or her.   |
| Interpersonal conduct    | How the individual typically interacts with others; the attitudes that underlie, prompt, and give shape to these actions; the methods by which the individual engages others to meet his or her needs; how the individual copes with social tensions and conflicts.   |
| Cognitive style          | How the individual focuses and allocates attention, encodes and processes information, organizes thoughts, makes attributions, and communicates reactions and ideas to others.  |
| Mood/temperament         | How the individual typically displays emotion; the predominant character of an individual's affect and the intensity and frequency with which he or she expresses it.   |
| Self-image               | The individual's perception of self-as-object or the manner in which the individual overtly describes him- or herself.  |
| Regulatory mechanisms    | The individual's characteristic mechanisms of self-protection, need gratification, and conflict resolution.   |
| Object representations   | The inner imprint left by the individual's significant early experiences with others; the structural residue of significant past experiences, composed of memories, attitudes, and affects that underlies the individual's perceptions of and reactions to ongoing events and serves as a substrate of dispositions for perceiving and reacting to life's ongoing events. |
| Morphologic organization | The overall architecture that serves as a framework for the individual's psychic interior; the structural strength, interior congruity, and functional efficacy of the personality system (i.e., ego strength).   |

*Note.* From *Disorders of Personality: DSM-IV and Beyond* (pp. 141–146) by T. Millon, 1996, New York: Wiley; *Toward a New Personology: An Evolutionary Model* (chapter 5) by T. Millon, 1990, New York: Wiley; and *Personality and Its Disorders: A Biosocial Learning Approach* (p. 32) by T. Millon and G. S. Everly, Jr., 1985, New York: Wiley. Copyright © 1996, © 1990, © 1985 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Adapted by permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and Theodore Millon.

## Method

### Materials

The materials consisted of biographical sources and the personality inventory employed to systematize and synthesize diagnostically relevant information collected from the literature on Kim Jong-un.

**Sources of data.** Diagnostic information pertaining to Kim was collected from a broad array of media reports that offered useful, diagnostically relevant psychobiographical information.

**Personality inventory.** The assessment instrument, the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; Immelman, 2015), was compiled and adapted from Millon's (1969, 1986b; 1990, 1996; Millon & Everly, 1985) prototypal features and diagnostic criteria for normal personality styles and their pathological variants. Information concerning the construction, administration, scoring, and interpretation of the MIDC is provided in the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria manual (Immelman, 2014).<sup>3</sup> The 12-scale (see Table 2) instrument taps the first five "noninferential" (Millon, 1990, p. 157) attribute domains previously listed in Table 1.

The 12 MIDC scales correspond to major personality patterns posited by Millon (1994, 1996), which are congruent with the syndromes described in the revised third edition, fourth edition, and fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III-R, DSM-IV, and DSM-5)* of the American Psychiatric Association (APA; 1987, 1994, 2013) and coordinated with the normal personality styles in which these disorders are rooted, as described by Millon and Everly (1985), Millon (1994), Oldham and Morris (1995), and Strack (1997). Scales 1 through 8 (comprising 10 scales and subscales) have three gradations (a, b, c) yielding 30 personality variants, whereas Scales 9 and 0 have two gradations (d, e) yielding four variants, for a total of 34 personality designations, or types. Table 2 displays the full taxonomy.

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<sup>3</sup> Inventory and manual available to qualified professionals upon request.

**Table 2**  
***Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Scales and Gradations***

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|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Scale 1A: | Dominant pattern<br>a. Asserting<br>b. Controlling<br>c. Aggressive (Sadistic; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)              |
| Scale 1B: | Dauntless pattern<br>a. Adventurous<br>b. Dissenting<br>c. Aggrandizing (Antisocial; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.7 / F60.2)         |
| Scale 2:  | Ambitious pattern<br>a. Confident<br>b. Self-serving<br>c. Exploitative (Narcissistic; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.81 / F60.81)     |
| Scale 3:  | Outgoing pattern<br>a. Congenial<br>b. Gregarious<br>c. Impulsive (Histrionic; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.50)                     |
| Scale 4:  | Accommodating pattern<br>a. Cooperative<br>b. Agreeable<br>c. Submissive (Dependent; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.6 / 60.7)          |
| Scale 5A: | Aggrieved pattern<br>a. Unpresuming<br>b. Self-denying<br>c. Self-defeating ( <i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)               |
| Scale 5B: | Contentious pattern<br>a. Resolute<br>b. Oppositional<br>c. Negativistic (Passive-aggressive; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , 301.84)   |
| Scale 6:  | Conscientious pattern<br>a. Respectful<br>b. Dutiful<br>c. Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.4 / F60.5) |
| Scale 7:  | Reticent pattern<br>a. Circumspect<br>b. Inhibited<br>c. Withdrawn (Avoidant; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.82 / F60.6)               |
| Scale 8:  | Retiring pattern<br>a. Reserved<br>b. Aloof<br>c. Solitary (Schizoid; <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.20 / F60.1)                       |
| Scale 9:  | Distrusting pattern<br>d. Suspicious<br>e. Paranoid ( <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.0 / F60.0)  |
| Scale 0:  | Erratic pattern<br>d. Unstable<br>e. Borderline ( <i>DSM-5</i> , 301.83 / F60.3)   |

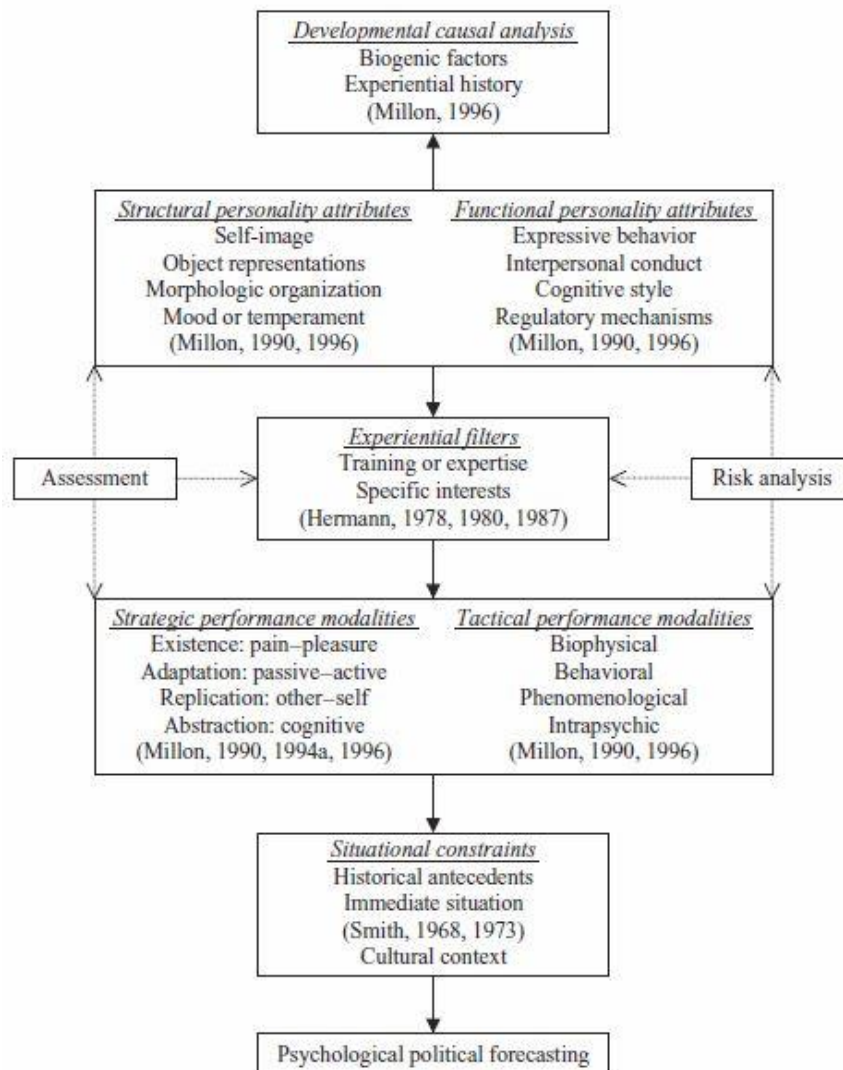
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*Note.* Equivalent *DSM* terminology and *DSM / ICD-10-CM* codes are specified in parentheses.



### Diagnostic Procedure

The diagnostic procedure, termed *psychodiagnostic meta-analysis*, can be conceptualized as a three-part process: first, an *analysis* phase (data collection) during which source materials are reviewed and analyzed to extract and code diagnostically relevant content; second, a *synthesis* phase (scoring and interpretation) during which the unifying framework provided by the MIDC prototypal features, keyed for attribute domain and personality pattern, is employed to classify the diagnostically relevant information extracted in phase 1; and finally, an *evaluation* phase (inference) during which theoretically grounded descriptions, explanations, inferences, and predictions are extrapolated from Millon’s theory of personality based on the personality profile constructed in phase 2 (see Immelman, 2003, 2005, 2014 for a more detailed account of the procedure). Figure 1 depicts Immelman’s (2003) generative conceptual model for assessing personality and predicting political performance.



**Figure 1. A generative conceptual model for assessing personality and predicting political performance.** From “Personality in Political Psychology,” by A. Immelman, 2003, in I. B. Weiner (Series Ed.), T. Millon & M. J. Lerner (Vol. Eds.), *Handbook of Psychology: Vol. 5, Personality and Social Psychology*, pp. 599–625. Copyright © 2003 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

## Results

The analysis of the data includes a summary of descriptive statistics yielded by the MIDC scoring procedure, the MIDC profile for Kim Jong-un, diagnostic classification of the subject, and the clinical interpretation of significant MIDC scale elevations derived from the diagnostic procedure.

Kim received 43 endorsements on the 170-item MIDC. Judging from endorsement-rate deviations from the mean (see Table 3), data on Kim's expressive behavior (11 endorsements) were most easily obtained and may be overrepresented in the data set, whereas data on his mood/temperament (7 endorsements) were most difficult to obtain and may be underrepresented in the data set.

Descriptive statistics for Kim's MIDC ratings are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
*MIDC Item Endorsement Rate by Attribute Domain for Kim Jong-un*

| Attribute domain      | Items |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Expressive behavior   | 11    |
| Interpersonal conduct | 8     |
| Cognitive style       | 9     |
| Mood/temperament      | 7     |
| Self-image            | 8     |
| Sum                   | 43    |
| Mean                  | 8.6   |
| Standard deviation    | 1.4   |

Kim's MIDC scale scores are reported in Table 4. The same data are presented graphically in the profile<sup>4</sup> displayed in Figure 2.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Figure A2 for a comparison of the personality profiles of Kim Jong-un and his predecessor, Kim Jong-il (Immelman, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> Solid horizontal lines on the profile form signify cut-off scores between adjacent scale gradations. For Scales 1–8, scores of 5 through 9 signify the *presence* (gradation *a*) of the personality pattern in question; scores of 10 through 23 indicate a *prominent* (gradation *b*) variant; and scores of 24 to 30 indicate an exaggerated, *mildly dysfunctional* (gradation *c*) variation of the pattern. For Scales 9 and 0, scores of 20 through 35 indicate a *moderately disturbed* syndrome and scores of 36 through 45 a *markedly disturbed* syndrome. See Table 2 for scale names.

**Table 4**  
*MIDC Scale Scores for Kim Jong-un*

| Scale | Personality pattern  | Raw | RT%   |
|-------|--|-----|-------|
| 1A    | Dominant: Asserting–Controlling–Aggressive (Sadistic)                | 18  | 30.5  |
| 1B    | Dauntless: Adventurous–Dissenting–Aggrandizing (Antisocial)          | 7   | 11.9  |
| 2     | Ambitious: Confident–Self-serving–Exploitative (Narcissistic)        | 8   | 13.6  |
| 3     | Outgoing: Congenial–Gregarious–Impulsive (Histrionic)                | 18  | 30.5  |
| 4     | Accommodating: Cooperative–Agreeable–Submissive (Dependent)          | 5   | 8.5   |
| 5A    | Aggrieved: Unpresuming–Self-denying–Self-defeating (Masochistic)     | 0   | 0.0   |
| 5B    | Contentious: Resolute–Oppositional–Negativistic (Passive-aggressive) | 2   | 3.4   |
| 6     | Conscientious: Respectful–Dutiful–Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive)  | 1   | 1.7   |
| 7     | Reticent: Circumspect–Inhibited–Withdrawn (Avoidant)                 | 0   | 0.0   |
| 8     | Retiring: Reserved–Aloof–Solitary (Schizoid)                         | 0   | 0.0   |
|       | Subtotal for basic personality scales                                | 59  | 100.0 |
| 9     | Distrusting: Suspicious–Paranoid (Paranoid)                          | 4   | 6.0   |
| 0     | Erratic: Unstable–Borderline (Borderline)                            | 4   | 6.0   |
|       | Full-scale total   | 67  | 111.9 |

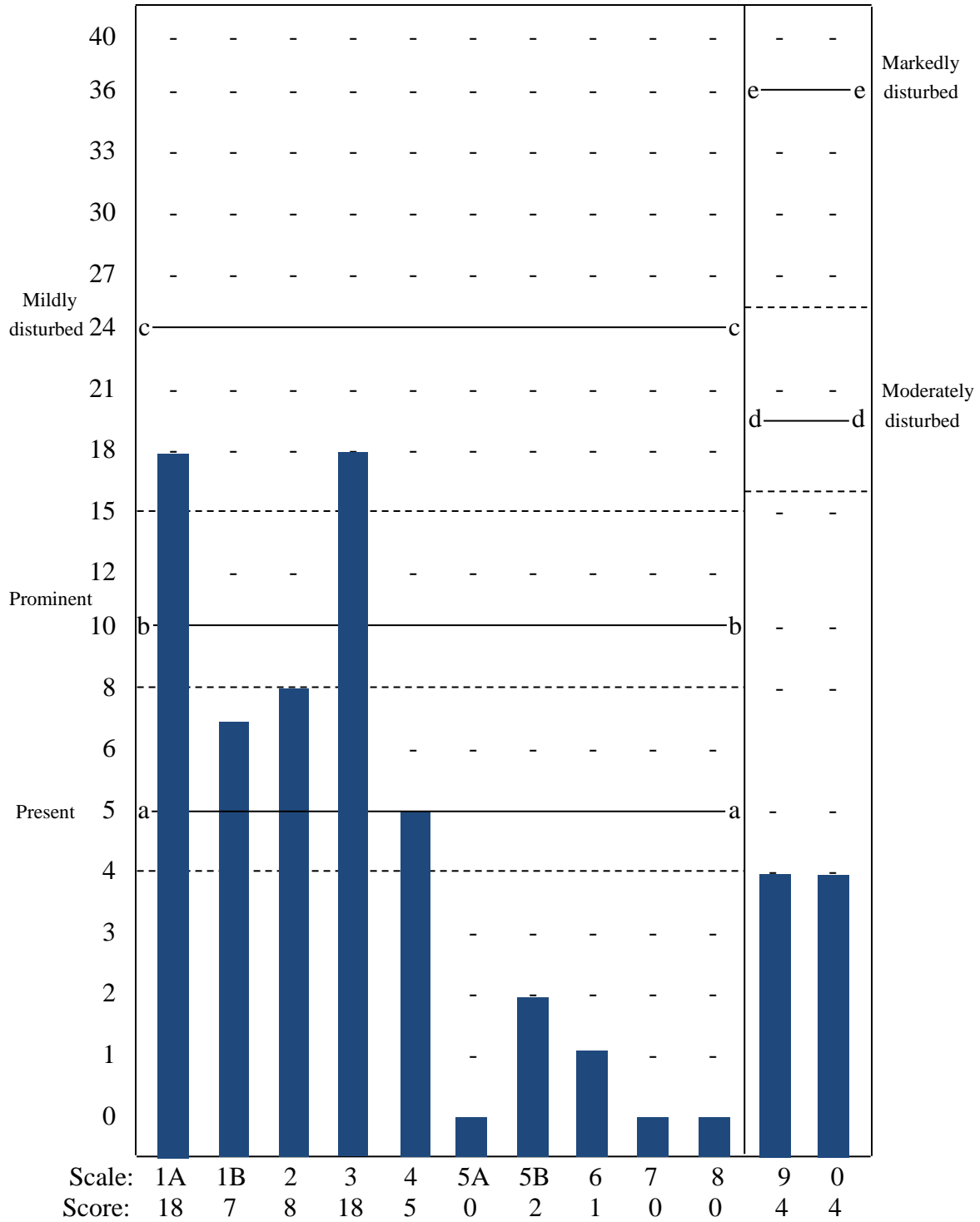
*Note.* For Scales 1–8, ratio-transformed (RT%) scores are the scores for each scale expressed as a percentage of the sum of raw scores for the ten basic scales only. For Scales 9 and 0, ratio-transformed scores are scores expressed as a percentage of the sum of raw scores for all twelve MIDC scales (therefore, full-scale RT% totals can exceed 100). Personality patterns are enumerated with scale gradations and equivalent *DSM* terminology (in parentheses).

Kim's primary scale elevations occur on Scale 3 (Outgoing) and Scale 1A (Dominant), both within the *prominent* (10–23) range, with identical scores of 18. The secondary Scale 2 (Ambitious) elevation of 8, Scale 1B (Dauntless) elevation of 7, and Scale 4 (Accommodating) elevation of 5 are all within the *present* (5–9) range. No other scale elevation is remarkable or of psychodiagnostic significance.

In terms of MIDC scale gradation (see Table 2 and Figure 2) criteria, complemented by clinical judgment, Kim was classified as an Outgoing/gregarious and Dominant/controlling composite personality, supplemented by secondary Ambitious/confident, Dauntless/adventurous, and Accommodating/cooperative features.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> In each case, the label preceding the slash signifies the categorical personality pattern, whereas the label following the slash indicates the specific scale gradation, or personality type, on the dimensional continuum; see Table 2.

**Figure 2. Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Profile for Kim Jong-un**



## Discussion

The discussion of the results examines Kim Jong-un's MIDC scale elevations from the perspective of Millon's (1994, 1996; Millon & Davis, 2000) model of personality, supplemented by the theoretically congruent portraits of Oldham and Morris (1995) and Strack (1997). The discussion concludes with a synthesis of the practical political implications of Kim's personality profile.

Few people exhibit personality patterns in "pure" or prototypical form; more often, individual personalities represent a blend of two or more primary orientations. With his moderately elevated scores on Scale 3 (Outgoing) and Scale 1A (Dominant), Kim emerged from the assessment as a blend of the *gregarious* and *controlling* types — prominent variants of, respectively, the Outgoing and Dominant patterns.<sup>7</sup>

The Millon Index of Personality Styles manual (Millon, 1994) describes Outgoing personalities as dramatic attention-getters who thrive on being the center of social events, go out of their way to be popular with others, have confidence in their social abilities, and become easily bored, especially when faced with repetitive and mundane tasks (pp. 31–32). Dominant personalities — labeled *Controlling* — enjoy the power to direct others and to evoke obedience and respect. They are tough, competitive, and unsentimental, and often make effective leaders (p. 34). Given his Outgoing–Dominant primary personality composite, Kim may be classified as a *high-dominance extravert*.

The interpretation of Kim's profile must also account for secondary elevations on Scale 2 (Ambitious), Scale 1B (Dauntless), and Scale 4 (Accommodating). The Millon Index of Personality Styles manual (Millon, 1994), employing the label *Asserting*, describes Ambitious personalities as bold, competitive, and self-assured individuals who easily assume leadership roles, expect others to recognize their special qualities, and often act as though entitled (p. 32). Dauntless personalities — which Millon labels *Dissenting* — tend to flout tradition, act in a notably autonomous fashion, dislike following routine, occasionally act impulsively and irresponsibly, and are inclined to elaborate on or shade the truth and skirt the law (p. 33). Accommodating personalities — labeled *Agreeing* — are notably cooperative, amicable, participatory, and compromising, conveying a self-respecting, congenial obligingness — a willingness to adapt their preferences to be compatible with those of others, to reconcile differences to achieve peaceable solutions, and to concede when necessary (p. 34).

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<sup>7</sup> *Note on clinical judgment vs. empirical observation:* Empirically, Kim Jong-un's score on Scale 1A (Dominant) is identical to his score on Scale 3 (Outgoing); however, on rational-intuitive grounds it is my opinion that Scale 3 should be accorded precedence when interpreting the personality profile within the broader political context. Specifically, totalitarian regimes serve as more of a conduit for the expression of dominant/aggressive personality traits than for outgoing traits, which raises the possibility that traits associated with dominance may be overrepresented in the universe of data in the public domain sampled for at-a-distance psychological assessment. Moreover, media reports sometimes conflate aggressive regime behavior with the personal psychology of the political actor, so it is conceivable that aggressive traits attributed to Kim Jong-un may be inflated in media reports.

### Scale 3: The Outgoing Pattern

The Outgoing pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive.<sup>8</sup> At the well-adjusted pole are warm, congenial personalities.<sup>9</sup> Slightly exaggerated Outgoing features occur in sociable, gregarious personalities.<sup>10</sup> In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, extraversion manifests itself in impulsive, self-centered, overdramatizing behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of histrionic personality disorder.<sup>11</sup>

Normal, adaptive variants of the Outgoing pattern (i.e., congenial and gregarious types) correspond to Strack's (1997) *sociable* style and Millon's (1994) *Outgoing* pattern. It overlaps with the *cooperative* segment of Leary's (1957) *cooperative–overconventional* continuum (which is, however, more congruent with the Accommodating pattern). Millon's Outgoing pattern is highly correlated with the five-factor model's *Extraversion* factor, moderately correlated with its *Conscientiousness* and *Openness to Experience* factors, has a moderate negative correlation with its *Neuroticism* factor, and is uncorrelated with its *Agreeableness* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82).

Chief executives with an elevated Outgoing scale, accompanied by prominent Dauntless (Scale 1B) and Ambitious (Scale 2) patterns and a low score on Scale 6 (Conscientious), may be susceptible to errors of judgment related to “neglect of the role demands of political office, low resistance to corrupting influences, and impulsiveness .... [as well as] favoring loyalty and friendship over competence-for-the-position in making appointments to high-level public office” (Immelman, 1993, p. 736). Kim fits this profile only marginally given the less-than-prominent elevation of Scale 1B (Dauntless) and Scale 2 (Ambitious).

Millon (1994) summarizes the Outgoing pattern as follows:

At the most extreme levels of the Outgoing pole are persons characterized by features similar to the DSM's histrionic personality. At less extreme levels, gregarious persons go out of their way to be popular with others, have confidence in their social abilities, feel they can readily influence and charm others, and possess a personal style that makes people like them. Most enjoy engaging in social activities. ... Talkative, lively, socially clever, they are often dramatic attention-getters who thrive on being the center of social events. Many become easily bored, especially when faced with repetitive and mundane tasks. ... [Prone to] intense and shifting moods, gregarious types are sometimes viewed as fickle and excitable. On the other hand, their enthusiasms often prove effective in energizing and motivating others. Inclined to be facile and enterprising, outgoing people may be highly skilled at manipulating others to meet their needs. (pp. 31–32)

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<sup>8</sup> Kim Jong-un's score of 18 on MIDC scale 3 (Outgoing) — a measure of extraversion — compares as follows with U.S. presidents studied by the author: Donald Trump, 24 (Immelman, 2016); George W. Bush, 16 (Immelman, 2002); Bill Clinton, 15 (Immelman, 1998); Barack Obama, 3 (Immelman, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> Relevant to Kim Jong-un.

<sup>10</sup> Relevant to Kim Jong-un.

<sup>11</sup> Not applicable to Kim Jong-un.

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the normal (*sociable*) prototype of the Outgoing pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

They are characterized by an outgoing, talkative, and extraverted style of behavior and tend to be lively, dramatic, and colorful. These people are typically viewed by others as spontaneous, clever, enthusiastic, and vigorous. ... Sociable individuals may also be seen as fickle in their attachments. They may have quickly shifting moods and emotions, and may come across as shallow and ungenue. These persons tend to prefer novelty and excitement, and are bored by ordinary or mundane activities. ... They often do well interacting with the public, may be skilled and adept at rallying or motivating others, and will usually put their best side forward even in difficult circumstances. (From Strack, 1997, p. 489, with minor modifications)

In politics, leadership ability may well be compromised in individuals who “become easily bored, especially when faced with repetitive and mundane tasks,” and who are prone to “intense and shifting moods.” Those limitations must, however, be weighed against the high degree of skill with which Outgoing leaders are able to engage their capacity for “energizing and motivating” the public.

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). Owing to the clinical emphasis of his model, Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Outgoing pattern, the impulsive pole of the congenial–gregarious–impulsive continuum. The “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 238–240) diagnostic features of the Outgoing pattern are summarized below, along with the diagnostic features of maladaptive variants of the pattern. Generally, one would expect the designated traits to be attenuated, less pronounced, and more adaptive in the case of well-functioning political leaders.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Outgoing individuals is *sociability*; they are typically friendly, engaging, lively, extraverted, and gregarious. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern are predisposed to *impulsiveness*, intolerant of inactivity and inclined to seek sensation or excitement to prevent boredom; such individuals may display a penchant for momentary excitements, fleeting adventures, and short-sighted hedonism. As leaders, Outgoing personalities may be somewhat lacking in “gravitas,” inclined to make spur-of-the-moment decisions without carefully considering alternatives, predisposed to reckless or imprudent behaviors, and prone to scandal. (Millon, 1996, pp. 366–367, 371; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Outgoing individuals is *demonstrativeness*; they are amiable and display their feelings openly. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to be *attention seeking*, being attentive to popular appeal and actively soliciting praise and approval. In a political leadership role, Outgoing personalities display a substantial need for validation, one manifestation of which may be an overreliance on public opinion as an instrument of policy direction and formulation. (Millon, 1996, pp. 367–368, 371; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Outgoing individuals is *unreflectiveness*; they avoid introspective thought and focus on practical, concrete matters. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to be *superficial*, which is sometimes associated with flightiness in reasoning or thinking. They are not paragons of deep thinking or self-reflection and tend to speak and write in impressionistic generalities; though talkative, they tend to avoid earnest or complex matters and their words may lack detail and substance. In politics, more extreme variants of the Outgoing pattern may be associated with lapses of judgment and flawed decision making. (Millon, 1996, pp. 368–369, 371; Millon & Davis, 2000, p. 236)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the temperamental disposition and prevailing mood of Outgoing individuals is emotional *expressiveness*; they are animated, uninhibited, and affectively responsive. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern are quite *changeable*, with occasional displays of short-lived and superficial moods. Leaders with an Outgoing personality pattern are skilled at staying in touch with public sentiments, but may be mercurial, volatile, or heedless, prone to periodic emotional outbursts, and easily angered or bored. (Millon, 1996, pp. 370–371)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-image of Outgoing individuals is their view of themselves as being socially desirable, well liked, and *charming*. More exaggerated variants of the Outgoing pattern tend to perceive themselves as stimulating, popular, and *gregarious*. Given their appealing self-image, these personalities are confident in their social abilities. In politics, Outgoing personalities, more than any other character types, are strongly attracted to the self-validation offered by adulating crowds. (Millon, 1996, pp. 369, 371; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 33)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic feature of the regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of Outgoing individuals is *self-distraction*; their preferred stress-management strategy is to engage in relatively mindless activities — for example, games, physical diversions, or other forms of amusement or recreation. Although healthy self-distraction is generally adaptive in coping with the stress of high-level public office, some of its political implications may be troubling — including a leader’s failure to face up to unpleasant or dissonant thoughts, feelings, and actions, which may be compounded by cosmetic image-making as revealed in a succession of socially attractive but changing facades. (Millon, 1996, p. 370)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of Outgoing individuals is their *shallow* nature. Outgoing personalities characteristically seek stimulation, attention, and excitement, presumably to fill an inner void. In politics, Outgoing leaders thrive on the thrill of political life and the international spotlight, and in office may not be averse to instigating a crisis for instrumental purposes. Thus, although generally conflict averse, they may engage in brinkmanship to force a desired outcome and secure a legacy — especially if narcissistic tendencies feature prominently in their personality profile. (Millon, 1996, p. 369)



**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphologic organization of Outgoing individuals is *exteroceptiveness*; they tend to focus on external matters and the here-and-now, being neither introspective nor dwelling excessively on the past, presumably to blot out awareness of a relatively insubstantial inner self. The personal political style of Outgoing leaders, hypothetically, may have a similar quality, with ad hoc strategies sometimes displacing the disciplined pursuit of carefully formulated policy objectives. (Millon, 1996, p. 370)

### Scale 1A: The Dominant Pattern

The Dominant pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive.<sup>12</sup> At the well-adjusted pole<sup>13</sup> are strong-willed, commanding, assertive personalities. Slightly exaggerated Dominant features<sup>14</sup> occur in forceful, intimidating, controlling personalities. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form,<sup>15</sup> the Dominant pattern displays itself in domineering, belligerent, aggressive behavior patterns that may be consistent with Millon's (1996, chapter 13) description of sadistic personality disorder.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dominant pattern (i.e., asserting and controlling types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Aggressive* style, Strack's (1997) *forceful* style, Millon's (1994) *Controlling* pattern, and the *managerial* segment of Leary's (1957) managerial–autocratic continuum. Millon's Controlling pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Conscientiousness* factor, has a more modest positive correlation with its *Extraversion* factor, is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* and *Neuroticism* factors, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). Thus, these individuals — though controlling and somewhat disagreeable — tend to be emotionally stable and conscientious. According to Millon (1994), Controlling (i.e., Dominant) individuals

enjoy the power to direct and intimidate others, and to evoke obedience and respect from them. They tend to be tough and unsentimental, as well as gain satisfaction in actions that dictate and manipulate the lives of others. Although many sublimate their power-oriented tendencies in publicly approved roles and vocations, these inclinations become evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. Despite these periodic negative expressions, controlling [Dominant] types typically make effective leaders, being talented in supervising and persuading others to work for the achievement of common goals. (p. 34)

Oldham and Morris (1995) supplement Millon's description with the following portrait of the normal (*Aggressive*) prototype of the Dominant pattern:

While others may aspire to leadership, Aggressive [Dominant] men and women move instinctively to the helm. They are born to assume command as surely as is the top dog in the pack. Theirs is a

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<sup>12</sup> Kim Jong-un's score of 18 on MIDC scale 1A (Dominant) — a measure of aggressiveness — compares as follows with U.S. presidents studied by the author: Donald Trump, 17 (Immelman, 2016); George W. Bush, 11 (Immelman, 2002); Barack Obama, 7 (Immelman, 2010); Bill Clinton, 7 (Immelman, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Relevant to Kim Jong-un.

<sup>14</sup> Relevant to Kim Jong-un.

<sup>15</sup> Not applicable to Kim Jong-un.

strong, forceful personality style, more inherently powerful than any of the others. They can undertake huge responsibilities without fear of failure. They wield power with ease. They never back away from a fight. They compete with the supreme confidence of champions. ... When put to the service of the greater good, the Aggressive [Dominant] personality style can inspire a man or woman to great leadership, especially in times of crisis. (p. 345)

Finally, Strack (1997) offers the following description of the normal (*forceful*) prototype of the Dominant pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Like confident [Ambitious] persons, forceful [Dominant] individuals can be identified by an inclination to turn toward the self as the primary source of gratification. However, instead of the confident [Ambitious] personality's internalized sense of self-importance, forceful [Dominant] people seem driven to prove their worthiness. They are characterized by an assertive, dominant, and tough-minded personal style. They tend to be strong-willed, ambitious, competitive, and self-determined. Feeling that the world is a harsh place where exploitiveness is needed to assure success, forceful [Dominant] individuals are frequently gruff and insensitive in dealing with others. In contrast to their preferred, outwardly powerful appearance, these individuals may feel inwardly insecure and be afraid of letting down their guard. In work settings, these personalities are often driven to excel. They work hard to achieve their goals, are competitive, and do well where they can take control or work independently. In supervisory or leadership positions, these persons usually take charge and see to it that a job gets done. (From Strack, 1997, p. 490, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Dominant pattern, the aggressive pole of the asserting–controlling–aggressive continuum. The diagnostic features of the Dominant pattern with respect to each of Millon's eight attribute domains are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 514–515) descriptions of the more adaptive variants of this pattern. Nonetheless, some of the designated traits may be less pronounced and more adaptive in the case of individuals for whom this pattern is less elevated.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Dominant individuals is *assertiveness*; they are tough, strong-willed, outspoken, competitive, and unsentimental. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *forceful*; they are controlling, contentious, and at times overbearing, their power-oriented tendencies being evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. When they feel strongly about something, these individuals can be quite blunt, brusque, and impatient, with sudden, abrupt outbursts of an unwarranted or precipitous nature. (Millon, 1996, pp. 483, 487)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Dominant individuals is their *commanding* presence; they are powerful, authoritative, directive, and persuasive. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *intimidating*; they tend to be abrasive, contentious, coercive, and combative, often dictate to others, and are willing and able to humiliate others to evoke compliance. Their strategy of

assertion and dominance has an important instrumental purpose in interpersonal relations, as most people are intimidated by hostility, sarcasm, criticism, and threats. Thus, these personalities are adept at having their way by browbeating others into respect and submission. (Millon, 1996, p. 484; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Dominant individuals is its *opinionated* nature; they are outspoken, emphatic, and adamant, holding strong beliefs that they vigorously defend. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *dogmatic*; they are inflexible and closed-minded, lacking objectivity and clinging obstinately to preconceived ideas, beliefs, and values. All variants of this pattern are finely attuned to the subtle elements of human interaction, keenly aware of the moods and feelings of others, and skilled at using others' foibles and sensitivities to manipulate them for their own purposes. (Millon, 1996, pp. 484–485)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Dominant individuals is *irritability*; they have an excitable temper that they may at times find difficult to control. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *cold* and unfriendly; they are disinclined to experience and express tender feelings, and have a volatile temper that readily flares into contentious argument and physical belligerence. All variants of this pattern are prone to anger and to a greater or lesser extent deficient in the capacity to share warm or tender feelings, to experience genuine affection and love for another, or to empathize with the needs of others. (Millon, 1996, p. 486; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-image of Dominant individuals is that they view themselves as *assertive*; they perceive themselves as forthright, unsentimental, and bold. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern recognize their fundamentally *competitive* nature; they are strong-willed, energetic, and commanding, and may take pride in describing themselves as tough and realistically hardheaded. (Millon, 1996, p. 485; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic feature of the regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of highly Dominant individuals is *isolation*; they are able to detach themselves emotionally from the impact of their aggressive acts upon others. In some situations — politics being a case in point — these personalities may have learned that there are times when it is best to restrain and transmute their more aggressive thoughts and feelings. Thus, they may soften and redirect their hostility, typically by employing the mechanisms of *rationalization*, *sublimation*, and *projection*, all of which lend themselves in some fashion to finding plausible and socially acceptable excuses for less than admirable impulses and actions. On the longer term, socially sanctioned resolution (i.e., sublimation) of hostile urges is seen in the competitive occupations to which these aggressive personalities gravitate. (Millon, 1996, pp. 485–486)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of highly Dominant individuals is their *pernicious* nature. Characteristically, there is a marked paucity of tender and sentimental objects, and an underdevelopment of images that activate feelings of shame or guilt. (Millon, 1996, p. 485)

**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphologic organization of highly Dominant individuals is its *eruptiveness*; powerful energies are so forceful that they periodically overwhelm these personalities' otherwise adequate modulating controls, defense operations, and expressive channels, resulting in the harsh behavior commonly seen in these personalities. These personalities dread the thought of being vulnerable, of being deceived, and of being humiliated. Viewing people as basically ruthless, these personalities are driven to gain power over others, to dominate them and outmaneuver or outfox them at their own game. (Millon, 1996, p. 486)

## Scale 2: The Ambitious Pattern

The Ambitious pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive.<sup>16</sup> In the case of Kim Jong-un, only the normal variant — well-adjusted, confident, and socially poised — has any bearing on his overall personality functioning and executive performance.<sup>17</sup>

Normal, adaptive variants of the Ambitious pattern (i.e., confident and self-serving types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Self-Confident* style, Strack's (1997) *confident* style, and Millon's (1994) *Asserting* pattern. Millon's *Asserting* pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Extraversion* and *Conscientiousness* factors and negatively correlated with its *Neuroticism* factor (Millon, 1994, p. 82). It is associated with "social composure, or poise, self-possession, equanimity, and stability" (Millon, 1994, p. 32).

Millon (1994) summarizes the *Asserting* (i.e., *Ambitious*) pattern as follows:

An interpersonal boldness, stemming from a belief in themselves and their talents, characterize[s] those high on the ... *Asserting* [*Ambitious*] scale. Competitive, ambitious, and self-assured, they naturally assume positions of leadership, act in a decisive and unwavering manner, and expect others to recognize their special qualities and cater to them. Beyond being self-confident, those with an ... [*Ambitious*] profile often are audacious, clever, and persuasive, having sufficient charm to win others over to their own causes and purposes. Problematic in this regard may be their lack of social reciprocity and their sense of entitlement — their assumption that what they wish for is their due. On the other hand, their ambitions often succeed, and they typically prove to be effective leaders. (p. 32)

Strack (1997) provides the following description of the normal (*confident*) prototype of the *Ambitious* pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

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<sup>16</sup> Kim Jong-un's score of 8 on MIDC scale 2 (*Ambitious*) — a measure of narcissism — compares as follows with U.S. presidents studied by the author: Donald Trump, 24 (Immelman, 2016); Bill Clinton, 17 (Immelman, 1998); Barack Obama, 7 (Immelman, 2010); George W. Bush, 4 (Immelman, 2002).

<sup>17</sup> *Note on clinical judgment vs. empirical observation:* The deification of the Kim dynasty serves as a conduit for crystalizing narcissistic tendencies in the emerging leader and the expression of narcissistic personality patterns in political behavior. Thus, it is conceivable that the extent of Kim Jong-un's narcissism may be overestimated in empirical analysis derived from media reports.

Aloof, calm, and confident, these personalities tend to be egocentric and self-reliant. ... In the workplace, confident [Ambitious] persons like to take charge in an emphatic manner, often doing so in a way that instills confidence in others. Their self-assurance, wit, and charm often win them supervisory and leadership positions. (Adapted from Strack, 1997, pp. 489–490, with minor modifications)

### Scale 1B: The Dauntless Pattern

The Dauntless pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive.<sup>18</sup> At the well-adjusted pole are individualistic, daring, adventurous personalities.<sup>19</sup> Exaggerated Dauntless features occur in somewhat unconscientious, risk-taking, dissenting personalities.<sup>20</sup> In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Dauntless pattern displays itself in reckless, irresponsible, self-aggrandizing behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder.<sup>21</sup>

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dauntless pattern (i.e., adventurous and dissenting types) are congruent with Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Adventurous* style, Millon's (1994) *Dissenting* pattern, and the low pole of Simonton's (1988) *interpersonal* executive leadership style. Theoretically, the normal, adaptive variant of the Dauntless pattern incorporates facets of the five-factor model's *Extraversion* factor and the low pole of its *Agreeableness* factor; however, the Dissenting scale of the Millon Index of Personality Styles (Millon, 1994) is uncorrelated with the NEO Personality Inventory's (Costa & McCrae, 1985) *Extraversion* factor, though — as expected — this scale is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* factor. In addition, the Dissenting pattern is moderately correlated with the NEO Personality Inventory's *Neuroticism* factor, has a small negative correlation with its *Conscientiousness* factor, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). The Dauntless pattern, as conceptualized in the MIDC, is congruent with the low poles of Simonton's (1988) *deliberative* and *interpersonal* leadership styles and incorporates elements of his *neurotic* and *charismatic* styles.

According to Oldham and Morris (1995, pp. 227–228), the following eight traits and behaviors are reliable clues to the presence of an Adventurous style:

1. *Nonconformity*. Live by their own internal code of values; not strongly influenced by the norms of society.
2. *Challenge*. Routinely engage in high-risk activities.
3. *Mutual independence*. Not overly concerned about others; expect each individual to be responsible for him- or herself.

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<sup>18</sup> Kim Jong-un's score of 7 on MIDC scale 1B (Dauntless) — a measure of risk taking and sensation seeking — compares as follows with U.S. presidents studied by the author: Donald Trump, 9 (Immelman, 2016); George W. Bush, 5 (Immelman, 2002); Barack Obama, 3 (Immelman, 2010); Bill Clinton, not measured (Immelman, 1998).

<sup>19</sup> Relevant to Kim Jong-un.

<sup>20</sup> Marginally relevant to Kim Jong-un.

<sup>21</sup> Not applicable to Kim Jong-un.

4. *Persuasiveness*. “Silver-tongued” charmers talented in the art of social influence.
5. *Wanderlust*. Like to keep moving; live by their talents, skills, ingenuity, and wits.
6. *Wild oats*. History of childhood and adolescent mischief and hell-raising.
7. *True grit*. Courageous, physically bold, and tough.
8. *No regrets*. Live in the present; little guilt about the past or anxiety about the future.

Oldham and Morris (1995) provide the following description of the *Adventurous* style:

[People] with this personality style venture where most mortals fear to tread. ... They live on the edge, challenging boundaries and restrictions, pitting themselves for better or for worse in a thrilling game against their own mortality. No risk, no reward, they say. Indeed, for people with the Adventurous personality style, the risk is the reward. (p. 227)

Ultimately, adventurous types “are fundamentally out for themselves” (Oldham & Morris, 1995, p. 228); they “do not need others to fuel their self-esteem or to provide purpose to their lives, and they don’t make sacrifices for other people, at least not easily” (p. 229). Furthermore, they believe in themselves and do not require anyone’s approval; they have “a definite sense of what is right or wrong for them, and if something is important to them, they’ll do it no matter what anyone thinks” (p. 229). Despite their self-orientation, adventurous people are capable of advancing a cause incidentally in the service of their personal desires or ambition; but, fundamentally, what matters is the momentary excitement, emotional vitality, or sense of aliveness that they experience, not love of person, country, or cause (p. 229).

Technically, Oldham and Morris’s Adventurous style appears to be a more adaptive variant of Millon’s “risk-taking psychopath,” a composite of his aggrandizing (antisocial) and gregarious (histrionic) personality patterns (see Millon, 1996, p. 452; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164; Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 111–112).

Millon (1994), who uses the term *Dissenting* as a label for the normal, adaptive variant of the aggrandizing, antisocial pattern, asserts that these individuals tend to “flout tradition,” “act in a notably autonomous fashion,” “are not social-minded,” and “are not inclined to adhere to conventional standards, cultural mores, and organizational regulations” (p. 32). They are

unconventional persons who seek to do things their own way and are willing to take the consequences for doing so. They act as they see fit regardless of how others judge them. Inclined at times to elaborate on or shade the truth, as well as ride close to the edge of the law, they are not conscientious — that is, they do not assume customary responsibilities. Rather, they frequently assert that too many rules stand in the way of people who wish to be free and inventive, and that they prefer to think and act in an independent and often creative way. Many believe that persons in authority are too hard on people who don’t conform. Dissenters dislike following the same routine day after day and, at times, act impulsively and irresponsibly. They will do what they want or believe to be best without much concern for the effects of their actions on others. Being skeptical about the motives of most people, and refusing to be fettered or coerced, they exhibit a strong need for autonomy and self-determination. (p. 33)

Although the Adventurous (Oldham & Morris, 1995) and Dissenting (Millon, 1994) personality styles are adaptive variants of antisocial personality disorder, it should be noted that antisocial-spectrum personality patterns commonly become less pervasive, intrusive, and maladaptive by early middle age. According to *DSM-5*, “Antisocial personality disorder has a

chronic course but may become less evident or remit as the individual grows older, particularly by the fourth decade of life” (APA, 2013, p. 661).

Millon (1996), in examining the developmental background of these so-called “socially sublimated antisocials” (p. 462), asserts that their experiential history is often characterized by secondary status in the family. He writes:

It is not only in socially underprivileged families or underclass communities that we see the emergence of antisocial individuals. The key problem for all has been their failure to experience the feeling of being treated fairly and having been viewed as a person/child of value in the family context. Such situations occur in many middle- and upper-middle class families. (p. 462)

Finally, Millon and Davis (2000) specifically address the relevance of the Dauntless pattern to leadership — notably the intermediate range of the continuum, where normality shades into the more aggrandizing variant of this pattern. They suggest that within this range “we find persons [e.g., some very successful industrialists, entrepreneurs, and corporate executives] who have never come into conflict with the law, but only because they are very effective in covering their tracks”:

For many politicians, the deception of doublespeak is a talent necessary for survival. Skirting the edge of deceitfulness, they “spin” objective events by minimizing negatives and exaggerating positives. When cornered, they focus attention on mitigating circumstances and lie by omission by failing to report the total circumstances and full motives of their actions. Moreover, they deliberately create public policy so complex that any particular aspect might be singled out to impress the special interest of the moment. (p. 107)

Millon’s personality patterns have well-established diagnostic indicators associated with each of the eight attribute domains of expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization. The diagnostic features of the Dauntless pattern with respect to each of these attribute domains are summarized below. Because of the clinical emphasis of his model, Millon’s (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Dauntless pattern, the aggrandizing pole of the adventurous–dissenting–aggrandizing continuum. The “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 107–109) diagnostic features of the Dauntless pattern are summarized below; nonetheless, some of the designated traits may be attenuated or less pronounced (i.e., more adaptive) in the case of well-functioning political leaders — especially in cases where dauntlessness constitutes a less elevated secondary or subsidiary pattern in the leader’s overall personality profile.

**Expressive behavior.** Dauntless personalities are typically adventurous, fearless, and daring, attracted to challenge and undeterred by personal risk. They do things their own way and are willing to accept the consequences for doing so. Not surprisingly, they often act hastily and spontaneously, failing to plan ahead or heed consequences, making spur-of-the-moment decisions without carefully considering alternatives. This penchant for shooting from the hip can signify boldness and the courage of one’s convictions as easily as it may constitute shortsighted imprudence and poor judgment. (Millon, 1996, pp. 444–445, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Interpersonal conduct.** Dauntless personalities are rugged individualists, not compromisers or conciliators. They take clear stands on the issues that matter, backed up by the self-confidence and personal skills and talents to prevail. Though generally jovial and convivial, they become confrontational and defiant when obstructed or crossed. (Millon, 1996, pp. 445–446, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Cognitive style.** Dauntless personalities are original, independent-minded, and unconventional. At their best, these personalities are enterprising, innovative, and creative. They are nonconformists first and foremost, disdainful — even contemptuous — of traditional ideals and values. Moreover, Dauntless personalities shirk orthodoxy and typically believe that too many rules stand in the way of freedom. In politics, these individuals may be described as “mavericks.” (Millon, 1996, pp. 446–447, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Mood/temperament.** Dauntless personalities are untroubled and easygoing, but quickly become irritable and aggressive when crossed. They are cool, calm, and collected under pressure, restless and disgruntled when restricted or confined. Tough-minded and unsentimental, they display their feelings openly and directly. (Millon, 1996, pp. 448–449, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Self-image.** Dauntless personalities are self-confident, with a corresponding view of themselves as self-sufficient and autonomous. They pride themselves on their independence, competence, strength, and their ability to prevail without social support, and they expect the same of others. (Millon, 1996, pp. 447, 449–450; Millon & Davis, 1998, p. 164)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** Dauntless personalities are unconstrained. They express their impulses directly, often in rash and precipitous fashion, and generally without regret or remorse. They rarely refashion their thoughts and actions to fit a socially desirable mold. (Millon, 1996, p. 448)

**Object representations.** Dauntless personalities are driven by restive impulses to discredit established cultural ideals and mores, yet are skilled in arrogating for themselves what material spoils they can garner from society. Though fundamentally driven by self-serving motives, they are capable of incidentally advancing social causes in the service of their own ambition. (Millon, 1996, p. 447)

**Morphologic organization.** The inner drives and impulses of Dauntless personalities are unruly, recalcitrant, and rebellious, which gives rise to unfettered self-expression, a marked intolerance of delay or frustration, and low thresholds for emotional discharge, particularly those of a hostile nature. (Millon, 1996, p. 448)



#### Scale 4: The Accommodating Pattern

The Accommodating pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive.<sup>22</sup> In the case of Kim Jong-un, only the normal variant — associated with cooperative, conciliatory personalities — has any significance.<sup>23</sup>

The normal, adaptive variant of the Accommodating pattern corresponds to Strack's (1997) *cooperative* style and Millon's (1994) *Agreeing* pattern. The Accommodating pattern also overlaps with the *docile* and *cooperative* segments of Leary's (1957) *docile-dependent* and *cooperative-overconventional* interpersonal styles. Millon's *Agreeing* pattern is highly correlated with the five-factor model's *Agreeableness* factor. The Accommodating style is equivalent to Simonton's (1988) *interpersonal* executive leadership style.

According to Millon (1994) the Accommodating pattern (which he labels *Agreeing*)

is akin to the normal "cooperative" segment of Leary's [1957] cooperative-overconventional interpersonal style, representing an accommodating, participatory, compromising, and agreeing pattern of behavior. ... [The Accommodating pattern] corresponds ... to the Big-Five's Factor II, Agreeableness ... in conveying a self-respecting concordance with others; a congenial obligingness is voluntary rather than being coerced or being a product of self-derogation. Those who fit the congenial/Agreeing [Accommodating] pattern are notably cooperative and amicable. Disinclined to upset others, they are willing to adapt their preferences to be compatible with those of others. Trusting others to be kind and thoughtful, they are also willing to reconcile differences and to achieve peaceable solutions, as well as to be considerate and to concede when necessary. Cordiality and compromise characterize their interpersonal relationships. (p. 34)

Millon (1996) further notes that Accommodating personalities in the adaptive range of the pattern tend to demand little from others, are relatively uncritical, and are invariably gracious, even to those they may dislike (p. 335).

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the interpersonal style of the normal (*cooperative*) prototype of the Accommodating pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Cooperative [Accommodating] persons are often cooperative, reliable, considerate of others, and deferential. They may appear even-tempered, docile, obliging, or self-effacing. When faced with difficult or stressful situations, cooperative persons may seek others to provide authority, leadership, and direction. (Adapted from Strack, 1997, p. 489)

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<sup>22</sup> Kim Jong-un's score of 5 on MIDC scale 4 (Accommodating) — a measure of agreeableness — compares as follows with recent U.S. presidents: Barack Obama, 5 (Immelman, 2010); Bill Clinton, 5 (Immelman, 1998); George W. Bush, 4 (Immelman, 2002); Donald Trump, 0 (Immelman, 2016).

<sup>23</sup> The most important implication of the secondary elevation of Scale 4 (Accommodating) in Kim Jong-un's overall personality configuration is that Scale 4 is theoretically the polar opposite of his primary Scale 1A (Dominant) elevation and may thus offset the magnitude of his dominant/aggressive personality tendency.

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). The diagnostic features of the Accommodating pattern with respect to each of these attribute domains are summarized below. Because of the clinical emphasis of his model, Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Accommodating pattern, the submissive pole of the cooperative–agreeable–submissive continuum. The “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 208–210) diagnostic features of the Accommodating pattern are summarized below; nonetheless, some of the designated traits may be attenuated, less pronounced, and more adaptive in the case of well-functioning political leaders — especially in cases where agreeableness constitutes a less elevated secondary or subsidiary pattern in the leader's overall personality profile.

**Expressive behavior.** The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Accommodating individuals is *avoidance of self-assertion*; they tend to be overly cooperative and acquiescent, preferring to yield and placate rather than assert themselves. They are characteristically generous and thoughtful, impressing others with the gentility of their behavior and their humility, cordiality, and graciousness. (Millon, 1996, pp. 331–332)

**Interpersonal conduct.** The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Accommodating individuals is *submissiveness*; to achieve their goals, they tend to ask for little other than acceptance and support, avoiding expressions of power. (Millon, 1996, p. 332)

**Cognitive style.** The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Accommodating individuals is a certain *naïveté*, or *artlessness*; they tend to be unperceptive and uncritical, inclined to look on the bright side of things and smoothing over difficulties or downplaying troubling events. (Millon, 1996, p. 332)

**Mood/temperament.** The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Accommodating individuals is a prevailing *mild-mannered* mood and generally *pacifist* temperament; they avoid tension and interpersonal conflict. (Millon, 1996, p. 334)

**Self-image.** The core diagnostic feature of the self-perception of Accommodating individuals is *cooperativeness*; they view themselves as considerate, thoughtful, and modest in their aspirations. (Millon, 1996, p. 333)

**Regulatory mechanisms.** The core diagnostic feature of the unconscious regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of more extreme variants of the Accommodating pattern is *introjection*; as a defense against anxieties stemming from deep-seated fears of powerlessness, these individuals tend to internalize the beliefs and values of a more powerful and supporting figure. Another common regulatory mechanism is *denial*; these individuals tend to cover up and smooth over troublesome events. (Millon, 1996, p. 333)

**Object representations.** The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of more extreme variants of the Accommodating pattern is a *lack of*

*sophistication*; these individuals are artless, guileless, and sincere in the trust they place in others. They possess an ingrained capacity for expressing tenderness and consideration and have a preference for forming attachments to strong, competent, sympathetic figures (Millon, 1996, p. 333).

**Morphologic organization.** The core diagnostic feature of the morphological organization of more extreme variants of the Accommodating pattern is its rudimentary, relatively *undeveloped* nature; because of the degree to which these individuals have entrusted their fate to others, excessively Accommodating personalities have had little need to develop a diversity of coping strategies. Because of a strong need to escape social condemnation, highly Accommodating personalities are careful to restrain assertive impulses and to deny feelings that might provoke criticism and rejection. This, in part, accounts both for their social affability and good-naturedness and for their tendency to be self-deprecating without being overly harsh about their own shortcomings. (Millon, 1996, pp. 333–334)

### **Inferring Kim Jong-un’s Leadership Orientation**

With the caveat that the leadership models referenced in this section focus largely on the U.S. presidency, the present psychological assessment offers an empirically based framework for anticipating Kim Jong-un’s political leadership style in a chief executive role generally and his behavioral predispositions in responding to arising or unforeseen circumstances in particular.

#### **Renshon’s Character-Based Modalities of Political Performance**

There is utility in coordinating the present findings with alternative models of personality in politics. Stanley Renshon (1996), for example, developed a psychologically grounded theory of political performance, proposing “three distinct aspects” (p. 226) of political leadership shaped by character: *mobilization*, the ability to arouse, engage, and direct the public; *orchestration*, the organizational skill and ability to craft specific policies; and *consolidation*, implementing one’s policy proposals (pp. 227, 411).

Kim’s greatest leadership strength, by dint of his outgoing personality in concert with substantial dominance and ample self-confidence, is *mobilization*, which could be instrumental in rallying, energizing, and motivating his followers. In the sphere of *orchestration*, Kim’s deficit of personality traits related to conscientiousness (e.g., diminished capacity for sustained focus and insufficient attention to detail), along with an extravertive inclination to nondeliberative decision making and susceptibility to boredom, may serve as an impediment to executive performance; he is not what one would call a “policy wonk” — an attribute firmly embedded in his personality. Finally, Kim’s dominant personality attributes — though not his primary leadership strength — will aid Kim in *consolidating* his power and consummating his policy objectives.

#### **Barber’s Temperament-Based Model of Presidential Character**

James David Barber (1972/1992), focusing more narrowly on presidential temperament, developed a simple model of presidential character that has shown some utility in predicting

successful (active-positive) and failed (active-negative) leadership in the realm of the U.S. presidency. Kim seems most similar to Barber's active-positive character — epitomized in contemporary U.S. politics by Bill Clinton: energetic, optimistic, self-confident, and deriving pleasure from the exercise of power in pursuit of political objectives.

### **Simonton's Five-Factor Model of Presidential Styles**

Dean Keith Simonton (1988) proposed five empirically derived presidential styles (charismatic, interpersonal, deliberative, neurotic, and creative) that offer a promising frame of reference for establishing links between personality and political leadership, given the fidelity with which they mirror the currently popular five-factor model, whose correlates with Millon's personality patterns have been empirically established (Millon, 1994, p. 82).

From Simonton's perspective, Kim's primary MIDC elevations on the Outgoing and Dominant scales, in conjunction with his secondary elevation on the Ambitious scale, imply a "charismatic" leadership style, which conceptually corresponds to the "Big Five" Extraversion factor. Framed in the context of American politics, Simonton (1988) describes the charismatic leader as follows:

[T]ypically "finds dealing with the press challenging and enjoyable" ... [Outgoing], ... "consciously refines his own public image" ... [Outgoing, Ambitious], "has a flair for the dramatic" ... [Outgoing], "conveys [a] clear-cut, highly visible personality" ... [Outgoing], is a "skilled and self-confident negotiator" ... [Dominant, Ambitious], "uses rhetoric effectively" ... [Ambitious, Dominant], is a "dynamo of energy and determination" ... [Outgoing, Ambitious, Dominant], ... "keeps in contact with the ... public and its moods" ... [Outgoing], "has [the] ability to maintain popularity" ... [Outgoing], [and] "exhibits artistry in manipulation" ... [Ambitious, Dominant]. (p. 931; associated Millonian patterns added)

In addition, the charismatic leader "rarely permits himself to be outflanked" [Dominant, Ambitious] and rarely "suffers health problems that tend to parallel difficult and critical periods in office" (pp. 930, 931; associated MIDC patterns added).

Kim's weak loadings on the Conscientious (Scale 6) pattern, along with his primary elevation on the Outgoing (Scale 4) pattern and his secondary elevation on the Dauntless (Scale 1B) pattern, suggest that he is *not* likely to display Simonton's "deliberative" leadership style, which conceptually corresponds to the "Big Five" Conscientiousness factor. According to Simonton (1988), the deliberative leader in American politics

commonly "understands [the] implications of his decisions; exhibits depth of comprehension" ..., is "able to visualize alternatives and weigh long term consequences" ..., "keeps himself thoroughly informed; reads briefings [and] background reports" ..., is "cautious, conservative in action" ..., and only infrequently "indulges in emotional outbursts." (p. 931)

As a *nondeliberative* leader, Kim would be inclined "to force decisions to be made prematurely," lose sight of his limitations, and place "political success over effective policy" (pp. 930, 931). Based on his personality profile (but cognizant of the pitfalls of applying a U.S.-derived model cross-culturally to North Korea), those qualities could plausibly hamper Kim's executive performance.

## Etheredge's Two-Dimensional Interpersonal Generalization Foreign Policy Theory

Lloyd Etheredge (1978) and Margaret Hermann (1987) developed personality-based models of foreign policy leadership orientation that can be employed rationally and intuitively to enhance and complement the predictive utility of Millon's model with respect to leadership performance in the arena of international relations.

Regarding foreign policy orientation, Kim's profile most closely resembles what Etheredge (1978), in his "four-fold speculative typology" of "fundamental personality-based differences in orientation towards America's preferred operating style and role in the international system" (p. 434), has called the "high-dominance extrovert." Etheredge contends that high-dominance extraverts (such as U.S. presidents Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon B. Johnson) share high-dominance introverts' tendency "to use military force"

[b]ut in general ... are more flexible and pragmatic, more varied in the wide range and scope of major foreign policy initiatives. ... [In contrast to high-dominance introverts, they] want to lead rather than contain. They advocate change, seek to stir up things globally ... [and] are relatively more interested in *inclusion* [compared with high-dominance introverts, who favor exclusion], initiating programs and institutions for worldwide leadership and cooperative advance on a wide range of issues. (p. 449).

## Hermann's Foreign Policy Role Orientation Model

Etheredge's high-dominance extravert is similar in character to the "active-independent" orientation to foreign affairs in Margaret Hermann's (1987) sixfold typology of foreign policy role orientations. Hermann's taxonomy pertains specifically to African leaders, which renders it particularly relevant to cross-cultural analysis. *Active-independent* leaders, though recognizing the importance of other nations, are self-reliant and prefer to participate in international affairs on their own terms and without engendering a dependent relationship with other countries (p. 168).

In terms of personal political style, they "[s]eek a variety of information before making a decision; examine carefully the possible consequences of alternatives under consideration for dealing with a problem; [and] cultivate relationships with a diverse group of nations" (Hermann, 1987, p. 169).

The foreign policy resulting from an active-independent orientation is generally "focused on economic and security issues." The behavior of these leaders is "usually positive in tone but involves little commitment" because they "shun commitments that limit maneuverability and ... independence" (Hermann, 1987, p. 169).

## Conclusion

In closing, Kim Jong-un's major personality-based leadership strength is a distinctly outgoing tendency, supplemented by an accommodating inclination, a fitting descriptive label for which would be *congenial-cooperative*. Leaders possessing this personal quality can be expected to be jovial, socially gregarious, agreeable, accommodating, and obliging in their relationships with others; they are characteristically gracious, neighborly, and benevolent, preferring to avoid conflict and seek harmony with others. These attributes could serve North Korea well with respect to greater openness in the international arena.

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### Appendix

**Figure A1. Comparative MIDC Profiles: 2013 and 2018 Studies of Kim Jong-un**

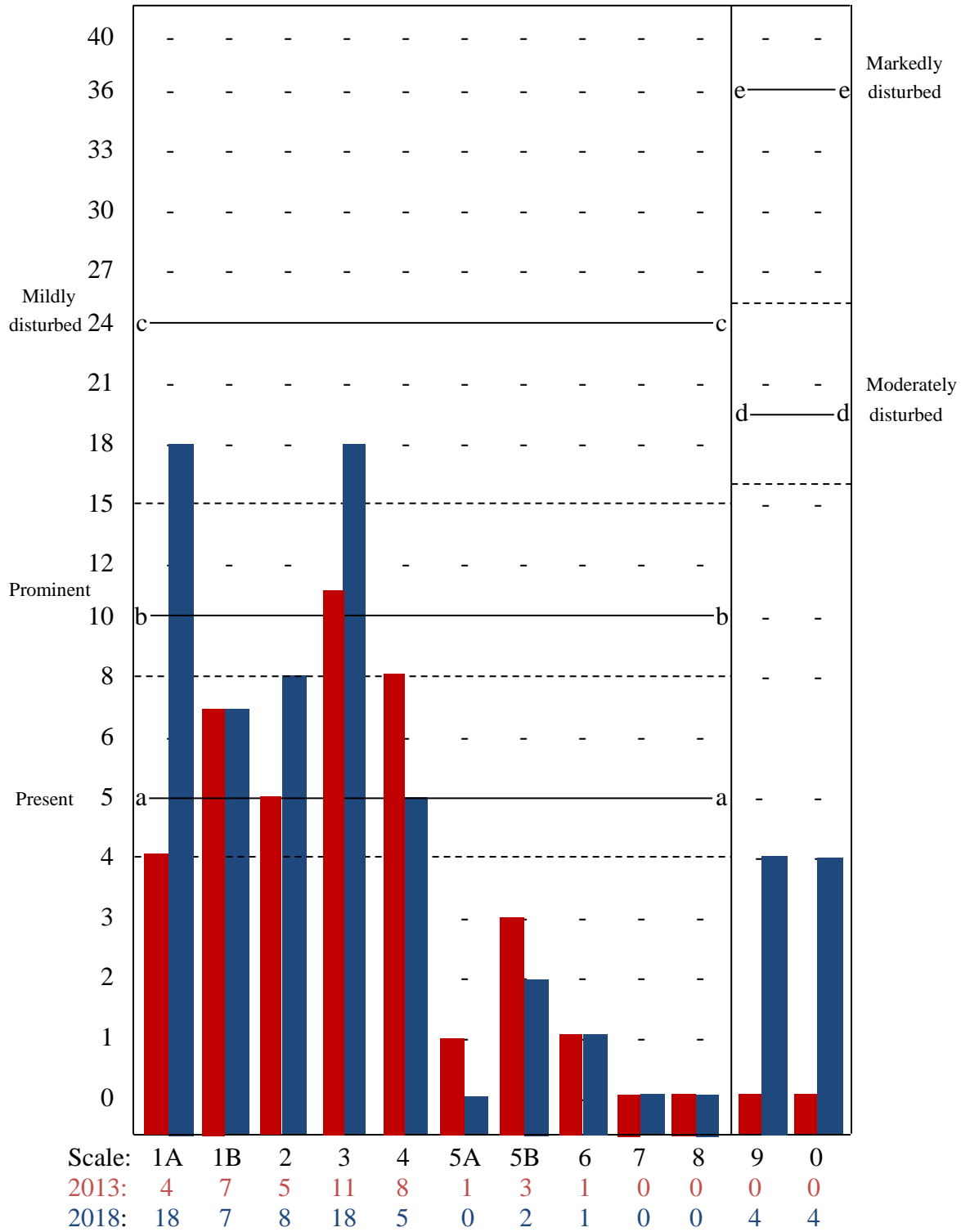


Figure A2. Comparative MIDC Profiles for Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un

