



Mass Dictatorship and Transnational History: “Exploring the Conceptual Basis for the Connection”¹⁾

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I. Post-dictatorial situation as the problematic

In this paper, I treat the mass dictatorship project as a transnational history of Twentieth-Century dictatorship. For almost ten years since 2002, the mass dictatorship project has involved more than 50 researchers per year, but ‘mass dictatorship’ is still not sufficiently known in global historical academia.²⁾ Contrarily, transnational history is often being mentioned around the globe as a new current,

- 1) 이 논문은 2012년 4월 11~14일에 한양대 비교역사문화연구소가 준최한 European Social Science History Conference(ESSHC)의 “Transnational Humanities: Possibilities and Prospects” 세션에서 발표된 글을 수정보완한 것이다.
- 2) The mass dictatorship project was inspired by a scholarly shift from the conception of ‘dictatorship from above’ to ‘dictatorship from below.’ It addresses the (self-) mobilization of ‘the mass’ in and for twentieth-century dictatorships: the pre-World War II dictatorship (for example, Fascism, Nazism, Stalinism and Japanese colonialism) and post-World War II dictatorial regimes as well, including communist and post-colonial versions of ‘development dictatorships in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Building a series of international conferences organized by the Research Institute of Comparative History and Culture (RICH) at Hanyang University in Korea between 2003 and 2008, the first volume of a series on mass dictatorship was published in the title of *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship: Global Perspectives*(Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). The others will be published in the titles of ‘*Mass Dictatorship and Modernity*, ‘*Everyday Life in Mass Dictatorship: Desire and Delusion*’ and ‘*Mass Dictatorship as the Ever-Present Pass*.’ In this paper, I focus on books and papers by Jie-Hyun Lim, series editor of them and director of RICH.

but does seem to have different mode. Different, even conflicting approaches have been making claims for 'the transnational' and competing with each other. To talk about the concept of mass dictatorship in connection with transnational history, therefore requires chasing two hares at once, those of unfamiliarity and ambiguity. Despite such difficulty, seeking to explore the conceptual relationship between them is a meaningful enterprise, because both are born out of efforts to liberate our imaginations bound to the nation-state paradigm. I want to introduce and examine the idea of mass dictatorship from a transnational perspective. On the other hand, in discussing mass dictatorship, I also try to suggest a post-colonial approach to transnational history.

The mass dictatorship research project is based on the memory war in democratized Korea over the past dictatorship.³⁾ Who the tentative winners of this unfinished war are is evidenced by the opening of a memorial hall for late dictator, Park Chung Hee on February 21 of this year. Although about 100 members of pro-democracy activists were gathered in front of the hall, built for as much as 70 billion Korean won (60 million US dollars), shouting "Memorial hall for what?" "Park's legacy is something that should vanish, not memorialized," their voices were utterly lacking in resonance. In various public opinion surveys on Korean presidents, Park has consistently been the top choice.⁴⁾ Park's eldest daughter, Park Geun-hye, was elected as the president of South Korea on 19 December 2012 with the approval of 51.6% of Korean voters, by assuming the title of her father's successor. She had been often criticized for being the "daughter of a dictator Park Chung Hee. But a national-level poll conducted

3) Jie-Hyun Lim, "Mass Dictatorship Thesis," in Jie-Hyun Lim and Yong-Woo Kim eds., *Mass Dictatorship II: Political Religion and Hegemony* (Korean) (Seoul: Chaiksesang, 2005), 613-615; Jie-Hyun Lim, "Series Introduction: Mapping Mass Dictatorship: Towards a Transnational History of Twentieth-Century Dictatorship," in *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship*, 1-2.

4) He took first place in a survey taken in 2009 as the president who has made the most contribution to Korean development with 75.5%, also in a 2010 survey as the most trustworthy president with 34.2% and again in 2011 as the favorite president of all time with 31.9%.

in July 2012 by a conservative newspaper reported that 59.2% of participants responded they did not believe Park was a “daughter of a dictator” while 35.5% agreed with the characterization.⁵⁾ The paradox of such strong nostalgia for dictatorship in a democratized society is not at all unique to Korea. It is a common phenomenon in countries with the experience of leftist or rightist dictatorships in the 20th century. Perplexing as this widespread nostalgia for dictatorship may be, it shows the limitations of emphasizing the brutality of dictatorship versus the resistance of the people.

The pro-democracy forces in Korea have claimed that the Park's regime was a system of pro-Japanese and anti-national dictatorship and ruined Korea's chances for autonomous modernization. If one takes this stance, Park's popularity is nothing more than ‘anachronistic nostalgia’ resulting from dissatisfaction with today's politics and economic troubles. But the Park era is remembered by most Koreans not as a deviation or aberration from modernity but rather as an inevitable stage in an underdeveloped country's advance to modernization, in other words, a process of ‘industrialization for democratization.’⁶⁾ The pro-democracy forces is being put on the defensive in the memory war over the Park era owes much to its overlooking the modern and national aspects of dictatorship. They, critical as may be of Park's dictatorship, can in fact reinforce the chauvinist mentalities in their aspirations for a proper strong

5) “안철수 지지기반 30, 40대서 지지율 뚝...왜?” Donga Ilbo article (Korean) 16, July 2012.

6) It is worth noting that the chief mobilizing mechanism under Park's dictatorship such as the Saemaueul (New Community) Movement is being celebrated as a means to modernization, reforming the minds of the masses and fostering a national consciousness. An article in a newspaper dealing with the 2010 earthquake catastrophe in Haiti is a good example of this kind of remembrance by the masses. Describing the catastrophe as a typical case of a third world country, it asks: “The core of the problem is how to awaken the people's consciousness buried for a long time in the habitual routine of poverty and help them regain hope.” The solution offered by the article is the Saemaueul Movement led by Park's regime during his dictatorship. “If the Saemaueul Movement was about reforming people's minds and giving them back their dreams, it might be exactly what these people need.” Chosun Ilbo (Korean), 13, April, 2010.

state. The awareness that there is no proper state for people and that wanting one is a problem in itself was nowhere to be found. The problem of coming to terms with the past regarding anti-North spies demonstrates this point well.⁷⁾ Such is the problematic situation created by the democratization of the law and system, in which the masses are ever more strongly incorporated into the nation and the state.

Mass dictatorship as a working hypothesis originated in these post-dictatorial situations as the problematic emerged after Korea's democratization. It is not about justifying dictatorship as an indispensable condition of modernization. It is an attempt to illuminate the violent nature and the mechanism behind modernization and nationalization endlessly reproducing the desire of the masses for dictatorship. The Idea of mass dictatorship centers on dictatorship as a 'normal exception' of a nation-state. It takes the 'exception' of dictatorships as a prism through which the 'normality' of the nation-state system is revealed as a product of violence and oppression. In other words, the mass dictatorship project is an attempt to

7) Between 1952 and 1972, under the North-South confrontation, Park's regime had soldiers and civilians infiltrate the North as spies, a fact which was unspoken then and for a long time to come. The existence of around 8,000 who died or became missing in action and countless others who were wounded in anti-North spy missions went unrecognized; some of them were even put to death after their cases were fabricated as anti-South spy incidents. The victims and their families were able to have their voices heard for the first time in 2004, 30 years after the fact. But the cultural politics of remembering was conducted from the perspective that they were scapegoats for the lack of a proper strong state. There was no fundamental criticism or reflection about the violence which mercilessly destroyed the lives of individuals in the name of the state and the nation. The victims of state violence were turned into 'Korean Rambos' - national heroes who had made a 'special sacrifice for the state' - and were compensated in the service of 'fostering the patriotic spirit.' They ended up becoming extreme rightists, infamously known for committing disturbance and physical violence against leftist political parties. This is only one of numerous instances of coming to terms with the past going in the direction of further reinforcing nationalism. Such is the problematic situation created by the democratization of the law and system, in which the masses are ever more strongly incorporated into the nation and the state.

grasp the workings of power by the nation-state, through getting to the bottom of the mechanisms of modern power and consent supporting the system of dictatorship. By dealing with these problems, it opens the door to think out the possibilities of a transnational history stimulating and developing critical imaginations regarding the nation-state system.⁸⁾

II. Mass-Dictatorship from within the Nation-State

A study of mass dictatorship does not lose sight of the persistent power of nation-states. Rather, it pays close attention to how the hegemonic order of nation-states is reinforced in 'the global age' through an 'antagonistic complicity of nationalisms' under which conflict exists hand in hand with mutual justification, as exemplified by territorial and historical disputes between Korea, China and Japan.⁹⁾ In spite of, or rather because of this, the idea of mass dictatorship questions the hermeneutic preeminence that nations are fixed and timeless. In place of taking the nation as the framework within which one can study things (literature, histories, and so forth), the nation itself becomes a problematic to be studied. In this respect, a study of mass dictatorship should be understood as belonging to postcolonial transnational history, which argues that it belongs to genealogies of anti-imperial and decolonizing thought by analyzing against the naturalized frame of the nation.¹⁰⁾ It sets

8) Jie-Hyun Lim, "Mass Dictatorship and the Politics of Memory," in *Mass Dictatorship II*, 586-587.

9) Jie Hyun Lim, "The Antagonistic Complicity of Nationalisms: On 'Nationalist Phenomenology' in East Asian History Textbooks" Steffi Richtered., *Contested Views of a Common Past: Revisions of history in Contemporary East Asia*(New York: Campus, 2008).

10) A postcolonial-transnational perspective "makes the case for 'transnationalism' as a strategy for identifying the ideological work of the nation by offering a series of provocations derived from our own work about what might be seen as the self-evidently 'national.'" Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J. T. Way, "Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis," *American Quarterly*, 60-3(September, 2008), 637. Also see Micol Seigel, "Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational turn," *Radical History Review*, 91 (Winter 2005), 63-65.

itself apart from transnational studies which take ‘transnational’ as a concept for explaining the new kinds of social relations and phenomena that have emerged since so-called ‘globalization.’¹¹⁾ Mass dictatorship as a transnational history reveals the modern power behind twentieth century dictatorships, seeing nations as imagined and constructed entities, or in the words of Joan Scott, a “primary way of signifying relationships of power.”¹²⁾

The idea of mass dictatorship starts from the simple thesis that modern dictatorship presupposes mass support, while pre-modern despotism does not need massive backing from below.¹³⁾ With the multitude (including workers) having entered the political scene, the modern state, whether democratic or dictatorial regime, could not ignore the voices of ordinary people and needed a social and political mechanism of mobilization. This mechanism encompassed forced as well as voluntary mobilization based on mass support and participation. Mass dictatorship was a historical appropriation of modern statecraft based on the principle of equality. Like other modern political systems, mass dictatorship legitimized itself through various legal, administrative, medical and cultural devices. Its sustainability depended on its ability to bring people to form an identity conforming to the subject model it had created and to involve them in the political ritual of legitimacy. It differed from other modern political systems in that it often adopted an extreme mode of ruling. Both fascism and Stalinism harbored an ambition to create a ‘new man’ through an anthropological revolution. Despite such extreme phenomena, mass dictatorship assumed the general characteristics of the nation-state system, transforming the chaotic crowd of ordinary people into a nation, a collective with a homogeneous identity and a unitary will.

11) For a brief criticism of Transnational Studies, see Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine and Frank Trentmann, *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism, C. 1880–1950* (Palgrave, 2007), 4–13.

12) Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 42.

13) Jie-Hyun Lim, ‘Mapping Mass Dictatorship’, in Jie-Hyun Lim and Yong-Woo Kim eds., *Mass Dictatorship I: Between Coercion and Consent* (Korean) Seoul: Chaiksesang, 2004, 26–36; “Series introduction,” 3.

Indicating the ways in which popular sovereignty and political religion function as 'the nationalization of the masses,' a study of mass dictatorship problematizes the liberal democracy that justified itself against the background of fascism and Stalinism.¹⁴⁾ The path

14) Jie-Hyun Lim, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship,' 37-51; "Mass Dictatorship Thesis," 607-51; "Series introduction," 11-14. The intellectual history of popular sovereignty provides a clue to understanding the link between mass dictatorship and the nation-state. Popular sovereignty transformed the multitude from passive subjects into active citizens and opened the way for modern participatory dictatorship. Sovereign dictatorship then emerged with the establishment of the modern nation-state, based on the legacy of general will and popular sovereignty from the French Enlightenment. Endowed with the legislative right to make constitutions, the people were, in principle, not subject to the existing constitutions. Since the people had the power to enact new laws in their own name, they were able to legalize any illegitimate action. This is what Carl Schmitt refers to as 'sovereign dictatorship,' the logic behind his claim that the Nazi regime was based on a mass awakening and solidarity of a nation, and should not be seen as illegal or dictatorial because it was only advocating the will and desire of the people. Through a logical chain of representation whereby the people represent the multitude, the nation represents the people and the state represents the nation, popular sovereignty is turned into sovereign dictatorship. The predestined conclusion of sovereign dictatorship is thus revealed to be twentieth century mass dictatorship.

Nevertheless, an ideological justification of popular sovereignty is much too abstract to regulate everyday life through bio-power. For popular sovereignty to have effect in reality, an anthropo-cultural re-enchantment is called for. The answer to this demand is 'political religion,' which confers a sacred status on earthly entities like nation, class, and race, and turns them into absolute principles of collective identity. By transforming realistic politics into political religion, nationalism plays a key role in re-enchanting the masses. The nationalist narrative of a collective life flowing from the immemorial past into an infinite future can turn the mortal life of the individual into the eternal life of the collective. Out of this narrative shift comes a subject which pledges allegiance in body and soul to the eternal glory of the homeland and the nation. But political religion is not something that is peculiar to mass dictatorship. Its origins can be traced back to the term 'civil religion,' coined by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Totalitarian political religion and democratic civil religion are two sides of the same coin of the nation-state's social and political engineering over the homogenous collectivity of the masses.

from one to the other does not seem to be very long, but it doesn't call for a justification of dictatorship by erasing difference from democracy. The key assertion here is that dictatorship is the darkest extreme of the nation-state, not a deviation or distortion from modernization. It can therefore be reasonably argued that liberating our political imagination from the nation-state is a prerequisite for changing the groundwork upon which mass nostalgia for dictatorship is being reproduced, and envisioning diverse possibilities for political life and community. It also offers a critical perspective on the transnational tendencies that have emerged as Eurocentric responses to globalization: namely, multiculturalism and the European Union. Even though they seem to pass 'through' or go 'beyond' the boundaries of states, their power relations are actually expanded and reinforced.¹⁵⁾

By focusing on the power relations that produce national subjects, the study of mass dictatorship never fails to illuminate the limitations of current tendencies, reproducing the nation-state paradigm under the rubric of 'the transnational.' But the question remains as to whether the comparative method in studies of mass dictatorship is not bound by similar limitations. The three volumes of the Mass Dictatorship Series in Korean, and one volume in English published so far are each made up of a series introduction and separate chapters analyzing different dictatorships according to nation-state units, such as the Mussolini regime, the Franco regime, the Stalinist regime and the Park regime. These volumes have problematized the nation at the level of individual research while suggesting the

15) Multiculturalism in the US, Canada, Australia and others that claim to recognize and advocate the cultural diversity of members of a state serves to induce national loyalty with the least amount of resistance and reinforce nationalism in the name of 'transnational.' The EU is not exempt from the charge that it is no more than an expansion of existing borders of nation-states into a civilizational divide between Europe and non-Europe. It has been pointed out that a transnational historiography aspiring to an 'integrated European history' contributes to the social discrimination and prejudice against Muslims within the area." Jie-Hyun Lim, "Transnational Humanities: What is not to be done?" keynote speech for the conference of Graduate Program in Transnational Humanities (September 25, 2009).

nation as a self-contained analytical unit for mutual comparison on a larger scale. Bringing attention to the similarities and differences between nations, comparative research participates in the construction of broader categories. MicolSeigel argues for treating comparative research not as a methodological model, but rather as a subject of transnational history, for it is important to explore how comparative studies contribute to producing the very notions, subjects, and experiences of national difference.¹⁶⁾

The second question, closely related to the first, is how to rethink the relationship between dictatorship and democracy outside of the modern/pre-modern or normal/abnormal binary. The concept of mass dictatorship is a useful tool for showing that they are two sides of the same coin, both being products of modernity and sharing much of the modern power devices such as popular sovereignty and political religion. But as pointed out by a critic, even if all nation-states possess the potential for sovereign dictatorship, there is still the question of when the moment is that it becomes realized. In other words, how to rethink and re-situate dictatorship and democracy within modernity remains to be further explored. Needless to say, one should be watchful of being pulled back into the nation-state paradigm by taking the nation as a self-contained unit. It is imperative that dictatorship and democracy be rethought in connection to relations, encounters and interactions across na-

16)MicolSeigel, "Beyond Compare,"65-58.For the tensions comparative history and transnational history, see Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and JürgenKocka eds., *Comparative and Transnational History: Central European Approaches and New Perspectives*(New York: Berghahn Books, 2009).

tions.¹⁷⁾

III. Mass Dictatorship, Through or Beyond the Nation-State

In attempting to answer these questions, a study of mass dictatorship turns to colonialism and imperialism for the connecting links between dictatorship and democracy. This approach is a hypothetical adaptation of the ‘boomerang thesis’ put forward by Hannah Arendt. She claims that racist theories, non-democratic political assumption (rule by decree and enforcement by bureaucracy), and violent practices like forced popular transfers and proto-genocidal massacres that were used to legitimize colonial rule had a wide-ranging influence on European political and intellectual cultures and provided the opportunity for totalitarian regimes to emerge in Europe.¹⁸⁾ Her claim offers the possibility for a new approach to Nazism and the Holocaust, away from a Euro-centric and asymmetrical framework of comparative research; the idea of a German *Sonderweg* (“special path”).

But there is an obstacle to appropriating Arendt’s boomerang thesis: why did Nazism and the Holocaust appear in Germany, where colonies had hardly existed, and while the two largest empires of Britain and France were able to maintain democratic institutions

17) For example, C. L. R. James provides a multifaceted account of the connections between nations, metropole and colony. This dynamic sense of interconnection between the slave revolt in Saint-Domingue and the French Revolution is integral to the structure of the book, with the fourth and fifth chapters respectively titled the ‘San Domingo Masses Begin’ and the ‘Paris Masses Complete.’ This disrupts an imaginative geography whereby political activity is situated in the nation as a self-contained analytical unit. James’s book offers important resources for rethinking about ‘relations across space’ that focus on the mutually constitutive nature of West-non-West interactions. C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and The San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989).

18) Richard H. King and Dan Stone eds., *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History: Imperialism, Nation, Race, and Genocide* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 2-10, Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland, 1958).

and political culture? An easy answer to this question would rely on positing a historical connectivity between German colonialism and the Holocaust, but the study of mass dictatorship refrains from such a linear continuum that reduces the Holocaust to pre-modern Germany's historical exception as a latecomer to the colonial situations. It argues that the historical links behind the Holocaust can be revealed by taking a close look at the modern mechanisms of ideologies and institutions behind incidents of genocide in European colonies.¹⁹⁾

The 'categorical murders' of European colonialism provided the epistemological and cultural ground for the Nazis to come up with the idea of genocide. That is to say, if the thought of annihilating an entire ethnic group based on a certain categorization, or if the act of putting that thought into practice had not previously taken place in the colonies, the Holocaust would not even have been imaginable. 'Categorization' is a concept borrowed from Zygmunt Bauman, who used it as a tool for explaining the Holocaust under the Nazi regime.²⁰⁾ A disregard for the individual diversity of adults, children, men and women and the belief that people can be reduced to components of abstract categories such as class, race and nation is a major characteristic of modernity. The study of mass dictatorship emphasizes that the modern thinking of categorization has functioned as the connecting link between colonial genocide and the Holocaust. Through a deliberate categorization, minorities were constructed as others in ethnicity, race or class and degraded to objects to be controlled by violence, even eliminated. Whatever formal differences there may be between massacres, genocide, and the Holocaust, they are all 'categorical murders' of others in their

19)Jie-Hyun Lim, "Modern Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy" in *Reading dictatorship on the verge of modernity* (Korean) Seoul: Green Bee, 2006, 46-62; "Series introduction," 3-11.

20)Jie-Hyun Lim, "From Banality of Evil to Rationality of Evil: An interview with Zygmunt Bauman." (Korean) *Contemporary Criticism*, 22 (Spring, 2003), 12-32, Sophia Marshman, "Bauman on Genocide - Modernity and Mass Murder: From Classification to Annihilation?" by Michael HviidJacobsen and PoulPoder eds., *The sociology of ZygmuntBauman : challenges and critique* (Ashgate, 2008), 75-94.

abstract state.

The study of mass dictatorship suggests that not only the Holocaust under Nazism but also democracy in Britain and France can be explained in connection by ruthless colonial violence. Britain and France categorized the colonial subordinate people as ‘others’ to establish their own national identities and committed categorical murders against them as well.²¹⁾ For black diaspora intellectuals, the links between European colonialism and fascism were all too obvious and brutal racist violence was not exclusive to fascism.²²⁾ In 1938, George Padmore called the British colonial regime in the West Indies “colonial fascism,” and C.L.R. James also said, “To the vast body of Africans in Africa such a distinction (between the Fascist and the democratic imperialism) is meaningless.”²³⁾ Britain tried to integrate its people by categorizing itself as a superior ruler, while identifying the colonized as inferior beings. National

21) Jie-Hyun Lim, “Modern Origins,” 57-62; “Series Introduction,” 6, Sangsoo Kim, “Little Prefects: The Embodiment of Masculinity in Interwar Britain,” in *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship*, 85-88.

22) African-American intellectuals also were aware of the link between colonialism and racism in the US. Recently, Malini Johar Schueller has argued that the symbiosis of imperialism and racism in the responses to hurricane Katrina points out that, “simultaneous with representations of African American degradation were scores of references to Katrina as similar to the third world; fighting in Iraq and battling in Katrina seemed eerily alike as Katrina was declared a ‘war zone’; most ominously, Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco pegged New Orleans as enemy territory, a city needing colonial occupation, when she said, ‘These troops are fresh back from Iraq, well trained, experienced, battle-tested and under my orders to restore order in the streets.’ In Blanco’s vision, citizens in need became irascible law-and-order problems, just like unruly denizens of a colony... Rather, they attest to a violent synergy of imperialism and racism as New Orleans, the colony within, is literally subdued by armies controlling the reaches of empire in occupied Iraq, a suggestion decisively made by Spike Lee when he posed before a ravaged New Orleans house tagged “Baghdad” during the shooting of *When the Levees Broke* (2006),” Malini Johar Schueller, *Locating Race: Global Sites of Post-Colonial Citizenship* (SUNY Press, 2009), 2.

23) George Padmore, “fascism in the Colonies,” *Controversy*, Vol. 2, No. 17, February 1938, C. L. R. James, *A History of Pan-African Revolt*, Washington D. C.: Drum and Spear Press, 1969, 99.

pride in being the ruler led British people to turn a blind eye to internal problems such as class conflict and gender inequality. It was through this type of imperialism that Britain was able to avoid developing into a system of dictatorship and maintain its liberal democratic institutes and political culture. Contrarily, the totalitarian regimes of Germany and Italy applied, in the words of Pascal Grosse, “colonialism without colony” to themselves and Europe.

While European colonialism took its civilizing mission outside of Europe, totalitarian regimes tried to accomplish it within Europe, against the non-nationals within their nations. This was interpreted as treating Europeans as Africans, leading to a strong resistance against, and later, banishing of totalitarian violence in Europe as non-European and pre-modern. Therefore AiméCésaire condemned Europeans as complicit in Nazism as, “they tolerated Nazism before it was inflicted on them: they have cultivated that Nazism...because, until then, it had only been applied to non-European peoples.”²⁴⁾ For Europeans, the real crime of fascism was the application to white people of colonial procedures, “which until then had been reserved exclusively for the Arabs of Algeria, the ‘coolies’ of India, and the ‘niggers’ of Africa.”

The study of mass dictatorship argues that the German *Sonderweg* thesis is a Euro-centric historiography, according to which liberal democracy is representative of modern universality, while Nazism and the Holocaust belong to the ‘particular’ and ‘abnormal’ nature of the German developmental process. Its point is that *Sonderweg* is a term used to justify the claim that Western modernity would never have led to such atrocities. But the perception of mass dictatorship as something abnormal and non-Western is as much a Euro-centric product as mass dictatorship is a product of European colonialism.²⁵⁾ Therefore, without a thorough examination of Western modernity itself, Europeans shedding tears over the Holocaust are likely to remain impassive to their countries’ colonial mas-

24) AiméCésaire, Joan Pinkham trans., *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), 36.

25) Jie-Hyun Lim, “Modern Origins,” 31-46; “Series Introduction,” 3-4.

sacres and incapable of discerning the contradictions of reality. A study of mass dictatorship focuses on the connecting links between the forgotten memories of European colonialism and mass dictatorship in order to break away from Euro-centric historical narratives and to fundamentally rethink the violence of Western modernity.

In Euro-centric historical narratives, nation-states are described as appearing in the West after the French Revolution, gradually expanding throughout the world and becoming a universal norm, while colonies are treated as external and secondary questions.²⁶⁾ Although Weberian historical sociologists pay attention to the emergence of nation-states out of international militaristic competitions, explaining the violent nature of the state, it is just as dismissive of the relationship between a metropole and colonies. Nevertheless, recent historical studies on colonies show that modern power devices corresponding to Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' were tested and developed within the colonies before being exported to the metropolitan states and greatly affected postcolonial state formation.²⁷⁾ Also, the new imperial histories indicate that the national identities of the metropole were constantly reconstructed through complex interactions with the colonies and suggest a need for the imperial history beyond the framework of national history.²⁸⁾ Rather than simply reversing Euro-centric historical narratives and

26) Gurminder K. Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 116-118.

27) Prakash, for example, argues that it was in the colonies that populations were explicitly constituted as subordinated subjects, whose health, resources, productivity and regularities were the objects of governance. Fingerprinting, for example, which has come to be used worldwide as the 'scientific' means of identifying an individual, was first utilized for this purpose in India by the colonial government in Bengal. Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason, Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 126.

28) Rochona Majumdar, *Writing Postcolonial History* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2010), 85-106, Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose eds., *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

asserting the centrality of the non-West/colonized, these recent currents shift the focus to imperial networks and interactions between the West and the non-West, suggesting that colonial issues should be treated not as external to modern Europe and nation-state formation, but as part of internal history.

In this context, the necessity arises for studies of mass dictatorship to analyze modern ideologies and the mobilization of mass dictatorship from the interaction between metropole and colonies. But there are a couple of questions to consider: first, how do we define the relationship between empire and the nation-state? This concerns not only the nature of the political regime, but also the unit of analysis. Is empire a different political system from the nation-state or merely an extension of it? Judging from its treatment of democracy and dictatorship, the study of mass dictatorship seems to hold the latter view.²⁹⁾ But when the power mechanisms of British Empire and the German nation-state are compared and discussed on the same level, colonies become an ambiguous space. Analyses of the imperial dimension assign to the colony the space of the categorical other – a position of utter exclusion – against which metropole constructs its national identity. Contrarily, in analyses of one national dimension, the colony represents a space of consent upon which the legacies of imperial nationalization wield power reaching

29)Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper have differentiated empire from nation-state. “Empires are large political units, expansionist or with a memory of power extended over politics, that maintain distinction and hierarchy as they incorporate new people. The nation-state in contrast, is based on the idea of a single people in a single territory constituting itself as unique political community. The nation-state proclaims the commonality of its people – even if the reality is more complicated – while the empire-states declare the non-equivalence of multiple populations. Both kinds of state are incorporative – they insist that people be ruled by their institutions – but the nation-state tends to homogenize those inside its borders and exclude those who do not belong, while the empire reaches outward and draws, usually coercively, peoples whose difference is made explicit under its rule. The concept of empire presumes that different peoples within the polity will be governed differently.”Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empire in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 8

as far as the postcolonial state. In this case, metropole and colonies lose their difference and are put into the same space. As such, the nature of colonial space is changed according the unit of analysis, calling for a more sophisticated theorization of political systems and analytical units.

This leads to the second question: While the theory of mass dictatorship advances sharp criticisms against Western modernity focusing on colonial violence, doesn't it leave the colonized/subaltern as a passive object helplessly exposed to the central forces? Indeed, the colonized/subaltern is assigned a space upon which Western modernity's internal violence is exerted, but not the historical agency to affect the formation of Western modernity. As long as the colonized/subaltern remains a passive object, the interaction between the West and the non-West is impossible, making the identity of the West/metropole seem fixed and constant, rather than fluid and unstable. It may be useful to pay attention to the recent problematization of the historical narrative of the trans-atlantics slave trade dedicated to describing the sacrifice of the Africans. The traditional discourse criticizing the trans-atlantics slave trade as a case of the West's non-humanitarian violence paradoxically turns Africa into a land of ignorance and no hope whatsoever. It fails to acknowledge that Africans themselves actually took part in the slave trade, and that those forcibly taken to the Americas survived through their hardships, all playing a role - positive or negative - in creating the modern world. It is with this awareness that attempts are being made to rethink 'the age of revolution' and political modernity through the history of the Haitian Revolution.³⁰⁾

But that the study of mass dictatorship has recently begun to incorporate "the history of everyday life (*Alltagsgeschichte*)" approach, developing the concept of 'everyday coloniality' is indicative of its

30) Sibylle Fischer, *Modernity Disavowed: Haiti and the Cultures of Slavery in the Age of Revolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Nick Nesbitt, *Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and the Radical Enlightenment* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2008); Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).

move toward overcoming its limitations and offering a new direction for research.

IV. Transnational Remembering of Mass Dictatorship

The politics of memory is an important battlefield that has become increasingly problematic in the post-dictatorship era. The study of mass dictatorship challenges the notion of historical sovereignty that reinforces the hegemony of nation-states, because it finds that the nationalization of memory is a major obstacle to truly coming to terms with mass dictatorship.³¹⁾ Asserting an a priori responsibility for crimes committed in the name of the nation even before one has been born the idea of 'collective guilt' assigns the category of nation to the ideas and actions of an individual. The collective guilt or innocence paradigm dominating the discourse over coming to terms with the past in Germany-Poland and Korea-Japan clearly indicates this problem.³²⁾

Since victims without perpetrators are unthinkable, hereditary victims can only exist by presupposing hereditary perpetrators. The 'hereditary victimhood' prevalent in Poland and Korea is based on the premise that the postwar generation of Germany and Japan are

31) Jie-Hyun Lim, "Between 'National Sovereignty' and 'Historical Sovereignty,'" Jie-Hyun Lim ed., *Frontiers or Borders?* (Korean) Seoul: Humanist, 2004, 19-34. Just as a state claims ownership over its territory, so a nation claims exclusive ownership and sovereignty over its past. In the same way that the world heritage sites designated by UNESCO are the properties of individual states, the pasts of humanity are imagined and distributed as legacies exclusively owned and managed by each nation. The ongoing territorial and historical disputes between Korea, China and Japan are a good example of claims of national sovereignty over the past.

32) Jie-Hyun Lim, "Victimhood Nationalism in Contested Memories: National Mourning and Global Accountability," Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad eds., *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 138-162.

hereditary perpetrators.³³⁾ And hidden underneath this premise is a consciousness of collective innocence as victims of Nazism and colonialism respectively. When one defines oneself as a hereditary victim, the possibility of critically reflecting upon one's position as a perpetrator is already ruled out. This is one reason why there are countless reports of Japanese atrocities during its colonial rule and massacres of innocent civilians by the US during the Korean War, while crimes committed against innocent civilians by Korean soldiers during the Vietnam War remain unspoken to this day. Hereditary victimhood leads to the idea that purging a handful of traitors is all that is needed to come to terms with the past, and severely obstructs our path to overcoming internalized value systems of colonialism and racism.

Collective memory built on hereditary victimhood creates the aspiration for a strong state and reinforces the hegemony of state power over civil society. Generally corresponding to Korea's experience with trying to come to terms with past anti-North spy incidents, a 2003 Korean college student opinion survey showed that while 90% of the students saw America's war on Iraq as an act of aggression, 72.2% agreed that sending Korean troops to Iraq was inevitable for the good of the country. The ethical contradiction of willing to take part in a war of aggression "for the benefit of the nation" was also evident in the mass media's hailing of Korean humanitarian relief acts in Haiti and the dispatch of Korean armed forces in 2010 as signaling the beginning of "global Korea." This attitude of taking the sufferings of others as a means to promote

33)Based on this line of logic, the postwar generations of Germany and Japan have been regarded as hereditary perpetrators and have been told to beg forgiveness for Nazism and colonial invasion of past generations. This is where collective guilt converges with the "logic" of genocide that people deserve to die because they belong to a certain nation, regardless of their personal actions or responsibilities. Paradoxically, by reinforcing the national identities of those nations blamed for past crimes, collective guilt provides a fertile ground for neo-Nazis or extreme rightists to emerge and gives other nations exemption from any historical role in those crimes. As long as the holocaust is the problem of Germany alone, the rest of the world can focus on keeping Germany under its surveillance without the burden of self-reflection.

national interests betrays a sub-imperialist desire.³⁴⁾

Behind this open display of imperialistic desire is the logic that Koreans are victims and therefore entitled to harbor such desire, as well as a sense of inferiority as a peripheral nation. It acknowledges the superiority of Western nations while aspiring to become their equal.³⁵⁾ But it should be noted that behind this sub-imperialist desire lies the existence of around 800 conscientious objectors currently imprisoned in Korea, largely stigmatized as "cowardly non-nationals" in the name of "the sacred duty of national defense". The problem of mass dictatorship, of an exclusive and violent national discourse dominating society, is not only of the past, but the present as well.

The study of mass dictatorship aims to create, in the words of Susan Buck-Moss, a "de-privatized, de-nationalized structure of collective memory."³⁶⁾ The logic of collective guilt/innocence is not adequate for dealing with atrocious and tragic pasts. A meaningful insight we can take away from the study of mass dictatorship is that under the given circumstances of modern civilization, we can all become perpetrators of 'categorical murder.' This is why it is dedicated to making a connection between colonial violence and the holocaust through the historical link of modern violence

34)Activities in Haiti where the state system is near total collapse will be a testing ground for the Korean armed forces to accumulate overseas dispatch experience and hone their capacity."최종철, "아이티파병, 중견 국한국의길,"Donga Ilbo article (Korean) 23, January 2010

35)The expression of this desire was plain to see in remarks by a prominent rightist figure, wholooking at the ruins of the Haiti disaster, recalled those days when, "we used to chase American army vehicles shouting 'give-me-chocolate'" and tearfully adding, "seeing the Republic of Haiti with its slack national character makes me very happy to have been born and to live in the Republic of Korea and I am ever so proud of our country." In this case, the relationship between Korea and Haiti is subsumed under that between the US and Korea, through which the Western gaze is applied upon oneself and the other. "폐허의아이티에 희망심는코리아,"SegyeIlbo article (Korean), 10, October 2010

36)Susan Buck-Morss, "The Gift of the Past," *Small Axe* 33(November 2010), 185.

and expanding mass dictatorship beyond the border of nation-state into an issue of Western modernity. Examining the (self) mobilization of the masses for dictatorship, along with the transnational remembering of it, provides a mirror for us to reflect upon our own actions and values. Historical agents as reflective selves can ward off the system's ambition to nationalize the masses. With renewed historical agency, the multitude can be transformed from subjects of a homogeneous identity into autonomous individuals with a rich spectrum of diversities, creating fissures in the political structures supporting mass dictatorship.³⁷⁾

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37) Jie-Hyun Lim, "Modern Origins," 62-64; "Series Introduction," 16-18.

<초록>

대중독재와 트랜스내셔널 역사학:
어떤 근거에서 대중독재는 트랜스내셔널한가?

하영준

연구 프로젝트로서 대중독재는 한국의 민주화 이후 출현한 박정희 체제에 대한 대중적 향수라고 하는 포스트-독재적 문제상황으로부터 기원한다. 이것은 독재를 근대화의 일탈 또는 왜곡이라는 이름하에 파문하거나, 독재를 근대화라는 미명 하에 정당화하려는 시도가 아니다. 독재에 대한 대중적 욕망을 끊임없는 재생산하는 권력기제로서, 근대화와 국민화 자체의 폭력적 성격을 밝히려는 시도이다. 대중독재론은 국민국가의 '정상적 예외(normal exception)'로서 20세기 독재를 자신의 연구대상으로 삼는다. 전근대적이고 비정상적이며 일탈적인 것으로 간주되는 독재라는 '예외'를 통하여 국민국가 체제라는 '정상'자체가 폭력과 억압의 산물임을 드러내려는 것이다. 독재 체제를 밑바닥에서 떠받치고 있는 근대적 권력과 동위의 기제들을 드러내려는 시도는 단순히 과거를 어떻게 기억해야 하는가의 문제가 아니다. 우리의 욕망을 배치하고 일상을 규율 하는 국민국가의 권력 기제를 어떻게 넘어설 것인가 하는 문제이기도 하다. 대중독재가 20세기 독재의 대중 동원에 대한 연구 프로젝트일 뿐만 아니라 국민국가 체제에 대한 비판적 상상력을 끊임없이 자극하고 계발하는 트랜스내셔널 역사학으로 나아가는 것은 지점이 여기에 있다. 그러나 이 둘의 관계는 여전히 모호하다. 이 논문은 이론적, 방법론적 차원에서 이 둘 사이에 관계를 시론적으로 탐구하면서, 대중독재론이 트랜스내셔널 역사적 상상력을 제공할 수 있는 가능성을 모색하고자 시도한다.

주제어: 대중독재, 트랜스내셔널 역사학, 국민국가, 신제국사, 인종주의,

<Abstract>

Mass Dictatorship and Transnational History:
Exploring Conceptual Fundament for the Connection

YoungJun Ha

Mass dictatorship as a working hypothesis originated in these post-dictatorial situations as the problematic emerged after Korea's democratization. It is not about justifying dictatorship as an indispensable condition of modernization. It is an attempt to illuminate the violent nature and the mechanism behind modernization and nationalization endlessly reproducing the desire of the masses for dictatorship. The Idea of mass dictatorship centers on dictatorship as a 'normal exception' of a nation-state. It takes the 'exception' of dictatorships as a prism through which the 'normality' of the nation-state system is revealed as a product of violence and oppression. In other words, the mass dictatorship project is an attempt to grasp the workings of power by the nation-state, through getting to the bottom of the mechanisms of modern power and consent supporting the system of dictatorship. By dealing with these problems, it opens the door to think out the possibilities of a transnational history stimulating and developing critical imaginations regarding the nation-state system. But the relationship between these two is not very clear. On what foundations, is Mass dictatorship transnational? What exactly does the appellation 'transnational' stand for in Mass dictatorship? This paper will scrutinize the links between Mass dictatorship and a transnational perspective for histories.

Keywords: Mass Dictatorship, Transnational History, Nation-State, New Imperial History, Racism