MASS DICTATORSHIP IN THE 20TH CENTURY

MASS DICTATORSHIP AND MODERNITY

Edited by Michael Kim, Michael Schoenhals and Yong-Woo Kim

Mass Dictatorship and Modernity

Mass Dictatorship in the Twentieth Century

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Mass Dictatorship and Modernity

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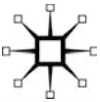

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Acknowledgements

This book, the second volume of a series on mass dictatorship, began with a conference called 'Mass Dictatorship and Modernity' that Jie-Hyun Lim hosted at Hanyang University, Korea, in June 2007. The Research Institute of Comparative History and Culture (RICH) at Hanyang University organised six consecutive 'mass dictatorship' conferences between 2003 and 2008 and co-sponsored a seventh conference in the series, 'Imagining Mass Dictatorship: The Individual and the Masses in Literature and Cinema', at Lund University, Sweden, in 2010. Other themes included 'coercion and consent', 'political religion and hegemony building', 'everyday lives between desire and delusion', 'gender politics', and 'coming to terms with the past'. The fifth conference addressed the issues of modernity and the public sphere. The mass dictatorship project was inspired by a scholarly shift from the conception of 'dictatorship from above' to 'dictatorship from below'. This project assembled a trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific scholarly constellation with the aim of a global study of dictatorship but without any claim to comprehensiveness.

Without the help of many friends, colleagues, and institutions this book would have remained only in the realm of ideas. The Korean Research Foundation (KRF) was the principal sponsor that financed the project and multiple international conferences. We express our special thanks to the programme managers and administrative staff of the Humanities and Social Sciences Section of the KRF. Hanyang University also contributed funding. Dr. Kim Chong Yang, the former president of Hanyang University, was highly supportive of the project. More than a hundred scholars from various corners of the world participated in the conferences, including most of the contributors to this volume. We are grateful particularly to Charles Armstrong, Stefan Berger, Paul Corner, Roger Griffin, Minoru Iwasaki, Konrad Jarausch, Kyu Hyun Kim, Claudia Koonz, Volodymyr Kravchenko, Marcin Kula, Peter Lambert, Alf Lüdtke, Robert Mallet, Hiroko Mizuno, Karen Petrone, Martin Sabrow, Naoki Sakai, Feliks Tych, and Michael Wildt for their multiple commitments. Unfortunately, there is not enough space here to list and acknowledge all of the wonderful colleagues who participated in the mass dictatorship project.

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Jie-Hyun Lim is Professor of Comparative History and founding director of the Research Institute of Comparative History and Culture at Hanyang University, in Seoul. He is the series editor of the Mass Dictatorship series and co-editor of two other volumes in the series, the previously published *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship* and the forthcoming volume *Mass Dictatorship as Ever Present Past*. Lim is the author of numerous books

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1

Introduction: Mass Dictatorship and the Radical Project for Modernity

Michael Kim and Michael Schoenhals

As a twentieth-century phenomenon, mass dictatorship developed its own modern socio-political engineering system, which sought to achieve the self-mobilisation of the masses for radical state projects. In this sense, it shares a similar mobilisation mechanism with its close cousin, mass democracy. Mass dictatorship requires the modern platform of the public sphere to spread its clarion call for the masses to overcome their collective crisis. Far from being a phenomenon that emerged from pre-modern despotic practices, mass dictatorship reflects the global proliferation of quintessential modernist assumptions about the transformability of the individual. Mass dictatorship therefore utilises the utmost modern practices to form totalitarian cohesion and to stage public spectacles in the search for extremist solutions to perceived social problems.

Global history suggests that mass dictatorship is far from a result of deviation or aberration from a purported 'normal path' of development but is in itself a transnational formation of modernity that emerged in response to the global processes that swept through the twentieth century. As Jie-Hyun Lim argued in his series introduction, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship: Towards a Transnational History of Twentieth-Century Dictatorship', the near ubiquitous presence of mass dictatorship in so many parts of the globe and disparate historical circumstances argues against the *Sonderweg* dichotomy of a particular/pre-modern/abnormal dictatorship in the 'Rest' and a universal/modern/normal democracy in the 'West', while reducing fascism and the Holocaust to manifestations of essentialist characteristics that pervade the 'Rest'.[1] Mass dictatorship is ultimately but one of many

manifestations of global modernity that stem from our fervent desires to construct a utopian social world. As such, one of the contributions of this series and this volume in particular is to highlight the linkages of colonial and post-colonial circumstances with mass dictatorships that share a radical trajectory in their common pursuit of modernity.

In this volume, the contributors examine the phenomenon of mass dictatorship along many different lines of inquiry. The first section attempts to theorise the specific structural mechanisms that enabled mass dictatorships. Jie-Hyun Lim and Roger Griffin map out a theoretical framework for grasping the relationship between mass dictatorship and modernity in both its colonial and fascist forms. On the broader arena of global modernity, the desire for colonising power and the corresponding fear of being colonised were unquestionably two powerful engines that drove twentieth-century mass dictatorships. While mass dictatorships on European soil were shaped by the push for imperialist expansion, non-European dictatorships were also driven by the desire to acquire colonial power and the fear of being colonised. As Jie-Hyun Lim emphasises, global perspectives on mass dictatorship as a transnational formation of modernity render the Holocaust, fascist atrocities, and post-colonial genocides visible as a composite whole within a single continuum that begins with the initial unleashing of colonial violence.

Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai and Michael Schoenhals, on the other hand, provide us with distinctly ground-level views of how colonial Taiwan and the post-civil war People's Republic of China deployed various modern practices of control and surveillance. Populations had to be disciplined, exhorted, and mobilised to transform individual subjects into a collective totality. The specific techniques that the two regimes pioneered allowed them to watch over and encourage the 'voluntary' compliance of their populations and, by extension, to regulate their individual behaviour. The expansion of the state apparatus to engulf the everyday emerges as a critical feature of mass dictatorship, and these views from non-European examples provide us with insights into the global scale of the technologies of domination that were so vital for manufacturing 'consent' and perpetuating authoritarian rule.

The second part of this volume explores the critical role of the public sphere in enabling colonial as well as totalitarian politics. The public sphere in the modern era, imagined or real, has been a space for obtaining and securing legitimacy ever since the idea of *Öffentlichkeit* became an integral part of modernity. Mass dictatorships attempted to shape public opinion and organise public spectacles to establish their

own *agora* for the development of powerful capillary organisations at the grass-roots level. Many of the chapters engage the problem of applying Habermasian conceptions of the public sphere to mass dictatorships. Habermas's normative model of rational discussion is a controversial issue for historians who have cast doubt on the utility of the concept for historical analysis. Few historical periods seem to produce unfettered rational discussions, and those who are excluded from participating in the public sphere inevitably far outnumber those who are permitted entry. Nevertheless, a public sphere that claims to be the sole source of rationality and legitimacy certainly existed within mass dictatorships, and an examination of its conceptual terrain become paramount for understanding the violent excesses of the twentieth century.

The contributors to this volume alert us to the ways in which the public sphere can be transmuted to fit the particular needs of mass dictatorships. Paul Corner explores the inherent contradictions of applying Habermasian notions to fascism and argues for the presence of a choreographed and staged public sphere that is a central feature of all mass societies of the twentieth century. Kyu Hyun Kim extends the discussion of the public sphere into wartime Japan and suggests ways to reconceptualise the notion into another idiom to understand this critical period of Japanese history. Hiroko Mizuno shows how volunteer firemen in Austria formed their own public sphere in the nineteenth century to gain hegemony over their localities and how the structural constraints of this 'non-political' process ultimately aided the spread of National Socialism in the twentieth century. Hae-dong Yun and Michael Kim discuss further the limitations of the colonial public sphere in Korea under Japanese occupation. Through careful and in-depth examinations of colonial Korea, both authors highlight the appropriation of the colonial public sphere by colonial subjects and demonstrate its latent mass mobilisation potential. Often it was this space for appropriation between dictatorial regimes and the ordinary people where we witnessed the most interesting interactions within the public sphere. Ultimately, the public spheres of mass dictatorships became not only levers of political hegemony but also spaces for the (fictive) self-empowerment of the masses. This complexity requires careful elaboration through the kind of comparative analysis that the contributors of this volume provide across a wide gamut of historical circumstances.

The third part calls for a reconsideration of the totalitarian self as shaped and disfigured by state power and ideological practices. The chapters reveal an overdetermined characteristic of the ambivalent

modern self that ultimately eludes attempts to form a totalitarian whole. State-controlled in all aspects, the attempt to shape the totalitarian self inevitably leaves disruption in its wake. Choi Chatterjee and Karen Petrone provide a historiographic overview of the debates regarding subject formation within the Soviet Union to reveal a composite picture of Soviet subjectivity. Peter Lambert examines the question of elite agency to show that the crisis of subjectivity that accompanied the rise of National Socialism was classically modernist in its conception. Finally, Cheehyung Kim explains how an attempt to construct an infinite subject emerged from the North Korean regime's attempt to merge society and subjectivity into a single seamless totality.

The volume as a whole deals with numerous case studies and provides diverse perspectives from its contributors. The mass dictatorship regimes analysed include Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, interwar Austria, Imperial Japan, colonial Korea, colonial Taiwan, Stalinist Russia, Maoist China, and North Korea. The academic contributors to the volume were trained in seven different countries on three different continents: Asia, Europe, and North America. Their interplay of analytical ideas and transnational perspectives conjure forth new interpretations of key questions in the histories of colonialism, socialism, nationalism, and fascism. Just as the individual chapters address many different areas of global history, they also all share a common concern with exploring the theoretical basis and specific practices that enabled mass dictatorship to come to such prominence during the past century.

Jie-Hyun Lim begins this volume with his main thesis: that global perspectives on the transnational formation of modernity help us to see the grotesque violence in mass dictatorship, such as the Holocaust, within a wider historical continuum that begins with the first instances of colonial violence. The racial hierarchies and the willingness to inflict violence on segregated populations were governing practices that incubated on an institutional scale in the colonies. He emphasises that while mass dictatorships on European soil were shaped by imperial projects, non-European mass dictatorships were driven both by the desire for colonial power and the fear of being colonised. This explains why the 'follow and catch up' strategy was adopted not only by socialist regimes but also by post-colonial developmental dictatorships. These regimes proclaimed that their historical task was to follow and catch up with the Western colonial powers at all costs. Under these circumstances, those victimised by Western colonial genocides became themselves victimisers, perpetuating various post-colonial genocides on others.

Roger Griffin builds on the classic theory of totalitarianism proposed by Friedrich and Brzezinski and more recent work by Emilio Gentile to offer his take on the theoretical basis of mass dictatorship. Griffin distinguishes two types of mass dictatorship, the *authoritarian* one, which aims to contain the anarchic forces released by the rise of the masses and the impact of modernisation within a coercive regime masquerading as a modern populist state, and the more radically utopian *totalitarian* one, which pursues the transformation of the whole of society and the creation of a new man within an alternative modernity. Having underlined the different roles played by propaganda and coercion in the two types of regime, totalitarianism is then identified with the ambition of political forms of modernism to create a healthier, more meaningful society immunised against the chaos of liberal modernity. The totalitarian mass dictatorship in his view is hence equated with 'the modernist state'.

Whereas Lim and Griffin offer us broad theoretical perspectives on the relationship between mass dictatorship and modernity, Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai and Michael Schoenhals provide detailed empirical studies on the specific practices located at the heart of mass dictatorships. Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai examines the 1925 Taipei police exhibition and its attempt at 'policising the masses' and 'massifying the police'. Rather than rely solely on violent coercion, the colonial police hoped to achieve the 'self-policing' of the local Taiwanese population through the projection of a kaleidoscope of visual images. She shows through her textual analysis of the exhibition that there is only a thin line between governmentality and social engineering in the colonies. Japan's colonial governmentality in Taiwan ultimately took the form of 'social management', which partly reflected Japan's determination to bring Taiwan into line with its own conception of the 'Asian modern'. Colonial policies in Taiwan, she suggests, had a major impact primarily because they appealed to both Japanese interests and Taiwanese concerns – in the name of 'enlightenment'. Therefore it is this space of 'everyday coloniality' that deserves more analytical attention to understand the complex mechanisms that sustain colonial rule.

Michael Schoenhals posits the existence of a nexus of modernity and surveillance in the People's Republic of China in the untidy post-civil war decade of the 1950s. He identifies the state's interception and perlustration of ordinary people's correspondence for the purpose of discovering what they were thinking as a central component of that nexus and illustrates this identification with contemporary data culled from recently declassified archival material. He argues that the creation of an

alternative modernity – labelled communism but defined by discipline and quantifiable order rather than simply by 'freedom from want' – was attempted by China's then communist party leadership but ultimately abandoned in favour of the quiet consolidation of 'really existing socialism' with Chinese characteristics.

The second section aims to shed new light on the essential role of the public sphere in mass dictatorships. Paul Corner engages the discussions over the public sphere as envisaged by Habermas to argue that, while mass dictatorships – Italian fascism in particular – denied any democratic participation in the political process, the need for popular legitimation compelled dictatorships to invent a 'fascist public sphere'. By denying any role to the individual when divorced from the collectivity and the state, and by refusing to recognise the existence of a private sphere, fascism incorporated everything into the public sphere. He highlights a seeming paradox in that the 'people' under fascism were more politically present than ever before and the town square formed the core of fascist rallies. It was precisely in the choreography and orchestration of 'spontaneous enthusiasm' that we can witness fascism's political theatre. Corner reaffirms that the public displays under fascism are not a Habermasian public sphere. Instead he argues that such developments can be seen as representing what Habermas termed the 're-feudalisation' of public life, where the people were present only as audience and consumers of public spectacles.

Kyu Hyun Kim examines the Japanese 'national public sphere' during the decade and a half between 1931 and 1945. His chapter draws upon the theoretical critics of Habermas and the works of contemporary thinkers such as Charles Taylor, as well as the scholarly literature on European histories of the 1930s, but is firmly grounded in recent Japanese-language scholarship and primary sources. While the 1930s were clearly a period of neither democracy nor liberalism, civil society in Japan, through its engagement with mass politics and culture, resisted being dominated by the state. Yet despite the persistence of the essential underpinnings of a democratic system, Japan continued on its path towards total war. In addressing the public sphere in this period, his chapter examines government-based source materials that serve to illustrate the nature of the ideological and discursive conflicts within the state, such as internal reviews and reports of the Imperial Rule Assistant Association, as well as a set of civilian journals, many of them difficult to classify easily as 'left' or 'right'. Through his analysis, he discovers that wartime Japan did not in any way appear 'special' or 'unique' in terms of how the critical

functions of the public sphere became challenged and undermined by the increasing push towards authoritarianism. Ultimately, wartime Japan may have to be understood as a case where war mobilisation took place within a constitutional structure.

Hiroko Mizuno focuses on the 1860s and the many Volunteer Firemen Associations (*Freiwillige Feuerwehr*) that came to be established at the time in almost every local community in the Austrian monarchy. One of the most important missions of these associations was to protect their own home town as well as their properties from fire-related catastrophes. Varying in size and in formation, most of the associations consisted of male inhabitants who belonged to the middle class. The association of Hohenems, a town in the region of the Vorarlberg, was co-established by some Jewish burghers and may in this sense be understood as a symbol of the liberalism of the times. Financially supported by and cooperating with the town council, the Hohenems association won wide recognition for its voluntary activities and eventually dominated the local public sphere. Yet over time, the structural constraints of the relationship between the firemen and the local authorities led them towards greater accommodation with state power, until the associations became an integral part of the National Socialist system. This chapter considers the historical roles of the Volunteer Firemen Associations in the shaping of the Austrian liberal public sphere and highlights the areas where liberalism and fascism overlap.

Hae-dong Yun's contribution to this volume discusses a long-running debate among mostly historians in Japan concerning the presence or absence of the public sphere in colonial Korea. Rather than accept the problematic assumptions behind a Habermasian public sphere, Yun offers the concept of 'publicness' as a suitable substitute for analysing the multiple dimensions of colonialism. A public sphere in the civic society sense could not and did not exist under colonialism, he argues. However, this does not mean that colonised subjects lacked a sense of publicness that ultimately served the interests of the colonial state as well as offered opportunities for Korean appropriations. Therefore, Yun explores alternative venues for discovering notions of 'publicness' in colonial Korea and highlights several neglected aspects of the period for further consideration.

Michael Kim expands upon Yun's discussions to explicate the discursive mechanism of the colonial public sphere. The Japanese often explained that they could not implement certain policies in Korea because of the low *mindo*, or cultural and economic level, of the Korean population. This denigrating term then became internalised among Korean

participants in the colonial public sphere, and they often expressed views that the Korean public was backward and not able to fully express its collective political will. However, Korean pundits did not accept their fate quietly, and a critical public debate developed within the limits of the dominant colonial rationality, especially over the perceived failures of colonial policy. The discourse of *mindo* changed rapidly with the outbreak of World War II, as Koreans would later claim that their level of civilisation had finally become high enough to achieve equality with the Japanese. Political pressure for colonial reforms continued to build even at the height of World War II and assumed a different character under the particular circumstances of wartime mobilisation. Through an examination of the trajectory of *mindo*, we may gain insights into the 'alternative rationalities' of the colonial order that shaped the colonial public sphere.

Switching to the theme of totalitarian selfhood in the third section, Choi Chatterjee and Karen Petrone propose in their review essay to interrogate the notion of the modern self as a historical category and see how historians working within the Anglo-American tradition of historiography on Russia and the Soviet Union have used it as an entry point to reach a deeper understanding of that society and culture. Chatterjee and Petrone marry various, nuanced, and ultimately complementary models of the self to arrive at a composite picture of Soviet subjectivity. Only when notions of the individual are seen in dynamic interaction with the others in their particular collectives and with the wider public can one imagine Russian and Soviet experiences of selfhood. It is in this interaction that both Soviet selves and Soviet power were made.

Peter Lambert embarks on a more specific historiographical discussion to distil a sense of agency among the German 'old elites' of the Weimar Republic and the prelude to Hitler's accession to the office of Chancellor. The old elites had survived Germany's defeat in 1918, the revolution, and the birth of the democratic republic with their power, which was deeply rooted in the underlying structures of Germany, essentially intact. Given their undiminished commitment to authoritarianism, they wielded that power first to undermine democracy and then, fatefully, to hand Hitler the keys to office. He highlights the German historian Detlev Peukert's contention that, far from being overburdened with pre-modern vestiges, the Weimar Republic had met the criteria of what he called 'classical modernity': advanced industrial capitalism, a welfare state, vast bureaucracy, faith in science as a 'cure-all', and mass-participatory politics. Embedded within that condition, however, was a 'dark side' of pathological potential, which was

unleashed as Germany entered a crisis of classical modernity. Other historians have since argued that the 'old elites' had no collective agency in producing the outcome of a Hitler-led government. Lambert, however, contends that the significance of the old elites is important for understanding the modernist dimensions of the crisis that led to the rise of fascism in Germany.

Finally Cheehyung Kim gives us a view of 1970s North Korea to witness the beginnings of a single-leader system accompanied by a single-ideology system based on *chuch'e*, the guiding rationality and paradigm attributed to Kim Il Sung. *Chuch'e* was tantamount to an ontological orientation of the subject and the nation, a totality within which that same subject became the actor. He explains that the nation in the North Korean context arose as a specific kind of totality, abstract and dependent on positivistic characteristics of society as autonomous. The cinema and paintings of this period point out both the objectivity and ambiguity of a reified social totality. In art, the social refuses to be categorised or, more specifically, totalised. Nonetheless, society indeed appears as a real 'thing' autonomous from the state. The impossibility of constructing an absolute subject, however, also affirms a lesser truth in that hegemonic totality is equally impossible. Cheehyung Kim posits that this impossibility is not a limitation but rather a moment of rupturing. The socialist art of North Korea from the 1970s was state-controlled in all aspects, but it nonetheless provides us with a glimpse of the infinite quality of the subject.

The contributors to this volume interrogate the myriad of ways in which radical attempts to achieve modernity are fraught with contradictions and unrealised promise. Rather than view the history of twentieth-century dictatorships as aberrations from a normative model, the contributions to this volume greatly expand our horizons to the immanent potential of modernity to follow multiple paths, some of which inevitably lead to a totalitarian direction. Instead of 'us' v. 'them', the aim of this volume is to see the potential for self-empowerment, violence, and everyday oppression within the collectivised attempts to realise our modernist utopian visions.

Note

1. Jie-Hyun Lim, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship: Towards a Transnational History of Twentieth-Century Dictatorship', in Jie-Hyun Lim and Karen Petrone, eds, *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship: Global Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 3–4.

Part I

Radical Projects for Modernisation

2

Mass Dictatorship: A Transnational Formation of Modernity

Jie-Hyun Lim

Neither *Sonderweg* nor diffusionism

The term 'mass dictatorship' implies the attempted mobilisation of the masses and puts forth the position that dictatorships frequently secured voluntary mass participation and support.[1] The peculiarity of mass dictatorship as a twentieth-century phenomenon can be found in its modern socio-political engineering system, which aims at the voluntary enthusiasm and self-mobilisation of the masses for state projects, the same goal shared by mass democracies. Mass dictatorship appropriates modern statecraft and egalitarian ideology and pretends to be a dictatorship from below; the study of this phenomenon needs to be situated as a broader transnational formation of modernity. Mass dictatorship as a working hypothesis denies the diffusionist conception of modernity as a movement from the centre to the periphery. Rather, it focuses on the transnational aspects of modernity through global connections and interactions of the centre and periphery, and of democracy and dictatorship.

Once placed in the orbit of global modernity, twentieth-century dictatorships cease to be inevitable products of deviation or aberration from a normal path to modernity. Mass dictatorship as a transnational formation of modernity argues against the *Sonderweg* thesis, which seeks to set Nazism and other manifestations of fascism apart from the parliamentary democracies of the 'West'.[2] The *Sonderweg* dichotomy of a particular/pre-modern/abnormal dictatorship in the 'Rest' – quintessentially represented by Germany – and a universal/modern/normal democracy in the 'West' strengthens a Western claim to exceptionalism, according to which democracy, equality, freedom, human rights, rationalism, science, and industrialism promulgated by

the European Enlightenment are phenomena unique to the 'West'. The normative presupposition inherent in the *Sonderweg* thesis implies Eurocentrism, suggesting that the 'West' has achieved the maturation of the unique historical conditions necessary for democracy and human rights. In the 'Rest', by contrast, these conditions remained un- or underdeveloped.

In explicating twentieth-century dictatorships, this sort of Eurocentrism is profoundly misleading, encouraging us to believe that fascism and the Holocaust can be reduced to manifestations of peculiarities of the pre-modern 'Rest'. The argument serves as a historical alibi of the modernist 'West', which is thus exempted from association with a barbarism defined ab initio as pre-modern.[3] Mass dictatorship occupied the position of the 'East', while democracy remains 'Western' in this imaginative geography.[4] A shift from the 'reified geography' of the dichotomy of East and West to the 'problem space' of the co-figuration of East and West would make it possible to see both mass dictatorship and mass democracy as transnational formations of modernity.[5] In fact, the East/West or dictatorship/democracy divide does not make any substantial difference, since both dichotomies co-evolved within the same 'problem space' of modernity. This is precisely why mass dictatorship should be mapped onto the transnational history of modernity.

It is on this historical topology that the dictatorships of the 'East' and the democracies of the 'West' converge as transnational formations of modernity. The historical singularity either of a dictatorship or of a democracy can be analysed from global perspectives on the emergence of the modern state. Once conscripted to modernity's project,[6] each version of the modern state is the result of negotiations among various draftees of modernity in different regions. Viewed from global perspectives, the sophisticated discourses of 'alternative modernity', 'retroactive modernity', 'modernism against modernity', 'capitalism without capitalism', 'anti-Western modernisation', 'antimodern modernisation', and so on were rampant in the metaphorical language of mass dictatorship. They reflect a consciousness that 'oscillated furiously between recognising the peril of being overcome by modernity and the impossible imperative of overcoming it' in the latecomers' society.[7] In other words, the desire for colonising power and the fear of being colonised are two locomotives that drive mass dictatorship.

It is in the transnational formation of modernity that transnational and post-colonial perspectives meet to allow for new insights into mass dictatorship. To state that 'the transnational meets the post-colonial' is not to imply a linear continuity in a simplified understanding between

German colonialism in South-West Africa and the Holocaust.[8] The Holocaust should not be reduced to another peculiarity of German colonialism. Global perspectives on the transnational formation of modernity help us to see the Holocaust on the same continuum with 'Western' colonialism, as Hannah Arendt suggested when she articulated the concept of 'administered mass killing' (*Verwaltungsmassenmord*) in respect to the British colonialist experience.[9] In other words, the Holocaust can be better explained from the transnational perspectives of Euro-colonialism than by recourse to German peculiarities. More broadly, one cannot miss the history of primitive accumulation, full of conquest, enslavement, plunder, murder, and all forms of violence in the making of the modern nation state. The emergence of capitalism and democracy in the 'Western' nation state should be viewed as having taken place, in Marx's terms, 'under circumstances of ruthless terrorism'.[10]

If the mass dictatorships on European soil have been shaped by the latecomers' imperial projects, non-European mass dictatorships have been driven by the desire for great-power status, the regret of not being colonisers, and the fear of being colonised. That explains why the 'follow and catch up' strategy has been adopted not only by socialist regimes but also by post-colonial developmental dictatorships. These regimes proclaimed their historical task to follow and catch up to the Western colonial powers at all costs. Often their achievements resulted from the conceptions of 'little imperialism', secondary Orientalism, non-European forms of Eurocentrism, and eventually hegemonic regionalism. It is under these circumstances that those victimised by Western colonial genocide can become victimisers and perpetrators of similar genocides. Various post-colonial genocides in the peripheries can be grasped within this broader context.

Indeed, interrogating mass dictatorship as a transnational formation of modernity upends conventional dichotomies of East/West, dictatorship/democracy, particular/universal into a historical convergence of modernity. The criticism of the conventional diffusionist discourse that describes a movement of modernity from Europe to non-Europe does not necessarily justify the counter-diffusionist reaction from non-Europe to Europe. From this perspective, one can overcome the dichotomies of European democracy and non-European dictatorship and diffusionist discourses that posit the existence of a centre-periphery relationship. Once liberated from these conventional conceptualisations, mass dictatorship and mass democracy can then appear on the same historical horizon.

A colonial Korean Marxist in the Via Nazionale of Rome, 1933

The observations of a colonial Korean intellectual, Yi Sun-t'ak (1897–1950?), who was a leading Marxist economist, can help reveal this common trajectory between colonialism and mass dictatorships. During the 1920s, he studied economics at Kyoto Imperial University in Japan under Kawakami Hajime (河上肇), a well-known Marxist economist who translated *Das Kapital* into Japanese. After returning home, Yi Sun-t'ak taught economics at Yŏnhŭi College in Seoul (Yonsei University today). As a Marxist economist he had engaged wholeheartedly in popularising Marxism among colonial Koreans and published more than 60 articles in various journals and newspapers. In 1938, he was arrested for his leading role in the 'red professors group', and his employment was terminated. Among his writings, what draws my attention the most is a travelogue. He travelled around the world, visiting 17 countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and North America in the nine months between 24 April 1933 and 20 January 1934. During his travels, Yi sent contributions at regular intervals to a Korean daily newspaper, the *Chosŏn Ilbo*, which were published as a book in 1934.

This travelogue, entitled 'A Recent Travel Around the World', was written as a comprehensive report on the contemporary world, touching on geography, history, ethnography, customs, religion, art, politics, economy, and society.[11] As a colonial intellectual, Yi felt deep compassion for independence movements in China, India, Poland, Ireland, and Egypt and other African countries. But his empathy with the national liberation movements of the colonised was accompanied by his contempt for the savage 'natives' who are the supposed subjects of the national movements.[12] He reprimanded the unpatriotic Chinese who were willing to sell out their country for money and admonished the Indians to stop the class struggles and religious conflicts that had been manipulated by the British divide-and-rule policy. Upon embarking at the port of Aden, Yemen, he deplored how Africa had become the prey of the 'white people', despite Africa's great historical contribution to world civilisation, along with Asia.

Yi's distress over Africa's predicament ran through a similar line of deep regret for the backwardness of colonial Korea, which 'did not open her eyes to the foreign market … did not think of great national leadership to overcome the poisonous political partisanship'.[13] His denunciation of colonialism and war could not conceal his envy of the great imperialist civilisations. A deep regret that 'we should have been the West' was

paired with that envy. It was this ambivalence towards negation and mimicry of Western civilisation, desire and fear of the colonial powers, and oscillation between self-empowerment and self-Orientalism that underlay Yi Sun-t'ak's travelogue. That ambivalence is not peculiar to Yi; it is rampant among both right-wing and leftist colonial intellectuals, as post-colonial studies have shown.

One peculiar point in this colonial Korean Marxist's travelogue is Yi's idiosyncratic view of contemporary Europe, especially his explicit sympathy for Fascist Italy. Except for a couple of reservations about the personality cult of Mussolini and political oppression, Yi could not conceal his admiration for Italian fascism. Yi's direct encounter with Italy betrayed his expectation of gangs of beggars, pickpockets, and thieves. According to Yi, that anticipation was a result of past prejudices 'because the army and police of Mussolini repress wrongdoings completely, thus social justice and public righteousness is greatly improved over the era of parliamentary democracy'.[14] Yi also recorded his cheerful conversation with a young Italian about Mussolini. When he asked a young Italian passer-by near the Garibaldi monument 'if Mussolini can be a second Garibaldi', Yi received the answer that 'Mussolini is better than Garibaldi'.[15]

Yi twice visited the exposition that commemorated the tenth anniversary of fascist rule on the Via Nazionale in Rome. In a humorous manner, he explained his rather pragmatic motivation to receive a 70 per cent discount train ticket voucher as a reward for exposition visitors, which had led him there twice. But this propaganda exposition of fascist achievements certainly made a deep impact on him. Yi was duly impressed by the cooperative state which made the Italian economy leap forward: the balanced budget, the recovery of credit, the successful negotiations to reduce foreign debts, the dramatic reduction of unemployment, a shift from dependency to autarky in the agrarian sector, the well-built infrastructure, the steady growth of the population, and a proper migration policy. Yi noted that all this successful restructuring of the economy made Italy a member of the 'Gold Bloc' that stood firmly against the USA.[16]

Italian colonialism did not lead this leftist colonial intellectual to any critical thoughts about fascism, perhaps because its colonial cruelty had yet to become apparent. But Yi's ultimate interest was whether or not the Italian fascists' desire for a Second Roman Empire could be realised. Any leftist value judgment remained suspended in his account of Italian fascism. The leftist value-ridden achievement, if any, was the admiration of the successful building of a self-sustaining economy by the fascist

regime. For this Korean colonial Marxist, a shift from dependency to autarky might have been the most valuable lesson. It was thought to be a first step towards the independence of colonies against the colonial expansion of the advanced capitalist countries. When he returned home after his travels around the world, Yi visited the headquarters of the newspaper *Chosŏnjungang ilbo*, which had provided financial support for his travels. In an interview, he stated explicitly that 'what impressed me the most is the transformation in Italy'. Under the title, 'He Saw the Hope for the Korean Nation in the Future', the *Chosŏn jungang ilbo* published an article about Yi's visit to the newspaper's editorial board and his interview.[17]

Yi discovered a development model for colonial Korea in Fascist Italy. It is not difficult to see the strong lust for power and modernity in Yi Sun-t'ak's account of Italy. But his desire was not so simple as to be reduced to a longing for Western modernity. Yi's praise for Italian fascism was in stark contrast to his sharp criticism of London. He saw London as a dirty cosmopolitan city tainted with beggars, the unemployed, and pollution. Despite its past glory, it seemed to him that the British Empire was in decline.[18] Certainly, Yi projected his desire for power and greatness onto Fascist Italy rather than the British Empire. This did not mean that he thought Fascist Italy was more developed than Great Britain. Perhaps Fascist Italy's remarkable advance 'from a proletarian nation to a bourgeois nation' might have appealed to him. The Marxian view twisted from class struggle to national struggle in fascist ideology was not alien to some colonial Marxists who regarded socialism as the means to realise rapid modernisation and national liberation. Polish irredentist socialists, who invented the term 'social patriotism' in the late nineteenth century, might be the predecessors of those colonial Marxists.[19]

Yi Sun-t'ak was not the only colonial Marxist who discovered a model for the independence and modernisation of a poor and underdeveloped colony. It is intriguing to find that Subhas Chandra Bose, an Indian independence fighter, travelled to the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Imperial Japan in search of an alliance against the British Empire during the Second World War. He founded the Free Indian Centre in Berlin while broadcasting on the German-sponsored Azad Hind Radio. Bose succeeded in creating the Indian Legion of some 4,500 British Indian prisoners of war in North Africa. Disappointed by Hitler's intention of using his Indian Legion only for a propaganda war, Bose left Germany in February 1943 on board a German submarine and changed to a Japanese submarine on the sea between the Cape of Good Hope and Madagascar. In Japan, he was engaged in the ideological movement

of the Greater East Asian Prosperity Sphere. For Bose, who felt increasingly uncomfortable with the Nazi regime's extreme racism, Japanese Pan-Asianism might have been more attractive. But the highlight of his stay in wartime Japan was the establishment of the provisional Azad Hind Government, with the Indian National Army and the support of the Japanese imperial regime. Bose's Indian provisional government was recognised by eight Axis states – Nazi Germany, Hirohito's Japan, Fascist Italy, the Independent State of Croatia, the Wang Jingwei regime in Nanjing, a provisional government of Burma, Manchukuo, and Japanese-controlled Philippines – and the Soviet Union.

What is at issue is not whether Bose was skilled enough at international realpolitik to exploit the enemy of his enemy. Bose's alliance with the Axis powers during the war period was more than pragmatic. The case of Yi Sun-t'ak, who had no pragmatic reason at all for an alliance with Fascist Italy – a friend of his enemy, Imperial Japan – gives us some hints for understanding Subhas Chandra Bose. Bose's address delivered to Tokyo University in November 1944 reveals more than his wartime travels to the Axis powers: 'You cannot have a so-called democratic system, if that system had to put through economic reforms on a socialist basis. ... [W]e have come to the conclusion that with a democratic system we cannot solve the problems of Free India. Therefore, modern progressive thought in India is in favor of a State of an authoritarian character.'[20]

In fact, Bose called himself a socialist and believed that socialism in India owed its origin to Swami Vivekenanda. It is also indicative that Bose's other favourite model was the socialist authoritarianism of Kemal Atatürk's Turkey. When the Indonesian left nationalist dictator Sukarno frightened Western diplomats by admiring Hitler in a public address,[21] he represented an ambiguity of the nationalist socialism that dominated the Beijing-Pyongyang-Hanoi-Phnom Penh-Jakarta Axis. If this was socialism, then it was a socialism that turned the Marxian idea upside down – from labour emancipation to labour mobilisation. The common thread stitching together the (neo)colonial Marxism of Yi Sun-t'ak, Subhas Chandra Bose, Sukarno, and the Beijing-Pyongyang-Hanoi-Phnom Penh-Jakarta Axis was a nationalist version of socialism that aimed to achieve a rapid anti-Western modernisation.

'Bourgeois nation' versus 'proletarian nation'

As a colonial Marxist economist, Yi advocated a national united front of Marxists and nationalists and the establishment of class collaboration

between the national bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The stress on national unity originated in his peculiar analysis of the colonial class structure as entwined within a national divide. Yi categorised all Korean colonial subjects as the 'total proletariat'. In his view, the Japanese nation represented the ruling class of capitalists and landlords, while the exploited class of workers and tenant peasants was epitomised by the Korean nation. Thus, he expected that the revolution in colonial Korea would be performed not by the Korean proletariat against the Korean bourgeoisie but by the total proletariat of the Korean nation against the total bourgeoisie of the Japanese nation. Yi Sun-t'ak characterised the forthcoming revolution of colonial Korea as a national political revolution in which he transformed the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat into a national struggle between the Japanese people and the Korean people.

It is stunning to also find the dichotomy of 'bourgeois nation' and 'proletarian nation' in Italian fascist discourse. As early as 1910, Enrico Corradini declared that 'Italy is, materially and morally, a proletarian nation ... whose living conditions are subject to the way of life of other nations'. In order to compete with the bourgeois nations, Italy demanded 'a means of national discipline' and 'a pact of family solidarity between all classes of the Italian nation' in the moral domain and 'an economic society' to produce wealth and civilisation in the material domain. Only through the production of civilisation would Italy acquire the 'strength and the right to expand in the world'. Insofar as 'the conception of a wealthy people in a powerful nation is one imposed by the nature of modern civilisation', the nationalist principle remained an imperative to him and Italian fascists.[22] Mussolini's radical syndicalism also shared Corradini's nationalist view that Italy was a proletarian nation, disadvantaged in the competition with 'rich' and 'plutocratic' nations, which justified Mussolini's full commitment to modernisation and industrialisation.[23] It is not surprising that Ramiro Ledesman Ramos, a Spanish fascist who regarded Spain as an agrarian dependent nation, shared this dichotomy with Italian fascists.[24]

In Yi Sun-t'ak's metaphor, the Italian nation was the total proletariat that should struggle against the total bourgeoisie of the bourgeois nations. I have found no proof so far to indicate that Yi Sun-t'ak knew about the fascist dichotomy of 'bourgeois nation' and 'proletarian nation'. It might be a pure coincidence that Yi's idea of 'total proletariat' and 'total bourgeoisie' co-evolved with the fascist dichotomy of 'bourgeois nation' and 'proletarian nation'. But the co-evolution of these ideas, even if by chance, can be placed within a certain historical context. The strategic

location of colonial Korea and Fascist Italy in the discourse of global modernity in the 1930s may give a clue to this inevitable coexistence of the ideas of 'total proletariat' and 'proletarian nation'. A colonial Korean Marxist's encounter with Italian fascism was not a sort of 'East meets West'. The strategic positions of Italy and Germany in the interwar world system were that of 'semi-peripheries', 'peripheries in the centre', or 'East in the West'. When Yi encountered fascism in Italy, it just so happened that one 'East' sympathised with another 'East'.

This interesting encounter between a colonial Korean Marxist and Italian fascism poses a challenging question to the dichotomy of rightist fascism and leftist socialism as representative of opposing modernisation/development strategies. From a transnational perspective, the convergence of fascism and socialism as radical anti-Western modernisation projects was not unusual at all. The Italian futurist Filippo Marinetti, who represented fascist art, was respected by Russian futurists who supported the Bolshevik revolution, and left-wing fascists such as Berto Ricci and Ugo Spirito were pleased to see the Soviet Union incline towards fascism. Left-wing fascists in Italy could see the shift of emphasis from revolutionary internationalism to nationalist strength and development in the Soviet Union.[25] Mussolini himself made it explicit that he would prefer 'Italy as a Soviet republic' to 'Italy as a British colony'.[26] The cliché that the two extremes always meet explains nothing about this awkward convergence. When Asia and Europe stop being geopositivistic concepts, fascism and socialism may appear on the same horizon of anti-Western modernisation projects.[27]

Historical observers of the fascist phenomena have been perplexed by the schizophrenia between modernising practices and antimodern ideas. According to Henry Turner Jr., fascists' positive attitude toward the products of modern industry should not necessarily be equated with an approval of modernisation in principle. Italian fascists implemented many modernising policies only as the means to antimodernist ends.[28] Turner's interesting argument about fascism can be summed up in an oxymoron, 'antimodern modernisation'. What was missing in Turner's argument is a reflection that the antimodernist ideals traced back to tradition were not a type of natural reality but the construct of the selective interpretation of the past.[29] Traditionalism is different from traditional paradigms for the very reason that it constitutes 'traditionalistic countermovements' against the dominating trend of the West.[30] If it is 'precisely the modern which conjures up prehistory', traditionalism is a variant of modernist discourse, and fascist discourse represented not a simple nostalgia for ancient glory, but a

combination of modernisation and industrialisation with a national mystique.[31]

Once they entered the stage of global modernity, the fascists' anti-modernist self-image was confined by either explicit or implicit references to the modernist other-West. Non-Western intellectuals' attempts to posit an identity of one's own ethnicity or nationality in terms of the gap between it (proletarian nation) and the putative West (bourgeois nation), through either the dynamics of attraction to or repulsion from the West, can be found broadly in the periphery.[32] Once the fascists' discourse towards antimodernist ends is placed in the context of cultural transfer and interaction with modernity, one can read the anti-Western modernisation project as a transnational agenda: the nineteenth-century German advocacy of 'culture' against Anglo-French 'civilisation'; Russian Slavophiles' assertion that 'inner truth' based on religion, culture, and moral conviction is much more important than 'external truth' expressed by law and state; Indian nationalist discourse of the superiority of the spiritual domain over the material domain; Japanese fascism under the guise of what might be called '*Gemeinschaft* capitalism' aligned against Western '*Gesellschaft* capitalism'.[33]

An anti-Western convergence of fascism and socialism

An anti-Western modernisation project as a transnational agenda frequently associated with 'traditionalism' was also prominent among contemporary left-wing intellectuals in the peripheries. 'Dependency' as a transnational agenda is an uneasy blend of traditional Marxism and economic nationalism. The dichotomy of centre and periphery, metropolis and satellite, in dependency theory is resonant with the fascist dichotomy of 'bourgeois nation' and 'proletarian nation'. The desired socialist state was 'an independent and industrialised nation state'. Corradini's advocacy of a national economy was reiterated in dependency theory's advocacy of autarky. With a twist on the Marxian idea transmuted from class struggle to national struggle in the capitalist world system, the emphasis became national exploitation rather than class exploitation. The dichotomy of centre and periphery instead of capital and labour that is inherent to dependency theory often led to the logical conclusion that proletarian nations had been exploited by bourgeois nations, which in turn combined an entire nation into a homogeneous class. Thus, dependency theory justified the accumulation of capital by the states of the periphery with reference to the nationalist cause of proletarian nations.[34]

Once class struggle was remoulded into the international struggle between rich nations and poor nations, socialism in this epistemological shift from class emancipation to national liberation became a development strategy for catching up to and overtaking the advanced capitalist nations at all costs. In spelling out the connection between the First Five-Year Plan and the strategic concerns of the Soviet regime, Stalin proclaimed his main goal of catching up to and overtaking the economies of the advanced countries. The goal of socialism became transmuted into a desire for the wealth and power of the core states of the capitalist world economy. When the Bolsheviks found after the October Revolution that they had inherited a poor and backward country lacking the material base for socialism, they made rapid industrialisation their top priority. Citing Eric Hobsbawm, 'Bolshevism turned itself into an ideology for the rapid economic development for countries in which the condition of capitalist development doesn't exist.'[35] As dependency theory justified the accumulation of capital by states of the periphery due to the nationalist causes of proletarian nations, it was Preobrazhensky's theory of 'primitive socialist accumulation' that justified state capitalism as 'the anti-Western modernization project'.

The remarkable economic growth during the Soviet Union's five-year plans must have been impressive to leaders of Third World countries, who established modern nation building as their primary goal after independence. Jawaharlal Nehru expressed clearly the unacceptability of capitalism for India on the grounds that India had no time at her disposal to achieve progress by the same methods and at the same rates as the Western countries. Nehru asked and answered for himself: 'Should we follow the British, French or American way? Do we really have as much time as 100 to 150 years to achieve our goal? This is absolutely unacceptable. In such an event we shall simply perish.'[36] Julius Nyerere, the leader of Tanzanian agrarian socialism, coined the slogan, 'we must run while they walk'. Mao Tse-tung and Kim Il-Sung were not lacking in their ardent advocacy of rapid industrialisation. The slogan of Mao's Great Leap Forward Movement in 1958 was 'Let's overtake Britain and catch up to the USA in 15 years'. In the same year Kim Il-Sung stressed that 'we can achieve in the period of two Five-Year Plans what other socialist countries achieved in the period of three Five-Year Plans'.[37]

It is in this context that 'it was Lenin who first opened the door wide to the implantation of Marxism in Asia'.[38] The Indian reformer Swami Vivekananda expressed an aphorism that demonstrates how socialism became the third alternative of anti-Western modernisation when he noted that socialism is neither traditionalism nor westernisation. This is

the historical and ideological conjunction where Vivekananda inspired the Indian colonial Marxist Subhas Chandra Bose. Socialist ideas, Western in their origin, could be perceived both as non-Western and even anti-Western in this way, challenging and negating the European civilisation that imperialism imposes to the peripheries. Socialism shifted its stress from class emancipation to national liberation, and thus labour emancipation was replaced by labour mobilisation for the rapid modernisation of the national economy. In short, revolutionary nationalists in the Third World regarded socialism as a project of 'anti-Western modernisation'. It was an exit for those who were caught between the Scylla and Charybdis of modernisation and national identity. In a situation where the capitalist way of development was to accept the Western coloniser's standard of values, socialism as a way of non-capitalist development was an ideological exit for the nationalist intelligentsia in the peripheries. It solved the historical dilemma of 'colonial modernisation' by one stroke with a vision of both national liberation and socialist modernisation.

Although socialists in underdeveloped countries admired the achievements of socialism and its advantage over capitalism, they often placed socialism on a par with capitalism because both are allegedly concerned with man's worldly and material interests and ignore his higher spiritual needs. Therefore they proclaimed that 'Western socialism' was unacceptable due to the materialist bias of Western civilisation and insisted that the spiritualistic peoples of the East should attempt to evolve their own national variants of socialism.[39] This reflected a development strategy of using their traditional heritage to provide the ideological foundations for non-capitalist development. Following the pattern of Russian populists who connected the future of socialism with the traditional collectivism of the peasant commune (*Mir*), revolutionary nationalists in the peripheries were keen to find collectivist traditions in their national heritages and sought the seeds of a socialist future in them.

Freed from strict right-left ideological divisions, one can see that fascism and socialism converged in the project of anti-Western modernisation as transnational formations of modernity. Ernst Nolte's argument that Nazism was the reaction and counterpoint to Soviet communism in the European civil war might look like a pioneer version of '*histoire croisée*' from the transnational perspective, since he sees the fates of the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany as historically intertwined through the 'European civil war'. Apart from the 'Historikerstreit' sort of moral criticism that Nolte *sublimed* the Nazis' own justification for war into his scholarly interpretation, Nolte's model of 'challenge and response' had an inherently limited scope. The scale of comparison in his argument

was too narrowly confined to the interaction between Germany and Russia.

As soon as the scale of comparison extends to the interaction between the West and the Rest, Nolte's seemingly solid story of Bolshevik challenge and Nazi response melts away into the air. An analogy of 'the West and the Rest' with 'Germany and Russia' might be possible, but Germany and Russia both belong to the Rest if one posits Britain and France as the West. A closer look at transnational formations of modernity on a global scale would reveal the successive chains of 'challenges and responses' that constitute the *histoire croisée* of mass dictatorship and democracy. The transnational formation of modernity is much more complex and multiplex than Nolte had assumed. Thus, in words the anti-Western modernisation project aimed at overcoming (Western) modernity, but in deeds it was overcome by modernity. The strong anti-Western modernisation drive was pregnant with the regret that 'we' should have been the West and with the desire to reverse the order of East and West within the orbit of modernity.

Colonialism and mass dictatorship

While George Mosse argued that 'Robespierre might have felt at home in Nazi mass meetings' and 'fascist style was in reality the climax of "new politics" based upon the emerging eighteenth century idea of popular sovereignty',[40] François Furet worked on the ideology and discourses of Jacobinism as a model for far-reaching comparisons among totalitarian movements. Compared to Nolte's monocausal thesis of 'Bolshevik challenge and Nazi response', Furet's analysis on the cultural transfer of Jacobinism seems to be much more productive for understanding mass dictatorship as a transnational formation. To this end, as Daniel Schoenpflug suggests, 'the reception and conception of French and other revolutionary cultures by the Bolsheviks, the Italian fascists, and the National Socialists should be explored'.[41] Seen from this perspective, the Nazi *Volksgemeinschaft* was not a bizarre pre-modern political concept but a metamodern political order in which people regarded themselves as the actual political sovereign. In Eugene Weber's expression, Nazism looked 'much like the Jacobinism of our time'.[42] It is intriguing that George Mosse took the title of his book, *The Nationalization of the Masses*, intentionally from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.[43]

The historical association of Jacobinism and mass dictatorship hints at the interconnectedness of non-Western mass dictatorship and Western colonialism. If Robert Paxton saw a remarkable precedent for fascism

in the Ku Klux Klan in the American South, Simon Wiesenthal found a symptom of the 'final solution' in the white settlers' genocide of Native Americans in the United States. Indeed, homicide could develop into genocide only after the anti-Semitic tradition met the massacre of natives by European colonialism. From the viewpoint of intellectual history, it is remarkable that 'race' and 'space' remained two key concepts underlying both German colonialism in South-West Africa and the Nazi conquest of eastern Slavic Europe. A biological interpretation of world history based on a racial hierarchy in connection with the idea that the superior race/nation must have the necessary living space contributed to the justification of German colonialism and Nazi rule over eastern Europe. In fact it was Friedrich Ratzel, a predecessor of Nazi ideologues, who coined the term *Lebensraum* in the 1897 book *Politische Geographie oder die Geographie der Staaten, des Verkehrs und des Krieges* (Political Geography and the Geography of States, Transport and War).

Prior to Ratzel, however, Robert Knox insisted as early as 1850 that the Celts deserved a significant amount of space for their civilisation, energies, and valour. But Ratzel's claim for *Lebensraum* was much more imminent than Knox's demand for living space for the Celts, because Wilhelmian Germany was the latest arrival to the colonial contest. The colonial partition of the non-European world was almost complete, and little living space was left when Germany plunged into the colonial competition. That explains why 'Nazi Germany embarked upon a gigantic plan to colonise Europe'.[44] There was no outlet for Germans except for intra-European colonialism. In a way, it was much simpler for them to colonise the European continent. The Nazis' intra-European colonialism was backed by Carl Schmitt's version of the Monroe Doctrine: that Germany has an exclusive right to decide continental Europe's destiny under the slogan of 'Europe for Europeans'.[45] *Mein Kampf* tells us that the German dream of *Lebensraum* could be realised not in Cameroon but in Europe.

In fact, the Nazi utopia of a racially purified German empire mimicked Western colonialism, 'turning imperialism on its head and treating Europeans as Africans'.[46] Nazi Germans may have felt a kind of 'white man's burden' inside Europe as they regarded the Slavic people as 'white negroes' and Slavic lands as 'Asia'. Hitler did not attach himself to a reified geography. His colonial imagination was more flexible than the *histoire croisée* geopositivistic conception of Europe and Asia. Hitler stated explicitly that 'the border between Europe and Asia is not the Urals but the place where the settlements of the Germanic type of people stop and pure Slavdom begins', and he further observed that 'the Slavs

would provide the German equivalent of the conquered native populations of India and Africa in the British empire'.[47] In other words, Hitler believed that 'the Eastern territory will be for us what India was for England'. The eastern territory would provide Germany with the material resources necessary for autarky. Hitler's model for domination and exploitation remained the British Empire. Upon the conquest of eastern Europe, Hitler planned to build a Great Wall in the Urals to protect Europe against the 'dangerous Asian human reservoir'.[48]

Hitler's cohorts thought along the same lines. Hans Frank, the Governor-General of occupied Poland, avowed that 'Poland shall be treated like a colony', while Erich Koch, the Nazi commissioner in Ukraine, called Ukrainians 'White niggers'. The Hitlerites' idea of Asia represents the typical way of Orientalist thinking about the Orient as an imagined geography. In the context of German intellectual history, their Orientalist ideas were in continuity with Hegel's concept of 'historyless people', or *geschichtlose Völker*. These Slavic nations were not state-building nations but were destined to be subjugated by the superior German nation. Among ordinary German civilians and soldiers in the occupied 'East', it was not difficult to find a sense of cultural superiority similar to the Orientalist thought associated with a colonial mission. According to a war diary of a German soldier stationed in Poland, 'the soul of an Eastern man (Pole) is mysterious'.[49] In this schematic Orientalist thought, Russians were more Asiatic than Poles. Many German soldiers were committed to the historical mission to defend European culture against Muscovite-Asiatic inundation by crushing the Asiatic soldiers of the Red Army.

This intra-European Orientalism provided an ideological justification for Nazi Germany's occupation policy to treat their Slavic neighbours as colonial natives. In the 'Wild East', the Nazis' racial imagination became unbridled.[50] Slavic people under occupation were subject to discrimination and segregation policies based on a racial hierarchy with the Reich Germans on top. Colonial subjects in eastern Slavic occupied lands were not allowed to enter the cinema, music concerts, exhibitions, libraries, museums, theatres, and the like. The possession of bicycles, cameras, radios, leather briefcases, musical instruments, telephones, and phonographs was forbidden to Poles. The 'civilising mission' of the Nazis co-evolved with the idea of deporting Poles to either Brazil or western Siberia. What gained final approval among various occupation plans was a sort of ethnic cleansing to work Poles to death through slave labour and exterminate the Jews. These options were not imaginable vis-à-vis the French, Dutch, Belgians, Danes, Norwegians, and others under occupation in occidental Europe.

Indeed, the Nazis' brutal rule over the Slavic peoples can be interpreted as colonialist violence directed against oriental Europe. A postcolonial approach to the Nazi occupation policy in eastern Europe argues for the continuity between Wilhelmian Germany's colonial rule over South-West Africa and Nazi rule over eastern Europe in the domain of discourses, institutions, laws, and human resources.[51] The list of examples that show this historical continuity appears quite rich: the genocidal rhetoric of *Vernichtungskrieg* and *Konzentrationslager*, legally institutionalised racism to prohibit interracial marriage, the racist geography and anthropology of *Lebensraum* by Friedrich Ratzel, the scientific racism discourse of ethnic physiognomy by Eugen Fischer, direct personal connections between Franz Ritter von Epp and Nazi combatant leaders such as Georg Strasser and Ernst Röhm, and the Göring family's history in Africa. The historical links between Wilhelmian Germany's colonialism in South-West Africa and the Nazis' rule over eastern Europe and the Holocaust are to some extent undeniable.

However, historical links between German colonialism in what is now Namibia and the Nazis' paroxysmal racism should not give way to another peculiarity of German colonialism, which represented the newest version of the German *Sonderweg*. A transnational history of colonialism would reveal the connectedness of violence on a global scale. For instance, the term *concentration camp* was originally invented by the Spanish colonialists in Cuba in 1896. It was translated into English by Americans and reintroduced institutionally by the British 'pacification' policy to round up and isolate Boer civilians during the bloody Anglo-Boer war at the turn of the twentieth century. Ratzel's concept of *Lebensraum* was presented earlier by Robert Knox, and as Paul Rohrbach points out, the Nazis' racist discourses were German expressions translated from Anglo-American and French discourses that justified their colonial mass killings.[52] Viewed as transnational formations of modernity, we can see that these colonial regimes articulated their violent impulses under different historical conditions while sharing a common colonialist code.

If Anglo-American and French colonialists saw their own civilising missions as lying chiefly outside Europe, Nazi Germany's colonial impulses treated their Slavic neighbours in a similar fashion to their colonial subjects in non-European countries. Italian fascists regarded southern Slavs in Yugoslavia as an enemy to be annihilated, too, but they could only build the racial supremacist state in Libya and Ethiopia and justified their mass killings in Africa by manipulating racist ideology. Apart from the Nazi singularity of intra-European colonialism, certain

historical connections between colonial genocide and Nazi crimes are undeniable. 'Western' colonialism provided an important historical precedent for the Nazis' genocidal thinking. Genocide of the native Americans on the frontiers, British colonial genocide in India and Africa, Stalinist mass murder of the kulaks, and the Holocaust all belong in the same category of 'categorial murder' spurred by the essentialist tendency to categorise others on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, and so on.[53]

Contemporary ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sudan, and other places should also be seen in continuity, not with premodern barbarity, but instead with colonial violence in the transnational formation of modernity. This brutal colonial legacy was bequeathed to colonial subjects who were reborn as the modern subjects of independent nation states in the post-colonial era, just as European mass dictatorships in the interwar period were shaped by their colonial experiences and imperial projects. The reason why non-European postcolonial mass dictatorships, often manifested as development dictatorships, resemble their European predecessors can be explicated from this transnational vantage point. Interrogating this critical transnational dimension may provide a key for understanding the basis of mass dictatorship and mass democracy in the post-colonial era.

Notes

1. It is noteworthy too that Francoism is often defined as '*despotismo moderno*' (modern despotism) because it constitutes an alliance of conservatives and the military without mass involvement. Modern despotism of this kind differs conceptually from mass dictatorship in that it does not rely on the mobilisation of the masses or on intervention in their private lives. See Salvador Giner, 'Political Economy, Legitimacy and the State in Southern Europe', in Ray Hudson and Jim Lewis, eds, *Uneven Developments in Southern Europe* (London: Methuen, 1985). For the general introduction of mass dictatorship, see Jie-Hyun Lim, 'Series Introduction: Mapping Mass Dictatorship: Towards a Transnational History of Twentieth Century Dictatorship', in Jie-Hyun Lim and Karen Petrone, eds *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship: Global Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 1–22.
2. See David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London: Arnold, 2000), pp. 20–3.
3. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. xi–xii, 28, 152, and passim.
4. For 'East' and 'West' as the imaginative geography and the schema of co-figuration of East and West, see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), pp. 49–72; Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 40–71. It should be

noted that Germany had to refer to France as its own putative 'West' because it was situated in the 'East' from France's perspective. The co-figuration of French 'civilisation' and German 'culture' in Norbert Elias's analysis shows this succinctly. See Nagao Nishikawa, *Zouho Kokkyou no Koekata* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2001), Ch. 6.

5. Daniel Schoenpflug's attempt to comprehend François Furet's and Ernst Nolte's comparative history of totalitarian movements within the framework of 'histoire croisée' is suggestive, but its limits are clear. To say nothing of 'linear causality' and 'potential oversimplifications' in Nolte's thesis on 'Bolshevik's challenge and Nazi's response', Furet seemed to stop at the point of making the analogies between French Jacobins of 1793 and Russian Bolsheviks of 1917. See Daniel Schoenpflug, 'Histoires croisées: François Furet, Ernst Nolte and a Comparative History of Totalitarian Movements', *European History Quarterly* 37/2 (2007), 265–90.
6. David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), pp. 4–9.
7. Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture, and Community in Interwar Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. x.
8. For the continuities, but not necessarily simplified, between colonial genocide and the Holocaust see Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Die Geburt des Ostlandes aus dem Geiste des Kolonialismus: Die nationalsozialistische Eroberungs- und Beherrschungspolitik in (post-)kolonialer Perspektive', *Sozial Geschichte* 19/1 (2004), 10–43; Benjamin Madley, 'From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by the Nazis in Eastern Europe?', *European History Quarterly* 35/3 (2005), 429–464; Sven Lindquist, *Exterminate All the Brutes* (New York: New Press, 1996); Enzo Traverso, *The Origins of Nazi Violence* (New York: New Press, 2003). In his recent work Enzo Traverso goes further to put the totalitarian terror in the peculiar context of the European civil war. Enzo Traverso, *Im Bann der Gewalt: Der europäische Bürgerkrieg 1914–1945* (München: Siedler, 2008), tr. Michael Bayer.
9. Robert Gerwarth and Stephan Malinowski, 'Der Holocaust als 'kolonialer Genozid'? Europäische Kolonialgewalt und nationalsozialistischer Vernichtungskrieg', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 33 (2007), 445.
10. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, tr. Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 895.
11. Yi Sun-T'ak, *Ch'oegŭn Segeilchugi*, repr. edn (Hakminsa, 1997), 15.
12. Ibid., 40, 43, 54, 76, 77, and passim.
13. Ibid., 41.
14. Ibid., 125.
15. Ibid., 116.
16. Ibid., 128–30.
17. *Chŏson-jungang ilbo*, 25 January 1934.
18. Ibid., 193–205.
19. For Polish socialist irredentists, See Jie-Hyun Lim, 'Labour and the National Question in Poland', in Stefan Berger and Angel Smith, eds, *Nationalism, Labour and Ethnicity 1870–1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).
20. S. C. Bose, 'The Fundamental Problems of India', in Sisir K. Bose and Sugata Bose, eds, *The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 319–20.

21. Benedict Anderson, *Spectres of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeastern Asia and the World* (London: Verson, 1998), pp. 1–2.
22. Enrico Corradini, 'The Principles of Nationalism', 'Nationalism and the Syndicates', in Adryan Lyttleton, ed., *Italian Fascisms: From Pareto to Gentile* (London: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 146–47, 159, 163.
23. A. James Gregor, 'A Modernizing Dictatorship', in Roger Griffin, ed., *International Fascism: Theories, Causes and the New Consensus* (London: Arnold, 1998), pp. 130–32.
24. Juan J. Linz, 'Political Space and Fascism as a Late-comer', in Roger Griffin, ed., *Fascism: Critical Concepts in Political Science* (London: Routledge, 2004), vol. 2, p. 152.
25. Stanley G. Payne, 'Fascism and Communism', *TMPR* 1 (Winter 2000), 3, 5.
26. John Lukacs, 'The Universality of National Socialism (The Mistaken Category of Fascism)', *TMPR* 3 (Summer 2002), 113.
27. If the discursive position of Fascist Italy was 'East in the West', Russia at the turn of the twentieth century was regarded as a 'developing' or 'peripheral capitalist' society at best. See Theodor Shanin, 'Introduction', in Shanin, ed., *Late Marx and the Russian Road: Marx and 'The Peripheries of Capitalism'* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p. x.
28. Henry A. Turner, Jr., 'Fascism and Modernization', *World Politics* 24 (July 1972), 547–64.
29. Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens, and Scott Lash, *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).
30. Dominic Sachsenmaier, 'Searching for Alternatives to Western Modernity – Cross-Cultural Approaches in the Aftermath of the Great War', unpublished paper.
31. George L. Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution: Towards a General Theory of Fascism* (New York: H. Fertig, 1999), p. 28.
32. Naoki Sakai, p. 50.
33. See N. Elias, *Über den Prozess der Zivilization*, Korean trans. Mi-ae Pak (Seoul: Han'gilsa, 1996), pp. 33–75; A. Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), pp. 93–106; Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 3–13; Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. xxx.
34. For a persuasive Marxist critique of the national economy and Third Worldism, see Nigel Harris, *The End of the Third World* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1987). Perhaps it would be a too-far-fetched argument that National Socialism was interwar Germany's version of Third Worldism. But the widespread revengism against the West among ordinary Germans implied their frustration and fear of relative 'underdevelopment' and 'backwardness'.
35. E. J. Hobsbawm, 'Out of the Ashes', in R. Blackburn, ed., *After the Fall: The Failure of Communism and the Future of Socialism* (London: Verso 1991), p. 318.
36. J. Nehru, *Towards a Socialist Order* (New Delhi: All India Congress Committee, 1956), p. 4.

37. See Jie-Hyun Lim, 'Befreiung oder Modernisierung? Sozialismus als ein Weg der anti-westlichen Modernisierung in unterentwickelten Ländern', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung* Jg. 43, nr. 2 (2001).
38. S. Schram and H. C. d'Encausse, 'Introduction', in *Marxism and Asia* (London: Allen Lane, 1969), p. 4.
39. R. Ulyanovsky, *National Liberation* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978), pp. 271–72.
40. Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution*, p. 76; G. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1975), p. 1.
41. Daniel Schoenpflug, 'Histoires croisées', 285.
42. Eugene Weber, *Varieties of Fascism* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co, 1964), p. 139.
43. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses*.
44. A. Dirk Moses, 'Empire, Colony, Genocide: Keywords and the Philosophy', in A. Dirk Moses, ed., *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History* (New York: Berghan, 2008), p. 18.
45. Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2001), pp. 428–29.
46. Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage, 1998), p. xiii.
47. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1936–45: Nemesis* (New York: Norton, 2001), p. 400, 405.
48. Ibid., 400–5.
49. See B. Lagowski, 'Ideologia Polska. Zachodnie aspiracje i wschodnie skłonności (Polish Ideology: Western Aspirations and Eastern Inclinations)', in *Polska i Korea: Proces modernizacji w perspektywie historycznej*, ed. Jie-Hyun Lim and Michał Śliwa (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Naukowe WSP, 1997), 88–97.
50. In the 1960s some of Karl May's novels were made into films, usually with the scenery of the then Yugoslavia playing the Wild West.
51. See Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Die Geburt des Ostlandes aus dem Geiste des Kolonialismus'; Jürgen Zimmerer, 'Holocaust und Kolonialismus', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 51, Part 12 (2003). 1098–1119; Benjamin Madley, 'From Africa to Auschwitz'.
52. Sven Lindquist, op. cit.
53. Zygmunt Bauman, 227–28.

3

Mass Dictatorship and the 'Modernist State'

Roger Griffin

Dictatorship and totalitarianism

To begin to write about mass dictatorship in relation to modernity is to walk into a minefield of the sort of definitional and methodological problems encountered in all comparative history. Every dictatorship is both unique and part of a more general pattern, and finding the appropriate grouping of similar regimes to compare meaningfully and the appropriate conceptual framework within which to carry out the study is deeply problematic. Once 'modernity', one of the most multifaceted and contested concepts in the human sciences, is thrown into the pot, the task of writing something coherent and significant is multiplied even in a purely Western context, where an enormous literature already exists on dictatorial regimes in Europe and Latin America. For European human scientists the task of analysis and generalisation is compounded further once the remit is enlarged further to include the plethora of non-European, especially Asian, dictatorships of modern times, all of which arose in quite distinct cultural, political, and cosmological traditions, and all of which respond to the impact of specific conjunctures or episodes of modernisation and Westernisation[1] in a unique way.[2]

There is, of course, a perennial tension in the human sciences between the 'idiographic' concern with uniqueness and 'nomothetic' concerns with general patterns. However, in this instance the tension is especially pronounced – and intensified rather than relieved by a deep-seated post-modern suspicion of 'big pictures' which set out to offer panoramas of the patterns observable in vast geographical or temporal areas of reality at the expense of contaminating the analysis with the virus of a 'metanarrative'. Against this background I propose to do no

more in this introductory chapter than offer a brief clarification of the key concepts involved in this area, followed by a theory of the relationship between modernity and one particular type of mass dictatorship. These are certainly not to be taken as definitive pronouncements. They are presented in the hope that they will be found of some practical value to specialists working on specific dictatorships or their comparison. The methodological premise for carrying out this exercise is to be found in Max Weber's theory of the ideal type which circumvents the trap of essentialising concepts by stressing not only the constructed nature of all generic concepts but also their purely heuristic value. Likewise, the metanarrative offered here to underpin my account of modernity and reactions to it is immunised against the objectives which postmodernists make to any sort of *grand récit*, because it is a 'reflexive metanarrative': it is presented, not as *the* story, but simply as *a* story of modernisation's relationship to mass dictatorship; an exploratory device, not a revealed truth.

On this methodological premise what is constructed here is an ideal-typical distinction between two types of mass dictatorship, the totalitarian and the authoritarian, each of which has a distinctive relationship to modernity. To clarify the nature of this task it may be useful to dwell on an unresolved ambiguity in the conceptualisation of totalitarianism that lies at the heart of Friedrich and Brzezinski's (henceforth F&B's) seminal text *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (1965) but which has attracted too little academic attention to date. The analysis they offer is famous for the 'six point' checklist of defining traits, which is generally summarised in such a way that the emphasis is on the imposed monopoly of coercive power and enforced destruction of individual freedoms. Totalitarianism thus becomes equated with the *repression* of pluralism, individualism, and freedom of speech and the imposition of a uniform world view. One text written for high school students summarises the hallmarks of totalitarianism according to F&B as (1) an official ideology to which general adherence was demanded, the ideology intended to achieve a 'perfect final stage of mankind'; (2) a single mass party, hierarchically organised, closely interwoven with the state bureaucracy and typically led by one man; (3) monopolistic control of the armed forces; (4) a similar monopoly of the means of effective mass communication; (5) a system of terroristic police control; and (6) central control and direction of the entire economy.[3]

The implication is that totalitarianism is to be conceived as an essentially repressive, reactionary, liberticide form of politics, a modern form

of despotism. However, F&B's original text shows how misleading it would be to equate 'demanded' and 'intended' simply with the pathological ethos produced by the blend of coercion with state propaganda dramatised in George Orwell's *1984* (1949) and explored with such sustained intellectual passion by Hannah Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). Important nuances have become lost in the compression of their original argument. Point (1) above, concerning an 'official ideology', is a summary of a more nuanced statement by F&B that characterises it as 'elaborate' and 'focused and projected towards a perfect final state of mankind' and as containing 'a chiliastic claim, based on the radical rejection of the existing society with conquest of the world for a new one'.

But this original passage *itself* is a summary of a more discursive account of the totalitarian project offered in another passage in the book, one that highlights the regime's bid to create a 'new man' and utterly rejects any temptation to reduce the motivation behind totalitarianism to nihilism or the unbridled lust for personal power of a corrupt elite or megalomaniacal leader. Instead, genuinely totalitarian ideologies contain 'strongly Utopian elements' or 'some kind of notion of a paradise on earth'. This gives them 'a pseudo-religious quality', eliciting in 'their less critical followers a depth of conviction and a fervour of devotion found only among persons inspired by a transcendent faith', to a point where they act as what Marx described as 'the opium of the people'. In an important excursus F&B also insist that democratic political programmes are the descendants of what they call 'totalitarian movements', which corrupt and pervert the ethos of pluralistic politics into the ideological rationale for autocracy.[4] F&B thus recognise that a totalitarian state seeks the monopoly of all aspects of power over society for a 'higher' purpose, even if somehow it is the freedom-crushing side effect of this ideologically motivated drive in the practice of regimes that has so radically shaped the way their account of totalitarianism has survived in the collective imagination of political scientists and their students till this day.

Thirty-five years later another seminal definition of totalitarianism was offered that considerably refined F&B's conceptualisation of its utopian, 'religious' thrust towards a new order and a new man. Appropriately enough, Emilio Gentile's article 'The Sacralisation of Politics: Definitions, Interpretations and Reflections on the Question of Secular Religion and Totalitarianism', a chapter from the Italian book that has been published in English translation as *Religion as Politics*,[5] appeared in the very first issue of the journal *Totalitarian*

Movements and Political Religions. In it Gentile offered the following discursive definition:

> The term 'totalitarianism' can be taken as meaning: an *experiment in political domination* undertaken by a *revolutionary movement*, with an *integralist conception* of politics, that aspires toward a *monopoly of power* and that, after having secured power, whether by legal or illegal means, destroys or transforms the previous regime and constructs a new state based on a *single-party regime*, with the chief objective of *conquering society*. That is, it seeks the subordination, integration and homogenisation of the governed on the basis of the *integral politicisation of existence*, whether collective or individual, interpreted according to the categories, the myths and the values of a *palingenetic ideology*, institutionalised in the form of a *political religion*, that aims to shape the individual and the masses through an *anthropological revolution* in order to regenerate the human being and create the *new man*, who is dedicated in body and soul to the realisation of the revolutionary and imperialistic policies of the totalitarian party. The ultimate goal is to create a *new civilisation* along ultra-nationalist lines.[6]

From such approaches totalitarianism emerges not as a system of total state control but as a project for the total transformation of society and of human nature itself.[7]

The totalitarian mass dictatorship

Taking as our starting point the emphasis on the utopian movement driving totalitarianism implicit in F&B and fully elaborated by Emilio Gentile, we can postulate the existence of a category of political regime we propose to call the '*totalitarian mass dictatorship*'. Its definitional property is that it makes a sustained effort in various spheres of state intervention – political, economic, social, and cultural – to exercise power as far as possible through the masses in order to bring about their eventual emancipation from the old order and integration within an eventually sustainable new order, one which sets out to eradicate the alleged anarchy, decadence, and corruption generated over the now superseded phase of history embodied in the status quo. This means that any coercion, propaganda, social engineering, terror, or persecution to which the population is subjected by the new autocracy is regarded as necessary to complete the transition to the new stage of civilisation

and that the victims are regarded as collateral damage in the struggle for a better world.

Under totalitarianism, the dominant elements within the ruling elite – rather than be motivated by megalomania, self-interest, or sadism – set out to conquer society and gain extensive power over the behaviour and thinking of the masses not as an end in itself but as an integral part of a wholesale experiment in social engineering made possible by the unprecedented power of the modern state. Its most fanatical members at all levels of authority see themselves constituting the nucleus or vanguard of a totalising populist movement and the executive of a total social transformation that will eventually mass-produce a new type of human being integrated within a new community. In his chapter 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship', Lim also stresses the centrality of this 'anthropological revolution' to totalitarianism:

> It is not a coincidence that both Italian Fascism and Stalinism very loudly proclaimed their intention to create the 'new man', 'homo fascistus' and 'homo sovieticus' respectively, through an anthropological revolution. Neither of these regimes reached perfection, but both had been driven by an unstinting effort to perform that revolution.[8]

In the visionary and delusory scheme of historical development postulated by the ideologues of totalitarianism, the process they have launched will be finally complete when the basis of the regime is genuine populist consensus for its values, goals, and policies, allowing it to work with a minimum of state coercion and terror. In preparation for this stage the new generation reared by the regime (the youth) and the most fanatical of the pre-revolutionary generations will willingly 'work towards'[9] the leadership, whose charisma and spontaneous popularity stem from the fact that it (or at least its dominant personality) embodies a palingenetic myth of the ideal society now enjoying deep-seated cultural hegemony. According to the idealistic futural scheme of totalitarian ideologues, if their project were ever realised, the coercive regime and terror state it can sometimes give rise to in the process of socially engineering the new world will eventually wither away, though not the need for a strong state to govern society. The result in the totalitarian *imaginaire* would be a dictatorship of the masses, for the masses, and by the masses.

Four highly diverse experiments in establishing regimes that broadly correspond to this definition of the 'totalitarian mass dictatorship' were

undertaken in certain phases of their development by Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Bolshevik Russia, and Communist China. It is important to recognise that in each case the totalitarian regime was able to take power and make a sustained attempt to realise its vision of total societal transformation, at least in part, only because, in a highly unusual conjuncture of social breakdown with wide-spread messianic hopes, a populist momentum for revolutionary change – 'palingenetic community' – spontaneously arose from below, which made an important segment of the 'masses' (proletarian and bourgeois) malleable by the dictatorship from above.[10] Moreover, assessments of totalitarian mass dictatorship's importance as a historical phenomenon should not lose sight of the scores of secular totalitarian *movements* of the extreme right and left that arose in the twentieth century in various parts of the Europeanised world, movements that would have attempted to establish a totalitarian mass dictatorship had they been able to gain state power and retain it long enough to undertake society's total regeneration. Their presence within liberal democracies had a major impact on the history of inter-war Europe and continues to compromise the ethos of liberal democracy today, even if they have largely lost their potential to destabilise parliamentary politics.

The three-point syndrome that characterises a totalitarian mass dictatorship can be summarised thus:

i) It strives to realise an ideologically elaborated (palingenetic) project of creating a new type of society and a new type of 'man' through an all-pervasive politico-cultural and anthropological revolution.
ii) It deploys coercion and social control – and in extreme cases terror and mass persecution – not as ends in themselves but to reinforce the drive towards maximising the cultural hegemony of the new order through mass mobilisation and consensual participation in the new society it forms. This may involve removing from society (through incarceration, exile, or liquidation) those perceived as active enemies of the new order or as passive obstacles to its realisation.
iii) The mass single party, mass youth and leisure organisations, the displays of spectacular politics, the propaganda, and political religion which characterise the regime are intended by the new ruling elite not to delude or brainwash the masses but to legitimate and sacralise the new society and thus contribute to engineering a new mentality, a vast community of human beings of the new age inspired by the same faith.

The authoritarian mass dictatorship

As characterised above, totalitarian mass dictatorship is to be distinguished from the *authoritarian mass dictatorship* exemplified by most military and some personal dictatorships (regimes of military or colonial occupation by definition lack a 'mass' populist dimension). In such regimes power is exercised *over* the masses, with no serious intention to inaugurate a new era or socially engineer a new man. However, rather than exercise power in a nakedly despotic way, most modern authoritarian regimes go to considerable lengths to legitimise themselves by staging public displays of popular support and collective enthusiasm for the regime or its leader. Some may even hold plebiscites, create an artificial leader cult from above, or emulate the external trappings of fascism or Bolshevism. This they do by deliberately creating a facade of dynamism, youth, and radicalism, cynically adopting the language of revolutionary myth, forming youth movements, organising a nationwide single party with mass membership, and staging elaborate displays of political religion and charismatic politics but with no genuine palingenetic purpose. In short, authoritarian mass dictatorships tend to emulate totalitarian ones to establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the 'people', but they are essentially coercive and reactionary.

In such regimes the monopolistic control of the armed forces, effective mass communication, and the economy, as well as the police control of society, whether terroristic or not, referred to in F&B's six-point model, is exercised for fundamentally reactionary, antirevolutionary ends. The utopian promises of a better future serve only as the pretext for social control and the rationalisation of mass regimentation. The main purpose of exercising power, beyond satisfying the self-indulgence of corrupt or megalomaniacal individuals, is the eradication of social instability, anarchy, pluralism, and potential opposition from sectors of civil society, whether the extreme left or extreme right, and the safeguarding of the power and privilege enjoyed by traditional power elites under the protection of the autocratic state. As a result, the authoritarian mass dictatorship, especially if it resorts to terror against those deemed in the civilian population to be state enemies, corresponds much closer than the totalitarian one, as we have described it, to the Orwellian dystopia. In such a regime politics has become perverted into a sinister stage set, where politics has become a charade devoid of idealism, goals, or substance and the state in practice orchestrates untold physical and

psychological suffering to the point where it assumes the macabre ritualistic dimension portrayed in Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*.

Whereas a central drive of the totalitarian mass dictatorship is to achieve cultural hegemony for its project of retooling society, any semblance of it observable in authoritarian mass dictatorship reveals itself on closer examination to be predicated on enforced consensus – what Gramsci called 'dominion'. Its leader cult is a sham. Its ritualised displays of popular enthusiasm for the regime are feigned, expressing not mass mobilisation and spontaneous fanaticism but mass disempowerment, subjugation, and fear; lip service without devotion, collaboration without conviction. The displays of political religion staged by such an authoritarian dictatorship approximate much closer than under a genuinely *totalitarian* state to the 'aestheticisation of politics' described by Walter Benjamin; namely, as a technique of mass depoliticisation and brainwashing. In the twentieth century Latin America was particularly fecund in producing such regimes, Pinochet's Chile and Argentina's military junta being outstanding examples, while Ceauşescu's Romania and Saddam Hussein's Iraq provide further case studies in the genus. Such regimes suggest that the Weberian triad of tradition, legal rational, and charismatic politics needs to be supplemented by a fourth category in the modern age: 'autocratic politics'. By this I mean the exercise of power by a regime which is sanctioned, not by tradition, by legal rationality, or by *genuine* charismatic authority, but through the imposition, rationalised or thinly camouflaged by cynical propaganda, of a modern despotism through a propaganda machine underpinned by the constant threat that violence will be employed against personal or collective targets to crush dissent.

It should be noted that this ideal-typical distinction between authoritarianism and totalitarianism is implicit in much writing on modern dictatorships, not just in English (e.g., in the work of Juan Linz),[11] but in other languages.[12] It should also be clear that it is a distinction that has important implications for the 'mass support' which plays such an important role in Jie-Hyun Lim's analysis of 'mass dictatorship'.[13] The authoritarian mass dictatorship seeks to manufacture genuine or simulated mass consensus to fulfil the *reactionary* goal of neutralising the anarchic, subversive, decadent energies potential of the 'masses' and enlisting the support of the productive forces of the state. In this way they attempt to integrate them into a regulated society without disrupting traditional hierarchies of power, often using spectacular displays of political religion so as to demobilise the masses while providing the illusion of their empowerment. Walter Benjamin's theory of the 'aestheticisation

of politics' fully applies to *authoritarian* mass dictatorships. The aim of consensus manufacture and the regimentation of the masses under a totalitarian regime is different. It serves to turn them into a mass of individuals either proactively enthusiastic or sufficiently passive and pliable to be integrated into a *new order*, a new community in which traditional elites and social hierarchies are overthrown. The aim is to turn the 'masses' not just into an agency of support and legitimacy needed by a ruling elite within an 'mass authoritarian dictatorship' but into the collective historical subject of a *charismatic* process of communal self-transformation and renewal which will continue beyond the death of the present leadership.

Having hopefully imposed an ideal typical dichotomy of concepts on the chaos of the term 'mass dictatorship',[14] we now attempt to put some order in the second nebulous term which is the subject of this chapter: modernity. To do this means starting not with modernity but with a related and no less contested term: 'modernism'. Furthermore, to understand modern dictatorships we need to travel back into the mists of time when human beings first started imposing elaborate collective meanings, familiar to us as 'culture', on the alien world in which they found themselves.

A primordialist concept of modernism

In *Modernism and Fascism* (2007),[15] part 1, or half the book, is devoted to building up step by step a new model of the relationship between modernity and modernism. One important inference to be drawn from the six chapters in which the argument gradually unfolds is that the more devastating modernity's impact on a traditional society, the more powerful the countervailing reaction precipitated in those whose social and ontological security has been threatened. This is so because the forces unleashed by the various destabilising forces compounded within modernisation – such as atomisation, secularisation, materialism, individualism, rationalisation, disenchantment, and the disembedding of time and space – have the aggregate effect of eroding or in some cases destroying the subjective sense of rootedness, home, and belonging that is a premise of all viable human existence. It is in this sense that the cultural historian Fredric Jameson writes of modernity as a 'catastrophe' that 'dashes traditional structures and lifeways to pieces, sweeps away the sacred, undermines immemorial habits and inherited languages, and leaves the world as a set of raw materials to be reconstructed rationally'.[16]

The influential social anthropologist of an earlier generation, Peter Berger, refers to what Jameson calls the 'lifeway' as the *nomos*, the sphere of ritually underpinned suprapersonal meaning and values that constitute the *sacred canopy* of a given society held aloft by the elaborate myths and rituals that formed the basis of existence in pre-modern societies, whether minute tribes or entire civilisations. This, Berger argues, is not merely some colourful backcloth for the material process of daily life but a primordial, vital human necessity to counteract the instinctual fear of personal extinction without some form of suprapersonal purpose or transcendence. It is a fear stemming from the human reflexivity that makes our species uniquely aware of what philosophers call euphemistically our finitude: our mortality.[17] Seen from this standpoint, the ultimate purpose of all human cultural production is to create or maintain an essentially fictional sphere of communal custom- and ritual-based suprapersonal meaning to prevent the descent into a bottomless dread of the existential void at the core of each individualised being, of the nothingness in which the fragile bubble of each life floats till it pops.[18] From this ruthlessly disenchanted perspective, then, culture reveals itself to be an elaborate trompe l'oeil, an integral component of the socially constructed stage set on which the drama of all life is lived out at both the macro and micro levels of social being.

The social function of the sacred canopy of a totalising *nomos* is thus to act communally as what Berger calls society's 'shield against terror', as a refuge from the horror of anomie. The stronger their culture, the less vulnerable human beings are collectively, since their existence is lived out within what Friedrich Nietzsche called 'a fixed horizon framed by myth', which endows existence with a 'higher', suprapersonal meaning. But once the sacred canopy protecting them from the prospect of personal annihilation begins to be slowly degraded, or is even ripped to shreds by a flood of 'culture-cidal' forces, ancient culture-healing and society-renewing reflexes are automatically set in motion that work to put in place an effective communal *nomos*, thus repairing the canopy of transcendent meaning or, in extreme cases, erecting an entirely new one.

It follows from this analysis that, despite Jameson's reference to the devastation of the old *nomos* leading to the *rational* reconstruction of a new one, every act of replacing the lost world of transcendence involves intensive – though in the modern age frequently subliminal or highly *rationalised* – mythopoeic activity, especially of the regenerative, redemptive, palingenetic variety. One well-documented example of how this largely subliminal human reflex to mend the sacred canopy operated in

pre-modern societies is the 'revitalisation movement'. When a community entered a collective crisis in which traditional beliefs, ceremonies, and rites of passage[19] failed to guarantee cultural cohesion and a fixed metaphysical horizon, the conditions were created for the emergence of a minority 'breakaway' movement, whose members might eventually provide the nucleus of a new community and a new social order. Following the triadic stages of the rite of passage, the initiate moves from a 'stable' initial situation through a *liminal* phase of *predictable* transition and disaggregation to reach a new stable life phase which brings closure to the process of change.

In the case of a revitalisation movement, however, society enters an open-ended *liminoid* situation whose resolution demands a groundbreaking, pathfinding, culture-generating initiative to lead at least a segment of the original community into a newly constituted, newly *invented* society founded on a new *nomos*.[20] The history of millenarianism in the Christianised world is teeming with examples of this generic phenomenon, and doubtless studies of Asian societies by cultural anthropologists reveal an identical pattern even if the cosmological assumptions are radically different. From a rigorously secular anthropological perspective, the genesis not just of Christianity but of Judaism, Islam, and all religions, great and small, along with the civilisations founded on them, can be traced back to processes of cultural revitalisation born of material economic, ecological, social, military, or political crisis, decay, or breakdown that threatened a society's existence as a homogeneous community.[21] Just as stars in a galaxy are constantly forming and dying, so the history of humanity is one of cultures constantly coming into being, changing, and perishing in one form to mutate, whether slowly or dramatically, into another in an eternal process of birth and decay.

The revitalisation movement enabled a traditional society that entered a profound crisis, instead of being destroyed or absorbed by a more powerful one, to be reconstituted through internal regenerative mechanisms. If the instinctive self-healing mechanisms worked, a segment of humanity emerged once more with an intact shield against anomie provided by a significantly modified world view, a new *nomos*. Indeed, without infinitely repeated episodes of social palingenesis, human societies and cultures would have been condemned either to total extinction or to total stasis. One recurrent hallmark of successful processes of social rebirth has been the emergence of a *propheta*, a figure credited with the supernatural powers of an inspired 'charismatic' leader, who enables his or her followers to complete the transition to a new

order and put a final end to the decline. To do this has meant presiding over a phase of 'mazeway resynthesis' – in other words, the elaboration of a totalising world view and ritual forged from both traditional and newly improvised, 'invented', elements capable of supplying the new *nomos* of the embryonic community. The intense process of syncretism and hybridisation this involves is known to anthropologists as 'ludic recombination'.[22]

Modernism and Fascism argues that the atomisation and secularisation of society fostered by Western modernisation progressively destroyed the foundations of traditional feudal, absolutist, theocratic, and eventually even Enlightenment-based society. As a result, 'high' modernity was, by the second half of the twentieth century, bringing about in the European heartland an unprecedented state of *permanent* liminoidality, which was experienced by those with a strong psychological need for closure, order, and metaphysical certainty – predominantly the intelligentsia and artistic avant-garde – as sustained anomie, as permanent transition, as decadence. The instinctive, primordial human urge to reconstitute the disappearing nomic world and find a new sense of belonging and transcendental purpose could not aggregate itself into a collective movement of rebirth throughout any one society, let alone in an entire nation or the whole of the West. Instead, it expressed itself in a highly fragmented, atomised way, proliferating thousands of alternative *nomoi* and action plans for regenerating the world, whether in the microcosm of a few enlightened people or at the level of society as a whole. Aggregated with all the others, each movement formed one of the pixels constituting the familiar face of modernity. Rather than being housed under a single sacred canopy, the West witnessed an extraordinary proliferation of new canopies, some as vast as football stadia, some more like minute personal sunshades to keep out the blinding glare of nothingness.

It is on the basis of the primordialist theory of cultural production outlined earlier that I argue that the term 'modernism' should be extended[23] from the sphere of artistic and cultural history to all social, technocratic, and political attempts under high modernity to create a new regenerative *nomos*, if not for 'the world', however conceived, then for a particular grouping of humanity. What distinguishes modernism from the cosmological creativity of the traditional revitalisation is that the assault on the status quo is conceived as a bid to resolve the decadence and spiritual bankruptcy produced by modernisation. Within the conceptual framework I propose, cultural products as different as Picasso's paintings and Hitler's *Mein Kampf* can be approached as two

radically different permutations of the same primordial drive to overcome the decadence of the present phase of history and create a new world of higher meaning and transcendent purpose.

When modernism operates not in the subjective inner world of the artist but in the external, outer world of sociocultural transformation, its hallmark is the quest for an *alternative modernity*, for a society bound together, in Nietzsche's terms, by a new 'fixed horizon framed by myth'. It is an interpretation of modernism that has a profound bearing on the way we conceive the relationship of modernity in what we have termed 'totalitarian mass dictatorships' and brings us finally to the theme of this volume.

Totalitarian mass dictatorship as a form of political modernism

The first point to emerge from this (necessarily highly condensed) analysis takes us to the heart of the topic of 'mass dictatorship and modernity'. Despite sharing many features as systems of government, especially when contrasted with the evolution of political regimes throughout human history until the French Revolution, there is a fundamental difference between the authoritarian and totalitarian mass dictatorship in their relationship to modernity. Of course, both are products of modernity in that they employ the executive power of the modern state and the unprecedented technocratic, executive, and bureaucratic resources at its disposal to impose its rule and implement its policies. From a liberal humanist or democratic perspective they may seem equally despotic and repugnant. But with the sense of history and temporality inherent to their policies subjected to forensic examination, the cleavage becomes apparent. The genesis of the authoritarian mass dictatorship lies in the neoconservative bid by power elites to solve the socio-political crisis occasioned by the collapse of traditional society and to regulate the tsunami-like wave of anarchic energies unleashed by the rise of the masses so that traditional society can assume a modern dynamic guise without shattering the pre-liberal status quo. It represents, therefore, a modernising but *reactionary*, antirevolutionary, and essentially repressive form of conservatism. The project is one of regulating modernisation in a spirit of containment.

In contrast, the totalitarian regime pursues the modernist goal of resolving the nomic crisis of modernity itself by offering a totalising sense that history can be remade, that an *alternative modernity* can be constructed, that time can be renewed, that a transcendent sense of

suprapersonal (but no longer metaphysical) purpose can be restored to human existence not just at the collective political level but at the most intimate personal and existential one. It is characterised in its various fascist and communist forms by a *futural temporality* which seeks a break with the past, a break that makes it hostile to conservative elites, even if it is forced to make compromises with them in order to achieve legitimacy and take advantage of the military, ideological, executive, economic, and technocratic power they hold. Whereas the authoritarian regime is usually imposed from above without being brought to power by a mass movement or by a vanguard movement working in the name of the masses, the totalitarian mass dictatorship seeks to implement a programme of change intended to resolve the liminoid conditions of society and bring completion and closure to modernity's open-ended rite of passage from tradition to a new age.

The second point to emerge is that the totalitarian movement driving a mass dictatorship is not just – or not even – a degenerate descendant of democratic movements, as F&B suggested. First and foremost, it is a modern variant of the archetypal revitalisation movement on which the evolution and metamorphosis of human societies have always been based. Authoritarianism seeks to resolve the anarchic conditions of modernity by forcing society into a superficially modernised and bureaucratised version of the traditional order that prevailed before the descent into liminoidality – the 'chaos' of modernity so hated by conservatives – while adopting non-traditional forms of socio-political organisation such as the military junta and personal dictator. By contrast, totalitarianism seeks to drive society forward to a new order and an anthropological revolution and thus attempts to exert control over every aspect of existence, not just political and economic but social, aesthetic, and moral; their tendency is to generate political religion and charisma, to bring about the transition to a new type of society.

The third point is that it is necessary to recognise the revolutionary and, in the minds of the ruling elite, *liberating* dynamics of the political religion and leader cult of a totalitarian mass democracy. Their original goal is not mass coercion and brainwashing, or the reduction of civic society to the autonomy of a termite colony. The ideology they seek to realise has the qualities of a new mazeway, often containing a high degree of syncretism brought about by a process of ludic recombination and embodied in a leader who has for his followers the qualities of a *propheta*, whose pronouncements have the quality of revelations and a higher truth for at least a section of the masses. The mass organisations they create are meant to not just regiment the masses but turn them into

the vehicle for the eventual realisation of the utopian project to create a new society appropriate to the modern age – an alternative modernity. Whereas an authoritarian mass dictatorship exercises social control, its totalitarian counterpart undertakes vast programmes of social engineering that, in the Third Reich and Soviet Union, led them to pursue biopolitical and eugenic measures to accelerate the appearance of the 'new man'.

Inferences for the relationship between modernity and mass dictatorship

Several inferences relevant to the theme of this volume are to be drawn from the model proposed here. First and foremost, it may be useful *ideally* – typically to distinguish between authoritarian and totalitarian mass dictatorships' radically different relationships to modernity. Authoritarian mass dictatorship can be conceptualised as a *reactionary* response of existing elites to the collapse of tradition under the impact of modernisation, one which nevertheless produces a modern state to contain the ensuing chaos. Imagining itself fighting a war against anarchy and subversion, its task is to resolve the crisis brought about by the age of the masses now that traditional social and cosmological structures no longer keep them in their place.

The authoritarian regime may be a military regime or personal dictatorship that fills the power vacuum or the degenerate version of a totalitarian communist or would-be fascist regime. Alternatively, it is installed on behalf of or in collusion with traditional ruling classes and institutions by a dynamic political and military elite. In either case the new ruling elite understands the unprecedented executive power of the modern state and uses it deliberately to create an organisational and ideological dyke to contain the flood of chaotic sociocultural and economic forces unleashed by modernity as it erodes traditional society and religion. At the same time the authoritarian mass democracy uses the forces of the masses as a reservoir of potential social and productive energy that will enable society to be run in a more efficient, more technically and productively advanced system, even if the main product of the system is a disproportionate military capacity.

Behind the facade of populist legitimacy and simulated charismatic dynamism, the ruling elite of a mass authoritarian dictatorship adopts radical measures to curb individual freedom and control large spheres of human and social existence. It is compelled to do so by a reactionary fear of the potential of unbridled modernisation and globalisation to

generate social and moral anarchy and decadence. Hence authoritarian societies work to repress any ideology that could threaten that control, which, according to the official ideology of the regime, could be liberalism, socialism, communism, nationalism, racism, ethnic separatism, or religious belief.

By contrast the totalitarian mass dictatorship is a *revolutionary* response both to the concrete socio-economic dilemmas created by modernity and to the prevailing nomic crisis it produces. It thus can be seen as a *modernist* state, striving to establish a total alternative modernity. The space for it to arise is created when an acute political crisis cannot be resolved through traditional power or liberal democracy and liberalism's concept of a revolutionary temporality based on secularism, pluralism, economic development, individualism, and technological progress has no mass appeal or relevance. It imagines itself fighting a war against decadence. As a form of political modernism, it attempts to found a new order which creates forms of political, social, and cultural life designed to resolve the nomic crisis and inaugurate an alternative modernity which provides a new sense of transcendence.

A second point is that the different natures of the two regimes lead to contrasting fates. What tends to destroy authoritarian mass democracies in the long run are such forces as the corruption of the ruling elites, the failure of the regime to create a viable domestic economy based on autarkic principles, and the impossibility of maintaining isolation from the international community indefinitely. It dies through entropy and collapses into anarchy or liberalism.

The totalitarian mass dictatorship, on the other hand, has displayed several different scenarios. In the case of Nazism it was finally destroyed as a consequence of its own unlimited dynamism and ambition, which led to unrealisable campaigns of colonial conquest. Fascist Italy's overweening ambition, on the other hand, eventually led it to be embroiled in an international war it was not equipped to fight. Soviet Russia, though it survived far longer than the two fascist regimes, failed ultimately for a variety of economic, social, and ideological reasons to create either an alternative modernity that was viable or the New Man who was supposed to populate it. By the 1960s it had degenerated into an authoritarian society. Its satellite states within the Soviet empire, which combined rhetorical elements of the totalitarian coercive state and the ideological emptiness of authoritarianism, soon became grim travesties of the original Bolshevik dream. Communist China is currently experimenting with the possibility of liberal economics with the centralised 'socialist' regulation of society. This experiment,

though so far allowing it to be far more economically viable than the Soviet empire, represents the wholesale abandonment of its original totalitarian project (or at least its gradual entropy and corruption) for a form of authoritarian capitalism. The Chinese New Man is more likely to be wearing a Rolex and carrying a mobile phone and an MP3 player than Mao's Little Red Book.

One final example for consideration is the case of the two Koreas. A special instance of a mass dictatorship is that imposed on a people by an imperial foreign power allegedly to bring the fruits of an advanced society but actually to serve the foreign power's interests. This was the case of the states that after 1945 fell under Soviet occupation and then communist dictatorship in Europe and of Korea, which experienced and still experiences communist imperialism in the North and arguably 'capitalist imperialism' in the South. Do 'capitalist' dictatorships fall into the category of 'authoritarianism' because of their 'puppet' status, or do they retain something of the 'liberating' (hence under a dictatorship, 'totalitarian') mission claimed by the 'Free World', which gives them the utopian, totalitarian elements of what I have called a *modernist* state. Do dictatorships imposed abroad by 'totalitarian' – or originally totalitarian – regimes such as the Soviet Union and Communist China continue to express some of the original 'futural', revolutionary, modernist energies of the mother regime? If so, do they retain anything of this totalitarian drive after they become independent? Or are they coercive and pseudo-revolutionary – hence authoritarian – from the start, devoid of genuine mass-mobilising ideals of societal and anthropological revolution? If scholars one day can address such issues by examining in depth the relationship between the two post-war dictatorships of Korea in the context of its unique path to modernity, their answers would be fascinating not just in themselves. Such comparative perspectives would enrich the understanding of the nature of mass dictatorship in the West as well.

Notes

1. A seminal text in the context of this chapter is Schmuel Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
2. For a refreshingly non-Eurocentric treatment of the topic of dictatorship, see Jie-Hyun Lim's chapter, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship: Towards a Transnational History of Twentieth-Century Dictatorship', in Jie-Hyun Lim and Karen Petrone, eds, *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship: Global Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
3. Gilbert Pleuger, 'Totalitarianism', *New Perspective* 9/1 (2003), http://www.history-ontheweb.co.uk/concepts/totalitarianism.htm.

4. Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (New York: 1965), pp. 21–6.
5. Emilio Gentile, *Religion as Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). The passage cited below appears on p. 46.
6. Emilio Gentile, 'The Sacralization of Politics: Definitions, Interpretations and Reflections on the Question of Secular Religion and Totalitarianism', trans. Robert Mallet, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 1/1 (2000), 18–55. The passage appears on p. 46 of *Religion as Politics*.
7. For those interested in the way that totalitarianism is now becoming a dynamic concept identified, no longer with the static connotations of 'monopoly of power', but with the bid to implement a revolutionary concept of a new society, involving political religion in pursuit of its claims for 'fundamental renewal', see Simon Tormey, *Making Sense of Tyranny: Interpretations of Totalitarianism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Daniel Schönpflug, '*Histoires croisées*: François Furet, Ernst Nolte and a Comparative History of Totalitarian Movements', *European History Quarterly* 37/2 (2007), 265–90. For a brilliant comparative study of totalitarianism in the spirit of this 'new wave' of scholarship, see Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Beyond Totalitarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
8. Lim, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship', p. 8.
9. Cf. Anthony McElligott and Tom Kirk, *Working towards the Führer: Essays in Honour of Sir Ian Kershaw* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
10. Roger Griffin, 'The Palingenetic Political Community: Rethinking the Legitimation of Totalitarian Regimes in Inter-war Europe', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 3/3 (Winter 2002), 24–43; see also Roger Griffin, 'The Legitimizing Role of Palingenetic Myth in Ideocracies', *Totalitarismus und Demokratie/Totalitarianism and Democracy* 1 (2012), 39–56.
11. Simon Tormey, *Making Sense of Tyranny: Interpretations of Totalitarianism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Juan Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2000).
12. Andrzej Walicki, *Polskie zmagania z wolnością* (Kraków: Universitas, 2000). On Walicki's distinction between authoritarianism and totalitarianism, see Lim, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship', p. 9.
13. Lim, 'Mapping Mass Dictatorship'.
14. It need hardly be pointed out that the reality of dictatorial regimes is frequently far more complex than these two artificially polarised categories imply. In inter-war Europe several authoritarian regimes imitated the fascist style of totalitarianism but lacked any genuine totalising or utopian project. Franco's Spain, e.g., despite the fascist rhetoric of the early years, in practice operated as a personal dictatorship with a largely pseudo-populist consensus, especially once the passions of the civil war burnt out and the radicalism of the genuinely fascist Falange had been neutralised. How far Kim Il-sung's Democratic People's Republic of Korea can be treated as the communist equivalent of such a regime of disguised authoritarianism or pseudo-totalitarian despotism is a matter for experts to judge.The purity of ideal-typical categories in this area is complicated further by the tendency for regimes born of totalitarian – hence utopian and genuinely revolutionary – movements to decay into authoritarian regimes, as far as the broad masses are concerned, once they enter a systemic crisis or the failure of the utopian

vision becomes increasingly self-evident. Illustrations of this syndrome can be found in the Third Reich after Stalingrad and in Soviet Russia in the last three decades of its existence. Even Saddam's Iraq was born of Ba'athism, at the outset a utopian totalitarian movement.A regime that equally defies simple classification was Imperial Japan under Hirohito (Showa Japan) in the 1930s, where legitimacy was still theoretically based on the concept of the emperor's divinity, while power was exercised in practice by a military junta which reinforced genuine mass patriotism (partly articulated through a politicised form of Shinto religion with genuine fascist elements) with a state terror apparatus complete with its own thought police, the Tokku. The result was that it attempted to realise the palingenetic myth of Japan's destiny to become the hegemonic Asian power, filling the vacuum left by the decay of European imperialism, through an amalgam of authoritarianism, totalitarianism, imperialism, militarism, and populism, with elements of feudal-traditional, legal-rational, charismatic, and autocratic power. Another complicating example is Pol Pot's Cambodia, where a would-be totalitarian regime was imposed by a militia with so little consensus and such extensive use of genocidal terror that it effectively operated as an authoritarian regime, showing minimal interest in building up a powerful populist movement of support by the manipulation of civil society. Its idyll of a re-ruralised Cambodia purged of alien decadence thus remained almost a secret project rather than the central goal pursued through an intensive campaign of mass mobilization.

15. Roger Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism. The Sense of an Ending under Mussolini and Hitler* (London: Palgrave, 2007).
16. Fredric Jameson, *The Seeds of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 84.
17. Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy. Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (London: Doubleday, 1967). A number of other theories underpin the 'primordialist' approach to modernity summarised in this chapter but cannot be considered in detail here, notably Antonio Gramsci's distinction between 'dominion' (coercion) and 'hegemony' (consensus); Anthony Giddens's prolific publications on social and spiritual malaise–induced modernity; David Roberts's concept of totalitarianism as an essentially unrealisable project to establish alternative modernity; Zygmunt Bauman's insistence on the intimate causal link between modernity and the Holocaust and his concept of the 'gardening state' that arises once a ruling elite takes upon itself the use of the power of the state to reform and regenerate society by weeding and rooting out social elements held to disseminate crime, immorality, or chaos; work by Victor Turner (e.g., Victor and Edith Turner, 'Religious Celebrations', in Victor Turner ed., *Celebration. Studies in Festivity and Ritual*, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press (1982), pp. 211–12; and Anthony Wallace (see Robert Grumet ed., *Anthony Wallace. Revitalization & Mazeways. Essays on Cultural Change*, vol. 1, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003) on the rite of passage and the revitalization ceremony. I engage with these theories extensively in *Modernism and Fascism*, which provides a full bibliography.
18. Cf. Ernest Becker, *Birth and Death of Meaning. An Interdisciplinary Perspective on the Problem of Man* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962).

19. The pioneering study of this universal phenomenon was Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (1909) (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960).
20. Victor Turner makes the link between liminoid situations and the revitalization movements in Victor and Edith Turner, 'Religious Celebrations', pp. 33–57.
21. The classic text is Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium. Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (1957) (London: Granada, 1970).
22. See particularly Anthony Wallace (Robert Grumet ed., *Anthony Wallace*).
23. My own analysis builds on the pioneering attempts by a number of cultural historians who have similarly extended the concept of modernism, notably Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring* (1989) (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000); Peter Fritzsche, 'Nazi Modern', *Modernism/Modernity* 3/1 (1996), 1–22; Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time. Modernity and the Avant-garde* (London: Verso, 1995); and Peter Schleifer, *Modernism and Time. The Logic of Abundance in Literature, Science, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

4

Nebulous Nexus: Modernity and Perlustration in Maoist China

Michael Schoenhals

In the minds of a likely majority of non-native speakers of the English language(s), I believe the word 'nexus' carried until fairly recently no particular significance. When Anton Kaes wrote in an essay on modernity in 1993 that the film *M* 'narrativises the nexus between warlike mobilisation, surveillance, and social control', his use of it is unlikely to have triggered any particular shared associations, one way or the other, with his readers in Sweden, Korea, or Germany.[1] Alas, what a difference a few years can make! After Colin Powell in his speech to the United Nations Security Council on 6 February 2003 had lectured the world on what he insisted on calling a lethal combination of a 'nexus of Iraq and terror' and a 'nexus of poisons and terror', a whole cluster of new associations came to surround the word here, there, and everywhere.[2] Rereading Kaes today (or discovering his claim quoted verbatim and in full in a footnote in Peter Holquist's 1997 seminal article 'Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context'),[3] it is impossible to break completely the hold since laid upon the imagination by the language of the 'terror nexus', 'deadly nexus', 'nexus of rogue states', 'nexus of global politics', 'fascist-Islamist nexus', 'empire-terrorism-human rights nexus', 'nexus of religion and nationalism', and so on and so forth.

Since 2003, then, what we have in 'nexus' is a concept that implies a connection or link that judicious study of discernible reality may or may not actually be able to point at. A blunt weapon at the fingertips of intellectuals fact-finding their way through present-day dictatorships, it has become – when not placed between inverted commas – one of the new century's many illicit performatives, contributing to a linguistic violence that gives us the postmodern version of witchcraft, where the absence of evidence is no longer evidence of absence.[4] Queer as this may appear in an academic paper on history, it is precisely from here that I want to

migrate this expanded nexus 2.0 into the discourse so forcefully interrogated by Kaes and Holquist. It is my intention to expand on modernity and the associative bond that I herewith assert exists between it and a state project of intense surveillance and slightly less manpower-absorbing monitoring embarked upon in the urban People's Republic of China (PRC) after 1949.

In the body of this chapter, I attempt a description of how one particular component of the modernity-surveillance nexus – perlustration of the mail – played itself out in China once the centre of gravity of the Communist Party's work had, as Mao Zedong put it in March 1949, 'shifted from the village to the city.' In the cities, so Mao had insisted, there were lying in wait 'enemies without guns … bound to struggle desperately against us'.[5] A gigantic project of surveillance became the response to this perceived threat from a largely invisible enemy. Formally launched at the 1st National Conference on Operational Work convened by the Central Ministry of Public Security (CMPS) in the summer of 1950, it was an experiment, flawed and faltering at times and not without its internal critics.[6] But the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had proven more than once in the past that it was good at 'muddling along' and at, to evoke one of the favourite images of Mao's Politburo colleagues, 'crossing the river by feeling the stones'.[7] As Mao was himself fond of saying, 'We can *learn* what we did not know. We are not only good at destroying the old world, we are also good at building the new.'[8] Perlustration was central to this learning process. As a democratically elected (and re-elected) twenty-first century dictator wannabe once famously observed, 'Reading is the basics for all learning.'[9]

'The new' that Mao spoke of building in 1949 was meant to offer what Roger Griffin in 'Mass Dictatorship and the Modernist State: A Mazeway Resynthesis' calls 'a totalising sense that history can be remade, that an *alternative modernity* can be constructed.'[10] The CCP meant to relegate to history both the chaos of Old China and, in due course, the 'untidiness' of the transition initiative – aka Liberation. (As architects of other liberations have since observed, 'Freedom is untidy. Liberation is untidy!')[11] The alternative Leninist modernity, of which Mao's closest comrade-in-arms, Liu Shaoqi – the author of *How to Be a Good Communist*, who had spent 1921 in the Soviet Union and, unlike Mao Zedong, had actually seen V. I. Lenin 'in the flesh'[12] – painted a picture called 'mature communism', was just the opposite:

> Discipline will not be laxer than at present; in fact, it will be a lot firmer. Do not assume that under communism there will be all that

> individual freedom! In a certain sense, there will be a lot less freedom. When China's population has reached six billion, I am afraid not everyone will be able to have his own private single bed; it would not surprise me if people will have to sleep in shifts. No more of this chaotic way of walking in the streets either. The only time man was relatively free, was when he lived like a savage in the mountains. Then there were not all that many rules and regulations.[13]

In this context, surveillance by means of the 'interception and reading of mail for the express purpose of discovering what people were writing and thinking' (Holquist's definition of perlustration) would prove to be a project more enduring than most.[14] The father of the CCP's intelligence services, Zhou Enlai, would go so far as to predict in 1950 that 'even after the disappearance of class society … intelligence work will still have to go on'.[15] Once the technology was in place, to reading what people were writing was added the project of overhearing what people were saying. In the early 1960s, some foreigners living in Beijing were convinced, according to J. Marcuse (who was not), that 'the whole city was wired for sound and that the secret police was desperately keen not to miss a word one uttered'.[16]

The exact circumstances under which the 'secret police' engaged in perlustration was spelled out in classified communications, the contents of which are still known only to historians in part and indirectly. But the PRC was not even three months old when the systematisation of perlustration was already well under way. In the greater administrative region of Northeast China, the regional People's Government on 14 December 1949 issued a classified *Notification on Public Security* entitled 'In Some Matters Involving the Inspection of Post and Telecommunications', which began by announcing that '[a]s of this year, great attention has been paid everywhere to introducing and strengthening the inspection of post and telecommunications. This inspection has yielded major results.'[17]

The object of my affection: from white to a rosy red

By the early 1960s, public security officers in Beijing routinely kept nine different primary-level categories of persons of interest under some form of surveillance. Each primary-level category was an aggregate of subcategories that could be anything from a handful up to a dozen in number. The fourth category of persons of interest, for example, comprised 'elements suspected of spontaneous counter-revolution'. Translated into

plain language, this intriguing Beijing usage of the word 'spontaneous' meant that here were individuals whose 'counter-revolutionary' behaviour could not be accounted for within the framework the Leninist/Stalinist *Anketa* and/or its CCP equivalent, the file-self fashioning *lüli*.[18] (As the son of the first director of public security in the 'liberated' PRC capital summed up the popular, vulgar version of that framework in a give and take with his audience as he addressed a mass rally in 1966: '[*warm applause*] It seems that "the son of a hero is a real man" [masses: "The son of a reactionary is a bastard – it's basically like this!" *warm applause*].')[19] The 'Spontis' – as one might be inclined to call them if one knew little or no German history – were in turn subdivided into ten major subcategories, ranging from 'regular listeners to enemy radio broadcasts' to anyone who simply 'shows other suspicious signs of spontaneous counter-revolutionary activity'.[20]

The eighth category of persons of interest, consisting of 'returned overseas Chinese, immigrants, and persons with links to Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan etc.', made positive *exemptions* for four subcategories (including 'overseas Chinese who have returned from *socialist* countries') while at the same time emphatically calling for extraordinary measures comprising 'uninterrupted and in-depth investigation and scrutiny accompanied by control' to be applied to nine other subcategories that were designated 'priority investigation targets'. The latter included:

(i) newly discovered returned overseas Chinese, immigrants, and persons planning to immigrate
(ii) those who have previously been investigated and found *not* to have problems, but about whom suspicions are again surfacing…
(iii) relatives, residing in Beijing, of agents [not themselves in China] of [foreign] intelligence services and of persons [not themselves in China] suspected of being agents of [foreign] intelligence services…
(iv) persons, in Beijing, with whom persons overseas maintain indirect contact through letters or other means and whose circumstances are suspect…[21]

Perlustration was but one of numerous means of surveillance that operational departments employed vis-à-vis these 'priority investigation targets'. They also made use of agents, physical surveillance, and technical means of collecting actionable intelligence.[22] As time went on, telling the targeted objects from the targeting subjects became more and more difficult.[23] As Liu Shaoqi lamented in front of an audience of municipal and prefectural officials in southwest China in 1964, 'the

enemy nowadays is in a majority of cases concealed and does not himself appear in person: those who appear in person are those who act on his behalf, and who may even include our party members, our cadres'.[24]

Count your blessings instead of sheep

The CCP craved information, and at the highest levels of decision making, this often meant quantifiable information. *Planning* assumed numbers: absolute ones, if they could be produced. Revolution, too, needed suggestive statistics – in quantity, preferably. 'The greater the number of people murdered, the greater the wish [on the part of the survivors] for a revolution', an increasingly frail yet still intellectually agile Mao Zedong recalled late in life, referring to Adolf Hitler.[25]

In the summer of 1958, the official voice of the CCP Central Committee, the *People's Daily*, editorialised as follows: 'What the party and government leadership needs, that's what statistics will be compiled on; where political movements and production movements go, that's where statistical work will proceed.'[26] In *Statistical Work*, a prestigious organ of PRC planners and statisticians, a deputy director of the National Bureau of Statistics wrote around the same time of how it was the duty of all statisticians 'to be the red standard-bearers and scouts (*zhenchabing*) of the party'. Perhaps he had always wanted to become (or indeed once had been – we don't know his biography well enough to answer this particular hypothetical) an agent in daily proximity of Liu Shaoqi's concealed enemy: as a desk-bound officer, the deputy director had to be content with imagining himself in the part and could boast only metaphorically of how 'in everything that they do, our enemies seek to keep their secrets from us, but we surveillance officers are capable of investigation and of uncovering them to a point where they are as clear as clear can be'.[27]

By 1964, a growing obsession with the collection of detailed information by way of forms that asked 'How many of this? How much of that?' had reached levels that in some quarters began to be viewed as wellnigh absurd. Reality, in all its complexity, simply could not be made to fit the categories that the counting classes interfacing with 'whatever is out there' insisted on inventing. An investigation conducted by the General Office of the Beijing CCP Committee found, for example, that some forms asked for known instances of someone 'practising medicine without a license' to be listed in the statistical category of 'involved in feudal superstitious activities' and/or 'engaged in reactionary destructive activities'. As a statistical subcategory on the forms concerning

'lifestyles', the Women's Federation in one rural Beijing suburb included 'Likes to talk?'; if 'yes', then additional specific information was asked for – namely, how many of the women in question were ones who talked *about* things that could be classified as 'problematic', and how many limited themselves to topics that were 'not problematic'.[28]

The political upgrading and statistical processing of the intelligence that perlustration produced may well have been equally absurd – the truth is the surviving record and leaves us with no way of knowing for sure. As now and then reproduced (together with excerpts, some extended, some consisting of but a sentence or two, from letters read and recorded) in the top secret *Public Security Work Bulletin* of the CMPS, data sets consist mostly of absolute numbers and percentage rates ascribed to Beijing's official nine categories (and their multiple subcategories and/or occasional ad hoc categories in use elsewhere)[29] of persons of interest that operational departments had under surveillance or monitored. So, for example, at the start of 1960, it was reported that

> The writing of reactionary slogans, mailing of reactionary letters, and spreading of reactionary handbills is rather widespread and common. According to statistics [for 1959] from the three provinces of Shaanxi, Anhui, and Zhejiang for 1,021 cases of this kind, of the altogether 1,021 persons involved, some 666 (65.23 per cent) were new counter-revolutionary elements. Of altogether 227 cases committed by new counter-revolutionary elements in Beijing municipality, some 142 (62.55 per cent) involved writing reactionary slogans, mailing reactionary letters, or spreading reactionary handbills.[30]

I'm gonna sit right down and write myself a letter

Probably still the best book-length study of surveillance and modernity is Frank J. Donner's 1981 classic *The Age of Surveillance: The Aims and Methods of America's Political Intelligence System*. This is what Donner had to say about the relationship between simple numbers (i.e., mass, quantity, bulk) and intelligence value in the files of the security services to which perlustration contributed:

> Files are the cornerstone of all domestic political intelligence systems. The mere fact that information appears in a file in itself becomes a warrant of its truth and accuracy, automatically raising it above the level of its source, however dubious it might otherwise be. The reduction of a mass of material into subversive classifications, of events

> into a chronological sequence, of names into alphabetical order, can somehow clothe a body of questionable data, assembled by the most arbitrary and unreliable standards, with a special aura of objectivity and professionalism. In short, the process by which material is organised overcomes its lack of relevance or probative value. ... The sheer accumulation of items ... each innocent in itself, invites the inference that the subject is subversive. Quantity is transformed into quality; the end result is greater than the sum of its parts.[31]

Perhaps it is the 'intentional forgetting' that Arif Dirlik in 2005 called the 'preoccupation of our day' ('to erase revolutions so as to bring forth histories that justify the present; whether we call it development or civil society') that would explain why studies of high Maoism's alternative hesitate to make cross-comparisons with the contemporaneous data about the United States' 'actually existing' modernity on which conclusions like Donner's rested.[32] But it is worth reminding ourselves here that at the height of the Cold War, the CIA for two decades 'operated a mail intercept programme of incoming and outgoing Russian mail *and, at various times, other selective mail* at Kennedy Airport in New York City. This operation included not only the photographing of envelopes but also the surreptitious opening of selected items of mail. The bulk of the take involved matters of internal security interest which was disseminated to the Federal Bureau of Investigation'[33] (emphasis added).

Questions that come to mind are what did the 'mail intercept programme' operated by China's equivalent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation look like and what was the *Chinese* 'bulk of the take' in terms of internal security interest? Interpreting what is being revealed in the CMPS *Public Security Work Bulletin* leads one to the conclusion that in urban China, unlike the United States, the point of postal interception was not at the national border but far closer to, possibly even at, the district post office:

> On 26 June [1962], 160 reactionary stenciled handbills signed the 'Changchun Anti-Communist National Revival Assembly' were *discovered in 17 mailboxes spread out across 3 urban districts* in Changchun municipality. The [text on the handbills] bore the title 'Resist Communism, Save the Nation' and was just over 600 characters long. Its content mainly slandered us by claiming that 'the three Red Banners have collapsed and the deterioration of politics, economy, and military has already passed the point of no return', and instigated the masses to 'prepare everything for the arrival

> of the National[ist] army'. Of the reactionary handbills, 123 were addressed to [local addresses such as] the municipal People's Committee [i.e., the government], Bureau of Public Security, and the No. 1 Automobile Factory, etc., while 37 were addressed to [distant places such as] Qinghua University [in Beijing], Shanghai, Guangzhou, Qingdao, etc.[34]

Common sense suggests that not every single letter was opened and read: in fact, the December 1949 document 'In Some Matters Involving the Inspection of Post and Telecommunications', quoted earlier, spelled out the general rule that 'mail in transit is not inspected under any circumstances, and the time taken to inspect local mail [within the same municipality] must not exceed twelve hours; the time taken to inspect mail arriving from, or addressed to a recipient, outside [the municipality] must not exceed twenty-four hours. If time proves insufficient, inspection may be dispensed with'. The rule governing in broad terms how perlustrated mail was to be 'processed' stipulated that 'ordinary suspicious mail should *not* be confiscated. One should proceed in a planned fashion to copy down its contents, make a record of it, take photographs of it, and regularly scrutinise and study it in the hope of discovering leads'.[35]

When conditions made inspecting everything practically impossible, public security organs favoured 'priority checks' of 'suspicious mail'. An example of what was regarded as 'suspicious mail' was a letter that alerted the perlustrating officers at the end of 1961 because it was addressed to the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and had a transparently bogus return address. According to a two-page incident report in the CMPS *Public Security Work Bulletin*:

> A reactionary element in Guizhou province calling himself Li Weiqiang, faking the return address of the Consulate of the Soviet Union in China, sent a letter in Russian to [Nikita] Khrushchev in which he said: 'Writing this letter is a Chinese who is faithful to you. Ever since you laid down a Leninist line at the 20th Party Congress, a struggle has evolved in China between Leninists and Stalinist elements, something that became clearer than ever during the CPSU's 22nd Party Congress…. In order to set ourselves apart from China's Stalinist elements, we need to establish a "CCP Khrushchev organization." This work is linked to your fate, the fate of the people of all of China, and the fate of the international communist movement! It must be conducted in secret. In order to make it convenient for us

> to get your assistance in the future, we ask you to send a reliable and experienced emissary to reside in Beijing, China, preferably arriving to take up his post by the end of January or mid-February 1962, since that would be a convenient time for us to send a telegram to your ambassador to agree on a time and place to meet. In the telegram, our code will be to inquire about a Comrade by the name of "Boris Nikolayevich Fajevic." We don't know whether you agree to this or not? If you think it is alright, please share with us your views and opinions'.[36]

But one did not have to write to the man whom Mao, at the November 1957 meeting of representatives of 64 communist and workers' parties in Moscow, had called 'a beautiful lotus' in order to have one's correspondence read, scrutinised, and turned into a 'case' by the CMPS.[37] Addressing it to *any* person in another country was in itself already a triggering act, and if one was a man of letters it increased the chances exponentially of one's message ending up being perlustrated in search of (bourgeois) statements 'slandering the motherland' and, worse yet, 'secrets'. Between September 1959 and March 1960, one CMPS survey discovered, some 27 individuals employed in the Ministry of Metallurgy, Ministry of Construction Engineering, Ministry of Geology, Ministry of Agricultural Machinery, Ministry of Hydropower, and others had on no less than 28 separate occasions revealed state secrets in correspondence with individuals in the Soviet Union, Mongolia, Romania, East Germany, Thailand, Malaya, and Hong Kong.[38]

Yes, I received your letter yesterday (about the time the doorknob broke)

It may have been because the Hebei Provincial Bureau of Public Security reported to the CMPS more often and in greater detail than other provinces about its perlustration of the mail, but of this we cannot be certain. In any case, on numerous occasions between 1958 and 1962, the ministry reprinted extended excerpts from Hebei reports in the *Public Security Work Bulletin*. On 28 March 1959, for example, it carried an item from the Hebei Bureau of Public Security entitled 'Returned Overseas Chinese Students in Tianjin, Tangshan, and Shijiazhuang Are Found to Be Sending Letters Overseas Fabricating Stories and Slandering the Motherland'. It quoted a recent graduate from Tianjin University as telling his second uncle in Indonesia in a letter that 'there's no way one can live here without money, but even with money you can't get

anything to eat, which really makes it a fine society'. The graduate was under the certain impression that China produced the most wheat in the world, even more than the United States, but what he could not understand was why 'the people of China have no flour'. Not only that, he went on, turning to pork: 'There's as much pork in China as in the rest of the world combined', he wrote, 'but the people of China have none to eat. Things like fruit and eggs, etc. we merely get to hear about, never to eat … '. He believed himself lucky to know that there was another world beyond China's borders: 'Those who know of nothing else all think of the motherland as "full of joy," but those who don't know me also don't know how many heartbroken tears I've shed. … If there's really no way I can stick this out, I shall have to leave Tianjin. … Please send me a copy of the nationalities law of Indonesia.'[39]

One thing many of the correspondents 'fabricating stories and slandering the motherland' were particularly scornful of was precisely that of which Liu Shaoqi had expected there to be even more under mature communism: order and 'discipline'. A returned overseas Chinese university graduate employed in a government organ wrote to a friend, telling him how

> Every morning at six, the party secretary forces you out of bed. Then he forces you to do calisthenics, whereupon you have to listen to him lecturing you. Every night there's a meeting, then if there's a movie you have to write a report afterwards on what you learnt from it. If you read a lot of books, they say you pay too much attention to vocational matters and not enough to politics; if you like to take a shower, you're called unable to endure hardship and full of bourgeois thinking. … The way my thinking goes, this is all very painful as I cannot figure out why the more the revolution develops, the more hardship we have to endure … [40]

In the early autumn of 1960, the Bureau of Public Security in the provincial capital maintained an aggressive surveillance regimen, possibly prompted by the recent exposure of an Indonesian undercover intelligence officer operating in Tianjin.[41] A brief report on what was being discovered in the course of perlustration of letters sent to friends, colleagues, and relatives abroad by university teachers and students was published in *Public Security Work Bulletin*. It told, among other things, of the assistant professor at Tianjin University who wrote: 'Worst of all is the never-ending political study, criticism, and discussion. Even when

you've done no wrong, you're supposed to come up with some error and curse yourself, which is then referred to as "everybody's entirely free from worry."' A teacher at the School of Light Industry wrote: 'I simply have no way of coping with the environment: everyday, a constant fear of punishment has a stranglehold on me.' A student at Nankai University wrote: 'The severity of the physical labor we have to endure is horrifying, and we are not allowed any leisure time. Those who don't put up with it are subjected to a never-ending succession of meetings big and small at which they are criticised and struggled. Relations between people are colder than ice.'[42] A university student who did not sign his name wrote:

> During political study, we are told that communist labor is the no. 1 need in man's life. I'd say that's no more than a very loud and foul-smelling fart. When I'm on the night shift, every time I feel dizzy and want to throw up, I remind myself that labor is an enjoyment and a favour bestowed on me. ... Pulling a load and ploughing a field, that's a life worthy of a horse or an oxen. On top of that, to have to hold meetings and debate, is that really a life worthy of a human being?[43]

It was of course only to be expected that they would open, read, and even censor letters to and from persons of interest on which organs of public security had operated so successfully that their reclassification, for example, from 'shows other suspicious signs of spontaneous counter-revolutionary activity' to 'elements' undergoing re-education (a process meant to convince the individual, so it was hoped, not to believe everything he or she thought) through labour, had been possible. Nowhere was the modernity-surveillance nexus more conspicuous than here. This is how it found expression in a letter from an 'element' in the Banqiao State Farm outside Tianjin to his mother, excerpted by the Hebei Bureau of Public Security:

> The way I now deal with them is by saying one thing while thinking another. It all works rather well: I am compelled by circumstances to adapt, pretend. When I shout in a loud voice Long Live Communism, those country bumpkin soldiers become very satisfied. I'm being smart, in any case the communist party loves to be flattered and told that it is wise, correct, and great. In reality, there's no way I am prepared to abide by them.[44]

Well I fin'ly started thinkin' straight when I run outa things to investigate

Which brings us back to the expanded nexus and its post-Powellian – some might say acquired Orwellian – connotations. Assuming that it is made by what J. L. Austin, in *How to Do Things with Words*, called the appropriate person in appropriate circumstances, how *can* a performative utterance positing the presence of a modernity-surveillance nexus in Maoist China be exposed as unhappy or infelicitous?[45] We are, after all, here dealing *not* with a link informed by traditional Confucian ontology ('When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to allow that you do not know it; this is knowledge' – *Analects* II:17), but something straight out of the 21st heterotopia, where 'as we know', denials breed with known unknowns to procreate ever more unknown unknowns.

The problem we face, as we struggle (to the extent that it's safe to say we do) with falsehood masquerading as a readiness to reconsider 'what the meaning of the word *is* is', is *not* with the Maoist perlustration project.[46] The purpose of Bolshevik surveillance, Holquist argues, had been 'to act on people, to change them', and in this sense it was ultimately a 'subfunction of the modern form of politics, of which totalitarianism is one expression'.[47] Maoist perlustration was no different in its *intent*: it sought to make invisible enemies transparent, as well as help change in the process what CCP Vice-Chairman Lin Biao called 'vulgar humans' into 'lofty humans'.[48] That its execution bore the hallmarks of untidiness associated with Liberation and, even after two or three decades, no sign of 'discipline … a lot firmer' is easily explained given Mao's wider strategy, which held that 'chaos comes with the immense advantages of chaos. Take the fact that our party emerged victorious from all of twenty-five years of war'.[49] In December 1949, one highly placed public security officer had complained bitterly of how 'envelopes are torn, registered mail is lost, letters and money orders are put back in the wrong envelopes, envelopes are not re-sealed after inspection, etc. These are serious and common problems.'[50] Ten years later, the optics were no better. A Canadian resident of Beijing in 1958 observed how 'one's mail was carefully watched and there was ample evidence of that, not only to be found in clumsily re-stuck envelopes whose flaps would often stick to enclosed messages, but in that it took letters from Europe or Hong Kong two times longer to reach Peking than it took newspapers.'[51] In 1975/6, a year-long sojourn in Shanghai taught me that addressing one's correspondence to the perlustrator directly ('Please don't sit too long on this letter, thank you!') made little difference one way or the other.

Where the nexus becomes foggy is on the approach to the alternative modernity and its characterisation in greater detail, though – to play on Clifford Geertz's explanation of how contradictions in ethnographic studies are typically resolved – I should like to think that any problem in this respect really stems from different parts of the mind taking hold of different parts of the elephant.[52] Not marked as such on their road map to what was signposted mature communism was undoubtedly the obstacle of aesthetics – comprising the many conceptual categories underwritten by genetic algorithms of biases, passion, and desire toward which Mao Zedong and those around him inclined, especially in times of crisis. But whereas in Sweden such categories were, one by one, replaced in the transition to a modernity that came to view biology and statistics as *the* modern sciences, in the PRC they survived and gave rise to very different claims, such as Mao's claim that 'approximately 5 per cent (more than 30 million) of our total population consists of bacteria' and the Minister of Public Security's claim that what these '5 per cent counter-revolutionary bacteria' were dead set on doing was 'to infect and dilate'.[53] Surveillance generated endless data sets backshadowing Karl Marx's 1942 claim that 'Die *Statistik* ist die erste politische Wissenschaft!' but their processing did not give higher definition to the transparency of the invisible enemy.[54] At worst they produced sociological garbage like the 1960 top secret report from the Bureau of Public Security in the city of Tianjin which began by noting that 'somewhere between 5 to 10 per cent' of students simply 'aren't behaving' and then went on to claim, as an explanation, that of them, '41.4 per cent are the children of landlords, rich-peasants, and capitalists; 32.6 per cent are from the petty bourgeoisie; and 26 per cent are from worker-peasant families.'[55]

And so it is the perlustrated correspondence we are left with. What better way of winding up this interrogation of the modernity-surveillance nexus in Maoist China than by citing the altogether 94 identical letters mailed to Mao Zedong and his colleagues from eight different localities in China in the autumn of 1951. Alternative readings are encouraged. The letters – duly intercepted, analysed, and suspected by the CCP Centre at the time of making a silent political statement – were but blank sheets of paper.[56]

Notes

1. This paper is a product of the author's research on domestic surveillance in Mao Zedong's China, as generously supported by the Swedish Research Council (VR) from 2004 to 2006.Anton Kaes, 'The Cold Gaze: Notes on

Mobilization and Modernity', *New German Critique*, 59, special issue on Ernst Junger (Spring–Summer, 1993), 117.

2. Transcript of Powell's speech, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030205–1.html (accessed 1 April 2007).
3. Peter Holquist, '"Information Is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work": Bolshevik Surveillance in Its Pan-European Context', *Journal of Modern History* 69/3 (September 1997), 419.
4. Jean-Jacques Lecercle, *The Violence of Language* (London: Routledge, 1990), 224–64. 'Nexus' is both a negation, and in current usage the adopted rhetorical kin, of the footnote. Compare this description of the latter by a Berkeley linguist: 'In intradisciplinary prose, the footnote is wielded as cavemen wielded clubs, a blunt but effective weapon. The footnote ... says: I know everything about this topic. I could go on forever. Maybe I will. ... This communication is not for entertainment. It is *supposed* to be obnoxious'; Robin Tolmach Lakoff, *Talking Power: The Politics of Language* (New York: Basic Books, 1990), pp. 148–49.
5. Mao Zedong, 'Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China', in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol. IV (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1961), pp. 363–64.
6. 'Pubian gongkaide xinjian jiancha ying liji jiuzheng' (The Universal and Open Inspection of Correspondence Should Immediately Be Rectified), *Baowei gongzuo jianshe* (Protection Work Construction), 2, 15 August 1950, 22.
7. See Song Guiwu, '"Mozhe shitou guohe" buneng luan "mo"' (When 'Crossing the River by Feeling the Stones' One Must Not 'Feel' at Random), 17 February 2004, www.xslx.com/htm/sxgc/sxhh/2004–02–17–16096.htm (accessed 29 May 2007).
8. Mao Zedong, 'Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee', p. 374.
9. George W. Bush, quoted in www.slate.com/id/76886/ (accessed 1 April 2007).
10. Speaking notes prepared for the 5th International Conference on Mass Dictatorship, shared with the author in May 2007.
11. D. H. Rumsfeld, quoted in www.thenation.com/doc/20030512/miller (accessed 1 April 2007).
12. 'Liu Shaoqi', in Zhonggong dangshi renwu yanjiuhui, ed., *Zhonggong dangshi renwu zhuan* (Biographies of Prominent Persons in CCP History) (Xi'an: Shaanxi Renmin chubanshe, 1991), 48, 3.
13. Liu Shaoqi, 'Tong *Beijing ribao* she bianji de tanhua' (Conversation with the *Beijing Daily*'s Editors), in Renmin chubanshe ziliaoshi, ed., *Pipan ziliao: Zhongguo Heluxiaofu Liu shaoqi fangeming xiuzhengzhuyi yanlun ji* (Denunciation Materials: Counter-revolutionary Revisionist Utterances by China's Khrushchev Liu Shaoqi), 3 vols (Beijing, 1968), 3, p. 17.
14. Peter Holquist, '"Information Is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work"', p. 421.
15. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Zhou Enlai nianpu 1949–1976* (Chronology of the Life of Zhou Enlai 1949–1976), 3 vols (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), 1, p. 30.
16. Jacques Marcuse, *The Peking Papers: Leaves from the Notebook of a China Correspondent* (New York: Dutton, 1967), p. 33.
17. 'Dui youdian jiancha de jige wenti' (In Some Matters Involving the Inspection of Post and Telecommunications), *Gongan baowei gongzuo* (Public Security and

Protection Work) 17, 15 February 1950, p. 41. A 1957 textbook from China's Central Public Security Academy explains: 'Postal inspection is when the public security organs surreptitiously inspect the mail of surveillance targets and of persons which surveillance work indicates need to be put under observation…. In the past, the material obtained through postal inspection work has ensured major battle victories…'; *"Teqing gongzuo" jiangyi* (Lectures on the Subject of Agent Work) (Beijing: Zhongyang renmin gongan xueyuan, 1957), p. 1.

18. On the fashioning of 'file-selves' in the Soviet Union, see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Tear Off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 14–18. At the time, an absolute majority of Chinese provinces and cities were employing a statistical/analytical category known as 'newborn counter-revolutionaries' (*xinsheng fangeming*) or 'newly-bred counter-revolutionaries' (*xin zishengde fangeming*). But 'because Beijing is of the opinion', the CMPS had explained in a top secret note in January 1960 'that it is *impossible* for the socialist system to give birth to new counter-revolutionaries, the municipality uses the expression "spontaneous counter-revolutionaries" to refer to new counter-revolutionaries'; see 'Xinde fangeming dou shi shenme ren' (What Kind of People are the New Counter-revolutionaries), *Gongan gongzuo jianbao* (*Public Security Work Bulletin*), 9, 27 January 1960, p. 9.
19. Quoted in Andrew G. Walder, 'Tan Lifu: A 'Reactionary' Red Guard in Historial Perspective', *China Quarterly*, 180 (December 2004), p. 978.
20. 'Guanyu jiu zhong gongzuo duixiang diaocha modi de juti jiexian' (Concrete Distinctions to Be Made When Investigating and Getting to the Bottom of the Nine Kinds of Targets on Which Work Is Being Conducted), in *Baowei gongzuo shouce* (Protection Work Manual) ([Beijing], 1972), pp. 47–9.
21. Ibid., 52–3.
22. *Lectures on the Subject of Agent Work*, p. 1.
23. Cf. Mao Zedong (May 1957), 'Things Are Beginning to Change', in *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, vol. V (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1977), pp. 440–46.
24. 'Liu Shaoqi zai Guizhou, Yunnan liang sheng di (shi) wei shuji yishang ganbu hui shang de jianghua (jilugao)' (Liu Shaoqi's Talk at a Meeting of Cadres above the Prefecture and Municipality Level from Guizhou and Yunnan [Stenographic Record]), in Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei bangongting geming zaofandui, ed., *Liu Shaoqi zai gedi sanbu de xiuzhengzhuyi yanlun huibian* (Collected Revisionist Utterances Spread Here and There by Liu Shaoqi) (Shanghai, 1967), p. 212.
25. Mao Zedong, 'Tong Wang Hongwen Zhang Chunqiao de tanhua jiyao' (Minutes of Conversation with Wang Hongwen and Zhang Chunqiao) (4 July 1973), in *'Wenge' shinian ziliao xuanbian* (Selected Materials from the Ten Years of the 'Cultural Revolution'), 3 vols (Beijing: Zhonggong Zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, 1981), 2, p. 201.
26. 'Quandang quanmin ban tongji' (The Entire Party and Entire People Do Statistics), editorial in *Renmin ribao* (*People's Daily*), 13 August 1958.
27. Jia Qiyun, 'Dangqian tongji gongzuo gaige yundong zhong de jige wenti' (Some Problems in the Present Statistical Reform Movement), reprinted in Zhonghua renmin gongheguo guojia tongjiju, ed., *Tongji gongzuo zhongyao wenjian huibian* (Collected Important Documents on Statistical Work), 3 vols (Beijing: Tongji chubanshe, 1959), 3, p. 187.

28. Zhonggong Beijing shiwei bangongting, 'Lanfa "hei biaobao" xianxiang shifen yanzhong' (The Indiscriminate Circulation of 'Illegal Statistical Tables and Reports' Is Extremely Serious), in Zhonggong Beijing shiwei bangongting, ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang Beijing shi weiyuanhui zhongyao wenjian huibian [1964 nian]* (Collected Important Documents of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party [1964]) (Beijing, 1965), p. 411.
29. For unknown reasons, when calculating the overall number of new counter-revolutionary activities in the province, the Zhejiang Bureau of Public Security at the start of the 1960s, unlike its equivalent in other provinces, did not include activities engaged in by 'members of the ordinary masses and students'. Meanwhile the Yunnan Bureau of Public Security insisted, in what was clearly a departure from the norm in other provinces, on classifying first-time counter-revolutionary offenders who were 'landlord and rich-peasant elements' as '*new* counter-revolutionary elements'. See 'Xinde fangeming dou shi shenme ren' (What Kind of People Are the New Counter-revolutionaries), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 9, 27 January 1960, p. 10.
30. Ibid., p. 9.
31. Frank J. Donner, *The Age of Surveillance: The Aims and Methods of America's Political Intelligence System* (New York: Vintage, 1981), pp. 170–71.
32. Arif Dirlik, *Marxism in the Chinese Revolution* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), p. 216; here quoted from a review of the book in *China Quarterly*, no. 188 (December 2006), p. 1141.
33. John Ranleagh, *The Agency: The Rise and Decline of the CIA* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), p. 556, 762. The Soviet Union was not to be outdone: according to a classified KGB report for the year 1970, in Leningrad and Leningrad Oblast alone, that year 'the postal censorship service intercepted about 25,000 documents with "ideologically harmful contents"; a further 19,000 documents were confiscated at the frontier'; Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West* (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 714.
34. 'Liuyuefen bushao chengshi fasheng zhongda fangeming chuandan anjian' (The Month of June Saw Numerous Major Counter-revolutionary Handbill Cases in a Number of Cities), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 35/3 (July 1962), 2.
35. 'In Some Matters Involving the Inspection of Post and Telecommunications', p. 41.
36. 'Guizhou yi fandang fenzi wangxiang jianli "Zhongguo gongchangdang Heluxiaofu zuzhi"' (An Anti-Party Element in Guizhou Vainly Hopes to Establish a 'CCP Khrushchev Organization'), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 81 (14 December 1961), 2–3.
37. See Michael Schoenhals, ed. & transl., 'Mao Zedong: Speeches at the 1957 "Moscow Conference"', *Journal of Communist Studies* 2/2 (June 1986), 121.
38. 'Xiemi shimi shijian buduan fasheng' (Incidents of Secrets Leaking or Being Lost Occur Constantly), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 18 (1 March 1960), 12.
39. 'Tianjin, Tangshan, Shijiazhuang faxian mouxie guiguo huaqiao xuesheng gei haiwai xiexin, niezao qingkuang wumie zuguo' (Returned Overseas Chinese Students in Tianjin, Tangshan, and Shijiazhuang Are Found to Be Sending Letters Overseas Fabricating Stories and Slandering the Motherland), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 32 (28 March 1959), 10–11.

40. Ibid., pp. 11–12.
41. 'Tianjin zhenpo yi qi Yinni dashiguan zhijie zhishi xia de jiandie anjian' (Tianjin Cracks Case of Spy Being Run Directly by the Indonesian Embassy), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 63 (11 September 1960), 2–3.
42. 'Tianjin shi bufen dazhuan xuexiao shisheng zai tongxin zhong baolu chu sixiang jiwei fandong' (In Their Correspondence Some Teachers and Students in Some Tianjin Universities Reveal the Most Extremely Reactionary Thinking), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 63 (11 September 1960), 6.
43. Ibid., pp. 6–7.
44. 'Yige youpai fenzi de fandong zhen mianmu' (The True Reactionary Face of a Rightist Element), *Gongan qingbao* (Public Security Intelligence), 52 (12 June 1959), 7.
45. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 25–38.
46. Bill Clinton's grand jury testimony, quoted in www.slate.com/id/1000162/ (accessed 1 April 2007).
47. Peter Holquist, '"Information Is the Alpha and Omega of Our Work"', p. 418.
48. See Michael Schoenhals, 'Demonising Discourse in Mao Zedong's China: People vs. Non-People', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8/3–4 (2007), 465–82.
49. Mao Zedong, quoted in Minister of Public Security Xie Fuzhi's talk at the 14th National Public Security Conference. See p. 188 of Michael Schoenhals, 'The Global War on Terrorism as Meta-Narrative: An Alternative Reading of Recent Chinese History', *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies* 8/2 (October 2008), 179–201.
50. 'In Some Matters Involving the Inspection of Post and Telecommunications', p. 40.
51. Gerald Clark, *Impatient Giant: Red China Today* (New York: David McKay, 1959), p. 35.
52. Clifford Geertz, *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), pp. 5–6.
53. Jon Rogers and Marie C. Nelson, '"Lapps, Finns, Gypsies, Jews, and Idiots": Modernity and the Use of Statistical Categories in Sweden', *Annales de démographie historique*, 105 (2003), 61–79, www.cairn.be/article.php?ID_REVUE=ADH&ID_NUMPUBLIE=ADH_105&ID_ARTICLE=ADH_105_79 (accessed 29 May 2007); Luo Ruiqing, 'Guanyu jiunian douzheng zongjie de jige wenti' (Some Questions on How To Summarise Nine Years of Struggle), *Renmin gongan* (*People's Public Security*), 15 (1958), 7.
54. Karl Marx, 'Debatten über Preßfreiheit und Publikation der Landsständischen Verhandlungen', erster Artikel, *Rheinische Zeitung*, 125 (5 May 1842), www.mlwerke.de/me/me01/me01_028.htm (accessed 29 May 2007). 'Backshadowing' is described by Michael Andre Bernstein as 'a kind of retroactive foreshadowing in which the shared knowledge of the outcome of a series of events by narrator and listener is used to judge the participants in those events *as though they too should have known what was to come*'. See *Foregone Conclusions: Against Apocalyptic History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 16.
55. 'Dazhong xuesheng zai jieliang duhuang zhong de biaoxian' (University and Middle School Students Attitudes towards Managing Food Shortages through Rationing), *Public Security Work Bulletin*, 86 (5 December 1960), 6.

56. 'Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zhizhi dongyuan qunzhong xiang zhongyang zhi jingxin, fa hedian he songli de zhishi' (CCP Centre Instruction Banning Encouraging the Masses to Write Congratulatory Letters, Send Congratulatory Telegrams, or Present Gifts to the Centre), in *Zhongguo gongchandang xuanchuan gongzuo wenxian xuanbian* (Selected Historical Documents on CCP Propaganda Work), 4 vols (Beijing: Xuexi chubanshe, 1996) 3, p. 321.

5

Staging the Police: Visual Presentation and Everyday Coloniality

Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai

This chapter examines the police and colonial hygiene in interwar Taiwan under Japanese rule from the perspective of colonial modernity in everyday life or everyday coloniality. I examine in general terms how a special type of police and hygiene exhibition came to be organised by the Taipei Police in 1925.[1] Japan's participation in world exhibitions can be traced to the end of the Tokugawa period, as early as 1862 and 1867. In 1903, a Taiwanese exhibit called the Hall of Taiwan (*Taiwankan* 台灣館) appeared for the first time in the fifth Japan Domestic Exposition (*naikoku kangyō hakurankai* 內國勸業博覽會) in Osaka. Five years later, in 1908, the first trade exposition took place in Taiwan (*Taihoku bussan kyōshinkai* 台北物産共進會). By 1925, the practice of organising exhibitions in Taiwan had been well established, following the bureaucratic pattern developed in Japan but shaped by scientific knowledge applied to the colonial setting.[2] Thus the Taipei police found it expedient to follow suit. The Taipei police hoped that the masses (*shomin* 庶民) could be aroused by a variety of propaganda techniques to the idea of self-policing (*jikei* 自警) and mutual protection (*kyōei* 共衛), no doubt influenced by the popularity of expositions.[3]

The Taipei police kept a record of the event, published as reportage in 1926,[4] along with a photo album.[5] The government mouthpiece, the *Taiwan Daily News* (*Taiwan nichinichi shinpō* 臺灣日日新報), gave extensive coverage to the exhibition, as did the local newspapers closely tied to the colonial administration: *Tainan shinpō* 臺南新報, *Niitaka shinpō* 新高新報, and *Tainan keisei shinpō* 臺南經世新報.[6] The exception seems to be the *People's News of Taiwan* (*Taiwan minpō* 臺灣民報), the only media

outlet for the Taiwanese, and at the time a weekly based in Tokyo, where a Chinese bimonthly was first founded in April 1923. Understandably, to undertake this case study one has to turn to archives, photos, and documents, as well as recollections left primarily by the Japanese. How to best interpret the limited sources available is a constant challenge for any researcher.

Modern exhibitions illustrate the intersection of activities along three dimensions: imperialism, consumer society, and mass entertainment. As Yoshimi Shunya posits, exhibitions best illuminate the phenomenon of governmentality, with regard to how the gaze came to be disciplined in the realm of everyday life. Essentially, Yoshimi argues – rightly in my view – that exhibitions are by nature political; in a cultural realm they are ideographically bounded. He stresses that to cross boundaries such as class, the idea of empire is a most effective conceptual framework for integration, as it provides a common space wherein imagination is created.[7] Thus it is important to explore how the modern – both as a cultural device and a political establishment – affects one's self-identification and how one manages to react or resist or becomes subject to institutionalised forces.[8]

Specifically, I focus here on the police rhetoric and discuss the images on display in the exhibition. The cultural turn today, notably in post-colonial studies, tends to rest on a rich ground of things visible and tangible. The eyes or gaze, for example, can be a useful metaphor for signs, symbols, and the spirit. In the past two decades, scholarship on exhibitions is certainly one such field that has generated many impressive academic works. But in the search for a colonial 'other', history is more often than not abridged or curtailed, and the attempt to seek historical facts is sometimes muted. With an awareness of these issues in mind, I approach this study of the 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition[9] both by illustrating issues embedded in visual representations and by attempting to bring back history to textual analysis.

Staging the police

In late November 1925, the Division of Police Affairs (*keimubu* 警務部) of Taipei Prefecture organised an exhibition in which police affairs and hygiene were two key issues. The exhibition lasted for five days, 21–5 November, and attracted a sizeable audience: some 260,000.[10] Good weather as well as a long weekend helped draw a large number of visitors. While the exhibition was local in scale, it drew an impressive number of attendees from all over the island.

The exhibition was held at three separate sites in the city, each featuring a particular theme: social control, aboriginal affairs, and hygiene. Site One was the main exhibition location, and a major concern was social order. Site Two consisted of two halls: aboriginal administration (*riban* 理蕃) and water supply (*suidō* 水道). Site Three housed most of the items removed from Site Two, and it was converted into a showroom devoted to a single theme: hygiene. Due to space limitations in this chapter, I focus on some of the most controversial issues in Site One, with passing remarks regarding the rest.

Effective control over the spread of endemic diseases was crucial to any modern state, and Japan placed a special emphasis on this area. Except for the first decade after the Meiji Restoration, pre-war Japan by and large patterned itself after the nineteenth-century Prussian model in developing a centralised style of medical control with the strong hand of the state. In 1875, Meiji Japan set up the Bureau of Hygiene (*eiseikyoku* 衛生局) in the central government for the regulation of public health. Originally under the supervision of the Home Ministry (*naimushō* 内務省), the bureau in 1886 turned to the police for centralised enforcement, and from 1893 this responsibility was shifted to the Police Bureau (*keisatsubu* 警察部). The police system thus established in modern Japan came to be known as the continental type, which placed a priority on hygiene and featured the active intervention of the central government over sanitary affairs. As is well known today, the police administration developed in Taiwan after 1896 followed this feature of Meiji centralisation and further placed all sanitary-related affairs in the hands of the police after 1901.

The Taipei 1925 Police Exhibition was of a special type that aimed to spread information on the achievement of police work and hygiene in Taiwan. It was a local event, but the Taipei police sought help from many government organisations and Japanese enterprises. Solicitations were sent to prefectures in Japan proper and also to Hokkaido, Korea, Karafuto, and Manchuria. As the Taipei police pointed out in the 1926 reportage of the exhibition, in a self-congratulatory tone, it was the first of its kind on the island[11] and not at all any worse – perhaps even better – than its counterparts in Japan.[12]

A popular slogan from the 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition was to *policise* the masses (*minshū keisatsuka* 民衆警察化). A good policeman was ideally expected to carry out his job faithfully, even to the point of sacrificing his life. That is to say, the police were expected to move closer to the people (*keisatsu minshūka* 警察民衆化).[13] It was Matsui Shigeru 松井茂 (1866–1945)[14] who first introduced this concept to the

public in July 1921. The term became paired to read thus: to policise the masses and to massify the police. Matsui embraced the idea that the police was a crucial link between nation and society; he advanced a step further the notion that rank-and-file policemen, who worked on the front lines, had to have the backing of the masses. Later that year, the police headquarters back in Japan quickly endorsed this idea and made it a policy. The paired slogan came very close to the idea of national policemen (*kokumin keisatsu* 國民警察), a move that managed to get rid of the negative police images of the past.[15]

When this policy was transplanted into Taiwan, however, the utopian elements of the idea were suppressed or removed, and the new slogan emphasised the first part of the paired slogan, thus reconfirming the role of an almighty policeman. This halfway process of policy transplantation changed the mode of the slogan, which, for some contemporary Taiwanese critics, resulted in a further move to immortalise the police as the Buddha (Ch. *jingcha shenminghua* 警察神明化).[16] The message the Taipei police hoped to deliver in the 1925 exhibition was clearly both admonitory and hortative. I return to this topic in the following sections.

There was no budget and little revenue available for holding the event. Therefore, the Taipei police had to seek funding from outside sources. They followed established practices in Japan by soliciting funding via a few sponsoring groups – mainly, the Supporting Association (*kyōsankai* 協賛會) and the Reinforcement Association (*kōenkai* 後援會). Two supporting police institutes and one Japanese business operation also contributed to the event.[17] Contrary to the practice in Japan proper, the Taipei police stressed that they made no attempts to solicit donations (*kifukin* 寄附金)[18] They were proud to claim that they managed to accomplish a great deal with the little money available.[19]

Ideally, policing activities and a variety of other state duties were to be personified by the police, who would then serve as a model for the people. The display of posters, photos, miniature models (*mokei* 模型), and actual objects (*jitsubutsu* 實物) reinforced this image through their visual presentation.[20] Posters (1,234 items) constituted only one of the feature displays in the exhibition, but they scored the most success in terms of praise and applause. Schoolchildren contributed to the exhibition as well, both by responding to the solicitation for posters with some collections sent from Osaka and by group participation.[21] It is not clear who or which group made which poster(s), neither do we know whether the children were instructed by their schools to make posters, nor even how many posters were made by people other than the police.

Other displays included actual objects (4,414 items), miniature models (356 items), photos (667 items), and other items (143 items).[22] The Taipei police specifically pointed out that one of the actual objects, provided by Miyoshi Tokusaburō 三好徳三郎,[23] was a document handwritten by the father of Japanese police, Kawaji Toshiyoshi 川路利良. In the next several sections, I explore this issue of visual presentation further.

Only six members of the police staff were skilled in drawing or painting, so an additional woodworker was hired. The task was overwhelming, and the Taipei police came close to mobilising the entire police mechanism of the island to carry out this mission. Equally important were the unspoken motives for holding the event. The Taipei police hoped that the exhibition would help to dispel the misunderstanding of the local people towards the police, and they also planned to place a special emphasis on the theme of a progressive Taiwan – in contrast to China across the Strait.[24]

How did the colonial police themselves conceive the development of the police system in terms of how the Taiwanese might be tamed? The message is clear: the police lorded it over Taiwan with a sense of law, order, and governance. According to the Taipei police, the exhibition was a great success.[25] It is here that the gaze of the police invites further analysis. What were the goals the Taipei police set out to achieve? How did they manage to accomplish them, if they did? And in what sense did the Taipei police consider the exhibition 'a great success'? In terms of the political economy of the exhibition, questions remain about personnel, logistics, budgets, institutions, and so forth. That is to say: Who paid for it? Who created the displays? How were the participants mobilised? Was there any intrabureaucratic competition that might have involved subtle interactions among various sections of the police apparatus? These issues are legitimate questions for future research, but any attempt to explain them will inevitably involve not only a need to examine the texts but also a new historical perspective.

The eyes of the police

The 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition illuminates what constituted the gaze of the police in the Age of Taishō. Without question, the Age of Taishō is a problematic term. Takemura Tamio argues that Taishō Democracy as a term for periodisation has long been abused and overemphasised. He argues that national socialists and radical conservatives were policymakers of the time, and the impact of Taishō Democracy took place mainly in the urban sectors. In essence, he holds that the Age of Taishō

was a time of utopia and thus needs to be qualified as a historical term.[26] As for the colonies, the Taipei police exhibition represented certain trends within interwar Taiwan. It would have been a different type of event had it occurred in 1916 or 1935. Specifically, the role played by a group of senior colonial officials in the exhibition demands attention. A look at the police cadres of the exhibition reveals a remarkable line-up of talent in the Taipei police at that time. Groomed with the new mentality of Taishō Democracy, the Taipei police cadres had a vision for the future of the island; many of them were 'old Taiwan hands' who had stayed for years in Taiwan, where they had a personal stake. This is an important issue, but I leave it aside for another opportunity. Suffice it to say, this study is not just about policing but also about the police themselves.

In the beginning of their preparation, the Taipei police envisioned the exhibition as a local event and originally planned for only one exhibition site (Site One) in the old building of the Government General of Taiwan.[27] However, the items solicited for display increased beyond expectations, and there was no single exhibition hall that was large enough. Thus, the police added a new space as a second site at a Japanese primary school (*Kabayama shōgakkō* 樺山小學校). Later, when the two sites again ran out of space, a third site was added.[28] It should be noted that items that evoked negative images of the police were removed from the display prior to the exhibition.[29] Thus, a special hall originally planned to display 'reference items' was abolished, due to the organiser's consideration of the circumstances.[30] Moreover, the selection process for the final items meant that for every one item displayed in the exhibition, many had already been removed from the scene prior to the exhibition.

A further analysis of the Taipei police exhibition reveals a mix of principles on display with regard to both the administrative division and the itemised category. Administrative laws in colonial Taiwan were patterned after Meiji Japan, which in turn was modelled on Prussia. The range of affairs the Home Ministry regulated in pre-war Japan was almost all-inclusive, supervising aspects of daily life from social order and sanitation to education and economics. By 1925 when the police exhibition took place in Taipei, Taiwan had five prefectures (*shū* 州) and two subprefectures (*chō* 廳); Taipei Prefecture was one of the five. In terms of administrative hierarchy, the Division of Police Affairs was established at the prefecture level, as opposed to the Bureau of Police Affairs (*keimukyoku* 警務局) a rank up, of the Government General of Taiwan. Within the prefecture government, the Division of Police Affairs supervised several sections (*ka* 課), including the section of police affairs

(*keimuka* 警務課). Police departments (*keisatsuka* 警察課) were set up at the level of county (*gun* 郡), and police offices (*keisatsusho* 警察署) could be found at the level of city (*shi* 市).[31] Since the exhibition was almost solely organised by the Taipei police, the administrative structure of the police in the prefecture left a clear mark on the exhibition.

The administrative divisions were the first principle for categorising the collections; this was particularly important for the preparation in Site One, as it was the main location for the exhibition. Site One comprised nine halls (*kan* 館): 1) social control (*hoan* 保安); 2) crime prevention (*bōhan* 防犯); 3) firefighting (*shōbō* 消防); 4) electric items (*denki* 電氣); 5) thought police (*kōtō keisatsu* 高等警察); 6) police affairs (*keimu* 警務); 7) weights and measures (*doryōkō* 度量衡); 8) recreation facilities (*goraku* 娛樂); and 9) children and pupils (*jidō* 兒童). Among these divisions, the Taipei police paid the most attention to the Hall of Social Order, as it was here that almost all major displays for social control were displayed by themes; a few examples are traffic and transportation, emergency prevention, control of guns and gun power, the *hokō* 保甲 (Ch. *baojia*) system and the Able-Bodied Corps (*sōteidan* 壯丁團), as well as entertainment. Collections related to firefighting, electricity, and weights and measures, as well as amusements and recreations, were housed separately in the neighbouring halls.[32] As could be expected, it was the Hall of Social Control and two other halls (crime prevention and the thought police) that drew the sharpest criticisms from the elite Taiwanese.

A few types of participants stood conspicuously among the 'masses': elementary school children, *hokō* cadres and the Able-Bodied Corps,[33] firefighting groups, and the policemen themselves.[34] Participants came from all over the island. Most police officers and firefighting groups in northern Taiwan participated in the event, and some groups came from southern Taiwan.[35] What did the mobilised groups see or were organised to see? The Keelung Police Bureau reported that the *hokō* agents and the Able-Bodied Corps, which I discuss below, took particular interest in the route map displayed in the Hall of Social Control, which showed how a teenager went astray and turned into a juvenile delinquent (*furyō shōnen* 不良少年). The same source also recorded that they were moved by the posters calling for abolishing bad customs (*rōshū daha* 陋習打破). The two groups were so curious about the way sexually transmitted diseases spread that they enthusiastically discussed matters related to family education, custom reform via education, and the regulation of prostitutes.[36]

Elsewhere I have discussed in detail the *hokō* system and its importance with regard to the consolidation of Japan's colonial rule in

Taiwan.[37] Suffice it to say that the *hokō* system as implemented during the first decade of Japanese rule was designed to control five major areas of Taiwanese life: household registration, population movements, social security, transportation, and sanitation. By 1904, when the *hokō* system came to be largely established, it was increasingly transformed into the base for local administration. The timing coincided with the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War. The responsibilities of *hokō* agents (theoretically, a *hosei* 保正 supervised 100 households, and a *kōchō* 甲長, 10 households) multiplied accordingly.

Increasingly after 1905, the *hokō* agents began to be charged with other duties: tracking infectious diseases and opium smoking, providing money and labourers for public works and community services, and the like. And by the turn of the 1920s, the *hokō* system had been integrated into the police administration, which made it indispensable for the implementation of nearly all aspects of colonial policies. The *hokō* agents were expected to perform all kinds of activities – as illustrated in a poster in the exhibition (see Illustration 5.1) – with the backup of the police. Instead of employing penalising terms, the poster highlights

Illustration 5.1 The duties of *hokō* and *kōchō*, Site One (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0035)

the mediating role of the *hokō* (*jōi katatsu* 上意下達 and *kajō jōtatsu* 下情上達), and it also emphasises the soft side of the *hokō* in guiding local residents (*hokōmin shidō* 保甲民指導). The message conveys a sense of governmentality for social engineering.

Posters displayed at the Hall of Crime Prevention attracted particular attention – and invited displeasure – from among the Taiwanese participants. The display of the 'three reasons for committing crimes' reveals how the Japanese viewed Taiwanese society in terms of criminal violation: greediness and unlawful behaviour (see Illustration 5.2, top right). The 'four big crimes' committed by the Taiwanese in 1924 (see Illustration 5.2, bottom left) were ranked in order as 1) thefts, 11,855 cases; 2) opium-smoking violations, 4,780 cases; 3) gambling, 4,406 cases; and 4) inflicting bodily injury, 3,179 cases.[38]

Of the 'ten harms inflicted by gambling' in another poster, moreover, the Taipei police seemingly attributed these violations to the 'nationals' (*kokumin* 國民) of the island, thus identifying Taiwanese society as the source of problems. They pointed to potential threats to social order caused by such 'sham national traits' (of some Taiwanese) – in contrast to the 'real national character' (*makoto no kokuminsei* 真の國民性).[39] This remark and the posters displayed at the Hall of Crime Prevention tellingly reflect how the Japanese conceived of the Taiwanese as new nationals to be guarded against but also point to the need to examine how knowledge production of modern Japan contributed to the formation of Japan's colonial empire.

Despite the power of the colonial government, its presence in rural Taiwan was limited. Thus, from the beginning of Japanese rule in Taiwan, the realm of old customs and local practices was not part of the modernity programme of the colonial government. The Japanese regarded many old customs of the Taiwanese as backward practices: burning money for the dead (Ch. *shaojinzhi* 燒金紙), keeping concubines (Ch. *xuqie* 蓄妾), mistreating children (Ch. *xiaoer nuedai* 小兒虐待), and the ceremonies deemed empty formalities (Ch. *xuli* 虛禮). Illustration 5.3 reveals how the Taipei police portrayed the way to reform Taiwanese society as they conceived it.[40] A related issue was how to conform social customs in the colony to those of Japan. The Japanese government attempted to regulate Taiwanese religious practices. It did not, however, intend to ban them. To reform Taiwanese religion, the colonial government resorted to two methods. On the one hand it attempted to regulate temples and shrines, and on the other it tried to intervene in traditional Taiwanese religious practices. The result was a colonial power interested in adopting legal and supervisory means of control over temples.[41]

Illustration 5.2 'Four big crimes in Taiwan', and the like, Site One (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0050)

Illustration 5.3 Abolishing superstition, and the like, Site One (Taihokushū keimubu, *Taihokushū keisatsu eisei tenrankai shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0046)

There is only a thin line between colonial governmentality and social engineering. The Japanese government's determination to bring Taiwan into line through the colonial police continued to play with the tone of governmentality, but its key tune obviously lay in the mode of social engineering. Colonial modernity became established on the island only when the Taiwanese people began to appropriate the value system of the Japanese for their own use. This phenomenon began to occur during the interwar years, though it ultimately did not last into the later war years. Interestingly, while the gaze of the police was cast upon the masses, the police were also looking back at Japan, as illustrated by the rhetoric of the Taipei police promoting national spirit (*kokumin seishin sakkō* 國民精神作興), loyalty and patriotism (*chūkun aikoku* 忠君愛國), and placing stress on the concept of national polity (*kokutai kannen no kōchō* 國體觀念の高調).[42] It is beyond this chapter's scope to explicate the issues of power, sex, and race embedded in the posters, but there is no doubt that the eyes of the police were keenly present.

Everyday life as the sensational

For many of the participating 'masses', things modern and scenes entertaining seemed to have impressed them the most. This can be judged from the crowds populating the radio room, the curious audiences gathering to watch films, and the displays of many modern novelties in several exhibition halls. The case of everyday modernity illustrates how a disciplinary means of colonial governmentality could be socially engineered and politically manipulated in the Age of Taishō. In Japan, the commercialisation of culture was one key feature of the Taishō culture. Naming various objects with the prefix of culture (*bunka* 文化) was quite popular in the 1920s, a tendency that reflected the strong aspiration for progress among the new middle classes.

Site One turned out to be the most popular of the three. It was here that the sensational, the expressive, and the calculable of everyday life were most visibly on display through the ritual and the spectacle of cultural politics. Next to the recreation hall was a film room, jam-packed with people at all times, where movies played free of charge. Most of the films were made for entertainment and education (realistic, comic, educational, and propagandistic) and borrowed from a few major theatres operated by the Japanese. The theatres that had been solicited were all operated by the Japanese and located in the old downtown area (Ch. *Ximending* 西門町) of today's Taipei City: *Sekaikan* 世界館, *Yoshinotei* 芳乃亭, and *Shin-sekaikan* 新世界館. They were the earliest movie theatres

in Taiwan and the largest ones at that time. Two semi-government associations also provided films for the event: the *Taiwan Daily News* and the Educational Association of Taiwan Education (*Taiwan kyōikukai* 台灣教育會). From time to time, the Bureau of Police Affairs inserted propaganda with themes of police affairs and public health into the programme.[43] The messages thus delivered were clearly centred on social enlightenment with a hue of modernity, which the Taipei police hoped would eventually find a way into every household and thereby penetrate into local people's daily lives. This feature of everyday modernity no doubt helped draw a larger number of attendees than expected.

By the time the Taishō period came to an end, the broadcast age had descended. Broadcasts best represented this phenomenon of the cultural turn to the masses, and radios began to play a leading role in the Japanese living room (*chanoma* 茶の間).[44] In November 1928, to celebrate the enthronement of Emperor Showa, over-the-air broadcast of radio gymnastics (ラジオ体操, a fitness programme on the radio) began; it survived the war and continues to be a popular programme even today. Radio broadcasting was a novelty at that time. The Tokyo Broadcast Bureau (*Tōkyō hōsōkyoku* 東京放送局) made its first broadcast, the first in Japan, on 22 March 1925; it was not until 1928 that the first broadcast station was founded in Taipei. Partly to cope with the situation, the Taipei police installed on the third day a radio in the rest area (located at the centre of the ground in Site One). At night, news from major cities in Japan (Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya) and occupied China (Shanghai and Dairen) was broadcast via the speakers, only to gather a larger audience.[45] The sound in the police exhibition was by no means good, but it still attracted crowds. As the 1926 photo album reveals, in the cases of radio broadcasting and chestnut rice cake making and on other occasions such as showing films for entertainment, children were the most visible audience.

The other two sites were smaller but had clearly marked themes: aboriginal affairs and hygiene. Site Two was composed of the Hall of Aboriginal Administration, which displayed items concerning aborigines, and an annex (*eisei bekkan* 衛生別館) to the Hall of Hygiene (*eiseikan* 衛生館, the main hall, located in Site Three). The display for water supply included such facilities as modern toilets. Three large-scale miniature models stood conspicuously in Site Two. One was to demonstrate how water supply worked, a second was to illustrate how land planning contributed to malaria control, and a third was to show how garbage was collected and disposed. Site Three was located at the Bacteriological Inspection Office (*saikin kensashitsu* 細菌檢查室) of Taipei Prefecture. The items on display

there ranged in theme from the prevention of contagious diseases to informational publicity (on medicine, animals, housing, and foods) and to the physical education of the individual.[46]

Hygiene had been of prime concern to the Japanese since the early years of colonial rule. As a term and concept, hygiene involved a different operating mechanism from health (*kenkō* 健康; Ch. *jiankang*), which was originally Chinese and generally referred to individuals, emphasising physical integrity and long life. The term *hygiene* was also somewhat distinct from 'public health'. While hygiene suggests the role of a strong state in orchestrating administration and intervention, public health conveys a more positive move toward the welfare system with preventive medical care proffered by the state. The colonial government was the major moving force behind a series of reform programmes, beginning with plague control and disease prevention. The government made vaccination compulsory when plague or other contagious diseases spread. It strictly regulated the use of privies and drinking wells, sponsored lectures, held exhibitions, and constantly conducted routine inspections by encouraging group competitions. By the mid-1920s sanitary conditions in Taiwan had been considerably improved. So far as the 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition was concerned, progress and education were two major operating concepts, but the means for implementing them remained conventional: colonial governance.

Aboriginal administration was the key feature in Site Two, and the colonial government took pride in it. The Taipei police noted that the displays helped arouse the curiosity of the audience, some of whom had no prior knowledge of anything aboriginal.[47] A chestnut rice cake shop, toasting the taste of – and foods made by – the aborigines, was quite popular and constantly crowded with curious people.[48] As with Site One, evening operating hours helped attract crowds, and movies played in the back courtyard for three consecutive nights (see Illustration 5.4).[49] The Bureau of Police Affairs lent a total of 24 films for this event. All films were documentaries, with the aim of enhancing general knowledge about the aborigines: 'barbarian lands' (*banchi* 蕃地) and 'barbarians' (*banjin* 蕃人).

In the plains, the police took upon themselves much of the local administration, but in the aboriginal regions they had to personally carry out even more duties: education, health care, and hygiene, as well as some roles expected of specialists (such as technical supervisors in agricultural improvement and missionaries in spiritual guidance). The films conveyed a strong message: that the police not only administered aboriginal lands and served as teachers and medical doctors but also

Illustration 5.4 A night show of educational films at the Hall of Aboriginal Administration, Site Two (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0130)

filled other social needs. They were trained to do the job in this way and to embrace its difficulties as their calling (or true vocation). The Taipei police held the view that the propaganda effect was remarkably effective, as it aroused 'sympathetic understanding' among the attendees with regard to how the police had devoted themselves to the mission of administering the aboriginal lands.[50] At Site Two as well, copies of the first issue of a tabloid, the *Takasago Times* (タカサゴタイムス; lit., the *Formosa News*), were available for distribution. The *Times* boasted of the Japanese achievements in managing aboriginal affairs. A propaganda song (*riban sendenka* 理蕃宣傳歌) was also distributed at Site Two.[51]

At the main gate of each exhibition site stood an arch that drew large crowds. This was the area where all kinds of colourful banners for advertising were displayed. In each of the three exhibition sites, stands and shops for foods and souvenirs were lined up along the roads from the main gate to the entrance. The arch of Site One was elaborately decorated with a modern device, a work conceived and undertaken by the Taiwan Electric Power Company (*Taiwan denryoku kabushiki kaisha* 臺灣電力株式會社), which also helped with lighting decorations and related

facilities installed in each exhibition hall. The Age of Taishō was the time when electricity entered family life via electric bulbs made of tungsten filament. Electricity served as an indicator of the level of cultural life in a consumer-oriented society.[52] The arch was the signpost of each site. It signified fun, glitz, and all things modern.

In front of the entrance of the Hall of Social Control, Site One, stood a big goddess statue (1.4 *jō* 丈, or 3.36 meters). She had her left hand raised high, holding a golden placard which read Left (*hidari* 左) and Safe (*anzen* 安全), while her right hand, lower down, held another placard reading Right (*migi* 右) and Danger (*kiken* 危險). At the base of the statue were placed four wheels of a car, along with an alarm horn and a set of headlights. In the background were two lines of houses in downtown Taipei (Illustration 5.5). The message was clear: watch the traffic signs for your safety![53] As the signpost of the main exhibition site, this statue was as much a symbol for traffic safety as it was a disciplinary mechanism regulating one's behaviour in everyday life.

In a span of five days, some 250 firecrackers were launched. The firecrackers were sponsored by the Taiwan Fireworks Company (*Taiwan*

Illustration 5.5 The Goddess statue (right) for traffic safety (left), Site One (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0022)

bakuchiku hanabi kabushiki kaisha 臺灣爆竹煙火株式會社). Hygienic equipment was acquired, apparently with difficulty, from Japan. The All Taipei Rickshaw Association (*Taihoku nanboku jinrikisha kumiai* 臺北南北人力車組合) offered information on transportation facilities, with gift items solicited from car-related business operations of the city. Tea was provided all the time, with the tea-making facility provided by the Taipei Tea Merchant Association (Ch. *Taibei chashang gonghui* 臺北茶商公會). Site Two, in particular, was decorated with Japanese lanterns. The lamps with paper shades were gifts from the Formosa Fats and Oils Company (*Takasago yūshi kabushiki kaisha* 高砂油脂株式會社).[54]

On display at Site Three was a poster that read 'cultural housing' (*bunka jūtaku* 文化住宅) (Illustration 5.6). Following the model of Japan, the colonial government hoped that introducing the concept of cultural housing to Taiwan would help improve residential hygiene. What is striking was the location of the display. The poster to promote cultural housing was placed up top in the corner of a ward for contagious diseases, so that residential hygiene was ranked side by side with leprosy.

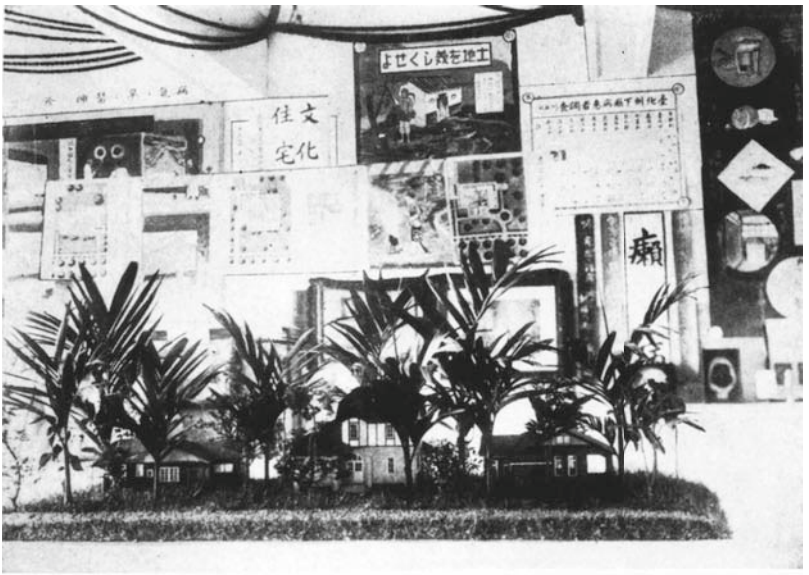

Illustration 5.6 A corner of the ward for contagious diseases (residential hygiene and leprosy), Site Three (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0180)

The message was strikingly alarming: building cultural housing for the sake of residential hygiene!

The police efforts to promote moral suasion (*kyōka* 教化) carried the distinct imprint of the Age of Taishō.[55] While the narratives constructed by the Taipei police in the 1925 exhibition remained exhortative and disciplinary, the messages it hoped to deliver were progressive and constructive. The display of posters and actual objects struck a chord of everyday modernity. This excitement, accompanied by desires, was enforced via broadcasts, shows, movies, and many other modern curiosities. Whether the twin messages of rule by law and social enlightenment were indeed received by the audience remains unclear.

Backlashes over the exhibitions did occur, as the Taipei police noted. They were unusually frank about this negative reaction from some Taiwanese. Caricatures that portrayed the Taiwanese as dirty and uncivilised (e.g., urinating by the roadside) or old Taiwanese customs (such as stealing, gambling, and human trafficking) as bad invited sharp criticisms from some Taiwanese.[56] This was no doubt an interesting phenomenon, which the next section attempts to evaluate.

Rhetoric, images, and coloniality

The police personified the world of order and law. A policeman was sarcastically called 'his honour' (*keisatsu daijin* 警察大人), suggesting that the police were almighty in colonial Taiwan. The myth of an all-powerful Japanese police lingers, as this image continues into today. The 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition endorsed this myth, albeit with changes in themes and some moderation in tone. Thus, it is legitimate to ask: Who was the audience for this exposition? Obviously, it was the Taiwanese who were supposed to be taught about disciplines such as social order and hygiene. The police themselves framed the meaning of their exhibition in relation to exhibitions in Japan proper. They were showing the Taiwanese – and themselves – that they were part of Japan's colonial empire. Putting on this exhibition, therefore, reveals as much about the police as it informs us about the audience.

The image of an almighty colonial police was deliberately toned down for the exhibition. The police now were expected to stand together with the masses (*keisatsu to minshū* 警察と民衆) in all kinds of activities from defence (*bōei* 防衛) to prevention (*yobō* 予防) (see Illustration 5.7, top left). Ideally conceived, the police were part of a trio at the front lines of local administration: policemen worked hand in hand with town and village officials (*shigaishō shokuin* 市街庄職員) and primary

Illustration 5.7 'The police and the masses', the 'trio' and the like, Site Three (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0104)

school teachers (*shō-kōgakkō kyōin* 小公學校教員) (see Illustration 5.7, bottom right).

What stands out among the posters referring to the police was the slogan 'kindness comes first' (*shinsetsu daiichi* 親切第一), which might be read as the first step towards a conscious attempt to improve the image of the police. One of the most controversial posters was the one below, which likened the police to the Great Merciful Buddha (*namu keisatsu daibosatsu* 南無警察大菩薩) (see Illustration 5.8). There is no knowing which Buddha the Taipei police had in mind. Most Taiwanese, upon first impression, might have associated the posture of the sitting Buddha with that of the Goddess of Mercy (Ch. *Guanyin* 觀音), the feminine form of *Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva*.

A close look at the image of the Great Merciful Buddha reveals that a rank-and-file policeman holds a Buddhist rosary (with 108 beads) in the left hand and a sword in the right. Stretching out from behind the Buddha were six hands, each pointing to one of the six duty categories of a policeman. In colonial Taiwan, policemen working on the front lines of local administration were by and large grouped into two categories

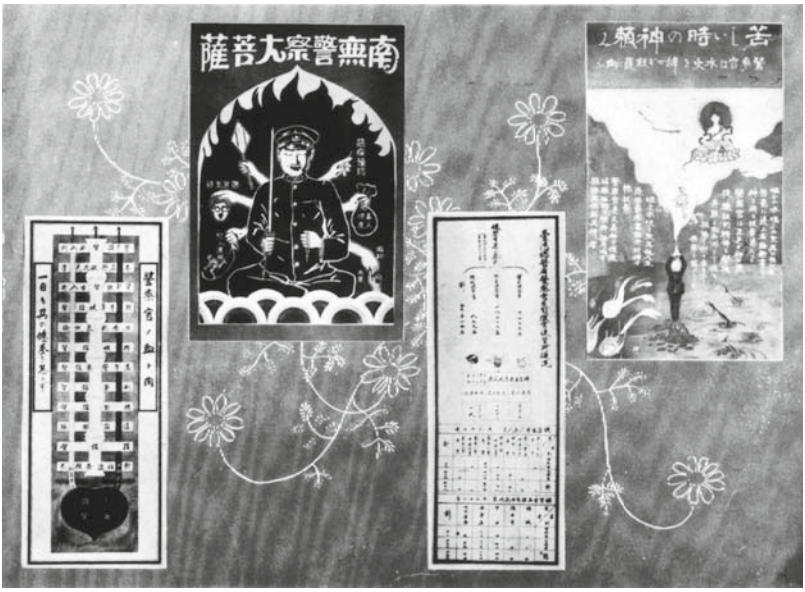

Illustration 5.8 The police poster as the Great Merciful Buddha, Site One (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0113)

by race. Group A (*junsa* 巡査 or, after August 1920, *kōshu junsa* 甲種巡査) were almost all Japanese, and virtually all Taiwanese policemen served as a supplemental force (*junsaho* 巡査補 or, after August 1920, *otsushu junsa* 乙種巡査). Rank-and-file policemen, as suggested in the image of the Buddha policeman, were at most 'treated as officials' (*taigū kanri* 待遇官吏), but in the mind of local people they acted like a local lord.[57]

Reading counter-clockwise, the duties corresponded to the three exhibition sites: 1) keeping to the left (*hidarigawa tsūkō* 左側通行); 2) thought control (*shisō torishimari*思想取締); 3) placing a culprit under arrest (*hannin taiho* 犯人逮捕); 4) rescue work and relief activities (*kyūjo kyūgo*救助救護); 5) providing the aborigines with work and vocational aid (*banjin jusan*蕃人授產); and 6) adopting preventive measures against epidemics (*akueki yobō* 惡疫豫防). Of the six tasks expected of a policeman, the first four pointed to Site One, the fifth to Site Two, and the sixth to Site Three. It is not too difficult to imagine what kind of messages the Taipei police hoped to deliver: turning the masses into the police.

Indeed, not all Taiwanese left the exhibition halls without reservations. Zhang Wojun 張我軍 (1902–55), a key figure in the New Taiwan

Literature Movement in the 1920s, was one of the few Taiwanese who attended the police exhibition and left a record. Zhang was editor of the *People's News of Taiwan* when he published his reflections on the exhibition on 13 December 1925.[58] He was particularly critical of the Hall of the Thought Police in Site One. It was in this hall that items related to current events and thought were exhibited, and it was here that most posters that sneered and scoffed at Taiwanese political movements as harmful and partially informed were displayed. On the top to the right of Illustration 5.9, for example, the caption reads 'A smattering of knowledge does no good but harm to oneself' (*itchi hankai no genron wa mukeki yūgai* 一知半解の言語は無益有害).[59]

Zhang Wojun represented the first new generation of Taiwanese, whose members were born after Japan's takeover and rose in society during the interwar years, and thus his comments deserve further analysis. Zhang claimed, first, that the image of the police as the Great Merciful Buddha was in conflict with their perpetual image as the all-powerful police. Second, while the police were anxious to uplift culture and livelihood via the exhibition and advocated a harmonious relationship between Japanese and Taiwanese, this move was self-defeating, because the Japanese ridiculed and poked fun at Taiwanese for knowing little about the nature of political and social movements. He was most irritated at the image of a poster the headline of which condemned the goals of Taiwanese nationalist activists as unrealistic and hopeless and declared all of their speech and writing no more than building castles in the air (*kūchū rōkaku no genron* 空中樓閣の言論). To add insult to injury, Zhang continued, the police derided the Taiwanese people as inferior for having lived an erroneous cultural life (*machigareru bunka* 誤れる文化).[60] Open complaints as such were scarce, but Zhang serves as a useful reminder of an attitude that may have been more widely felt than expressed.

Presumably, if there is a space for cultural critique, there is agency among the colonised. The watchful eyes of the Taipei police in the 1925 exhibition are understandable. Staging an exhibition by the police was, nevertheless, as much about Japan's colonial rule in Taiwan as it was about the colonial people and their everyday life. As a space, everyday life is ambiguous and evasive; as a discourse, it conveys certain contrasting or paradoxical implications. After all, our sensational world is part of – not external to – everyday life. Everyday life, moreover, is a cultural experience of modernity. To treat the realm of the everyday as silent, without motives or subjectivity, is to deny its problematic and so to negate its potential for generating a counter-discourse.

Illustration 5.9 A partial view of the Hall of the Thought Police, Site One (Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-087)

Zhang's case suggests that everyday life might have served as a source for negotiated coloniality. This, however, does not seem to be the case even in interwar Taiwan, when socio-political movements were most active. Taiwanese resistance against policy implementation or their criticism of the colonial government was mostly directed towards the question of implementation – it did not rise to the level of theoretical discourse. While Zhang Wojun expressed disgust at the display of some exhibition halls, he did not criticise the rest of the exhibition.[61] It is here that the nature of everyday coloniality demands further examination.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analysed texts and posters from the case study of the 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition to explore issues of modernity in a colonial setting in the 'Age of the Masses'. I have examined the 'eyes of the Japanese colonial police', to use their own terminology, during the interwar years, an intriguing period for the analysis of everyday coloniality. I have arrived at the conclusion that the police exhibition grappled with a growing awareness of the masses as targets for the consumption of a new kind of knowledge about Japan's Asian Modern.

No simple explanation is sufficient to interpret the Taipei police exhibition, despite the fact that it lasted only five days. One thing is certain, however. A majority of the masses in attendance were schoolchildren, youth, and Able-Bodied Corps members. They most likely did not care whether a miniature model was translated or omitted in the exhibition. These people participated in the exhibition for a variety of reasons, and they hoped to have fun and pleasure by seeking things that would arouse their curiosity and give them comfort. While it is too early to conclude that the Taiwanese had quietly begun to adopt the value system of their Japanese colonists, it is safe to argue that this was at least what the Taipei police hoped to see.

The growing importance of colonial governmentality as an analytical tool has had a major impact on historical studies today, and it points to a more complicated set of negotiated processes between modes of power than was previously appreciated. I have made the case that colonial modernity did indeed take place in colonial Taiwan, at least in the interwar years, to the extent that colonial policies worked in the name of enlightenment. This was primarily because they appealed to both Japanese interests and Taiwanese concerns, if not entirely cloaked in the modern. This study, however, raises more questions than it attempts to answer and points to the need to bring

history back to textual analysis. It remains to be seen if this image of everyday modernity helped shape the Taiwanese post-war obsession with Japan's colonial rule.

Notes

1. I first presented a preliminary study of this article at a conference on Taiwan studies held by the University of California at Santa Barbara in May 2010. The findings were later included in the 2011 UCSB conference proceedings. See Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, 'The "Eyes" of the Police: The 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition', in the Proceedings for the UCSB 2010 CTS Conference on Taiwan under Japanese Rule: Cultural Translation and Colonial Modernity, comp. University of California at Santa Barbara, USA, pp. 79–87.The images in this paper were based on a source: *Taihokushū keisatsu eisei tenrankai shashinjō* (A Photo Album of the Exhibition on the Police and Sanitation of the Taipei Prefecture; Taipei: Taihokushū keimubu, 1926); hereafter, *Shashinjō*. The photo album was reproduced by the Old Archives Division of the Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, Taipei; file no. T0156P0011. The original document was donated by Chen Chunmu陳春木, Tainan; the collector is the author herself; the date of donation was July 1995.I am most grateful to Peter Zarrow for his comments and copyediting. I am indebted to the assistance of Tsui Yan-hui for facilitating my access to special Taiwan collections.
2. Fan Yanqiu, 'Weisheng" kandejian: 1910 niandai Taiwan de weisheng zhanlanhui' [Visualising Hygiene: Hygiene Exhibitions in Colonial Taiwan during the 1920s], *Keji, yiliao yu shehui* [A Taiwanese Journal for the Studies of Science, Technology, and Medicine] 7 (2008), 65–124.
3. Taihokushū keimubu [hereafter, *Kiroku*; Department of Police Affairs], *Taihokushū keisatsu eisei tenrankai kiroku* [A Record of the Exhibition on the Police and Sanitation of the Taipei Prefecture] (Taihoku: Taiwan nichinichi shinpōsha, 1926), pp. 1, 11.
4. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku* (1926).
5. Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*. The photo album included more than 600 photos and over 1,000 posters, totalling slightly over 200 pages.
6. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 113.
7. Yoshimi Shunya, *Bolanhui de zhengzhixue: Shixian zhi xiandai* [The Politics of Exhibitions: The Modern of the Gaze] (trans. Su Shuobin et al.; Taipei: Qunxue, 2010; orig. pub. 1992 by Chūō kōron shinsha, Tokyo), p. 21.
8. Ibid., p. 252, 257.
9. The full name for the exhibition was *Taihokushū keisatsu eisei tenrankai* 臺北州警察衛生展覽會; hereafter, the 1925 Taipei Police Exhibition.
10. Taiwan nichinichi shinpōsha, *Taiwan nichinichi shinpō* [*Taiwan Daily News*] (Taihoku: Taiwan nichinichi shinpōsha, 1926), (26 November 1925): 2; Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 25–9.
11. Ibid., pp. 26, 116, 118.
12. Ibid., pp. 112–13.
13. Ibid., p. 1.
14. Matsui Shigeru was instrumental in helping set up an empire-wide training institute for police cadres (*keisatsu kōshūjō* 警察講習所, 1918–46) in Japan.

15. Obinata Sumio, *Kindai Nihon keisatsu oyobi chiiki shakai* [The Police and Regional Communities in Modern Japan] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2000), pp. 142–43, 193–95.
16. Jiang Yulin, '"Nanwu jingcha dapusa": Rizhi shiqi Taibeizhou jingcha weisheng zhanlanhui zhong de jingcha xingxiang' [The 'Buddha Police': The Image of the Police during the Period of Japanese Rule in Taiwan, As Seen from the Exhibition Held by the Taipei Prefecture on the Police and Hygiene], *Zhengda faxue pinglun* [*Law Review of Zhengzhi University*] 12 (December 2009):18–19.
17. Namely, the Taiwan Police Association (*Taiwan keisatsu kyōkai* 台灣警察協會), the Firefighting Association of Taipei Prefecture (*Taihokushū shōbō kyōkai* 台北州消防協會), and the Transportation Union of Taiwan (*Taiwan unyugyō kumiai* 台灣運輸業組合). These donors were all supporting groups of the police. Each contributed 500 yen. See Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 84.
18. Only one contribution was solicited from an individual, Katō Sadatarō 加藤定太郎, whose special endowment (*tokushu kifukin* 特種寄附金), derived from his 1000-yen treasury bonds, sold for 765 yen. See Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, 103. Katō's connection with the colonial government remains to be ascertained.
19. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 84.
20. Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, 'The "Eyes" of the Police', 2011.
21. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 4, 20, 26–8, 102–5, 118.
22. The total items displayed in the exhibition numbered 6814 items. See Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, 12, 30–84. The figures cited here should be taken as final counts for the 1926 official reportage.
23. Miyoshi Tokusaburō was a prominent Japanese tea merchant who had close official ties to the colonial government of Taiwan. See Namikata Shōichi, *Minkan sōtoku: Miyoshi Tokusaburō to Tsujiri chaho* [A Private-Citizen Governor General: Miyoshi Tokusaburō and the Tsujiri Tea House] (Tokyo: Nihon Senta, 2002).
24. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 11, 14.
25. Ibid., p. 112.
26. Takemura Tamio, *Dazheng wenhua: Diguo Riben de wutuobang shidai* [The Cultural Taishō: The Times of Utopia in Imperial Japan] (tr. Lin Bangyou; Taipei: Yushanshe, 2010; orig. pub. 2004 under the title *Taishō bunka: Teikoku no utopia* by Sangensha, Tokyo), pp. 165–6, 217–20.
27. The old building was built on the site where the Provincial Governor of the late Qing period (Ch. *futai* 撫臺) was located. Most of the old building was assigned to the Bureau of Transportation at the time when the police exhibition was held.
28. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 5.
29. While the 1926 exhibition reportage does not identify the items, one is led to surmise that they were mostly objects confiscated from the anti-Japanese military movements in the first two decades after the Japanese takeover of Taiwan.
30. The special hall housed goods from both criminal cases and those of the thought police that the Taipei police from all over the island had 'laboriously collected' (see Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 1, 4).
31. Ibid., pp. 3, 31–2.
32. Ibid., pp. 15–20.

33. The *hokō* organisation was a joint-responsibility household system organised by the decimal scale. The Able-Bodied Corps was a supplementary force to the local police.
34. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 26–8.
35. For a comprehensive study of sightseeing activities in colonial Taiwan, see Soyama Takeshi, *Shokuminchi Taiwan to kindai tsu-rizumu* [Colonial Taiwan and Sightseeing Activities in Modern Times] (Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 2003).
36. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 117.
37. Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, 'One Kind of Control: The *Hokō* System in Taiwan under Japanese Rule, 1895–1945' (New York: Columbia University, PhD diss., 1990); see also my book, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire Building: An Institutional Approach to Colonial Engineering* (Oxford: Routledge, 2009).
38. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 17.
39. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 97–9; Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-0049 and T0156P0011-0087.
40. I.e., Ch. *guan-hun-zang-ji* 冠婚葬祭, referring to the four ceremonies held for capping (Ch. *guanli* 冠禮, for a young man when he reaches 20), wedding (Ch. *hunli* 婚禮), burial (Ch. *zangli*葬禮), and festival (Ch. *jidian*祭典).
41. See Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, 'Engineering the Social or Engaging "Everyday Modernity"? Interwar Taiwan Reconsidered', in Ann Helen and Scott Sommers (eds), *Becoming Taiwan: From Colonialism to Democracy* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2006; Studia Formosiana series, vol. 6), pp. 83–100, esp. the section on 'religious regulation'.
42. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 1, 4.
43. Ibid, p. 96.
44. Takeyama Akiko, *Rajio no jidai: Rajio wa cha no ma no shuyaku datta* [The Age of Radios: Radios Played a Leading Role in the Japanese-style Living Room] (Kyoto: Sekai sisōsha, 2002).
45. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 27; Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156 P0011-0019.
46. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 20–5.
47. Ibid., p. 27.
48. Ibid., p. 120.
49. I.e., 22–4 November; Site Three was closed after 17:00.
50. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, p. 96.
51. Ibid., p. 123.
52. Takemura Tamio, *Dazheng wenhua*, p. 107.
53. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 14–15.
54. Ibid., p. 85.
55. Sheldon Garon translated this term, *shakai kyōka*, as 'moral suasion'; see Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).
56. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 114–16.
57. See Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, *Taiwan in Japan's Empire Building*; esp. ch. 3, on the 'Police as Lord', pp. 67–90.
58. This essay by Chang Wojun was originally published by *Taiwan minpō* 83 (13 December 1925), 11. It was later reprinted in a compendium compiled by his eldest son, Zhang Guangzheng 張光正; See Zhang Wojun, 'Kanle jingcha zhanlanhui zhihou' [After Visiting the Police Exhibition], in *Zhang Wojun*

quanji [The Complete Works of Zhang Wojun] (comp. Zhang Guangzheng; Taipei: Renjian, 2003), pp. 107–9.

59. Taihokushū keimubu, *Kiroku*, pp. 18–19; Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-087.
60. See Taihokushū keimubu, *Shashinjō*, T0156P0011-091 and T0156P0011-093, respectively.
61. Commenting in general terms from his postcolonial perspective on city planning and architecture, Xia Zhujiu condemns this flawed modernity under Japanese rule as a modernity without agency (Ch. *zhuti quexi zhi xiandaixing*主體缺席之現代性). See Xia Zhujiu, 'Zhimin de xiandaixing yingzao: Chongxie Riben zhimin Taiwan jianzhu yu chengshi de lishi' [Shaping Colonial Modernity: Rewriting the History of Architecture and Urban Cities in Taiwan under Japanese Rule], the International Symposium on the Urban Cities and Architecture under Colonial Rule, Preparatory Office of the Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, 6–7 Sept. 2000), p. 48. Xia is a political activist and currently a professor at Taiwan University.

Part II

The Public Sphere and Mass Dictatorship

6

Habermas, Fascism, and the Public Sphere

Paul Corner

On the face of it, the term 'fascist public sphere' – in the sense of 'public sphere' as used by Habermas – would seem to be a contradiction in terms.[1] The 'public sphere' implies debate, discussion, representation of position, exchange of ideas, respect of other people's opinions, and so on. The public sphere is the agora in which rationality can triumph in politics; indeed it is that element that makes society *function* properly – almost a kind of embodiment of the ideas of the Enlightenment. It is the testimony that civil society – the people – exists in separation from the state, a state to which the civil society concedes legitimacy by virtue of reasoned argument.

Fascism, of course, rejected all this. For the first fascists, the word 'politics' had come to mean social division, endless and bitter argument, and debilitating social conflict. From the antipolitical stance which early fascism adopted, 'politics' was understood to mean the fragmentation of national spirit, such as the fascists thought they had witnessed at difficult moments during the First World War, when acute political differences threatened to undermine national unity. The divisions created by politics were seen as being responsible for Italy's very evident problems of stability and for the emergence of the 'antinational' opposition represented by socialism. As a response to this perception of the old politics, fascism claimed to have 'transcended' political division by devising a new form of politics centred on the state. It was able to do this because the fascist movement acted within a logic created by itself; it asserted the supremacy of the state and then judged everything by that criterion. The asserted supremacy of the state rejected the key role of the individual, except when the individual was seen to be acting in conformity with the objectives of the state. In this process of reasoning, public and private seemed almost to disappear; everything became (or should

have become) public, in the sense that it was related to the state and to the collective objective. State and society thus became one, merged into each other. The 'public sphere' in the Habermasian sense could not exist, therefore, because there was no longer that 'space' between society and the state which it inhabited. Public discussion and reasoned argument had no place because all was predetermined by the supremacy of the state.

It might seem possible to stop here. We might very reasonably conclude with the acknowledgement that fascism destroyed the public sphere with its violence, intolerance of difference, manipulation of information, denial of individual rights, and suppression of pluralist debate. After all, under fascism the people do not decide; they obey. Yet it would not be a totally satisfactory conclusion. For one thing, it would suggest the idea of a perfectly functioning public sphere in Italy before the advent of fascism – which was clearly not the case. As some of Habermas's critics have observed, in the bourgeois 'public sphere' of the nineteenth century many were left out, relatively few consulted, and many repressed.[2] There is, in short, the risk of idealisation of the 'public sphere', of turning it into something that has never really existed, with a consequent exaggeration of the changes wrought by fascism. We should not forget that the liberal Italy of 1920 was in great difficulty because it was unable to resolve successfully the problem of representation of diverse social groups and political orientations, despite the presumed existence of a 'public sphere'.

More importantly – and here we can identify one of the many paradoxes of the argument – it is inescapable that at least in some ways the 'people' were more politically present under fascism than they had been before, the political process more public than it had ever been before. After all, the town square, the piazza – the central point of fascist rallies – had always been for Italians the quintessential place of public meeting. Not surprisingly fascism often dated its beginnings to the interventionist crisis of 1914–15, when a very active minority of Italians (those who favoured intervention in World War I) believed they had won their case through victory in the public battles with the neutralists in the piazza. And nobody in liberal Italy had been able to shout replies to the questions put to him or her by a liberal prime minister, as they were able to do with Mussolini during his famous 'dialogues' with the crowd from the balcony of Palazzo Venezia in Rome.

Is it possible therefore to suggest that fascism creates its own public sphere – a new kind of public sphere not comparable to the Habermasian sphere (usually defined as 'bourgeois' and often thought to be more

associated with the realities of the nineteenth century than the twentieth), one that is more adapted to twentieth-century *mass* society? Fascists, after all, spoke long before Tony Blair or Anthony Giddens about having invented the 'third way' for fascism, a third way between capitalism and communism. The fascists called it corporativism (to be distinguished from Charles Maier's corporatism). Could this be seen as, in some ways, a more 'modern' response to the tensions of an industrialising society than that which liberal Italy had been able to produce up to that point? Does fascism have this new kind of public sphere in common with other mass dictatorships of the twentieth century?

The very 'public' nature of fascism is undeniable. Indeed it is one of the most obviously novel and important aspects of the regime. From the first, fascism was organised public violence, but it was well-organised violence that showed a mastery of choreography. Drawing greatly on what was essentially the 'street theatre' of D'Annunzio at Fiume in 1919, fascism showed that it understood much better than its enemies the importance of communication and the role played by the public image. The carefully organised marches of columns of fascist *squadristi*, the open coffins at the funerals of fascist 'martyrs', the very uniform itself – the black shirt – all were designed to give a strong *public* presence to the fascist movement. The uniformed fascist blackshirt became, by virtue of his uniform, in some senses a 'public' figure in a way a supporter of a political movement before 1914 had never been. From late 1920 onwards, you might not like fascism, but in many areas, particularly of northern Italy, you could not avoid seeing it on the streets.

In the later years, of course, fascism developed this 'public' aspect to a very great degree. The major mass rallies of the regime, usually designed to show the 'spontaneous enthusiasm' of the population for some aspect of fascist policy, were well-orchestrated examples of public theatre. To understand this, it is only necessary to look at the newsreel films of these demonstrations (the films are of course an extension of the same operation, usually designed in their production to accentuate the theatricality of the event and carry it to the distant areas unable to participate directly). Radio brought the speeches of the Duce into every village, if not into every home; and public loudspeakers in the piazza completed the job (although it seems they often did not work). A specifically fascist architecture was developed with the intention of communicating the message of grandeur and power; the imitation of ancient Rome in the columns and the facades of the new fascist buildings gave a very public message to the population. The other visual arts were often used in the same way. Politics as theatre, the visual image, the instant emotive

impression rather than the reasoned argument – these were all aspects of a fascism that understood very well the importance of communicating with the masses and used most of the (modern) means available to it to realise this. It has even prompted some recent commentators to speak of fascism as being fundamentally about aesthetics.[3]

But a public theatre of politics is not, of course, a Habermasian 'public sphere' by any stretch of the imagination. Under fascism the people's role was that of acclamation and agreement. In fact, the plebiscite (the characteristic weapon of dictatorship) approves; it does not propose. The people may have *participated* in the open theatre of public politics, but the decisions were taken behind closed doors and were anything but public in their formation. In the same way, the people may have responded with a collective 'We!' to Mussolini's balcony questions, but the apparent dialogue was clearly only formal and ritualised. There was no room for argument.[4] Fascism was always rigorously top-down when it came to decision making, just as it was when making appointments to office. Whether as respondents to the leader's harangue, viewers of the film, or listeners to the radio or the loudspeaker, the public participated as never before, but essentially as *audience* or *chorus*, playing a passive role in a drama dominated by other actors.[5]

Of course no fascist in his right mind would have denied this. Indeed it would have seemed self-evident. Nor would it in any way have represented a criticism of fascism. Recognising this prompts us to look more closely at the fascist vision of the political world. Starting from the premise of the supremacy of the nation state understood as an ethical value (it is hardly necessary to remind ourselves of Mussolini's dictum 'Everything within the state, nothing outside the state'), fascist ideology attributed a role to the individual only in so far as that individual was acting in conformity with the requirements of the state (the collective 'We!' referred to above is symptomatic here). As already suggested, society – civil society – was, therefore, no longer autonomous in respect of the state but was merged with the state in a single unitary body politic. It was axiomatic that there was no longer a 'public sphere' where some kind of mediation between state and society took place. But equally and rather paradoxically, under totalitarianism, neither was there a private sphere where the state had no right to intrude. By denying the private sphere of the individual, everything thus became public. As Emilio Gentile has summed it up, 'The essential element which characterised the ideology of Italian fascism was the affirmation of the primacy of political action, that is, totalitarianism, understood as the total resolution of the private in the public, as the subordination of the values of

private life (religion, culture, morality, affection etc.) to the political value par excellence, the State.'[6] Under fascism there was no place for, indeed no need for, mediation between private and public spheres, because everything was now incorporated in a new kind of 'state/national community sphere'.[7] And the new sphere was governed solely by fascist ideology. Fascism postulated a new 'natural order', with predefined hierarchies (predefined by fascism itself), in which there was no room for divisions and therefore nothing to be decided by debate. It was no accident that the fascist imperatives, painted in large letters on half the walls of Italy, were 'believe, obey, fight' rather than 'think, debate, discuss'. It was implicit in fascist ideology that fascism had already done all the thinking for you.

At the same time, none of the mass dictatorial regimes could have survived for long without some kind of popular acquiescence, however grudging, and this presumes some kind of communication between population and power. We return to the question posed earlier: Did fascism succeed in establishing a new kind of 'public sphere', in the sense of forming new channels of communication between dictatorship and the masses? Certainly some fascists insisted that the 'organic' link between the people and the state required a unity of purpose only achieved through a close understanding between the two, and this implied some form of communication. The image of the human body was often invoked in this respect, with the head and the body performing different functions (one directing, one supporting) but the two being nonetheless inextricably linked one to the other in a single unit. Were there veins and blood vessels passing essential blood between fascist government and the people?

Such a question involves more than the usual, by now rather arid, issue of 'consensus' for Italian fascism. In the way in which the problem has been approached, consensus has often been seen as a very 'flat' feature – simply as the absence of open protest.[8] It may be active consensus or passive 'tacit' consensus, but it corresponds essentially to that kind of individual-choice consensus that can be found in democratic regimes. In reality the situation under totalitarian regimes was more complex. Certainly the regimes worked to obtain consensus (although none was reluctant to use force and coercive methods when necessary), but(at least in the case of Italian fascism) this consensus was to be realised through organisation, regimentation, and mobilisation of the population, all of which were intended to create the impression of a collective purpose of a unified population, with everyone working towards the same shared objectives. The *image* of national unity was extremely important.[9] Even

passive and reluctant participation in rallies and other fascist events was necessary, therefore, because it was here that a contact between regime and individual was inevitably established. In a hundred and one other ways (work, housing, health, pensions, schooling), people were compelled to be *involved* with the regime because there was simply no other choice. Sometimes this brought cooperation and collaboration, almost always it brought some kind of contamination and complicity with fascism – it was almost impossible to survive without this being the case. If there were no other choices available in order to be able to live a normal life, some kind of participation with fascism was inevitable. And it is important to understand that, for the fascist regime, it was more important that you *participated* than that you gave consent; the first might lead to the second, but if it did not, this was not a fundamental flaw. Failure to participate, on the other hand, was likely to be very damaging to the regime, because it undermined the essential impression of collective unitary purpose. Regimentation, which produced mobilisation, was therefore one of the key aspects of trying to generate that sense of purpose.

Fascism aimed to achieve legitimation through the mobilisation of the population in activities designed in one way or another to impress upon the participants the collective aims of the fascist state. The many organisations that were set up (in many cases mirroring similar organisations set up in the USSR and in Nazi Germany) are well known. Youth organisations for all ages of young people, women's groups, after-work leisure organisations, fascist trade unions, student groups, sports clubs – all aimed through different kinds of activity to inculcate the same fascist ideal. Some provided some kind of limited arena for discussion about the implementation, if not the formulation, of policy; views could be made known about detailed application of policies, as long as such views were clearly within the parameters of overall fascist objectives. This was very far from being a 'public sphere', but it was a kind of capillary mechanism for registering opinion which was not, as we shall see, without importance for the regime. Both the party (Partito Nazionale Fascista, PNF) and the fascist paramilitary militia (Milizia Volontaria per la Sicurezza Nazionale, MVSN) could, at the local level, perform the same function.

From a formal point of view, however, the most significant innovation of the regime was the idea of the corporative state – 'formal' because the idea was never really put into practice. The corporative state envisaged a set of mechanisms that would, in theory, 'guarantee' collaboration between social groups defined not by class but by productive function. It was essentially the attempt to substitute political representation

by representation based on economic category. In this way fascism proposed to 'transcend' the social conflict that had been inherent in the class struggle and realise that kind of strong monolithic society it judged necessary for the inevitable Darwinian struggle between nations. In a sense it was an attempt to construct an alternative mechanism to the public sphere, permitting a certain kind of representation while avoiding those divisions which had been typical of the parliamentary system in Italy and were seen to be present in the 'decadent' and depressed democracies of the West in the 1920s and 1930s.[10]

The corporative state was the fascist idea that most caught the attention of the Western world, generating a remarkable quantity of generally laudatory literature from British and American writers who thought they had finally found the solution to the Western world's economic and political problems. The success of the idea was undoubtedly due to the claims made for it in terms of 'overcoming' the problems afflicting capitalist societies, very much in the doldrums in the 1930s, without having recourse to the drastic political solutions employed in the Soviet Union. The 'third way' concept, providing an alternative to both capitalism and communism, was understandably attractive to many.[11] It is ironic, however, that precisely at the time, the mid and late 1930s, when the idea of the corporative state was most popular among Western onlookers, the fascist regime was itself rapidly abandoning the idea, permitting the continuance of those empty shells of corporative institutions created in the late 1920s but in effect recognising that the obstacles to the creation of such a state were insurmountable. The Ministry of Corporations had never achieved the kind of unitary control over the economy that its supporters had hoped for, and if the *Camera dei Fasci e delle Corporazioni* (a kind of fascist parliament) did exist by 1939, it never took any significant decision and remained a purely formal representational device.

The *Camera delle Corporazioni* did nonetheless demonstrate an awareness on the part of the regime that repression had to be accompanied by some kind of communication between regime and population. Fascist government was in fact extremely able in involving all kinds of social and professional groupings in the regime's workings, and the *Camera delle Corporazioni* was intended to be the formalisation of this process of involvement. In theory, representation of a sort was to follow the lines of hierarchy established by fascism, therefore, with the opinions of different interest groups being brought to general public attention by a capillary process through which possibly divergent positions met and merged in the workings of the *Camera*. These could never be opinions

or positions that expressed an opposition to fascism, of course, but it was accepted that debate about the best ways of realising fascist objectives could be permitted – indeed, a lively 'public' debate about the best way to realise the corporative state had taken place in the early 1930s – providing it did not go beyond very clearly prescribed limits.

The failure of the corporativist project and the reasons for that failure are extremely significant for any conclusions about fascism and the public sphere. The capillary mechanisms that were intended to permit carefully controlled communication of a sort between masses and regime – those mechanisms which might be seen as constituting a new kind of public sphere more adapted to modern mass society – were never able to function satisfactorily because of implicit contradictions in the regime itself. Perhaps much more than the Nazi regime, Italian fascism *was*, despite all the propaganda about the collective purpose of the nation, a very solidly based class regime. Its very claim to transcend class differences rather than abolish them indicated that the fascist 'revolution' was not (officially) aimed at the social and economic spheres but at the realms of politics and ideology. As long as public expression of opinion concerned Italy's glorious fascist future or (for example) the role of the school of fascist mysticism within the structure of the regime, debate could be permitted; but as soon as debate began to put in question the economic interests of powerful groups that provided the backbone of fascist support, it had to be suppressed. In fact, in numerous cases in which more radical fascists attempted to utilise the mechanisms of communication – the trade union, the corporations, the youth groups, even the party itself – in order to propose policies that might have damaged established interests, Mussolini or a powerful minister would step in in order to stop such initiatives. The message was usually very clear. It was that discussion and debate could be permitted within certain well-defined parameters but that any attempt to propose actions that might threaten the stability of the regime and the delicate equilibrium established by Mussolini with those various centres of power in Italy not directly controlled by fascism was destined to meet a rapid end.

The obvious ground on which this rule was tested was the trade union. The fascist union organisation owed much to its predecessor, the socialist CGIL, and also had many leaders who had passed from revolutionary syndicalism to fascism, Edmondo Rossoni being the most prominent example. By the very nature of its position the fascist union organisation was obliged to make some attempt to at least appear to protect the interests of its workers, and it frequently did so. Yet in the key struggles with industrial and agrarian bosses and in the perhaps even

more key struggles over the place of the unions within the bureaucratic structure of the regime and the amount of power the unions should wield, the more radical fascist ambitions were defeated, often through the direct intervention of Mussolini himself. Possibly because the Italian working class was smaller and represented less of a potential problem, the fascists never devoted that attention to forming bonds with the industrial workers that was evident in Nazi Germany.

Although communication of a sort was envisaged and even desired, it remained very difficult to realise. In the Italian case, this reflects a fundamental difference of interest, never bridged, between the government and a considerable number of the governed.[12] Fascism succeeded only insofar as it was able to persuade Italians that the proposed collective objective – national greatness – was worth the candle. In fact, as a vast quantity of documents of party, police, and police informers indicate, this objective actually came rather low down on people's list of priorities. Thus there was not even a 'tacit' popular consensus with respect to the international ambitions of Mussolini – ambitions generally considered beyond Italy's capacities and likely to produce a serious international crisis if any attempt were made to realise them. A tacit consensus over such a fundamental objective might have persuaded people to accept other unpleasant and unwanted aspects of the regime, in particular the sense of impotence in the face of increasing economic hardship. In this context it is worth remembering that the pre-economic-miracle Italy of the interwar years was still a very poor country; for most people (the majority were still employed in agriculture), basic requirements of daily life remained the principal priority. Unlike Hitler in Nazi Germany, Mussolini was unable to preside over a remarkable economic recovery once he came to power.

The degree to which communication of any kind was failing is apparent in the police and party documents of the 1930s. The reports from fascist *fiduciari* (spies) relating to the massive national rally of 2 October 1935 – a rally designed to show the world that public opinion was behind Mussolini in his aggression towards Ethiopia – indicate that popular sentiment was not always favourable to the Duce. People complained about being forced continuously to turn out in the streets for pointless demonstrations; some voiced the opinion that the money needed for the war could be better spent at home; and people were overheard expressing the view that the war was not only senseless but also dangerous from the point of view of international repercussions. The alleged 'civilising' mission of Italy in respect to Ethiopia was also questioned, cynics observing that it might be better first to civilise the

Italians. In the same negative sense were some of the reports about the famous donation of the wedding rings to the fatherland on 18 December 1935. Many people were donating rings of inferior quality or were even buying substitute metal rings to avoid having to make any donation at all. It is interesting to note here that people attempted, where possible, to observe the external formal ritual required of them by fascism while at the same time trying to protect what belonged to their personal and private sphere.[13]

More serious in the long run for communication between people and regime was the loss of reputation of the *Partito Nazionale Fascista*. The very public nature of fascism, which claimed to represent the nation and to speak for the people of Italy, required that its leaders demonstrate public virtues. Instead, in many provincial fascist federations, the story was one of public office being used for private advantage as local fascist officials either filled their own pockets or those of their family or client group. The corruption of many local *federali* (party bosses) sometimes provoked open protest, made to the police chief or to other fascists assumed to be more honest, even at times made directly to Mussolini through letters of denunciation, usually but by no means always anonymous. Very occasionally such protest could generate an official inspection and even the removal of the corrupt local leader. Much more often, the corrupt officials could simply assert that the charges were politically motivated by jealous opponents (usually fascists excluded from office in a complicated game of 'ins' and 'outs') and carry on without any concern for their position. In these cases one has very much the impression of there being a barrier between the people ('us' in many documents) and those who held power ('them' in the same documents) – a barrier almost impossible to penetrate. The fascist 'public sphere', such as it was, did not accept criticism willingly; the concept of accountability of authority to the people was totally absent. This suggests very little effective communication between people at the periphery and central authorities. Fascism was very attentive when it came to monitoring popular moods, but there is little evidence that the regime ever changed course as a result of what it discovered. The principal objective of the monitoring was simply to flush out opposition.

The difficulty of realising voice and protest (and the virtual impossibility of exit) was undoubtedly largely responsible for the crisis of the PNF at the end of the 1930s. To use the words of Renzo De Felice, people became 'disgusted' with politics and attempted to have as little to do with the political arena as was possible.[14] The mass rallies, the Saturday paramilitary training sessions, the obligatory (and costly) fascist

uniform – these were things that weighed heavily on the population and were respected because of fear of reprisals.[15] In a way this was depoliticisation; people had learned that active participation in fascist happenings was essentially a formal ritual that had little bearing on the course of events. In the absence of any obvious alternative political activity (a very important psychological factor), they withdrew into their private life as far as was possible in the circumstances, limiting themselves to carrying out the formalities requested of them by fascism. As Adrian Lyttelton has observed, one of the characteristics of the regime (and not only of Italian fascism) was that of 'bad faith', of people continuously mouthing sentiments they did not believe.[16] Far from creating a new and enlarged 'public sphere' through mass participation in politics, therefore, fascism seems in the end to have killed any kind of meaningful communication between population and regime.

Obviously there were exceptions – sizeable exceptions – to this picture. Certain categories of young people saw in fascism the opportunity for greater personal freedom or for social promotion. This was as true of the young northern industrial workers, who used the fascist movement to escape from the suffocating atmosphere of the traditional working-class family,[17] as it was of those university students who saw in fascism the opportunity for a promising administrative career. But in relative terms the numbers were small.[18] And there is much evidence to suggest that many other young people were heartily fed up with the rituals of fascism by the time Italy entered the war in 1940. The general sentiment may perhaps be gauged by a remarkable rise in enrolment in Italian universities after 1940. Enrolment, of course, provided an exemption from military service.

Small farmers and sharecroppers continued to support the regime, despite a worsening in their position vis-à-vis large landowners. Studies carried out in Tuscany suggest that there was a fairly precise dividing line in political allegiances represented by the division between those who were dependent workers in agriculture (they remained hostile to fascism) and those who were not. Here considerations of independence and status within the rural hierarchy very clearly played a part. In more general terms it is also true that women increased their representation in certain occupations (notably teaching) during the fascist period and, through the actions of *Opera Nazionale Maternità ed Infanzia*, enjoyed a new kind of attention from government, albeit always within the framework of a very strongly male-dominated culture. This aspect of female 'empowerment' is not to be underestimated in any assessment of the hold of the regime over the population.[19] In more general terms fascism

retained its support among the enormously expanded state and party bureaucracy and among segments of the urban lower middle classes, who continued to see in the fascist movement a defence of their social and economic status. Even among these categories, however, there were clear signs of discontent by 1938 and 1939, largely linked to economic factors and shortages of essential foodstuffs (the disappearance from the shops of coffee in the spring of 1939 provoked a near revolution among the office workers of Rome, seriously worrying the authorities).

Many of the supporters of fascism were no doubt both actors and audience in that 'street theatre' that fascism did so well, and consumers of those visual and intellectual effervescences of fascism have attracted much attention in recent years, often for modernity of form and style. Indeed, much of the writing on fascism over the last decade or so has stressed the 'cultural' or 'aesthetic' aspects of the regime, seeing in these aspects the expression of what is with reason considered a modern, 'positive' ideology, central to the formation and affirmation of the movement.[20] 'Pluralism' and related words have emerged again in the discussion of fascism.[21] This approach needs to be interpreted with extreme caution. While much of this work is undoubtedly very valuable for our understanding of the working of the regime, it does contain a very strong risk of loss of perspective. What artists, writers, and architects were able to realise under the regime is of great interest; such findings, however, must always be viewed within the reality of a political dictatorship that accepted a degree of pluralism in the arts only to the extent that this in some way enhanced the image of the regime and did not embarrass the regime in its *political* hold on the country. Fascism was always essentially about the primacy of politics – and these politics were the politics of unquestioned fascist control. In his *Prison Notebooks*, Antonio Gramsci argued very convincingly that real political hegemony was possible only in contexts that also envisaged the right to protest. Under fascism this right was never conceded. For this reason, it would be a mistake to see the many innovatory aspects of fascism in the artistic and cultural area as the formation of a new kind of 'public sphere'. The masses related to these artistic novelties and discussions essentially as consumers – certainly in this way, but only this way, performing a 'modern' function. And much of the available evidence suggests that the material available for consumption was of poor quality and little interest.[22]

So if the old 'public sphere' was destroyed by fascism and no functioning new public sphere was created to take its place, how were decisions in government made? A short – and by no means totally

mistaken – answer would be: by Mussolini. Unlike Hitler, the fascist leader did his best to have the last word on virtually everything, often to the consternation of his close advisers, who watched as he gave contradictory orders to different officials in the course of the same morning.[23] But despite the legends of ubiquity (clearly inspired by religious tradition), Mussolini could not be everywhere. Recent research is increasingly giving an answer to this question in terms of interest-group organisations (often only formally fascist), such as those of the industrialists and the agrarians; administrative bodies (sometimes created by fascism) with enormous financial resources, such as INFPS (*Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale,* responsible for pensions and some other aspects of welfare); non-fascist technocrats; and the banks and the consortia responsible for production and distribution. The *Ente Risi* (consortium of rice producers), for example, wielded formidable power in the provinces in which it operated and was able to contest decisions taken in Rome with success. The regime saw the constitution of a world of private businessmen and financiers for whom fascism was an opportunity to do business without any kind of public control, often, however, using influence and position in government to further personal objectives in an interesting exchange between private interest and public ideology. Far from being a new public sphere, this kind of behaviour represented on many occasions the privatisation of public power; that is, the appropriation of the authority derived from public functions for private advantage. To some extent, Italy has never recovered from the autonomy in respect of the state which these groups acquired under fascism.[24]

Such development seems to come close to what Habermas has called the refeudalisation of public life, although under fascism it was anything but that 'apparently' open competition between powerful market forces, lobbies, and interest groups which the German philosopher sees as having taken the place of the bourgeois public sphere.[25] What fascism did have in common with the structural transformation described by Habermas is that the people were present as audience and as consumers (of myths, of political theatre, of benefits and happenings); in some ways the people *did* become customers for services and benefits, and some undoubtedly used fascism as a 'resource' to be exploited. But they were not present as active decision makers. This last point is so obvious that it is hardly worth making.

Yet the analysis stimulated by the work of Habermas does suggest that one of the principal weaknesses of Italian fascism lay in the fact that it did not succeed in constructing any kind of public sphere capable of substituting the one it had destroyed. To return to Habermas for

a moment, it is significant that, when pressed to redefine his rather nineteenth-century 'public sphere' in a more modern context, he replied that what it really meant was a mechanism that would guarantee the proper *functioning* of society.[26] Under fascism – although the point can probably be extended to certain other mass dictatorships – the very lack of any effective communication between the masses and the regime produced stagnation in the higher echelons of power and resignation and depoliticisation among the masses. These latter phenomena were very serious for a regime that aimed at the anthropological transformation of Italians and the creation of the New Fascist Man. The paradox of fascism was that, despite the great public show intended to include everyone in its embrace, people eventually withdrew from the public to the private, rejecting the public and defending the private. It suggests that the solutions attempted by fascism, while they may have been 'modern' in their intention and in their manipulative methods, were less so in terms of their capacity to produce a well-functioning contemporary society. Rather than the realisation of a new, modern political synthesis between rulers and ruled that would have eliminated the necessity for a 'public sphere', it would seem that fascism was unable to invent for itself an acceptable and workable alternative to that sphere, thus failing to find a solution to the old problem of allowing people to express themselves even if you do not like what they say.

Notes

1. The reference is, of course, to Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Enquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991; orig. German, 1962).
2. See e.g., the comments of Geoff Eley, 'Nations, Publics and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century', in Craig Colhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 289–338.
3. In this respect it is worth noting the useful distinction Emilio Gentile makes between the 'aestheticisation of politics' and the 'aestheticisation of Fascism' – the first being a legitimate way of looking at the fascist mode of doing politics, while the second risks relegating to a secondary position the essentially *political* nature of fascism. See, E. Gentile, *Le origini dell'ideologia fascista (1918–1925)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996), p. 27.
4. Or, one might add, public discussion. Throughout the 20 years of the regime people believed (quite rightly) that public utterances were likely to be overheard by police and party spies who would report opinions to the authorities. Even overhearing a conversation critical of fascism put a person at risk if he or she failed to report it.

5. Even passive participation at public events may, of course, have had its effects on people. In the long run it may have been difficult to avoid some kind of identification with the regime, or at any rate with the community that appeared to express itself through the mass demonstrations in public squares. Any kind of participation – active, passive, obligatory or voluntary – suggested conformity with the rules of the game and had implications that were likely ultimately to be favourable to the regime. In a way mass demonstrations represented a kind of obligatory *complicity* with the regime. But, as is suggested later in this article, the device could be overused.
6. Gentile, *Le origini*, p. 496.
7. The prominent fascist politician Giuseppe Bottai always insisted that fascism was, at least potentially, more democratic than the old pre-1922 liberal politics had been because it represented (according to the fascist leader) a conciliation of the conflict between élites and masses through the creation of a new kind of national unity. Cf. Gentile, *Le origini*, p. 384
8. For the classic (and much criticised) statement of the consensus position see Renzo De Felice, *Mussolini il duce: Gli anni del consenso 1929–36* (Turin: Einaudi, 1974), p. 55.
9. On the importance of the impression of national unity, see Martin Sabrow, 'Consent in the Communist GDR, or How to Interpret Lion Feuchtwanger's Blindness in Moscow 1937', in Paul Corner (ed.), *Popular Opinion in Totalitarian Regimes. Fascism, Nazism, Communism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 168–82.
10. See Gianpasquale Santomassimo, *La terza via fascista. Il mito del corporativismo* (Rome: Carocci, 2006).
11. The claims made by the fascists of having avoided the crash were largely false. Italy had moved into recession after the dramatic revaluation of the lira in 1926–7. the effects of the 1929 international crisis were therefore less apparent in a country already experiencing economic slowdown and high rates of unemployment.
12. It must always be remembered that, in many areas of Italy, particularly in the north and centre, fascism achieved power through the extensive use of violence. Many never forgot this, as is evident from the numerous cases of revenge killings carried out after the fall of fascism in 1943, and again in 1945, but related to events which had occurred 20 years earlier.
13. For more on this, see Paul Corner, 'L'opinione popolare italiana di fronte alla guerra d'Etiopia', *Italia contemporanea* 246, March 2007.
14. See Felice, *Mussolini il duce*, II, 221.
15. Examples are given in Paul Corner, 'Everyday Fascism in the 1930s. Centre and Periphery in the Decline of Mussolini's Dictatorship', *Contemporary European History* 15/2, May 2006.
16. Adrian Lyttelton (ed.), *Roots of the Right. Italian Fascisms from Pareto to Gentile* (London: Cape, 1973), p. 36.
17. David Tabor, 'Operai in camicia nera? La composizione operaia del fascio di Torino, 1921–31', *Storia e problemi contemporanei* XVII, 36, May–August 2004. A similar point is made in respect of Nazism by Wilfried Gottschalch in 'Perspectives on the Fascist Public Sphere: A Discussion with Peter Brückner, Wilfried Gottschalch, Eberhard Knödler-Bunte, Olav Münzberg, and Oscar Negt', *New German Critique* 11 (1977), 108–9.

18. Luca La Rovere, *Storia dei GUF. Organizzazione, politica e miti della gioventù universitaria fascista 1919–43* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2003).
19. On these issues, see Maria S. Quine, *Italy's Social Revolution. Charity and Welfare from Liberalism to Fascism* (London: Palgrave, 2002), and Perry R. Willson, *The Clockwork Factory. Women and Work in Fascist Italy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
20. For examples of this approach, see Gentile, *Le origini*, 493. The increased attention paid to fascist ideology as a component of the success of fascism is also a feature of the last decade, with Emilio Gentile's work being central to that revival of interest.
21. Marta S. Stone, *The Patron State. Culture and Politics in Fascist Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998). Unlike some of those who use her text, who come close producing cultural studies with the politics left out, the author is herself very careful to indicate the considerable limits of the artistic 'pluralism' she identifies.
22. The fascist leisure organisation, the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* (popularly known simply as the *dopolavoro*) tried to seduce people with its activities; its success can be judged by the continuing existence in Italy today of the dismissive phrase '*roba da dopolavoro*' (stuff of little interest, worthy only of the *dopolavoro*).
23. On Mussolini's method of making decisions on the basis of improvisation and intuition, see Alberto Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello stato totalitario* (Turin: Einaudi, 1965), ch. 5.
24. Some critics have seen Berlusconi as the ultimate realisation of this phenomenon of public power being used for private interest, particularly in respect of the way in which the Italian politician used his position as prime minister to alter laws which affected his private situation as media tycoon.
25. For the adverb 'apparently', see the qualification made by Habermas in Jürgen Habermas, 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)', *New German Critique* 3 (1974), 49–55.
26. See Jürgen Habermas, Further Reflections on the Public Sphere, in Colhoun, *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, pp. 421–61.

7

Total War Mobilisation and the Transformation of the National Public Sphere in Japan, 1931–45

Kyu Hyun Kim

This chapter examines the transformation of the Japanese national public sphere (*kokumin kōkyōken*) during the decade and a half between 1931 and 1945 in relation to the rise of mass dictatorship in the specifically Japanese context. What I attempt to do here is make a small contribution not only to the much larger debates on the elusive and complicated nature of the state-society relationship in 1930s and early 1940s Japan but also to developing the conception of mass dictatorship as a theoretical framework through which to assess the often seemingly self-contradictory character of state mobilisation and its effect on social life in Japan during this period, especially on the public-private demarcation and the distinction between mobilisation and consent, or voluntary activism. The present essay will attempt to suggest directions for examining (1) the growth and transmutation of the state organs and apparatuses that sought to dismantle the critical function of the public sphere and 'engulf' civil society; (2) the accompanying ideological articulations of the 'totalistic' state-society relationship (whether 'fascist' or not) expected to suppress or eradicate critical functions of the public sphere and monopolise the discourse on nationhood; and (3) the critical counterdiscourse that nonetheless continued to emerge in the shifting national public sphere and challenge the totalising claims of the Japanese state.

The concept of 'public sphere' employed here is derived from Jürgen Habermas's seminal work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, refined through the critiques and revisions introduced by many other thinkers and scholars. In my study of the public sphere in late-nineteenth-century Japan, I characterise the particular public sphere

that evolved out of Japan's encounter with Euro-American modernity in the late nineteenth century as a 'national public sphere', emphasising the overwhelming significance of building a modern nation state as an objective and a rationalisation for both the imperial state and its civilian critics.[1] The imperial state in its early phases (roughly 1868–90) was strongly constrained by its own capitulation to the revived rhetoric and discourse of 'public opinion' (*kōgi yoron*), dating from the early modern period of Japan's history. Even though in China and other classical Chinese-based East Asian linguistic traditions, the word 'public' (*kung* in Chinese, *kong* in Korean, *kō* or *ōyake* in Japanese) has been strongly, some might say inseparably, linked to the state bureaucracy and its social policies – in the way, for example, we use the terms 'public office' or 'public projects' to indicate government positions or state-initiated projects – in Japan the concept of 'public' went through a complex process of evolution. During Tokugawa rule (1600–1868) the shogun managed to maintain the fiction of 'representing' the *daimyo* (regional lords) instead of monopolising political authority through a powerful central bureaucracy characteristic of an absolutist state. The shogun directly presented himself as a 'public authority', or *kōgi*, rather than a monarch of an absolutist state, as in the case of Louis XIV in France. Initially derived from the *daimyo's* emphasis on the 'impartial' (i.e., not bound to any private or sectorial interest) nature of their rule and further developed into the legitimating claims for hegemonic rules of the sixteenth-century warlord 'unifiers' of Japan, the notion of *kōgi* was naturalised as an essential component of the early modern Japanese political system.

As the Tokugawa *bakufu* (the shogun's 'tent government') faced foreign threats as well as domestic unrest and disorder in the early nineteenth century, the ambitious regional lords, samurai activists, and even commoner notables and scholars turned toward the Mikado in Kyoto as a new source of political authority. More importantly for our purposes, *kōgi* had begun to be interpreted as 'public authority' generated from an inclusive deliberative decision-making process. It is quite striking how far the samurai court noble leaders of the rising Japanese empire were willing to accommodate 'opinions' from the *daimyo* lords and other influential members of the social elite. Mitani Hiroshi convincingly argues that the foundational principle of the modern Japanese state was 'public discussion' rather than 'emperor-centrism', as many mainstream 'Western' historians and social scientists still presume.[2] In my study of the parliamentarian movement of late-nineteenth-century Japan, I trace the development of this new form of 'public discussion'

or 'public discourse' as a significant legitimating claim for the imperial state toward what we today recognise as 'public opinion'.

In the early phase of the evolution of public opinion in late-nineteenth-century Japan, this concept acquired an unmistakably critical character. Much of the critical discourse directed at the state in the early Meiji period took shape in various open forums, such as in newspapers' welcoming op-ed letters and in lecture meetings, where the members of civil society met and discussed matters of common concern with one another or even with agents of the state. Habermas defines the public sphere as a 'realm of social life' that 'mediates between society and state, in which the public organises itself as the bearer of public opinion'. Public opinion, in turn, refers to 'the tasks of criticism and control which a public body of citizens informally – and in periodic elections, formally as well – practices vis-à-vis the ruling structure organised in the form of a state'.[3] He sharply distinguishes the 'public' functions of the state from activities of this public sphere, stressing the latter's roots in the unregulated and manipulation-free public discussions among private individuals. From the examples of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, Habermas identifies coffee houses, tea houses, salons, galleries, museums, literary societies, and theatres as constitutive elements of the public sphere. These sites and institutions were linked to the concurrent profusion of journals, magazines, pamphlets, and other forms of print media. The evolution of the public sphere presaged and in many ways facilitated the transformation from absolutist to constitutional political systems in Europe. Similarly, in early Meiji Japan (roughly 1868–90), newspapers, journals, public lectures, academic and literary associations, and institutions such as prefectural assemblies and political parties served as components of the newly emerging public sphere. The public sphere so defined maintained a considerable degree of autonomy from both the state and traditional social divisions based on status and regional affiliation.

Perhaps ironically, it was really the strength of parliamentarian discourse, movements, and organisations that compelled the Meiji state to consolidate its ideologies and to establish institutional means to co-opt and suppress civil society. The Japanese state was constrained from adopting extreme measures at both poles. On the one hand, a radical authoritarian solution would have involved a complete suppression of the critical public sphere with flagrantly violent means, which would have proved impractical, not to mention dangerous. On the other hand a complete capitulation to the demands of parliamentarian forces might have created a polity perhaps far more liberal and open to

political participation than were most of the European 'democracies' in the late nineteenth century, resulting in the decline of the power of the largely self-appointed state leaders, an unacceptable scenario for most of them. The Meiji constitutional system, anchored in the 1889 Imperial Constitution, was as much a product of government leaders' response to parliamentarianism in the national public sphere as it was of their own foresight.

The emerging awareness of Japan as a modern nation state among participants in political discourse was an essential component of the public sphere developed in this phase, which is why I choose to call it the 'national public sphere'. The Japanese citizen-subjects (*kokumin*) were not fully in existence at the end of the 1880s. Further efforts at constructing ideological programmes and institutions of national integration had to be made by the imperial state well into the first two decades of the twentieth century. Japan's imperialist wars against China (1895) and Russia (1905) played significant roles in this project of national integration and ideological consolidation.[4] In this regard, Mitani's arguments that point to the inseparable co-development of national consciousness on the one hand and the public sphere on the other are highly original and extremely valuable.

However, I must ultimately disagree with his suggestion that the Japanese, unlike Europeans or Americans, did not truly understand or did not find much use for the concept of civil society and were happy to anchor their criticisms of the state in the separation between 'nation' (*kokka*) and 'government' (*seifu*).[5] In fact, there had been robust traditions of liberalism, of both the 'classical' and 'welfare state' variety, among the Japanese at least since the early Meiji period (beginning from the extraordinarily popular writings of Fukuzawa Yukichi, the age's most important and best-known exemplar). The followers of these traditions might have accepted certain tenets of nationalism and imperialism but also championed and supported such values as individualism, autonomy of civil society against state control, freedom of expression and collective movement, and public opinion as the legitimating grounds for the state. What was perhaps weaker in Japan, at least in comparison to France, the United States, and with some qualification, England, was the primacy given to popular sovereignty as the essential principle of democracy. This was the problem that Yoshino Sakuzō and Minobe Tatsukichi, twentieth-century theorists of liberalism and democracy in Japan, tried to circumvent to realise the substantive objectives of a democratic political system in Japan, compelling Yoshino to translate 'democracy' not as *minshushugi*, literally 'rule by the people', but as *minponshugi*, 'rule with

the people at its base'.[6] Still, there is little reason to regard this feature as 'Japanese uniqueness'. From the viewpoint of the educated Japanese living in the late nineteenth century, perfectly logical and sensible arguments could be made that Republican regimes such as France and the United States of the era were outside the norm, if not morally repulsive aberrations (pro-statist or conservative thinkers such as Inoue Kowashi and Motoda Nagazane had absolutely no qualms about making such claims, of course, given that the French had committed 'regicide' and the Americans had suffered a protracted civil war costing hundreds of thousands of lives). The majority of the Japanese opinion makers and thinkers considered constitutional monarchy the Western 'norm', ranging between the 'weak' monarchy of the British model and the 'strong' one represented by Prussia and later imperial Germany.

Likewise, the notion that the Japanese were bound to nationalism in a way that Europeans and Americans were not is difficult to prove. There is little actual historical evidence that Japanese of the early twentieth century were in any way more or less 'patriotic' than, say, British, French, or Americans of the same period, unless one wants to claim that 'American patriotism' and 'Japanese nationalism' are such fundamentally distinctive concepts as to make one incomprehensible to the other. No doubt this was one of the objectives pursued by both Japanese and American propagandists during the Pacific war, rendering the enemy's 'nationalism' or 'patriotism' as either fanatical devotion to a quasi-religious figurehead or venal racist defence of a plutocracy run by cigar-chomping businessmen.[7]

Finally, Japan's overseas empire and the impact it had on the public sphere and the Japanese people's conception of nation state and their identity as 'citizen-subjects' must be factored into any understanding of modern Japanese history proper. Japan, for the half century from 1895 (when Taiwan was formally colonised) to the dissolution of the empire in 1945, had in fact been a multiethnic and multicultural empire, the reality of which sometimes chafed against the common notion of the Japanese as an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically homogeneous people. Recently, the viability of the 'colonial public sphere' in Japan-dominated Korea, Taiwan, China, and Manchuria (Manchukuo) and its precise relationship with the broader Japanese empire have emerged as exciting new areas of exploration for students of modern East Asian history.[8]

I should point out that my notion of 'national public sphere' does not exactly conform to the socio-political category of 'bourgeois public sphere' as developed by Habermas. Yet neither is it entirely free from

'normative' implications of his conception of the public sphere. The encroachment into, as well as disruption, manipulation, and devolution of the public sphere by the state, whether it is Stalinist, fascist, neoliberal, or even social democratic in character is problematic from the viewpoint that envisages a minimum level of power sharing between those who hold concrete administrative and coercive powers in their hands and those who are subject to such powers as an essential condition for political liberty. Whether such a political system can properly be called a democracy is another question altogether. To put it another way, the weakening of the public sphere is a potentially harmful development, just as the increased coercion and surveillance of a law-enforcement organisation in a supposedly open society is a potentially harmful development. That does not make all public spheres 'good', of course, but I subscribe to the view that a state-society relationship utterly devoid of a mediating realm in which public opinions are freely (to the minimum degree) shared and at least some form of institutional mechanisms are there to guarantee (again, to the minimum degree) such exchange of public discourses cannot be called 'good'. Such a national community can only be 'good' in the moral sense only in the domains of religious utopias, ingenious metaphors, and science fiction: one thinks of the sentient ocean of Stanislav Lem's *Solaris*, wherein the conflict between private and public or the individual and the community would never arise. Obviously it can be argued that certain forms of the public sphere are inherently dysfunctional or so easily manipulated as to render their worth severely doubtful, but this is different from arguing that all forms of the public sphere are irrefutably corrupted or inventions of the ruling (bourgeois, fascist, neoliberal, communist) elite to keep the masses trodden under the boots. To talk about the public sphere is to accept the assumption that such a totalising control by the state or any governing power cannot exist or, more accurately put, is impossible to substantiate. Why talk about the public sphere at all when it exists only as a façade?

The theory of mass dictatorship being developed by Jie-Hyun Lim and others has shown us how the state can 'collaborate' with the masses to create a form of 'normalised' dictatorship that can avoid being recognised as such by the majority of its constituency. This type of dynamic may have been a significant part of how Stalinism, Nazism, Mussolini's and General Franco's fascism, Japanese militarism, the post–World War II military dictatorships in East Asia and Latin America, and even 'normal' liberal democracies of western Europe and the United States could claim their legitimacy and persuade the masses to be mobilised.[9] However, even then, the state has to inculcate (and the masses should be ready to

accept and internalise) certain commonly accepted values, traditions, and narratives. Nationalism, based on (no matter how blatantly fictive) ethnic/racial/cultural commonality, deliberately constructed territorial claims and/or shared historical narratives, has been such a valuable tool for mass dictatorship in the twentieth century precisely because the building of a nation state (or more accurately, attaining the qualification to join the higher ranks of the 'international hierarchy' set up by the 'Western', 'civilised' nation states) was closely intertwined with the attainment of modernity. There is no doubt that the national public sphere in pre-war Japan was socio-economically conditioned or that class relations were an important part of how public discourses were generated, sustained, and distributed, but at the same time the prospect of participating in the 'nation building' and later 'empire expanding' projects proved to be a powerful motivation for the non-bourgeois classes to consent to the state's mobilisation efforts.

Thus, while I am sympathetic to the argument of Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge that the bourgeois public sphere excluded the concrete lived experiences of a sizeable portion of society (in their view, the working class or proletariat) from its illusory view of a unified 'public',[10] the 'exclusion' in the national public sphere discussed here was practised less toward the working class than toward those who did not quite fit in with the Japanese state's (or the mass dictatorship regime's) view of the 'nation'. As we see below, a large segment of working-class organisations and the political representatives of proletarian interests became a part of the total mobilisation in Japan during the 1930s and early 1940s, the real suffering visited on the economically unprivileged of the society notwithstanding. Likewise, Warren Montag's criticism of Habermas's 'fear of the masses' in his theory (and thus the alleged counter-revolutionary primacy given to classical liberalism and bourgeois democracy) ironically directs us toward the ways in which the state, quite independently of the interests of the 'bourgeoisie', could mobilise the masses to its own ends.[11] Montag defines the masses as construed by Habermas as 'a force originating … from majorities outside of and opposed to the state, no longer associations of autonomous individuals but unthinking, perhaps manipulated, majorities', but what he considers Habermas's 'evasion' appears to me a stark description of historical reality: that the 'masses' who were no longer 'associations of autonomous individuals' had indeed been 'manipulated' by the state to pursue its morally repugnant and socially disastrous goals.[12]

To reiterate, there is no real reason to employ the concept of the public sphere, unless it is assumed that there always are areas of the

'lifeworld' (*Lebenswelt*) not colonised by the state, even if the society is referred to as 'totalitarian' by those who believe in the veracity of the concept (as should be obvious by now, I have grave misgivings about the very notion of 'totalitarianism'). The areas relatively free from state control could be family units, voluntary associations, local school councils, book reading groups, or in some cases – as was apparently the case in fascist Italy – semi-governmental (*parastato*) organisations. In a study of the attempted fascist control of the contents of children's books taken up by Adolfo Scotto di Luzio, for instance, the National Council for Popular and Educational Libraries and other publishers' associations, fully working under the directives of the fascist state, nonetheless held onto the pursuit of their own financial interests, sometimes in conflict with the ideological agendas of the government.[13] The existence of the public sphere, even if its predominant character is blatantly in negation of bourgeois (or proletarian) conceptions of 'morality', means that autonomous individuals capable of making political decisions, quite apart from the news media, school curriculums, laws and customs, and even the habitus of near-naturalised everyday life, have to be involved as actors in the larger political theatre.

Following Charles Taylor, the notion of the public sphere seems to make the best sense when it is defined as a space that exists outside the state, even though obviously not hermetically sealed from state infiltration, and allows for the 'overflowing' of state agents into it. Yet – and this is a crucial point, setting aside the 'character' of the public debates themselves – I believe that it is possible to distinguish between state 'infiltration' and 'manipulation' of public opinion on the one hand and the genuine absence of independent, autonomous public opinion on the other. As Taylor puts it, the public sphere is not the same thing as civil society or the market. I am most sympathetic to his pared-down definition of the public sphere as a common space 'in which the members of society meet, through a variety of media…and also in face-to-face encounters, to discuss matters of common interest: and thus to be able to form a common mind about those matters'.[14] In this formulation, the participation in the modern public sphere is not in itself an exercise of power. Its claim to legitimacy is bound to its ability to stand outside the actual mechanisms of statecraft and political rule. It is also important that 'public opinion' forged in the public sphere is not merely an aggregate of individual opinions – as in 'opinions' measured in focus group research – but a reflective one that bears signs of debates and discussions. To put it another way, the state can encroach upon and erode the autonomy of the public sphere, but it cannot wilfully 'create'

one that reflects only its objectives and designs – such a public sphere would be nothing more than a papier mâché mock-up and a gross self-contradiction in real life.

Of course, I am willing to concede the possibility of a counter-public or a counter-public sphere within the larger society. An example I find most interesting is a space of communication and discussion (including cyberspace) created by the Tibetan intellectuals and opinion makers, under a partial concession by the Chinese state, for its right to exist. The public discourse produced in this space is clearly not intended for consumption by the Chinese people foremost, and its very existence can signal the presence of a Tibetan culture or community as an entity not subordinate to the Chinese nation state. In other words, this space for now can exist both inside and outside the Chinese national public sphere and challenge the very premise of Chinese nationhood (i.e., that China is a multicultural nation where minorities voluntarily accede to the state). It is open to question whether the colonial public sphere in Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria played a similar role for Japan in the early twentieth century.

Now let us look more closely into the institutions and practices of state mobilisation and how they have affected the contours and contents of the national public sphere following the immediate nation-building phase of Meiji Japan. There has been a parallel development with German and Italian historiography in the sense that mainstream Japanese historiography has devoted itself to explanation of why the 'liberal' and 'democratic' Japan of the late 1910s and 1920s deteriorated into the 'militarist', 'authoritarian', and/or 'fascist' Japan of the 1930s and 1940s. Arima Takeo and others writing on the earlier decades of twentieth-century Japan, informed by the perspectives of Japanese Marxist historians, tended to devalue the significance of 'Taishō democracy' and saw it more as laying the foundation for the hegemony of the state bureaucracy and the military.[15] Against this, Andrew Gordon has presented an interpretation that encompasses both the 1910s–20s and the 1930s–40s under the larger category of 'imperial polity,' wherein the institutional and discursive features of liberalism and democracy, which were not only clearly present but also flourishing in the earlier decades, were gradually subverted and undermined by the state bureaucracy and the military through the latter's monopoly over the discourse on Japan's future direction as an empire (an important aspect of this was to block their opponents from invoking the name of the emperor to criticise their policies). For Gordon, this 'crowding out' of the civilian discourse from the public sphere by the military-bureaucratic state is symbolised by the

state monopoly of the 11 February Founding Day (*Kigensetsu*), banning the alternative celebration of the day as Constitution Commemoration Day, and the concurrent banning of May Day and Japan Labour Day celebrations (it is worth noting, too, that the mainstream labour unions had already abandoned on their own the celebration of May Day in favour of Founding Day).[16]

However, ideological struggles in the public sphere continued in Japan during the late 1930s and 1940s, even after the Communist Party and the 'true left' were completely suppressed, not so much between the usual camps of 'left' and 'right' as between those who sought to achieve a type of social revolution via the state control of the economy, extensive social welfare policies, and dismantling of organisations and institutions pursuing (in their view) sectorial interests, such as the Imperial Diet and political parties, and those who wanted to maintain the 'pluralistic' power-sharing structure under the framework created by the Meiji Constitution. The former group included not only socialists and communists but also so-called 'reform bureaucrats', a substantial number of whom were 'converts' (*tenkōsha*) from the socialist and communist camps, as well as 'authentic' fascists who consciously modelled themselves after German National Socialists and Italian fascists: their fields of activity were quite diverse, spread over academia, journalism, the military, and government bureaucracies. The last group consisted of old parliamentarians, party politicians, liberal intellectuals, a portion of the urban bourgeoisie, and in some cases 'conservatives' hostile toward revolutionary social changes of any kind. There was, of course, an overlap and shifting of membership over time between these two groups. And both were criticised by the so-called ideational or spiritual right wing (*kannen yūyoku*), deeply sceptical of Marxism and other European-derived theories, as well as of political activities or institutions that could potentially usurp the emperor's authority and damage the sacredness of the 'national body' (*kokutai*).

Moreover, 'mobilisation' itself turned out to be a double-edged sword for the military and reform bureaucrats. It was not that state surveillance and control of the social lives of the Japanese was not intensified to an unprecedented level in the late 1930s and 1940s. It was rather that the Japanese people, mobilised by the state into a host of semi-official organisations and institutions, managed to retain and exercise political power in their own compromised ways. They were by no means mere 'objects' of state policies. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to clearly distinguish the 'forced' mobilisation of the Japanese public from their 'voluntary' engagement with state programmes in pursuit of their rational economic

interests, upward mobility of status, 'progressive' community-oriented projects, and even sheer desire to wield personal power.

Historians of Japan mark the Manchurian Incident (1931) – in which the Kwantung Army, acting independently of Imperial Army headquarters in Tokyo, used their murder of the Chinese warlord Zhang Zhoulin as a pretext to occupy Manchuria – as the significant landmark of Japan 'sliding' into the militarist/fascist phase of its history. It is important to remember that at this juncture, the zeitgeist in Japan, as in many other countries of the era, was particularly susceptible to 'war fever'. Aggressive foreign policies were welcomed as the Washington Conference System of the 1920s and the diplomacy, helmed by Foreign Minister Shidehara Kijūrō, based on international cooperation among the imperialist powers led to what many Japanese perceived as a cul-de-sac. Anticapitalist and antiparliamentarian sentiments were gaining popularity. Ugaki Kazushige, army minister since 1924, and other military and civilian elites, including the members of the Cabinet Resources Bureau, had been measuring the war capability of Japan's economy. Their conclusion – that the economic capacity of the 1920s Japan was inadequate for conducting a total war – helped them condone the aggressive policy of 'securing' resources in Manchuria. Major Kawabe Torashirō, a member of the Issekikai, an association of middle-ranking army officers, wrote in retrospect:

> We were concerned not only over the Manchurian-Mongolia problem but also over domestic reform. Due to the First World War, Japanese capitalism had progressed rapidly, but so had its evils, especially for farmers and the small entrepreneurs ... [17]

Far more so than the situation with the Russo-Japanese War, another war that had fostered a wave of jingoistic war fever, the Manchurian Incident, despite its unauthorised, adventurist character, stimulated a type of mass media militarism, with enthusiastic participation by the likes of NHK, the *Asahi shinbun* (a newspaper stereotyped as 'left-wing elitist' in post-war Japan), the boy's magazine *Shōnen kurabu*, and the mass-circulation magazine *Kingu*. The public eagerly consumed the heroic stories of Japanese soldiers, embraced the characterisation of Manchuria as Japan's 'lifeline', and responded to the catechismal and programmatic discourse produced by intellectuals and men of letters justifying Japan's war efforts.[18] The Army Ministry, initially concerned that there would be an upsurge of criticism of the military following the Manchurian Incident, concluded by 1932 that Japan had now been

bequeathed a 'new spirit of solidarity' that seemingly replaced class-driven tensions and conflicts.[19]

The Manchurian Incident also inaugurated a new phase in the development of nationalism and the ideology of societal mobilisation. The imperialist project, initiated in early Meiji Japan, that sought to integrate the Japanese nation state in exchange for the enfranchisement of its 'citizen-subjects' (neither fully *citoyen* nor merely passive 'subjects' [*shinmin*] of the empire but a combination of them) had in a way come to fruition by 1931, where the general populace came to regard the elimination of their domestic 'social problems' and the Japanese Empire's expansion into foreign territories as a unit. This new development was accompanied by an incremental weakening of the powers of the established political parties and parliamentarian institutions. When Saitō Makoto, former governor general of Korea, was reluctantly chosen by the elder statesman Saionji Kinmochi to head the cabinet in 1932, party control of the cabinet came to an end.

In terms of thought, too, constitutional politics led by the democratically elected parties was challenged from many directions. In 1935, the constitutional scholar Minobe Tatsukichi presented his 'emperor organ theory', postulating that the emperor was a political institution and that the specific personage occupying the emperor's seat was not constitutionally protected. This idea would not have raised an eyebrow of a Meiji-period state leader like Ōkubo Toshimichi (1830–78) or Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909). These men were quite used to regarding the emperor as an institution or a political actor rather than an abstract symbol or a living deity. In 1935, however, not only the worshippers of the divine emperor in the military and right-wing societies but also the House of Peers denounced Minobe's ideas as 'treasonous'.[20]

And yet Minobe's political thought had another side. As early as 1932, he was very much in favour of an emergency 'national unity cabinet' (*kyokoku itchi naikaku*) based on an extraparliamentary gathering of the 'round-table council' of representatives from political parties, the military, business communities, and labour organisations. He claimed these representatives 'should discard their factional, class and private interests', 'determine fundamental directions of government policies regarding national finance and economy', and 'cease their political struggles and support the national unity cabinet, as if they are subject to wartime conditions'.[21] This notion of the possibility of the state operating beyond the parliamentarian apparatuses but presumably within the framework of the Meiji Constitution was rather widely shared in the 1930s, again cutting across left and right divisions. Political scientist

Rōyama Masamichi, to cite another example, considered the Saitō cabinet not a subversion of the constitutional principle of the division of power but a form of 'constitutional dictatorship (*rikkenteki dokusai*)'. Such a type of dictatorship could be justified within a constitutional framework, much as the Roosevelt presidency, he claims, was allowed in New Deal America, with parliamentary leaders voluntarily and temporarily surrendering their powers to imperially appointed council members.[22]

The newly pervasive language of 'national unity' was also reflected in the proliferation of 'national planning' (*kokusaku*) as a catchword in the state as well as in civil society. In many ways, the 1930s and 1940s were an unprecedented era in Japanese history, one where intellectuals could claim numerous pipelines into actual policymaking apparatuses. It was a veritable Age of Think Tanks, many of their proposals impeccably scientific and boldly visionary. The Cabinet Research Bureau, later renamed Planning Agency (*Kikakuin*), was responsible for numerous pieces of social welfare legislation and was staffed with many former socialist intellectuals who actively consulted models of planned economy in the Soviet Union, as well as Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. Significantly, too, many of these bureaucrats had started their careers as state planners in Manchukuo, the Kwantung Army's puppet state with Aisingioro Pu-yi, the 'Last Emperor' of the Qing dynasty, as its figurehead. Manchukuo in this sense served as a 'laboratory' for preparing and trying out policies leading to the state-controlled economy and social mobilisation.[23]

The truth was that even in the Japan of this period neither the 'radical' (fascist) military groups nor the army and navy could have 'taken over' the government and expunged all parliamentarian elements from it, no matter how badly they might have wished to accomplish just that. Popular enthusiasm for war was not automatically translated into mass support for the kind of military dictatorship that, for example, would have relied on Reservist Associations and other paramilitary groups to mobilise the populace for the kind of coup d'état attempted on 26 February 1936 by some hot-headed elements in the young officer corps. By the 1930s Japanese citizen-subjects were, locally and nationally, quite used to exercising their political agency through representative institutions, which included not only the national Diet but also prefectural assemblies and city councils. 'Total mobilisation', promoted as a national policy from 1938 on, did not create a monolithic bloc of Japanese citizen-subjects, ready and eager to abandon their local political identities and enfranchisement in order to foster 'national unity'. On the contrary, total mobilisation programmes tended to continue the

enfranchisement-in-exchange-for-mobilisation dynamic that had been the source behind the 'success' of the Meiji-period imperialist projects. Sure, the state could be repressive, interventionist, and secretive, and freedom of expression and thought was severely curtailed, especially utterances regarding the emperor and the military. However, criticisms of the state, political struggles, and other 'divisive' actions continued even during the Pacific war, albeit under different rhetorical guises.

As for the working-class organisations, they surrendered much of their power to the state-managed Congress of Japanese Labour Unions in 1932. They voted en masse for the Social Masses Party's platform for social reformist measures, including health insurance, tax cuts, rent control, and low utility bills; their rhetoric was 'only prosperous people can fulfil the goals of national defence'. The Social Masses Party (*Shakai Taishūtō*), formed in 1932, successfully drew into its fold the electorate disillusioned by the existing political parties. In the early 1930s, many proletarian party leaders 'reformed' their beliefs, abandoning the vision of a social revolution based on the triumph of the proletariat in a class conflict. The new small party organisations they built instead championed 'the masses' (*taishū*), which they often conflated with the 'middle classes' (approximating the petty bourgeoisie in the Marxist scheme) – in their view the true bulwark or 'mainstay' (*chūken*) of Japanese society. They called for greater solidarity of labour and capital under the rubric of the Japanese nation. The Patriotic Labour Party, founded in 1930, for instance, called for the elimination of all intermediate groups standing between the emperor and the 'national masses'.[24] When the civil bureaucrats drafted the National Total Mobilisation Bill in 1938, business leaders and conservative politicians were highly disturbed by its 'socialist' content, but the Social Masses Party enthusiastically endorsed it.

After the breakout of an all-out but undeclared war against the Chinese nationalists and communists following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, Konoe Fumimaro emerged as the new charismatic leader for a beleaguered Japan. A close relative of the imperial family (the many-times prime minister and liberal-leaning aristocrat Saionji Kinmochi always addressed him as 'Your Excellency' despite Saionji's extreme seniority), Konoe was like an uncle to the Showa emperor, who was ten years his junior. He was considered a 'conciliator' because of the wide respect he commanded from civilian and military leaders. However, he definitely held his own notions about where Japan should go after the breakdown of the multilateral international relations of the 1920s. The Konoe cabinet developed the concept of a 'new order in East Asia'

(*Tōa shinjitsujo*), which spoke in general terms of 'Asia for the Asians' and the alliance of Manchukuo, Japan, and China against the Western imperialist and communist forces.

In 1940, Prime Minister Konoe, aided by the more aggressive military push for centralised control of the political system, decided to create a Nazi-style superparty which would replace the existing political parties and resolve the tensions among such various elite groups as the military, parties, civil bureaucracy, and the privy council. In October of the same year, Konoe, after careful preparation, announced the dissolution of all existing parties and the creation of a new organisation, the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (*Taisei Yokusankai*, IRAA). The scholars who claim that the systemic form of Japanese fascism was successfully instituted in the 1940s cite the IRAA as the major evidence for their views. This claim has come under criticism, abetted by careful empirical research, by political historians led by Itō Takashi. The critics of this view point out that the 'corporatist' reaching out of the IRAA, instead of creating a totalising control by the state, in practice strengthened the tendency toward interdependence among various political actors.[25]

Many 'reform bureaucrats' and intellectuals regarded the establishment of the IRAA as a great opportunity to finally realise the grand vision of national unity, with Konoe serving as a 'populist' dictator directly connecting the masses and the emperor without any cumbersome 'mediation' through parliamentary institutions or other vestiges of 'democracy'. And yet, to their irritation and eventual frustration, the resistance toward such a vision and the IRAA itself persisted. From the very beginning, the legitimacy of the IRAA came into question from both 'old guard' parliamentarians and the 'ideational' right wing.

For instance, the constitutional scholar Itabashi Kikumatsu (1888–1983, then at Kansai University) presented a severe critique of the IRAA, flatly arguing that the premier of the IRAA had no right to 'lead' the people as both government leader and prime minister (such a position would effectively betray the spirit of the Meiji Constitution and usurp the authority of the emperor) and that its refusal to define its political character put it outside the existing security laws and regulations. Itabashi stated, '[the IRAA] is nothing more than a conspiracy for bureaucratic dictatorship ... [and] must not be tolerated under any circumstances, given its scandalous challenge to constitutional rule'. Likewise, Sasaki Sōichi (1878–1965), then president of Ritsumeikan University and a specialist in administrative law, argued in a debate published in the progressive *Kaizō* magazine that Japan should never follow in the footsteps of Nazi Germany.

Under the Meiji Constitution with its acknowledged 'liberal' features, a 'perfect correspondence' of the national government and a sectorial organisation, namely the IRAA, should be anathema. Even if the IRAA could be allowed to exercise extraparliamentary powers, Sasaki continued, it must still present its agenda and legislation openly to the public and seek the latter's approval.[26]

Against these criticisms, the IRAA leader Nakano Tomio's defence of the organisation sought to negate the 'liberal' principles of division of power encoded in the Meiji Constitution. But he could do so only by invoking the murky concept of 'national body' (*kokutai*) and again relying on the sacred authority of the emperor.[27] In an era where all groups, societies, and individual political actors invoked the emperor to justify their ideas and actions, the IRAA leadership's attempt to rationalise their totalising control of society was merely one of the many claims competing against and vitiating one another. As the Pacific war unfolded and economic hardship increased, big business leaders and former party leaders continued to pursue their own interests, and civil bureaucrats appointed local prefectural and village officials as IRAA branch leaders, in essence rehabilitating the pre-1940s patterns of local government. In the end, the IRAA could not achieve its objective of doing away with the intermediate organisations and institutions that blocked 'perfect' integration of state and society.

The Japanese state of the late 1930s and 1940s, far from being under a totalitarian or unambiguously fascist regime, was a mixed species. 'Total mobilisation', supported by the reform bureaucrats, military elite, and 'radicals' of the left and right, was never instituted with clear-cut success in wartime Japan, despite the undeniable signs that the 'masses' were mobilised to a hitherto unprecedented extent and in some cases actively 'collaborated' with the state toward greater integration of state and society. Modern Japan in this period still retained a strong built-in structure of pluralist politics with its institutional and behavioural memory of parliamentarian democracy, as well as the habitus of bureaucratic rationalism that vitiated the 'Sorelian' voluntarist actions of the type exemplified by the young military officers and Kita Ikki.[28] Moreover, the Meiji Constitution, sometimes blamed for introducing notions of the mythical, divine emperor and the national body into the basic architecture of the Japanese political system and thus paving the way for Japan's subsequent 'slide' into militarism, nonetheless proved redoubtably resilient as a source for undermining the totalising control of the state. Constitutional pluralism as a feature of the modern Japanese state in the 1930s and 1940s in many ways kept the national public sphere

from being completely engulfed by the state, even though the freedom of expression enjoyed in the 1910s and 1920s by the liberal media had become a thing of the past.

The leapfrogging advancement in the studies of wartime society, culture, and media has made it possible for Japanese historians to reassess the (overwhelming) 'oppression' versus (largely inconsequential) 'resistance' dynamic that has dominated our understanding of the wartime public sphere in recent years.[29] These new studies indicate that, far from being completely dominated by state directives and propaganda, the national public sphere of the late 1930s and early 1940s still contained discussions concerning such 'public' issues as accountability of state officials, openness of intergovernmental policymaking processes, and the right of the public to basic welfare and even political expression.

While the national newspapers gradually fell under the surveillance, censorship, and control of the state, small news magazines, some with circulation numbers in the upper thousands or tens of thousands, such as *Tazan no seki*, *Rodō shinbun*, *Sekai bunka*, and *Chikaki yori*, took up criticism of state policies. *Jikyoku shinbun* and *Gendai shinbun hihan*, founded in 1932 and 1933, respectively, specifically targeted the corporate news media and criticised their 'subservience' to state prerogatives. The cultural magazine *Doyōbi* (Saturday), for instance, was founded upon the very Habermasian premise that 'there is something bright (*akarui*) in the basis of our rights as citizens (*shiminken*)' and 'politics is founded on the rational capacity of the people (*minshū no gōriryoku*)'.[30]

It is true that, generally speaking, the tide turned against the critical functions of the national public sphere when Japan entered into a full-fledged war with the Chinese nationalists in 1937. The imperial state, most importantly the select leaders of the military and civil bureaucracy, found it much easier and more effective to use the foreign conflict as a subject to 'market' to the Japanese people, in terms of generating a sense of crisis and an atmosphere conducive to state-directed mobilisation. Domestic agendas were not nearly as effectively managed, however. Indeed, the failure of the 26 February coup d'état by young army officers in 1936 briefly created a palpably antimilitary mood in Japan. On 30 October 1936, the *Tokyo asahi shinbun* scooped the military's 'reform plan' for Japan's political structure, clearly showing the latter's preference for a one-party system and a rejection of party cabinet government, thus contributing greatly to the swelling of antimilitary public opinion.[31] However, following the escalation of the conflict in Northeast China, the *Tokyo asahi shinbun* began to engage in a self-promoted

campaign of 'cleansing' (*seisan*) its liberal tendencies, prompting a newspaper devoted to high culture, *Nihon gakugei shinbun*, to comment on their 'conversion' to the right-wing cause:

> No one can deny that liberal and critical attitudes are gradually disappearing from the *Tokyo asahi*. The senior staff of the said newspaper has strangled to death that honorable ideology called liberalism, and consequently ended up banning the outward expression of the superior brainpower of its reporters … [32]

Still, even after 1937, newsmagazines critical of the 'Japanist' cultural trends and other right-wing tendencies, such as *Jiyū* (Freedom) magazine, continued to wage struggles in the public sphere, without directly touching on the sensitive subject of the Second Sino-Japanese War.[33] Indeed, the strengthened censorship of the news media, expressed in the euphemistic term 'active internal guidance' (*sekkyokuteki naimenteki shidō*) by state bureaucrats of the contents of the news, became a subject of intense criticism from civilian intellectuals such as Ōmori Yoshitarō, Tosaka Jun, and Kiyomizu Ikutarō in the latter half of 1937.[34] The state retaliated by harshly cracking down on not only journalistic organs but also the writers themselves. Yanaihara Tadao, a noted Christian intellectual and professor of colonial studies at the University of Tokyo, had his academic writings and essays censored and banned. Finally, his speech during a commemoration ceremony for a colleague in October 1937, in which he stated, 'Today we attend the funerary service for Japan, which has lost its ideals. … In order to keep Japan's idealism alive, please let us bury this country first,' prompted the government as well as his right-wing 'colleagues' to force his resignation from the university. Yet even after his resignation, Yanaihara spent his personal fortune to publish a Christian magazine, *Kashin* (Joyful News), founded in January 1938, in which he used discussions of the Bible to express his disapproval of the Sino-Japanese War.[35] In this phase, Yanaihara retreated further from the national public sphere into his private domain, yet he obviously wanted to maintain a certain measure of connection to the public.

With the advent of the new order and establishment of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association under the leadership of Konoe Fumimaro in 1940, the state clearly attempted to go beyond merely demarcating the perimeter of 'acceptable' public discourse and to directly intervene in the public sphere and 'create' new content. The Cabinet Intelligence Bureau in May 1940 issued a series of directives that sought to suppress any news media reportage of signs of poverty, food shortage, and other

economic troubles. It also urged newspapers to 'portray the disequilibrium between supply and demand as normal in wartime and to convince people that discontent with commodity shortages reflected insufficient wartime consciousness'. Similar directives were issued by the Cabinet Information Bureau on the reporting of the Tripartite Pact (no negative tones regarding Japan joining the Axis alliance), the coverage of Diet sessions, and after the latter's demise, coverage of the IRAA.[36] The consolidation of the news agencies and media outlets proceeded with greater speed, not only in metropolitan areas like Tokyo and Kyoto but also in the countryside, where the robust tradition of newspapers with strong political colours and endorsements had survived from the political journalism of the Meiji period right into the 1930s. Even during the late 1930s, the local newspapers did not shy away from identification with mainstream political parties, namely Seiyūkai and Minseitō, and formed unions and associations among themselves to resist the infiltration of the national newspapers into their domains. In a way, the strength of the local newspapers indicated the truly 'national' scope of the public discourse not so easily undermined by the state policies. The Konoe cabinet worked hard to 'integrate' these variegated newspapers into a streamlined model under the principle of 'one newspaper per prefecture', first weeding out the allegedly 'corrupt and mismanaged' newspapers, then moving on to closing down the financially weak or insolvent ones. Even though the state was able to achieve this objective in 1942, it took them more than four years to see it through, with Hokkaido, Nagoya, and Tokushima remaining particularly 'difficult' areas in the transition process.[37]

But did the bureaucratic apparatuses built for the total mobilisation of Japanese society as well as the IRAA really succeed in creating new forms of news media and information agencies exclusively under the control of the state? The evidence for their success is mixed at best. For instance, the IRAA in 1941 came up with a plan for consolidating all national newspapers under a single company. This plan was so strongly opposed by the major Tokyo-based newspapers, namely *Asahi shinbun*, *Tokyo Yokohama mainichi shinbun* (later *Mainichi shinbun*), and *Yomiuri shinbun*, that the Tōjō Hideki cabinet could not enforce it, even after Japan practically went into a state of national emergency after the attack on the Pearl Harbor. Even though it is more than likely that the major newspapers resisted such measures due to financial and status-related reasons and not necessarily because of their commitment to freedom of the press, nonetheless the *Yomiuri* president invoked his commitment to 'freedom of newspapers' ('… even if I risk my life I will oppose this plan

in order to defend the freedom of newspapers', he allegedly told Cabinet Information Bureau Vice Chief Okumura Kiwao) to justify his opposition. Interestingly, by late 1941 it was major dailies such as the *Yomiuri* and *Tokyo asahi* that could boast excellent credentials in helping Japan's war efforts overseas and promoting various state-sponsored social mobilisation campaigns. In other words, the newspaper agencies were accommodating imperialist and nationalist projects, but they still strongly resisted direct state control. Also interestingly, some members of the Tōjō cabinet were convinced that the wartime government could push through the original 'consolidated one newspaper company' plan by exercising their control over material resources – for instance, the paper supply. But in the end the military-bureaucratic state backed down, and the plan was abandoned.[38]

The patterns of operation in the publishing industry did not change in a drastic way, either, at least until almost the end point of the Pacific war. Statistically, there was no sudden increase in the publication of nationalist or fascist newsmagazines and journals in the late 1930s or 1940s. A government report from 1944 shows, instead, that the precipitous decline of book retailer shops and the shortage of paper and other resources left most households unable to purchase books or buy magazines, rendering the 'effectiveness' of printed propaganda a rather moot question. Even under these circumstances, the statistics show that the most popular journal was *Shufu no tomo* (Friend of the Housewife), estimated at 500,000 copies produced in 1944 (more than 1.5 million copies were printed in 1943), which meant approximately one copy for every 250 households. The report urges the government to provide paper and other resources to the media companies so as not to derail propaganda and education efforts.[39]

The IRAA also attempted to extend control over various local cultural activities, but their directives show evidence of various types of 'public entertainment', the administratively ambiguous nature of which created confusion or obstacles for the organisation. For instance, the IRAA Cultural Division reported as late as 1943 the increase in 'amateur theatres' (*shirōto engeki*) in farming, fishing, and mining communities, often sponsored by town, village, and neighbourhood associations. The division's directive urged the local branches of the IRAA to strictly avoid sponsorship of these theatrical presentations by communal organisations such as women's associations and youth groups to ensure that these activities did not become 'professionalised' and that the local organisations followed the order of events laid out in state guidelines, including recitation of vows to fight the war to the end and

the singing of the national anthem. This indicates that such solemn rituals promoted by the state to inculcate patriotism and a warlike mentality were sometimes skipped or ignored by the 'amateur theatre' performers and that the IRAA could not enforce centralised control of local entertainments.[40]

For many Japanese living in the wartime period, the state of freedom of thought and expression hit its nadir with the establishment of the Japan Media Patriotic Association (*Nihon Genron Hōkokukai*) in 1942. This organisation was clearly mandated by the state to wage 'thought war' against all 'non-patriotic' and 'antiwar' elements in the public sphere, with the blessings of Tōjō Hideki and other militarist bureaucrats. In 1943, the Thought War campaign waged by the Media Association and its sister organisation, the Japan Literature Patriotic Association, received 200,000 yen in state funds and 323,000 yen in 'donations'.[41] Even after the establishment of these organisations, however, sporadic criticisms of the government continued. For instance, Nakano Seigō, a prominent right-wing thinker, ended up in jail after publicly criticising then Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki. Nakano distributed pamphlets in Ginza bearing the slogan 'Destroy American planes [*beiki*], Destroy Hideki,' Hideki being written with the same characters that could be read 'British plane' (*eiki*). Tōjō had to resign the prime ministership largely as a result of widespread dissatisfaction with his performance among not only civilian critics but also government members. In sum, the situation seems better explained by a 'crowding out' of civilian public discourse by the state rather than by the state's having created a new type of public sphere qualitatively distinctive from the national public sphere of the Meiji period.

Incidentally, it is known that the major commercial magazines with circulation numbers in the hundreds of thousands or even millions, such as *Kingu*, *Shufu no tomo*, and *Shōnen* (Boys), had been noticeably popular in Korea and Taiwan and actively solicited letters and other responses from the residents of the colonies. Popular literature – adventure stories, spy novels, war novels, and journalistic reportage on 'exotic' regions and cultures and military campaigns, for instance – continued to fuel public imagination about the colonies. Yet the presence of Taiwan, Korea, and Manchuria (Manchukuo, established as a 'pan-ethnic utopia' in 1931) as colonies served an ambivalent function as well, reminding the Japanese that their sense of unity derived from participation in the state- and military-initiated imperialist projects in parts of the empire that could potentially disrupt that very sense of unity. To give but one example, the precise relationship between the 'Manchuria-Mongolia'

boom that swept Japanese popular culture in the early to mid 1930s and its relationship to the state suppression of critical discourse in the public sphere has yet to be explored in detail.[42]

In conclusion, I believe that the Taylorian-Habermasian theory of the public sphere, with its emphasis on the public sphere as a space where reflective debates and discussions can take place, regardless of the contents of these debates and discussions, and be shaped into 'public opinion', can be applied to modern Japanese history between 1931 and 1945 without claiming any special consideration other than the ones we would commonsensically factor in when we study a culture with a vastly different history and traditions, including language and religion. Wartime Japan does not strike this researcher as in any way 'special' or 'unique', compared to the European cases, in terms of how the critical functions of the national public sphere were challenged and undermined (but *never totally*) by the militarist/fascist/authoritarian state. Surely there is still room for debating whether the national public sphere in an essentially liberal democratic form inherited from the 1880s had actually been completely replaced by something else between 1941 and 1945. However, even during the most repressive periods of active engagement during the Pacific war, a totalising control of the mass media and public discourse did not take place in Japan.

It also seems likely that the state (or the most ardent pursuers of total mobilisation and militarisation of Japan working in the state) could not have possibly pushed its undermining of critical public discourse to such an extent had it not been for the sense of national unity derived from the Sino-Japanese War and, later, the Pacific war. In the domestic arena, neither 'fascists' nor reform bureaucrats nor fanatical followers of Clausewitz in the army could overturn the 'messy' pluralist political system laid out under the Meiji Constitution, no matter how much they resorted to intellectual persuasion, vicious acts of terrorism and assassination, and economic blackmail. All this is not to downplay, of course, the fact that the state did encroach into the national public sphere to a great extent, suppressing, manipulating, and mobilising civil society through the nationalist and imperialist projects. My conclusions should not be taken as a potential contribution to the (right-wing) discourse of 'normalising' wartime Japan as essentially no different from the United States, England, and other liberal democracies, in terms of the rights and liberties of the population. Had wartime Japan been genuinely 'normal', there would have been more and stronger objections to Japan's aggressive policies in China in the public sphere and more open debates about how to pull out of the Pacific war once it became glaringly obvious that

Japan was losing its campaigns against the United States. Then perhaps the Japanese people would not have had to suffer the insult of having to take seriously (or having to pretend to take seriously) an insanely odious slogan like *ichioku sōgyokusai* (the Glorious Death for the Hundred Million Japanese).[43] The question, however, still remains: did the Japanese state in the 1930s and 1940s actively 'engulf' the public sphere, or was it merely more successful in encroaching into the latter's domain than it had been during other periods of modern Japanese history? Or if we accept that the Japanese public voluntarily and enthusiastically devoted themselves to imperialist projects of overseas expansion, would it not constitute further consolidation of the national public sphere? These are the questions that I hope to take up in future studies.

Notes

1. Kyu Hyun Kim, *The Age of Visions and Arguments: Parliamentarianism and the National Public Sphere in Early Meiji Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2007).
2. Mitani Hiroshi, Yamaguchi Teruomi, *19-seiki Nihon no rekishi: Meiji ishin wo kangaeru* (Tokyo: Hōsō Daigaku Kyōiku Shinkōkai, 2000).
3. Jürgen Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. Thomas Burger, with Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), pp. 136–37.
4. Consult the following works regarding these issues: Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984); Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation in Meiji Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1969); Richard M. Reitan, *Making a Moral Society: Ethics and the State in Meiji Japan* (Honululu: University of Hawaii Press, 2009).
5. Mitani Hiroshi, 'Joron-kōron keisei: hi-seiyō shakai ni okeru minshuka no keiken to kanōsei', in Mitani Hiroshi, ed., *Higashi ajia no kōron keisei* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2004), pp. 16–24. For similar views in English, see Merry Elizabeth Berry, 'Public Life in Authoritarian Japan', *Daedalus* 127/3, (Summer 1998), 133–65.
6. There are still few definitive English-language book-length studies of the major 'Taishō democrats', such as Yoshino and Ōyama Ikuo. For a recently published book-length study of Yoshino Sakuzō, see Jung Sun N. Han, *An Imperial Path to Modernity: Yoshino Sakuzō and the New Imperial Order in East Asia, 1905–1937* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Asia Center, 2013). Also consult Brett McCormick, 'When the Medium Is the Message: The Ideological Role of Yoshino Sakuzō's *Minponshugi* in Mobilising the Japanese Public', *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 2/6 (2007), 185–215; Dick Stegewerns, 'Yoshino Sakuzō: The Isolated Figurehead of the Taishō Generation', in Dick Stegewerns, ed., *Nationalism and Internationalism in Imperial Japan* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 113–31; Tetsuo Najita. 'Some Reflections on the Idealism in the Political Thought of Yoshino Sakuzō', in Harry D. Harootunian and Bernard S. Silberman eds, *Japan in Crisis:*

Essays on Taishō Democracy (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999 [1974]), pp. 29–67.

7. For a critique of this view of the Japanese Emperor as a quasi-religious figure automatically inspiring fanatical devotion, see Kyu Hyun Kim, 'The Mikado's August Body: "Divinity" and "Corporeality" of the Meiji Emperor and the Ideological Construction of Imperial Rule', in Roy Starrs ed., *Politics and Religion in Modern Japan: Red Sun, White Lotus* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
8. Michael Kim and Hae-dong Yun in the present volume address this issue in relation to colonial Korea.
9. Cf. Jie-Hyun Lim and Kim Young Woo eds, *Taejung tokjae: kangje wa tongŭi saiesŏ* (Seoul: Ch'aeksesang, 2004); Jie-Hyun Lim, Kim Young Woo, 'Taejung tokjaeran muŏssinga?' *Yoksa wa pip'yŏng* 9 (2004), 245–58.
10. Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
11. Of course, we can debate whether a modern state can truly achieve its objectives without co-optation of, collaboration with, and capitulation to the bourgeoisie or, in any case, the dominant socio-economic stratum. My own views hue closely to the notion of the state as both a 'field' of social activity and an 'independent' agent, developed by Michael Mann. See *States, War and Capitalism: Studies in Political Sociology* (London: Blackwell, 1992).
12. Warren Montag, 'The Pressure of the Street: Habermas's Fear of the Masses', in Mike Hill and Warren Montag eds, *Masses, Classes and the Public Sphere* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 139.
13. See discussion of Adolfo Scotto di Luzio, *L'appropriazione imperfetta: Editori, biblioteche e libri per ragazzi durante il fascism* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996), in Sergio Luzzatto, 'The Political Culture of Fascist Italy', *Contemporary European History* 8/2 (1999), 320–22.
14. Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 259.
15. Cf. Arima Takeo, *Failure of Freedom: A Portrait of Prewar Japanese Intellectuals* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Harry D. Harootunian, Bernard Silberman, and Gail Lee Bernstein, eds, *Japan in Crisis: Essays on Taishō Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974).
16. Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 317.
17. Quoted in Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan Prepares for Total War: The Search for Economic Security, 1919–1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 31.
18. Louise Young, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 55–95, 106–14.
19. Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 189.
20. For a discussion of Minobe's constitutional ideas and the contents of 'emperor organ theory', consult Frank O. Miller, *Minobe Tatsukichi: Interpreter of Constitutionalism in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965). Also see Richard H. Minear, *Japanese Tradition and the Western Law: Emperor, State and Law in the Thought of Hozumi Yatsuka* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970); Koyama Tsunemi, *Tennō kikansetsu to kokumin kyōiku* (Kyoto: Akademia Shuppankai, 1989).

21. Minobe Tatsukichi, 'Hijōji nihon no seiji kikō', *Chūō kōron*, January 1933; quoted in Arima Manabu, *Nihon no rekishi*, vol. 23, *Teikoku no shōwa* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2002), p. 135.
22. Arima Manabu, *Teikoku no shōwa*, pp. 131–33.
23. See Sheldon Garon, *State and Labor in Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Furukawa Takahisa, *Shōwa senchūki no sōgō kokusaku kikan* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1992).
24. Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy*, pp. 253–61. See also the 'conversion' of Akamatsu Katsumaro, one of the leaders of the proletarian parties, into a national socialist following his tour of Manchuria, discussed in Gordon, ibid., pp. 284–87. Also consult Eguchi Keiichi, *Toshi shō-burujoaji undōshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Miraisha, 1976).
25. For the view that the IRAA represents an important phase toward the consolidation of the 'Japanese system of fascism', see Kosaka Jun'ichirō, 'Taisei yokusankai no seiritsu', *Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi*, vol. 20 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976). For criticisms of this view, see Itō Takashi, *Konoe shin-taisei: Taisei yokusan e no michi* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1983); Akaki Suruki, *Konoe shin-taisei to taisei yokusankai* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984). For an analysis of the IRAA using the corporatist model, consult Amemiya Shōichi, *Kindai Nihon no seiji shidō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1997).
26. *Kokusaku kenkyū shūhō* 3/3 (10 January 1941), in Kokusaku Kenkyūjo, ed., *Senji seiji keizai shiryō*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1982), pp. 22–3. For Itabashi's interpretation of the Meiji Constitution, see Itabashi Kikumaru, *Waga kokutai to kenpō ronsō* (Tokyo: Kenpō Gakusetsu Saikentō no Kai, 1936).
27. Ibid., p. 23.
28. See Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, orig. pub. 1908).
29. Cf. Uchikawa Yoshimi, *Masu media hōseisaku-shi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1989); Yamanouchi Yasushi, J. Victor Koschmann, and Narita Ryūichi, eds, *Total War and Modernization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Satō Katsumi, *Genron tōsei* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 2004); Yoshida Noriaki, *Senji tōsei to jānarizumu* (Kyoto: Shōwadō, 2010).
30. Kuno Osamu, *1930 nendai no shisōka tachi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975); Kitagawa Senzō, *Sensō to chishikijin* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003), pp. 7–15.
31. Kunugi Toshihiro, 'Nihon fuashizumu taisei seiritsu-ki no gunbu no kokumin dōin seisaku', in Nihon Gendaishi Kenkyūkai, ed., *Nihon fuashizumu*, vol. 2, *Kokumin tōgō to taishū dōin* (Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 1982), pp. 44–50.
32. 'Dentō wo ittetsu shi Tōchō maware migi', *Nihon gakugei shinbun*, 1 June 1936; quoted in Yoshida Noriaki, *Senji tōsei to jānarizumu*, p. 62.
33. Kitagawa Senzō, *Sensō to chishikijin*, pp. 9–26.
34. Toyosawa Hajime, 'Nitchū sensō-ka no shuppan-genron tōseiron wo megutte', in Akazawa Shirō and Kitagawa Kenzō, eds, *Bunka to fashizumu* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha, 1993).
35. Kitagawa Kenzō, *Sensō to chishikijin*, pp. 26–7.
36. Gregory J. Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan, 1918–1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 175–80.
37. Yoshida Noriaki, *Senji tōsei to jānarizumu*, pp. 164–67.
38. Gregory Kasza, *The State and the Mass Media in Japan*, pp. 207–15.

39. Akazawa Shirō et al., eds, *Shiryō Nihon gendaishi*, vol. 13, *Taiheiyō sensō-ka no kokumin seikatsu* (Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 1985), pp. 184–85.
40. Kitagawa Kenzō, ed., *Shiryōshū: sōryokusen to bunka*, vol. 1, *Taisei yokusankai bunka-bu to yokusan bunka undo* (Tokyo: Ōtsuki Shoten, 2000), pp. 67–72.
41. Akazawa Shirō, 'Dai Nihon genron hōkokukai: hyōronkei to shisōsen', in *Bunka to fashizumu*.
42. See, e.g., Nagai Yoshikazu, 'Taishū bunka no naka no Manshū', in Tsuganesawa Toshihiro and Ariyama Teruo, eds, *Senjiki Nihon no media ibento* (Tokyo: Sekai shisōsha, 1998), pp. 37–51.
43. Likewise, in the case of Japan, it seems rather clear to me that there is no room for bringing in, e.g., the notion of 'fascist public sphere' unless we wish to attach the term 'public sphere' to the discursive domain of any political group engaged in production, consumption, and distribution of their particular ideological positions outside their 'inner circles'.

8

Between Liberalism and National Socialism: The Historical Role of Volunteer Firemen Associations in Austria as a Public Sphere

Hiroko Mizuno

From the 1860s, the Volunteer Firemen Associations (VFA; *Freiwilligen Feuerwehr*) were founded gradually in almost every local community in the former Austrian monarchy. Their chief initial aim was to protect the inhabitants of their own hometowns and their property from fire catastrophes. Combined with the growth of liberal capitalism, this founding principle behind the formation of the VFAs was regarded by the *Austrian Firemen Newspaper* of 15 August 1864 as 'fundamental for any progressive life of the communities'. As the name of these associations already suggests, those members usually worked for the community voluntarily. They found it of great value to give up their free time to protect their hometown. Closely connected with the typical liberal concept of 'autonomous' local communities, they tried to create a liberal public sphere in their own local community to counter the state's absolutist rule. The idea that the *Bürger* should protect their hometown by themselves reflected, therefore, the cultural values of the *Bürgertum*, or middle class.

While most of the VFAs consisted mainly of inhabitants who belonged to the middle class, there were often Jewish Austrians among them. In fact, they had been liberated from political and social restrictions imposed upon them under the absolutist rule of previous regimes and had started to establish their economic, political, social, and cultural basis in the liberal era. In this sense, the VFA can be seen as a product of liberalism, perhaps even a phenomenon that reflected the modernity of Austria.

A brief look at the history of the VFAs suggests that there may be at least two basic problems. First, with few empirical studies of the history of the Austrian VFAs, we have relatively little knowledge of the historical roles they played in establishing a public sphere in their local communities. However, many VFAs had clearly developed into important public associations. VFAs being widely recognised as essential in almost every local community, even today in contemporary Austria, their main buildings are usually located in the town centre.

Secondly, 'non-political' associations, including the VFAs, have received little attention despite their potential to influence political culture and create local public spheres. Instead, scholars often pay more attention to reading clubs or certain German national associations, like the *Südmark*. It is true that the members of VFAs assembled neither to read newspapers nor to engage in direct discussions of political issues; they instead worked as protectors of the disciplined and secure life of the community. However, in spite or because of their very 'non-political' character, they had a significant role in creating public spheres in a 'political' sense, especially by steadily practicing a kind of local autonomy. In so doing, they seem to have gained local hegemony no matter what political system they actually lived under. Assuming that they had once shared some of the cultural values of the *Bürgertum*, how did they actually live such a public life? Confronted with dramatic political changes from the monarchy over the interwar period through the Austrian authoritarian regime, followed by National Socialist rule and in to the present, to what extent were their 'non-political' activities and cultural public spheres affected and impacted by political events and vice versa?

In this chapter, I attempt to give an overview of the role that the Austrian VFAs played on the daily community level by mainly focusing on the town of Hohenems in Vorarlberg. First, I describe the general structure of the VFA as it formed in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Second, I focus on its organisational development from a 'non-political' association to a publicly recognised social one. Third, I show some characteristics of the political culture of VFAs in terms of continuity and change. Fourth, I consider the authoritarian tendency that VFAs had as a result of their structural factors. Finally, I explore why they took few effective measures to resist National Socialism (NS) and even accommodated themselves to its ruling system while maintaining some of their cultural hegemony in the local public sphere in a 'non-political' sense. In so doing, the ambivalent 'political' characters of 'non-political' liberal associations can be highlighted to show the

difficulties in drawing a clear demarcation line between liberalism and National Socialism.

The organisation and membership of the Volunteer Firemen Association of Hohenems

The VFA of Hohenems was established in 1869. This town is a part of the province of Vorarlberg, a western part of present-day Austria bordering on Germany and Switzerland. The town is situated on the old Rhine River, had a population of 14,000 as of 2004,[1] and had a relatively long Jewish tradition from the beginning of the seventeenth century until the last Jewish inhabitant was deported to Theresienstadt under NS rule. Now there is a Jewish museum, an old Jewish cemetery, and a synagogue that was recently symbolically rebuilt.

Hohenems consisted of two religious communities, a Jewish one (*Judengemeinde*) and a Christian counterpart (*Christengemeinde*). The great success of the textile industry by the middle of the nineteenth century led to an increase in the number of Jewish inhabitants (546 inhabitants in 1853), as compared to the 3917 Christian residents as of 1850.[2] The respective quarters were self-governing to the extent that each had its own mayor, or *Bürgermeister*, and the Jewish quarter was relatively independent of the Christian quarter in a political sense. For this reason, it was necessary to apply to both authorities when founding the Volunteer Firemen Association in Hohenems. The founders were Alois Peter, Karl Amann, Friedrich Rosenthal, and his second cousin Anton Rosenthal. Both Rosenthals belonged to the Jewish community, and the other two founding members were from the Christian community.

The VFA obtained official permission from the two local authorities to form in April 1869, and 12 executive members were quickly elected in the following month. Besides the four founding members mentioned above, Simon Steinach and Ludwig Ullmann were also elected from the Jewish community, and they participated in this social activity as medical doctors. Johann Georg Vogel, an owner of a guest house, was another member of the executive committee and was well known as a liberal in the Christian community. Therefore, the membership of the VFA of Hohenems as described here suggests that this organisation can be seen as a typical product of the liberalism of the era.[3]

According to the first edition (1869) of its statutes, the primary purpose of this association was, of course, 'to protect the life and property of the town inhabitants from the danger of fire'.[4] For the firemen themselves, their participation was premised on a general belief in the

'progressive life of the local community', as mentioned in the *Austrian Firemen Newspaper* cited above. This belief in their progressive actions meant that the members of the VFA consciously tried to differentiate their own social values of 'modernity' from 'pre-modern' times. The idea of 'protecting the property of inhabitants' indicates some typical and somehow ambivalent characteristics of liberalism in regard to the historical development of liberal capitalism against the conservative rule of the monarchy in the latter part of the nineteenth century. On the one hand, 'protecting property' (private as well as public) can be seen as a fundamental condition for the progress of capitalism, which was closely connected to the idea of self-governing local communities. On the other hand, the word 'protecting' implies a differentiation of inhabitants into at least two categories: those who thought of themselves as qualified to be protectors or guardians and those who were to be protected because they were not yet able to engage in self-help activities. This bifurcated view of the inhabitants shows the potential for more authoritarian characteristics to emerge out of a system that had been designed to protect property and life.

It is therefore not surprising that the 1869 statutes had some important qualifications designed to limit membership in the VFA. According to the stipulations, any male citizen of the community who was healthy, moral, and over the age of 18 could be a member of the association.[5] This meant, at the same time, however, that women, minors, and foreigners were automatically excluded from membership. Nor could one enter the association if he was judged to be immoral or unhealthy. A new member required the approval of a majority of the administrative committee, to which both mayors of the religious subcommunities of Hohenems belonged (after 1878, the two subcommunities were unified under one mayor). The statutes also required each member to participate in regular firefighting drills.[6] Those who missed a firefighting drill without a legitimate reason were penalised.[7] Regular participation implicitly demanded that members devote their time and money to 'voluntarily' work for public causes. They were obliged to pay association dues, and the founding members were men of means: manufacturers, proprietors of guest houses, craftsmen, and artisans such as glass masters; they were considered persons of 'reputation' in the community.

Such membership regulations, in fact, had a great deal in common with those of other (political) associations, as Pieter Judson shows in his work on liberal associations,[8] and there can be little doubt that the VFA of Hohenems did not simply recruit as many new members as possible to the organisation. It needed male citizens of the community

who shared its liberal cultural values. This should not, however, lead directly to the conclusion that the association was not accessible to every (male) citizen, as liberalism was at the basis of its ideals. Rather, the association believed in the possibility for any citizen to become a qualified *Bürger* through individual social and economic success as well as education.

While all members were equally entitled to vote in the election of the executive committee, they had to follow the instructions of the commandant, especially during firefighting. Thus, they were usually organised in a pseudo-military hierarchy, with the commandant on top.[9] The executive committee consisted of a commandant, a vice commandant, and a secretary, who was in charge of keeping the minutes. In addition, VFAs were usually divided into sections. In the Hohenems case, the VFA was divided originally into four companies: laddermen (*Steigermannschaft*), hosemen (*Spritzenmannschaft*), deconstruction (*Einreissermannschaft*), and safeguarding (*Sicherungsmannschaft*), each of which was organised as a smaller hierarchical unit with a leader.[10] A disciplined formation was also reinforced by wearing a common uniform.[11] The VFA of Hohenems introduced all of these different elements by 1900.[12]

From a non-political association to a publicly recognised social organisation – Creating a public sphere through 'representation'

There was a close connection between the local authorities and the VFA in Hohenems. Assisted by the rise of liberal politics in the aftermath of the compromise with Hungary (*Ausgleich*) in 1867, the town council was dominated by local liberals; the Catholic-conservatives were rather on the defensive. The long mayorship of Johann Georg Witzemann in the 1870s would not have been possible without the curial voting system and constant support from some Jewish manufacturers who belonged to the first voting curia. Not surprisingly, the Catholic-conservatives' criticism of Witzemann's success in the election of 1878 as the result of the strong support of the 'Jews' had a definite anti-Semitic tone.[13]

Witzemann seems to have engaged himself more in the administration of the VFA than the succeeding mayors. He participated constantly in regular meetings, together with some Jewish executive co-members, until at least 1878.[14] Even after he was defeated in the 1881–82 elections, the town council was still dominated by the liberals. These political circumstances helped some liberal councillors to continue supporting the activities of the VFA.

It might be worth noting that some of the individuals who had at one point functioned as VFA commandants later became involved in local and provincial politics. Alois Peter, the first commandant, even became a representative at the provincial parliament of Vorarlberg. Georg Johann Vogel, a co-founder of the association, who served first as vice leader of the company of laddermen and then as commandant in 1878, was elected town councillor of the first rank in 1891. When he was elected to a local school board (*Ortsschulrat*) in 1893 on the town council, one of the regional Catholic-conservative newspapers, *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, criticised this result on the grounds that Vogel would not be qualified for this function because 'he never went to church and let his son go to Jewish school'.[15] Indeed, soon after his election as commandant in 1878,[16] Vogel might have encountered some difficulties performing his duties due to conflicts with some of his opponents within the organisation. Vogel complained, for example, that a firefighting drill was held on someone else's orders without his knowledge.[17] In the following years, Vogel was never elected to the position of commandant again.

Vogel's successor, Josef Fenkert, once engaged in personal disputes against him. However, a few years later (1882), Fenkert himself had to resign as commandant, accusing Vogel and another *Bürger* (Matthäus Reis, later a town councillor) of defaming the association. As Fenkert directed his protest to the town council, Vogel and Reis attempted to explain their actions directly to the town council.[18] The details of the incident between Vogel and Fenkert remain unknown due to a lack of relevant documentation, but such troubles among the leading figures of the association indicate that it might not have been so easy for the members to share common cultural values.

While there were some conflicts within the association, the executive committee often confronted the problem that only a few members participated regularly in fire drills in 1873.[19] At the same time, a serious decrease in the number of active members nearly forced the association to disband; it was clear that the executive committee needed to establish a firmer foundation for the association. The number of active members ranged from 40 (1895) to 52 (1890, 1894, and 1906),[20] with some members remaining in the association for life and some withdrawing after a few years. Given that a commandant was elected at an annual general meeting, it seems natural that a commandant's term of office averaged from one to three years. But this was also very much affected by the internal structural instability of the association, as Vogel's case suggests.

It took almost two decades for the association to stabilise itself organisationally, helped partly through cooperation with the town council and partly through personal connections. The remarkable stability of the association can be attributed to the considerable achievement of Josef Anton Sandholzer, who functioned as commandant for 33 years (1886–1919). He successfully modernised and cultivated the organisation of the VFA: the fire drills, which were announced in advance in the town bulletin (*Gemeindeblatt*), were held eight to ten times a year on average.[21] Official meetings were often followed by unofficial gatherings, where the participants were offered a good opportunity to cultivate comradeship. In addition, beginning in 1889 the secretary documented their activities every year. A year's records were read out for confirmation by the secretary at the start of the next general meeting.[22]

In spite of some internal conflicts, the VFA was playing a dominant role by the 1880s, gradually making its presence felt in the public space of the community. The VFA ball, first held in 1881 and almost every year from 1899, became an important event in the community. In 1881 the fourth interregional festival of the VFA was organised in Hohenems by the Union of Volunteer Firemen Associations of Vorarlberg (founded in 1874),[23] and the whole community, as it were, 'mobilised' for this major event. Public buildings were decorated gorgeously, and town inhabitants were asked to decorate their houses in a colourful manner. Some local guest houses and restaurants in the town cooperated by offering lunch for the participants at a low fixed price. The participants marched in a parade through the town in a disciplined fashion. During the festivities, Hohenems was full of members of VFAs from Vorarlberg. Over 40 VFAs from Vorarlberg were in fact invited, and over 450 firemen took part in this festival.[24]

It is worth noting that in the 1880s the originally liberal association of firemen began to support religious festivities organised by the church. One of the typical festivities was a trinity procession (*Fronleichnamprozession*), which all members of the VFA participated in every year from at least 1898.[25] This perhaps corresponded with the decision of the town council two years earlier to oblige the inhabitants of the town to participate in trinity processions. It is furthermore noteworthy that religious services in a church were introduced at festivals of the VFA. In 1894, for example, a big festival was held to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Hohenems VFA. At this time, Catholic worship in a church was the first event of the festival[26] (it had not been a part of the above-mentioned festival of 1881).[27] More likely than not, the VFA of Hohenems had transformed itself from a (liberal) association to a more publicly recognised

organisation, absorbing the more 'traditional' elements of Catholic customs without abandoning its primary liberal characteristics. A church ceremony, therefore, became an essential part of the various festivals of the VFA.

This transformation might be attributed in part to the changing political circumstances, which did not favour the liberals on the dynastic and provincial levels in the final 20 years of the nineteenth century. Another possible reason, one that might be particular to the Hohenems case, was the fact that the Jewish population had decreased drastically, from 458 in 1867 to 91 in 1900,[28] while the association perhaps had to accept more and more inhabitants from the lower middle class, for whose sake some restrictions on election rights had been abolished. As long as they shared the values of disciplined order in the community, however, the cultural hegemony of the VFAs in the public sphere could be largely sustained. Even though some Jewish *Bürger*, among them Anton Rosenthal, remained in Hohenems, Jewish inhabitants seemed to participate in community life on a limited scale, especially after the political integration of the Jewish community into the larger community in 1878. There are some indications that relations between the Rosenthals and the VFA continued,[29] but it would be unrealistic to suggest that the Jewish members ever took part in a Catholic worship festival, especially since the population of the Jewish quarter had decreased dramatically.

In this way, the VFA created a public sphere in the community where they sought to realise their cultural values, especially by establishing a systematised and disciplined order. Demonstrating the benefits of a safe community life, they sought to secure their local cultural hegemony. On the other hand, they adapted themselves to the changing social and political circumstances. In short, they 'represented' their ideals in the public sphere (the view of a secure life) through various activities on a daily basis. Such frequent occasions of their real 'representation' in the town made it possible for the VFA to behave as if it 'represented' the whole of community life – as a 'representative' with great political legitimacy.

The political culture of the Volunteer Firemen Associations

As the Volunteer Firemen Associations were initially established as 'non-political' associations, there are few political remarks in the *Chronicles*, or annual reports on a VFA's activities. But if historically significant events

took place in state politics, the secretary of the association did not hesitate to remark on them. Thus, we get a glimpse of the political culture of the association through the available historical sources.

By the end of the nineteenth century, (Austrian-)German patriotism towards the dynasty as a whole polity had spread widely throughout the Austrian monarchy. Often identified with Emperor Franz Josef I, these patriotic sentiments infiltrated the association as well. In 1898, for example, the VFA of Hohenems celebrated the 50th anniversary of the reign of Emperor Franz Josef I. Shortly afterwards when the Empress Elisabeth was assassinated, the association expressed deep regret for this tragedy, and all members of the VFA participated in a memorial service for the dead empress in the town church.[30]

Around the turn of the century, the Habsburg monarchy also recognised the significance of the VFA and similar voluntary associations loyal to the regime. The Austrian dynasty needed to ensure more support from its people, because emerging societies of non-German nationalities began to challenge the old dynastic rule and increase political pressure to reach compromises in the interests of their own nationalist causes. Thus, the year 1906 was a remarkable one for the VFA of Hohenems, since a decoration system authorised by the emperor was introduced to honour the 'voluntary' services of the members. The VFA did not forget to express its deep gratitude to the emperor 'with three cheers'.[31]

In taking into consideration the fact that liberalism began to exhibit strong German nationalist characteristics in the 1880s, in general it is not surprising that the VFA also shared (Austrian-)German patriotism on the dynastic level even while maintaining liberal ideals. Certainly, it was a precondition of great importance for many liberals 'to be German' as long as (Austrian-)German culture was identified with such typical liberal ideas as 'freethinking' and 'enlightened' behaviour and liberal progress, which had originally opposed absolutist rule and the presence of other nationalities 'without history'. Liberalism as a political idea had meant liberation from such a system of pre-modern rule while implying the superiority of the (Austrian-)German people.

In addition, as dynastic rule was challenged by various nationalists, the emperor became perceived as a symbol of a safe and stable monarchic society.[32] In this sense, the monarchy, the emperor, and the hometown merged into a united overarching concept that the VFA strove to uphold. In other words, the VFA tried to protect its hometown through its activities and could identify itself as a protector of the (Austrian-) German liberal culture symbolised by Emperor Franz Josef of Austria.

In Hohenems, thus, the VFA gravitated towards liberal state patriotism and, at the same time, absorbed some of the characteristics that had previously been associated with the Catholics. During this decades-long process, the Jewish culture that had once been a part of Austrian liberalism receded into the background.

When Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in 1914, the VFA joined a mourning service for the prince.[33] During World War I, the association began to commemorate its comrades who fell in the war, portraying them in a heroic light.[34] After 1920, the VFA institutionalised special rituals for the fallen soldiers of World War I in each November. A war memorial for the fallen soldiers of the town was built directly by the church. Such war memorials were quite popular in the interwar period in Austria. The VFA participated, of course, in the unveiling ceremony of the monument along with all of the other local associations.[35] Even after the Great War, it seems that the VFA retained its (Austrian-)German cultural identity in associational life. The secretary of the VFA noted proudly, as the VFA celebrated the 60th anniversary of its founding in 1929, that the commandant (Alois Klien) appealed to the members to 'maintain German loyalty' in his address, insisting on the importance of the solid unity of the association.[36]

On 1 May 1934, the VFA attended an official local ceremony for the new constitution of the corporative state,[37] proclaimed by the Austro-fascist regime that existed between 1934 and 1938 under Chancellor Dollfuss, after the defeat of the social democratic forces in the civil war of February 1934. To commemorate the new constitution, the members of the Hohenems VFA inaugurated their first new uniforms since their founding 40 years earlier. This historical background made this ceremonial day 'of great significance' for the VFA of the town.[38]

When Dollfuss was assassinated by the Austrian Nazis in July 1934, the VFA attended a community memorial service.[39] It is well known that Dollfuss stressed Austrian national identity to resist Nazi expansionism, but he (and his successor Schuschnigg, too) could not abandon his (Austrian-)German nationalist sentiments for a purely Austrian national identity, which would not emerge until Austria experienced Nazi rule and World War II.

A modernity in the structured authoritarian tendencies of the Volunteer Firemen Associations

Based on their experiences with the total war system during the Great War, the VFA seemed more and more accustomed to getting

along with the local authorities. This was especially the case because modernising firefighting demanded more financial support.[40] The more effectively the firemen wanted to organise their activities, the more they needed official support from the authorities on various levels. Political and social support, as well as ample financial support, was indispensable for keeping up with the necessary technical innovations. In short, without such government support the VFA could not afford the up-to-date facilities they deemed essential for protecting their 'German' hometown. Conversely, the local authorities had good reasons to cooperate with the VFA. They knew that its members devoted their energies to the cause of their hometown and worked to protect national and regional security on the frontier. In addition, the authorities understood that the VFA was a low-cost workforce. Local authorities often increased subsidies for the associations in the interwar period, but they never nationalised or publicly owned them. The common interest of public safety created and strengthened a close relationship between the VFAs and the local authorities but without totally abandoning the liberal ideas behind the arrangement. This structural ambivalence explains why liberal associations like VFAs showed increasingly authoritarian tendencies as time went on. This perhaps key characteristic of modernity becomes apparent through the experience of VFAs.

Of course, this ambivalent connection between the local authorities and VFAs was actually seen only outside of 'Red Vienna', where the private areas in the sense of liberal values (family politics, for instance) were often integrated into a part of the public welfare politics. It is well known that in Vienna, the capital of the newly created Republic of Austria, a grandiose social experiment took place in the 1920s. In contrast, the Catholic-Conservative party that was dominant in the other parts of the republic provided only minimal financial support for private endeavours. In Vienna, public firefighting institutions replaced almost all of the former VFAs founded around the turn of the century. Before the Great War, there were 45 VFAs in Vienna, but by the interwar period only a few were left. Instead, the number of public firefighters increased from 590 members in 1913 to 908 in 1925.[41]

Regardless of the circumstances in other parts of Austria, the strong cultural consciousness of being 'non-political' formed the very political character of the VFAs in Hohenems. Yet the increasing dependency on cooperation with the local authorities brought out the structural flaws in the system. Since the structured authoritarian tendency was characteristic of the liberalism of the times, the VFA would, fatally enough,

find no effective way of protesting and resisting the subsequent regime of National Socialism, as we see below.

From a 'neighbouring volk' to a 'German volk'

During the time period 1934–8, the diplomatic relationships between NS Germany and the authoritarian government of Austria (or Austro-fascism) went from bad to worse: The Austrian government clearly opposed Hitler's regime because it threatened Austria's independence. The Austrian position was initially supported firmly by fascist Italy, but Mussolini changed his policy soon after he launched the Ethiopian war. Thus, there were in fact no more obstacles preventing Hitler's expansion policy towards the Austrian region. Hitler, placing more pressure on Austria to come into line with his policies, desired modification of the treaties of Versailles and St. Germain, which had forbidden the *Anschluss* of the two German countries as violating the principle of 'national self-determination'. One of the fatal pressures NS Germany exerted on Austria was the so-called Thousand Mark Barrier policy (1933). By imposing an unrealistic tax of a thousand marks on German tourists to Austria, it caused a drastic decrease in their numbers. When Mussolini gave up supporting Austria's independence and shifted toward a more pro-German line, Austria had to make a concession to Hitler in 1936 by concluding the July Agreement, which brought an end to the Thousand Mark Barrier policy.

Interestingly, such political problems at the highest diplomatic level sometimes impacted the 'non-political' character of the Hohenems VFA quite considerably. The conflict between NS Germany and Austro-fascism made it impossible for 'German friends' to visit Austria. The VFA welcomed, therefore, the 1936 political settlement between the countries. Consequently, a huge festival for the VFA was held in Bregenz (the capital city of Vorarlberg), and about a thousand VFA members from NS Germany visited the beautiful Austrian city on Lake Boden to participate in this festival.

According to his remarks, the secretary of the Hohenems VFA observed this tremendous event in Bregenz with great joy and portrayed the German participants as the 'first messengers of peace' since the countries' borders had been closed for three years. The German participants who marched through the town were so enthusiastically welcomed by its citizens that they 'fell short of flowers for other participants from Vorarlberg and Switzerland!'[42] For the secretary, this was clear evidence that, in spite of unfavourable diplomatic conditions, the

traditional friendship of Vorarlberg with its 'neighbouring people' (*Nachbarvolk*) in Germany had 'never changed'.[43] The major interest of the non-political VFA obviously lay less with which political regimes it lived under than with whether or not it could continue its firefighting activities and maintain links with other firefighter organisations. Such a 'non-political' behaviour and stance seemed harmless, but in effect it did more harm than good. The VFA surely worked hard to fulfil its duties to protect its hometown, but its accommodating attitude towards the political authorities could only benefit the goals of National Socialism.

When Hitler's Germany annexed Austria in 1938, a parade was held in Hohenems, in which the VFA took part.[44] Soon after the *Anschluss*, the association had 'the first comfortable meeting with the SS comrades'. At this meeting the association's commandant, Alois Klien, as well as former mayor Karl Hämmerle, made a welcoming speech for the National Socialists.[45] On 9 April 1938, all the members of the VFA were present at the main square of Hohenems, where a speech by Hitler was transmitted over the radio.[46]

In spite of the fact that the VFA was integrated into the German auxiliary police units (*Hilfspolizei*), it meant, not the end of its history, but rather 'the beginning of a new era', in the words of its secretary. Indeed, he was firmly convinced that the VFA should serve the hometown and the fatherland in the name of the Führer, Adolf Hitler, to help protect the German people (*Deutsches Volk*) from any danger. The VFA was frequently mobilised for NS meetings and events as 'security guards'.[47] During World War II, protecting the hometown undoubtedly coincided with the defence of the community from air attacks; so VFA members were heavily involved in the 'voluntary service' of sounding the alert to the local inhabitants – that is, as long as the members were not serving on the front lines. When the VFA was short of male hands, some women were mobilised into service for the first time in its history.

The public sphere that the VFA created during the former Austrian monarchy gradually gained wide recognition among the population, and its hegemonic dominance of local civic culture remained on the whole unchanged even during the NS era. It could be said that during that period, the liberal ideal of protecting the hometown complemented an important part of the emerging 'mass dictatorship' system rather than develop into resistance to the fascist regime. Liberalism was never the same as National Socialism, but it had few effective ways of protesting the latter because of its hierarchical structure.

During World War II, the former Jewish synagogue was in part used by the VFA as a 'training room' to 'render effective voluntary service even in winter ... '[48] Not surprisingly, since there were few Jewish *Bürger* left in the town (the last Jewish *Bürger* was deported to Theresienstadt in 1942), the NS town council of Hohenems had no difficulty in deciding to transform the former Jewish synagogue into the new main building of the VFA of Hohenems. This decision solved the serious problem of where to store the firefighting equipment. The NS town council began seriously discussing renovation plans for the former synagogue by 1941. The local authorities promised to renovate the structure into 'the most beautiful facility for firefighting equipment'.[49] It was not completed until 1954–55. The main VFA building was used as such until the VFA moved into new facilities in the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

As we have seen, VFAs attained local cultural hegemony by creating and securing their own liberal public sphere through their 'representation' as a protector of the hometown. As they believed in the cultural values of the (German) liberal *Bürgertum*, the VFA sought to realise them by pursuing autonomy in relation to Habsburg state politics. They systemised their organisation beginning in the 1890s and began to absorb grass-roots Catholic elements while they organised regular fire drills and participated in other local cultural and political events. As long as *this* public sphere supported the social security of the hometown, their 'voluntary' activities provided an important basis of state governance not only for the former monarchy but also for the 'mass dictatorship' of the NS regime. Conversely, VFAs required more and more support from local authorities to improve or remodel their firefighting equipment and vehicles as long as they remained private and voluntary organisations. Another important consideration was that they served as a low-cost workforce to protect the community. Therefore, the local authorities and the VFA had interests in common along multiple points. Who expected, then, that the local public sphere that the VFAs helped create in the era of liberalism of the nineteenth century would become an integral part of the 'responsibility' system for social and perhaps national security during the subsequent era of 'mass dictatorship'? The case of the VFA of Hohenems shows the potentially ambivalent characteristics embedded in the liberal public sphere that can be made available for state mobilisation.

Notes

1. Statistik Austria, Einwohnerzahl und Komponenten der Bevölkerungsentwicklung, www.statistik.at/blickgem/pr1/g80302.pdf.
2. Norbert Peter, *Die parteipolitischen Verhältnisse in der Marktgemeinde Hohenems in den Jahren 1849–1918*, diss. (Innsbruck, 1974), pp. 368–69.
3. Harald Walser, Emanzipation und Ausgrenzung: Die Hohenemser Judengemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert, in Werner Dreier, ed., *Antisemitismus in Vorarlberg. Regionalstudie zur Geschichte einer Weltanschauung, Studien zur Geschichte und Gesellschaft Vorarlbergs* 4 (Bregenz, 1988), 84–131, 109.
4. *Statuten der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr in Hohenems von 1869* (*Statuten* [1869]), Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, BH Feldkirch V54, Sch. 427, §1.
5. *Statuten* (1869), §3.
6. *Statuten* (1869), §1.
7. *Statuten* (1869), §14.
8. For a more general look at liberal associations in the former Austrian monarchy, see Pieter Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries: Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), esp. ch. 5.
9. *Statuten* (1869), §1.
10. *Statuten* (1869), §§4–5.
11. *Sitzungsprotokoll des Verwaltungsrates von 1876*, Vereinsarchiv der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems (VFFH).
12. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1934), VFFH.
13. *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 27 Sept. 1878.
14. Whether any Jewish Bürger participated in the association's meetings after 1878 remains unresolved.
15. *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 5 Dec. 1893; see also Walser, Emanzipation und Ausgrenzung, 114–15.
16. *Sitzungsprotokoll des Verwaltungsrates* (6 Jan. 1878), VFFH.
17. *Sitzungsprotokoll des Verwaltungsrates* (11 July 1879), VFFH.
18. *Sitzungsprotokolle des Verwaltungsrates* (14 June and 17 July 1882), VFFH.
19. *Sitzungsprotokolle des Verwaltungsrates* (12 Oct. 1873), VFFH.
20. Counted by the author; see *Sitzungsprotokolle des Verwaltungsrates* (1890–1906), VFFH.
21. Counted by the author.
22. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems*, 1886–1919 (counted by the author). See also Alois Klien, *Festschrift zum 60-jährigen Gründungsfest der freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems am 17. November 1929, 1869–1929* (Dornbirn, 1929), p. 33.
23. The Union of VFA of Vorarlberg was founded in 1874 to create a broader network of the associations in Vorarlberg. Some leaders of Hohenems committed themselves to the organisation of this union, sometimes playing a leading role. An even wider network of VFA associations was developed through the monarchy.
24. *Sitzungsprotokoll des Verwaltungsrathes* (1881), VFFH.
25. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1898–), VFFH.
26. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1894), VFFH.
27. *Sitzungsprotokoll des Verwaltungsrathes* (1881), VFFH.

28. Peter, *Die parteipolitischen Verhältnisse*, pp. 368–69.
29. In 1910, e.g., the firemen of the Hohenems VFA were invited to firefighting drills held by the firemen of a factory of the Rosenthals. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1910), VFFH.
30. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1898), VFFH.
31. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1906), VFFH.
32. Judson, e.g., points out that the German liberals in Austria developed an 'incongruous pairing' of a celebration 'of both the March Revolution and Emperor Francis Josef's accession to the throne' in 1873. See Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, p. 156.
33. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1914), VFFH.
34. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1915), VFFH.
35. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1936), VFFH.
36. Klien, *Festschrift zum 60-jährigen Gründungsfest*, p. 16.
37. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1934), VFFH.
38. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1934), VFFH.
39. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1934), VFFH.
40. E.g., the Volunteer Firemen of Leoben, Steiermark, shows a typical authoritarian tendency, standing on the side of the establishment. See *Festschrift zum 60jähr. Gründungsfest der freiwilligen feuerwehr und Rettungsabteilung Leoben am 1. und 2. September 1928* (Leoben, 1928), pp. 13–14.
41. Heinrich Kolar, *Alltag und Heimat. Wiener Alltagsdinge in ihren Beziehungen zur Kulturkunde und zum bodenständigen Rechnen. Mit einem Einblick in Wiener Sammlungen*, vol. 5, *Gaslaterne und elektrisches Licht. Heizung. Feuernot und Feuerwehr* (Vienna, 1928), pp. 34–5.
42. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1936), VFFH.
43. Ibid.
44. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1938), VFFH.
45. Ibid.
46. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1936), VFFH.
47. Ibid.
48. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1939), VFFH.
49. *Chronik der Freiwilligen Feuerwehr Hohenems* (1941/2), VFFH.

9
Colonial Publicness as Metaphor

Hae-dong Yun and Translated by Michael Kim

All colonial empires attempt to create a 'kingdom of order', where neither a 'people's republic' nor representative politics in the Western sense are allowed in the colonies. The only possible form of colonial politics that could and did exist was a 'politics of resistance'. Much of the history of colonial everyday life and thought vanishes, however, when colonies are discussed primarily in terms of the politics of resistance. In other words, the political realm of colonies and of colonialism as a whole cannot be understood simply in terms of the politics of resistance. Rather, the lack of a suitable interpretative paradigm for understanding this aspect of colonialism necessitates a concept of 'colonial publicness'.

How, then, is the concept of 'publicness', or *konggongsŏng* (公共性), deployed here? Colonial publicness has no relationship to the ideology of the colonial state, the anticolonial resistance movements, or the official colonial system that emerges from a fixed legal and political framework. In the present context, publicness represents a normative value that is necessary for a single community or society to communicate critical issues, and it enables the uncoerced agreement of a society's members. As such, the concept is distinguished from a Habermasian public sphere, which is somewhat related but encounters great difficulties in the colonial context. This sense of publicness essentially allows a society to overcome the collective dangers it faces by differentiating between urgent and ancillary issues and enables an awareness of the 'public weal' through a process of identifying friend or foe.[1] Thus, publicness represents an active attempt to maximise a society's freedom and is a normative value that has a fundamentally flexible nature rather than a conception that is associated with a fixed object such as a material space or sphere.

Therefore, rather than a physical entity, colonial publicness functions as a metaphor for critiquing the colonial state (or nation state). In most discussions of publicness, the most serious contradiction arises from a gap between the conceptual and the real. Publicness here is used as an expansion of the 'Marxist metaphor of commodification' that symbolises the 'political' not only in colonial societies but also as a general critique of modernity. Publicness is not a fixed social entity. Instead, it refers to the political effect that emerges when 'the social' is transformed into the 'political'.[2] In this sense, the term publicness may be deployed even today in the era of globalisation as a concept that allows for the reimagining of an alternative normative value or an alternative political sphere. Ultimately, the goal here is a chance to create a new metaphorical tool for reading colonialism or colonial modernity in a way that resists the temptation to view the concept of publicness as either an absolute value or a venue for control and domination.

The political division of labour based on modern European societies was conceived as a nation state or government responsible for supervision, an assembly responsible for coordination, and a civil society consisting of private and voluntary organisations responsible for reflecting communal needs. The public sphere was considered the medium that integrated and enabled this division of labour. Thus, the concept of the public sphere was accompanied by a value judgment and came to imply representation or support for the state in some fashion. This conception of the public sphere has ultimately led to its denigration, especially because the separation of public and private spheres was denied in the socialist societies of the twentieth century. The state may have been viewed as a tool of the ruling class and therefore a candidate for elimination, but the idea that state and society should be separated could not gain legitimacy. Thus, the public sphere came to be understood as something that must be lacking in the absence (or failed emergence) of a nation state.

Rather than the notion of a public sphere, a slightly different concept of publicness came to be expressed in colonial Korea as an absolute value through slogans such as the 'public first and the private after' (*sŏngong husa* 先公後私) and 'eliminate the self and serve the public' (*myŏlsa bonggong* 滅私奉公). In this manner, the public and private spheres were separated in public declarations. This does not mean that the public sphere was separated out from the private, however. Rather, the private was distilled from the public. The public sphere was the province of the (colonial) state insofar as the state played the leading role in its

establishment and in the separation between the public and private. The public sphere then came to dominate the private sphere, and anything private essentially became an object of condemnation. In this way the colonial state and the Japanese emperor system as a whole became the custodian of publicness.

After establishing its dominion over publicness, the colonial state then played the leading role in defining the private sphere as well. Publicness always begins with a separation of the public and private, and the direction of the authority that divides the two spheres can be determinative. Furthermore, the colonial state and the Japanese emperor system as a whole tried to move the debate over publicness in a direction that completely denied the autonomy of the private sphere, a direction reflected in a colonial slogan like 'eliminate the self and serve the public'. Within the cracks of this extreme attempt to control the private sphere, a new space emerges for the discussion of colonial publicness that provides a discourse of resistance for the formation of the ethnic nation. By accepting the value of 'the public', the formation of the public citizenry came to signify the creation of a new ethnic nation. In this way, the debates over publicness during the colonial period also became a space where the colonial state competed with the Korean elites to gain hegemony over the common people.

Is it possible to establish a public sphere without a private sphere? In Western liberal societies, the private/public distinction is based on the notion of property rights, with private interest as the foundation and the public sphere as a reflection of the desire to establish a common universal platform for the pursuit of these private interests. Private interests in colonial Korea were, however, dismissed. This is precisely why scholars engaged in debates over colonial publicness speak of the 'absence of a suitable interpretive paradigm'. Yet even in colonial Korea, there was a public sphere – or at least a notion of publicness – that tried to reflect private interests and establish mutual understandings. Until now, scholars have viewed this as an insignificant or peripheral area. My arguments concerning colonial publicness are not intended to address an actual space for competing public discourses. Rather, I use the concept of colonial publicness to address this absence in Japanese colonial studies' historiography, which sees the public sphere as peripheral because of the monopoly the state or the ethnic nation state had over all public discussions. Colonial publicness emerges, therefore, precisely in places that lack an official confirmation of the public's existence. In this way, colonial publicness serves as a metaphor for 'the political' during Korea's colonial period. Viewed from this stance, for colonial subjects,

colonial publicness represented an active opportunity that encompassed their hopes to achieve collective freedom.

The controversy surrounding colonial publicness

The debate in Korean historical studies in Japan over my 2003 proposal of the term 'colonial publicness' continues.[3] This is a controversy between the realists, who argue that the public sphere existed during the colonial period, and the fictionists, who argue that it was merely an illusion. I proposed the concept of colonial publicness in an attempt to interpret the 'grey zone' that limited previous understandings of colonialism or, put in another way, to understand the ontological basis of colonialism. Whether in the East Asian or Western context, the debate over the meaning of the public sphere in general involves considerable complexity and controversy, which are only exacerbated when scholars apply the concept of publicness to colonialism.

Let us start with an examination of Cho Kyŏng-dal, a representative of the fictionist camp. Cho Kyŏng-dal warns of the danger of overemphasising colonial publicness in colonial research. He argues from the perspective of a populist historian to cast doubt on the proposition that many ordinary people were incorporated into a sense of colonial publicness. He believes that colonial publicness was found only among a few groups of Korean intellectuals, students, and bureaucrats within a limited space allowed by the Government-General of Korea. As this space was not even formed autonomously, he argues that there is a need to clarify its illusory nature rather than highlight its presence.[4] For example, Cho Kyŏng-dal stresses that while 'colonial publicness' may imply that a young man isolated in the rural countryside can become a participant, he would not be able to do so easily and therefore could only participate in his imagination. In this context, Cho Kyŏng-dal argues forcefully that the publicness of the Government-General of Korea only amounts to a rhetorical space, because colonial publicness was formed through exclusion of the common people; it simply allows the society of urban intellectuals to transfer the colonial state's violence to the common people.[5]

There seem to be significant misunderstandings and problematic speculations in Cho Kyŏng-dal's argument, the leading critique of colonial publicness. First is the claim that colonial publicness was extrapolated from Habermas's 'civic public sphere'.[6] As is now well known, the Habermasian public sphere is actually the public sphere of the bourgeoisie, where a patriarchal ideology is deeply inscribed. Critiques of the

Habermasian public sphere argue that this space is homogeneous both inside and out due to its exclusivity.[7] In addition, Habermas premises his arguments on an ideal speech situation, where a communicative rationality exists. The concept of colonial publicness is completely unrelated to a Habermasian public sphere in this sense, as the following discussion demonstrates. The second serious flaw in Cho Kyŏng-dal's position is the understanding of colonial publicness as an indicator of colonial hegemony.[8] It is doubtful that a colonialism has ever existed where colonial authorities achieved a clear hegemony. Regardless, what is highly problematic here is the assumption that colonial modernity is linked to colonial hegemony. This major interpretive problem emerges, however, from the understanding of colonial publicness along the lines of a Habermasian public sphere, a misunderstanding that permeates the debates over colonial modernity and would be better discussed elsewhere. Third is the contention that the argument for colonial publicness homogenises the perspectives on colonialism and overlooks the 'multiple dimensions of colonialism',[9] but such criticism is far from the truth of the matter. The arguments for the existence of colonial publicness are in fact necessary for analysing the complexity of colonialism, and it is, rather, through a Habermasian approach to the concept of publicness that colonialism's multiple dimensions cannot be fully understood. Cho Kyŏng-dal, unnecessarily fixating on an attempt to support a populist history based on people's movements, assumes the existence of an inordinate distance between urban intellectuals and the rural people. In this sense, he criticises the concept of colonial modernity for overlooking internal divisions and tensions and then claims that such approaches therefore miss the complexity of colonialism. However, his modernist critiques of colonial modernity are premised on a weak foundation because coloniality is always embedded in modernity.

In opposition to the fictionist camp centred on Cho Kyŏng-dal, Masatoshi Namiki represents the realists' attempt to establish the possibility of a colonial public realm or colonial public sphere through the use of the key word *bargaining*. He argues that the politics of public opinion that centred on the aristocratic *yangban* in Chosŏn Korea or the traditional public sphere that officially excluded the vast majority of the people had disappeared. During the colonial period a mass public sphere emerged in conjunction with mass society, and this enabled the establishment of a colonial public sphere. Moreover, he emphasises that the colonial public sphere was then linked to a fascist public sphere. When Korea entered the wartime system, a public sphere formed

through collective intoxication within a simultaneously oppressive and festive time and space that emphasised unity. Thus, Masatoshi Namiki argues that colonial publicness had the flexibility to absorb the friction triggered by the violence of colonial rule and resulted in perpetuating Japanese colonial rule.[10]

The fascist public sphere, which is an attempt to understand the public sphere within Nazi Germany, conceives publicness structurally, without a notion of freedom, and in terms of an awareness of the 'public' that forms out of collective intoxication.[11] Masatoshi Namiki adopts my arguments regarding the emergence of colonial mass society[12] to prove the existence of a fascist public sphere, but this may ultimately amount to a logical leap of faith. Arguments for the existence of a fascist public sphere in colonial society will require considerably more logical rigor and historical evidence. In this sense, his attempt to connect colonial publicness with a fascist public sphere is no more than schematic at best.[13]

The debate between the realists and the fictionists seems to represent extreme opposite positions, but this is true only on the surface, for the arguments for the existence of a real colonial publicness and arguments that it was merely an illusion contain an even greater commonality. This similarity arises from the fact that both regard publicness or the public sphere as a social reality. There may not be a need to emphasise this point when addressing arguments that a sense of publicness can define society. However, when one gets to the crux of the matter, this point is also true of arguments that publicness was only an illusion, for both arguments are possible only when premised on the existence of the public as a social reality.[14]

Viewed from more traditional perspectives on the Japanese colonial period, the debate over colonial publicness may be derided as having little value. The discourse of the 'public' during the colonial period may be viewed as merely empty ideological declarations that were filled with politicised intentions to lionise absolute loyalty and devotion to the state or attempts to subsume the private sphere within the state's dominion. Such critics argue that the colonies could contain only a 'fictitious public' or 'pseudo public' and that a civic public sphere was impossible. In short, the autonomy of the public sphere could not exist, for this is precisely what made the situation colonial.[15] Other critics claim that the concept of colonial publicness is derived deductively rather than inductively, and therefore it is not easy to ascertain the existence of a publicness in a colony where the material underpinnings of civil society are weak. Thus, those who try to discover a concept of

publicness in the colonies are criticised for attempting to locate it in 'mass society' or in the villages. However, these critics also argue that finding the value of voluntarism in the villages is near impossible.[16] But such criticisms seem to view the public sphere as a single entity that contains some kind of lofty value which can be critiqued only as a misunderstanding of publicness arising from positivistic fantasies about modernity. Publicness is not a territorial conception with an absolute value; it is merely a complex process that plays a mediating role rather than represent a single concrete entity.

On the other hand, recent studies put forth the claim that not only did a notion of publicness spread during the colonial period, but this concept was reformulated and reorganised through its proliferation. One specific example that may move the debate forward, one where a sense of publicness had formed and was consumed by colonial audiences, is the movement by renters or leasers over the issue of sewage in Seoul.[17] While such an example is significant, it is important nevertheless to avoid logical traps that attempt to make publicness into something concrete. One trap here, as discussed above, would attempt to make publicness a social reality.

There is no reason why a civic public sphere should emerge in a colony where fundamental civil rights are denied. In that sense, viewing colonial publicness as a reality is a position that takes the debate over the public sphere outside its basic parameters. Then where can we find a basis for discussing colonial publicness? In my book, *The Colonial Grey Zone*, I attempt to understand colonial publicness as 'the political' that emerges at the intersection of resistance and collaboration, its intent being to expand understanding of political history within the colonial context.[18]

Several dimensions of colonial publicness

Recent studies stress that by the 1920s, the concept of society was used actively, and the importance of 'the social' had emerged. Eventually 'the social' established itself as the sphere that reflected the autonomy and independence of the colonised people in opposition to the colonial state. Furthermore, the structural relationship and mutual dependency between colonial subjects became highlighted as important. Thus, despite political repression, 'the social' even came to be identified as synonymous with the ethnic nation. However, in a context where a political community that can properly support individualism – that is, a nation state – was absent, 'the social' appears ultimately to have

facilitated colonial rule. For example, studies on the notion of 'the social' have concluded that the attempt to link the bourgeois consciousness of colonial subjects with nationalist demands was not successful. However, there is no need to be overly concerned with the formation of an autonomous society based on individualism along the Western model. If one interprets the phenomenon of 'the social' appearing in a colony that lacks a nation state as merely a distortion, the debate will be driven in a sterile direction.

One indicator of societal formation during the colonial period is the broad emergence of the private sphere. The family in the modern sense – that is, a modern family ideology – began to establish itself extensively, and a private individual's identity came to be viewed as founded on the intimate sphere of the family. Love, hobbies, and personal entertainment preferences, as well as the formation of personal character, became objects that had to be formed within the modern family sphere. This became a core value in the formation of private life.[19]

In this regard, there is need for a more active understanding of the formation of 'real society' in colonial Korea. The colonial state (Government-General of Korea) separated the economy from the nation state and led the construction of Korean society on this basis. Thus, even in colonial Korea in the 1920s, subsocieties formed in diverse areas. The phenomenon may have formed in a rudimentary way with limited autonomy, but a real society began to appear in the bureaucratic, economic, religious, cultural, and collective movements and in the local spheres. Furthermore, whenever a public sphere emerges in any capacity in the social sphere, it encounters the 'political'. Colonial modernity usually centres on the private and the bureaucratic spheres, but the social sphere can have a political character when it mediates a sense of publicness.[20] In other words, a public and legal type of communication is needed for society to be constructed in a political way. Publicness can form only when those who share a certain knowledge and understanding undertake to explain themselves in front of other people. Thus, they must collectively will to form relationships with others and express their intentions. Through these parameters, society achieves a political character and can be constituted in a political way.[21] An example of the social sphere might be one of the many advisory bodies of the colonial period: the provincial assemblies. Despite their passive nature, they formed a subsociety within the formal administrative bureaucracy. Provincial assemblies primarily served to ratify the colonial state's policies, but they encountered a sense of publicness whenever they attained a political character. When a provincial assembly discussed the issues of

Korean education or lifestyle improvements, the discussion naturally led to the issue of reforms of ethnic discrimination or became linked with local movements, and the colonial state criticised the Korean assembly members for leaning too far towards idealistic positions.[22]

Another example of this can be seen in the opposition movements surrounding the relocation of provincial administrative offices. The most famous example of this involves the opposition against the relocation of the administrative office of Ch'ungnam province.[23] The Government-General of Korea's effort to move the administrative offices of Ch'ungnam province from its long-established location in the city of Kongju to the new city of Daejŏn encountered strong resistance from the Kongju residents. Centred on the commercial merchants from the Kongju region, the mid- to upper-class residents became the primary actors and carried out their opposition movement by focusing on petitions and demonstrations. Indeed, the ethnic divisions among the Japanese and Koreans within the opposition movement did not become a significant issue. On the other hand, one can argue that this movement was centred on the Japanese commercial merchants. The activity costs were primarily borne by the Japanese Executive Committee members, and they also led the lobbying, petition, and protest movement. In contrast, the Korean Executive Committee members participated mostly on a passive level. Nevertheless, this opposition movement did not remain mired in class or secondary interests. With the slogans that they put forth through the 'citizen assemblies', they represented the general interests of the Kongju area. In this respect, this opposition movement can be described as an important example of colonial publicness.

The movement opposing the relocation of the South Kyŏngnam province administration building took place a bit earlier than the Ch'ungnam movement, and they can be contrasted on multiple levels. When the Government-General of Korea announced in 1924 that the South Kyŏngnam Province Administration would be moved from Chinju to Pusan, opposition immediately began. The movement's initial leaders were Japanese commercial merchants. These Japanese encouraged Korean participation by arguing that the fate of the Korean majority was tied to the opposition movement, but the Koreans did not respond. About a week later, an autonomous citizen-led opposition movement by Koreans began, but the Korean opposition movement immediately pressed for 'Chinju for the Koreans' and turned the effort into an anti-Japanese movement.[24] The movement opposing the Kyŏngnam administration relocation could not have had much of an impact because of ethnic divisions and conflicts. However, when the Koreans' opposition

movement transformed into an anti-Japanese movement, it became a form of political resistance. This example shows that the 'colonial publicness' that emerged from the opposition to administrative capital relocation could ignite into a political resistance movement once its political character was realised.

The public debates in the realm of the colonial administrative bureaucracy that surrounded the colonial state did not solidify completely, but they did provide a space for the expansion of publicness through the visible gaps. Colonial subjects may have accepted the hegemonic public discourse, but they were always looking for an opportunity to overcome them. For this reason, the realms of colonial publicness and political resistance were not far removed from each other. Thus, there is a need to utilise the sense of publicness as a metaphor for understanding the formation of society during the colonial period.

Second is the issue of publicness represented by the audiences of modern media. A recent debate worth noting has extended the awareness of colonial publicness to the consumers of mass media. Emerging at the start of the twentieth century, the radio and film media had a similar nature in terms of their audio and visual characteristics. Watching a silent movie or listening to the radio allows one to participate in the medium, but the experience is always accompanied by the absence of one or another sensory input. Therefore, audiences attempt to fill this absence with their own desires, fantasies, or beliefs.[25] This absence of sensory experience opens a space for the appearance of an 'audience publicness'.[26]

The Japanese imperialists introduced radio, a new medium in the 1920s, as a tool in their colonial assimilation policy, but this medium contained the characteristic of colonial publicness, where the hegemony between the ruling authorities and the colonial subjects interacted dynamically. For the efficient use of radio, the colonial state installed high-powered broadcast stations and expanded the broadcast network throughout the country. The number of Korean listeners jumped accordingly. During this process, Korean language broadcasts acted as a modern media platform that produced and distributed popular culture throughout colonial society. Despite the Government-General's prescreening and censorship, Koreans had considerable autonomy and developed their own programmes. Consequently, they established an autonomous sphere and developed a sense of audience publicness.[27] Studies along these lines attempt to understand the publicness that emerged among Koreans through the radio broadcasts that began in the late 1920s.[28]

Another example is the reception of films during the early colonial period. Films were imported as finished products into social circumstances where an oral culture still dominated. They generated a visual illusion or shock, and audiences misinterpreted or reinterpreted films based on their traditional customs and habitus.[29] The acceptance of early films was mediated through the play of the *gut* (Korean folk dance), the humour and amusement of traditional performances, the mobility of the traditional narrator, the surveillance of police investigators who watched over the colonial theatre, and the collective expectations of the theatre as an ethnic gathering place. In other words, the 'spectatorship' that mediated cinema's early acceptance can be understood as a dimension of audience publicness. Furthermore, colonial theatres with exclusively Korean audiences became both the only legally allowed place for colonial subjects to gather and a kind of ethnic space beneath the colonial racism. From this perspective, the theatre of the colonial period can be viewed as a public sphere with physical limitations.[30]

In this way, we can see the plausibility of the argument for an 'audience publicness' where the masses formed their own autonomous publicness by appropriating media such as radio and cinema, the propaganda tools of imperialism. The audiences under Japanese colonialism modified the dominant discourse of publicness slightly to make it their own. Through audience publicness, we can see that the dominant discourse of the colonial state's public sphere did not function only as a phantom public sphere. These arguments for audience publicness allow the realm of the public sphere to extend to everyday life.

The final sphere for consideration is the issue of the public sphere's expansion to the everyday. In general, the places where one can actively reveal the publicness of the everyday are the arguments concerning the 'informal public sphere'. The informal public sphere is the realm that supports communication in the formal public sphere. This can refer to the political character of discussions that take place over a group dinner or drinks, for example. If the formal discussions taking place in the media are not reflected in the views of individuals, they cannot penetrate the informal public sphere. Conversely, discussions within the informal public sphere are extremely political in nature, and therefore there is a need to extend the connections to the informal public sphere to further encourage public sphere debate.

In this context, it is important to determine the presence of the informal public sphere during the period of total mobilisation (1938–45), when mass media in Korea ceased routine functions. Imperial Japan,

expanding the war with China and starting to construct a system of total mobilisation, attempted to build a similar system in Korea. Total mobilisation theoretically signified a process that extracted a consensus by providing compensation to the 'citizens' under its rule. However, Imperial Japan could not build a total mobilisation system in the strict sense in colonial Korea. Rather, the fact that the total war system did not work well in colonial Korea can be confirmed clearly through the existence of a broad informal public sphere.

The existence of the informal public sphere during the colonial period can be confirmed through the example of the rumours that spread widely after the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. During a time when the colonial state propagandised the legitimacy of total mobilisation and the Sino-Japanese War not only through modern media like the radio and newspaper but through every available means, rumours that mocked the process spread widely, through the experiential and concrete realities of Koreans living their daily lives, as they criticised and rejected total mobilisation and the war.[31] One fictional account written by a Japanese author, Tanaka Eihikari, describes the period as follows:

> Korea may now appear on the surface as fully integrated with Japan, but that is hardly the reality. The number of anti-war flyers that flow into the army and the number of people being arrested for spreading rumours is so numerous that there can be no comparisons with Japan. Unmentionable and unseemly graffiti written in Korean with violent slogans have become widespread in trains and public bathroom stalls.[32]

Such fictional accounts may not be completely without merit when one considers some of the following examples. According to research that analysed the rumours collected by intelligence agencies such as the gendarmes and police between 1943 and 1945, approximately 1,300 of the 9,000 cases (14.5 per cent) were rumours that originated in Korea.[33] By their content, the rumours can be classified into three groups: those displaying a strong sense of victimisation among Koreans, a desire for the defeat of Japan, and an uncooperative attitude towards the wartime system. These three categories are connected to the sense of victimisation that resulted from colonial rule and linked to a desire for Japan's defeat. This consciousness led to a mutually organic connection among the Koreans, who held a non-cooperative attitude towards the ruling system. Furthermore, the rumours relied on traditional folk tales, such

as the story of Chŏng-gam,[34] or on imagined allies, such as the United States, and they showed a desire by Koreans to overcome their collective crisis. At the same time, they also showed a fear of the Chinese and Manchurian people and reflected an intense desire for Korean independence. Colonial subjects participating in the 'community of rumours' imagined themselves supporting the independence movement.[35] The 'community of rumours' is precisely what signified the formation of the informal public sphere. On the other hand, even someone like Cho Kyŏng-dal, who is sceptical about the existence of a colonial publicness, provides an extremely positive interpretation of these rumours. Arguing that the advent of nascent Christian denominations allowed the masses to achieve a psychological objective through the spread of rumours, he interprets them as a form of nationalist movement and a psychological battle with the Government-General. From this perspective, the nationalist movement to which Cho Kyŏng-dal refers and the psychological state of the masses cannot be viewed as far removed from the world of colonial publicness.[36]

Rumours circulated widely through everyday life and became extremely political. Although this phenomenon cannot be viewed as forming a formal public sphere, an informal public sphere in colonial Korea had clearly emerged in another form after retreating one step to a sublevel. The increase during this period of what were called 'current affairs incidents' were for the most part related to the informal public sphere, and the high police considered them major crimes.[37] The informal public sphere that emerges from the 'current affairs incidents' submerges publicness and allows its participants to make it their own realm.

The colonial publicness discussed here not only has a different character depending on the particular space and time; it also lacks a fixed form. Colonial publicness, flexible and ephemeral, remains a kind of metaphor for the 'political'. Furthermore, colonial publicness has multiple dimensions and can flexibly reveal its form in terms of the social dimension, the media audience dimension, and the everyday dimension. In short, we can speak of a 'publicness on the periphery' that is not far removed from the space of political resistance.

Viewed from this perspective, there will be major differences in our discussion depending on whether or not we premise the debate on the existence of a civic public sphere formed through autonomous individuals within a civil society or within a colonial publicness that emerges in a situation that lacks these conditions. Rather than discuss the formation of a public sphere based on the emergence of individual subjects,

we are discussing the formation of individual subjects through the emergence of colonial publicness. In this respect, one might say that the two perspectives adopt diametrically opposed perspectives. However, such a position does not come from an attempt to essentialise or privilege any one side, be it Western (or Japanese) or colonial. Readers are asked to understand that this has been an attempt to understand the public sphere from another vantage point, one where it has been transmuted under the conditions of colonialism.

Conclusion: Transforming the horizon of the public sphere

The debate over colonial publicness concerns a political metaphor rather than an actual reality. Colonial publicness is a concept that has been adopted to expand our understanding of political history and of colonialism in general. Our views on the formation of colonial society itself need a more vigorous reinterpretation through a consideration of the concept of colonial publicness. The debates over colonial publicness can advance further by expanding the discussion over publicness to mass media audiences and the informal public sphere. Colonial subjects may sneak into the niches of the dominant public sphere by transcending the prevailing discourse to make it their own (the politicisation of the 'social'), appropriate it by transmuting it (the audience publicness discourse), or submerge it to claim it in their everyday life (the formation of the informal public sphere). In addition to these methods, the colonial state, as well as the nation state itself, may offer countless other ways to discover a publicness and a discourse that resembles the public sphere among the dispossessed.

The public sphere that Habermas advocates ultimately cannot transcend the limitations of its statist assumptions. His arguments presuppose the existence of a modern state with the rule of law. This entity emerges from a dual structure: the administrative, legislative, and judicial powers centred on the state apparatus and a peripheral authority centred on the public sphere and civil society. In such a structure, legal norms and free will can form rationally only through civil society, the public sphere, and the state apparatus. This process may arguably describe the circumstances of the civic public sphere of a (non-colonial) nation state, yet such an understanding is inadequate to describe colonial states or mass dictatorships in general.

Today, the limitations of a nation state's public sphere come to the surface when 'non-registered individuals' appear who are not

affiliated with a nation. Stateless individuals like refugees, exiles, labour migrants, or other 'unregistered peoples' are often legacies of war left over from the age of imperialism; they are the products of hapless nation states that could not block the expansion of imperialism.[38] In this sense, even within the inner sanctums of today's nation states, new debates over the nature of the public sphere may crack the fossilised division between the public and private, and this critical perspective may be considered a prerequisite to creating a new political space and achieving a more radical democracy.[39] Moreover, perspectives on the public sphere are now expanding with the formation of a so-called global civil society as well as globalisation on the whole.[40] Perhaps the traditional debates over the public sphere that had stalled at the nation state level can now open upon new horizons, and we may discuss the possibility of new subjectivities forming from this broader view.

The concept of colonial publicness is intended to reinterpret the experience of colonised subjects from a political dimension. A 'society' similar to Western civil society could not form in the colonies, and in this sense a civic public sphere that exists within the confines of a modern nation state cannot be found under colonial circumstances. Yet a discussion of the establishment of publicness in the colonies is still necessary despite these limitations, because this concept can gain significance as a way of grasping the political basis for the colonial state. Colonialism can be said to be the political system that is formed out of publicness or the 'political', and its complex mechanism can be grasped better through an understanding of its conceptual contours. Furthermore, reinterpreting the experience of colonial rule through the lens of publicness may assist us in expanding the perspective to comprehend the broader dynamics of the age of globalisation. We may pause at this point to again pose the question: are not the nameless migrants of today the colonial subjects of yesterday? For it may well be argued that the stateless individuals who have no political recognition and wander the globe today remain locked in a perpetual state of coloniality, and the concept of colonial publicness helps us to understand their plight.

Notes

1. Volker Gerhardt (Kim Chong-gi, trans.), *Tasi ilgnŭn k'ant'ŭŭi yŏnggup'yŏnghwaron* (Seoul: Baeksansŏdang, 2007), pp. 281–315 (originally *Reflections about Kant's Perpetual Peace*).
2. The 'political' here has been an inherent aspect of all human societies since the beginning of time and is one of the dimensions that determine human

existence. The inevitable political and social antagonisms that arise are impossible without a radical stand from a position that accepts these ontological assumptions. Chantal Mouffe (Yi Pokyŏng, trans.), *Chŏngch'ijŏkin kŏsŭi kwihwan* (Seoul: Humanit'asŭ, 2007), pp. 10–21 (originally *The Return of the Political* [1993]).

3. Yun Hae-dong, 'Singminchi insikŭi hoesaekchidae', *Singminchiŭi hoesaekchidae* (2003); Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, *Hyŏndae sasang* (May 2002).
4. Cho Kyŏng-dal, 'Bōryoku to kōron', in Suda Tsutomu, Cho Kyŏng-dal, and Nakashima Hisato, eds, *Bōryoku no seiki wo koete – rekishigaku karano chōsen* (Tokyo: Aokishoten, 2004); Cho Kyŏng-dal, '15 nen sensō shitano chōsen – shokuminchi kindai ron hihan', *Chōsen shōgakukai gakujutsu ronbunshū* 25, 2005. Both of the papers above were published in Cho Kyŏng-dal, *Shokuminchiki chōsen no chishikijin to minshū* (Tokyo: Yūshisha, 2008).
5. Cho Kyŏng-dal, *Shokuminchiki chōsen no chishikijin to minshū*, pp. 9–32, 134–61.
6. Ibid., pp. 9–11.
7. E.g., Junichi Saito (Yun Dae-sŏk, trans.), *Minjujŏk konggongsŏng* (Seoul: iŭm, 2009), pp. 50–4 (originally *Kōkyōsei*, Iwanami shoten, 2000).
8. Cho Kyŏng-dal, *Shokuminchiki chōsen no chishikijin to minshū* pp. 9–22. I emphasise that Masatoshi Namiki, discussed below, also believes that a hegemony can be discovered in colonial publicness.
9. Ibid., pp. 17–22.
10. Namiki Masatoshi, 'Chōsen niokeru shokuminchi kindai sei shokuminchi kōkyōsei tainichi kyōryoku', *Kokusaikōryū kenkyū* 5 (2003); Namiki Masatoshi, 'Shokuminchiki chōsen niokeru "kōkyōsei" no kentō', in Mitani Hiroshi, ed., *Higashi ajia no kōron keisei* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdaigaku shuppankai, 2004); Namiki Masatoshi, 'Shokuminchi kōkyōsei to chōsen shakai – shokuminchi kōhanki wo chūshin ni', in Pak Chung-sŏk et al., eds, *'Bunmei', 'kaika', 'heiwa' – nippon to kankoku* (Tokyo: Keiō gijukudaigaku shuppankai, 2006).
11. Satō Takumi, 'Fuashisuto teki kōkyōsei – kōkyōsei no hi jiyūshugiteki moderu', Iwanami kouza, *Gendaishakai gaku* 24 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996). A critique of Satō Takumi's work can be found in Mitani Hiroshi, 'Kōron keisei, hi seiyō shakai niokeru minshuka no keiken to kanōsei', in Mitani Hiroshi, ed., *Higashi ajia no kōron keisei* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdaigaku shuppankai, 2004).
12. Yun Hae-dong, 'Shokuminchi kindai to taishū shakai no tōjō', in Miyajima Hiroshi, Yi Sŏng-si, and Lim Jie-hyun, eds, *Shokuminchi kindai no shiza* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 2004).
13. Namiki views the expansion of the colonial public sphere during the wartime period as signifying the extinction of the hegemonic sphere through coercive force. In other words, the maturity of 'colonial publicness' took place simultaneously with the loss of coloniality, which meant that the colonial public sphere became complete and lost its effectiveness at the same time. This interpretation also views the public sphere as a social reality and emerges from an overemphasis on the concept of 'bargaining'. See Namiki Masatoshi, 'Shokuminchiki chōsen niokeru "kōkyōsei" no kentō'.
14. In contrast, Matsumoto Takenori once argued for the possibility that the 'public sphere' can be used as an analytical concept for understanding colonialism. Matsumoto viewed the 'public sphere' as the source of the rhetorical power that made it possible to form a consensus between the local regional

societies and the central state, but he only suggested the possibility. See Matsumoto Takenori, 'Toku shū niatatte', *Chōsen shi kenkyūkai ronbunshū* 37 (1999) 43–47.

15. Chi Su-gŏl, 'Ilchehaŭi chibangt'ongch'i sisŭt'emkwa kun tanwi kwallyo – yuji chibaech'eje', review of Yun Hae-dong, *Chibaewa chach'i* (Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2006), *Yŏksawa hyŏnsil* 63 (April 2007) 345–379.
16. Yi Chun-sik, 'T'alminjokronkwa yŏksaŭi kwainghaesŏk: singminchi konggongsŏngŭn kwayŏn silchaehaessnŭn'ga', *Naeilŭl yŏnŭn yŏksa* 31 (2008), 201–11.
17. See the following four articles on the colonial publicness in the special edition of *Sahoewa yŏksa* 73: Hwang Pyŏng-ju, 'Singminchigi "kong" kaenyŏmŭi hwaksan'gwa chaegusŏng'; Kim Yŏng-mi, 'Ilchesigi tosiŭi sangsuto munjewa konggongsŏng'; Yŏm Pok-kyu, '1920 nyŏndae huban-30nyŏndae chŏnban ch'aji ch'akain undongŭi chojikhwa yangsanggwa chŏn'gaegwajŏng'; So Hyŏn-suk, 'Kyŏnggyee sŏn koadŭl – koamunjerŭl t'onghaebon ilchesigi sahoesaŏp'.
18. See Yun Hae-dong, *Singminchiinsikŭi hoesaekchidae* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 2003).
19. Phillippe Aries and Georges Duby, eds, *A History of Private Life*, vols 1–5 (Harvard University Press). The formation of individuality and society in colonial Korea and East Asia as a whole has a deep relationship with the formation of private life, yet there has yet to be a full-fledged study of this topic.
20. Yun Hae-dong, 'Ch'inilgwa panilŭi p'yeswaehoeroesŏ pŏsŏnaki', *Singminchi kŭndaeŭi p'aerŏdoksŭ* (Seoul: Hyumŏnisŭt'ŭ, 2007).
21. Gerhard, *Reflections about Kant's 'Perpetual Peace'*, pp. 294–95.
22. Tong Sŏn-hŭi, 'Ilcheha chosŏnin top'yŏngŭihoe tohoe ŭiwŏn yŏn'gu' (Academy of Korean Studies, doctoral diss., 2005).
23. The vigorous opposition to the relocation of the Chungnam provincial administrative building took place over a long period and therefore attracted the interest of many researchers from different angles. The most representative example attempted to analyse this movement with the concept of a 'bureaucratic-maintenance system'. Chi Su-gŏl, 'Ilcheha kongjujiyŏk yujijiptanŭi toch'ŏngijŏn pantaeundong (1930.11–1932.10)', *Yŏksawa hyŏnsil* 20 (1996) 119–228.
24. Chōsensōtokufu, *Chōsen no gunshū* (1926), 227–28.
25. Wolfgang Schivelbusch (Ch'a Mun-sŏk, trans.), *Nyutil, se p'yŏnŭi tŭrama* (Seoul: Chisikŭi p'ungkyŏng, 2009), pp. 86–104 (originally *Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt's America*).
26. 'Audience publicness' is a concept that I propose based on the concept of the 'proletarian public sphere'. During the 1910s and 1920s cinema in America provided the working class with small fleeting comfort, and they forged new kinds of social bonds. It is possible to conceive of this phenomenon as a 'proletarian public sphere'. In short, American film audiences actively intervened rather than reacted passively to the films. In other words, this concept criticises the assimilationist perspectives that audiences uncritically internalised the contents of the films and instead the theatre provided a space where the proletariat joined with immigrants to enact rituals of mutual awareness and community. See David Trend (Yang

Chi-yŏng, trans.), *Munhwaminjujuŭi* (Seoul: Hanul, 2001), pp. 86–138 (originally *Cultural Democracy: Politics, Media, New Technology*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

27. Sŏ Chae-gil, 'Ilche singminchigi radio pangsonggwa "singminchi kŭndaesŏng"', *Sai* 1 (2006) 181–214; Sŏ Chae-gil, 'Han'gukkŭndae pangsongmunye yŏn'gu' (Seoul National University Ph.D. diss., 2007).
28. Michael Robinson also argues that the radio broadcasts in the Korean language had the dual effect of supporting Japan's ultimate goal of culturally assimilating the Koreans and overturning this effort. See Michael Robinson, 'Broadcasting, Cultural Hegemony, and Colonial Modernity in Korea, 1924–1945', in Gi-Wook Shin and Michael Robinson, eds, *Colonial Modernity in Korea* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1999).
29. Yu Sŏn-yŏng conceptualises the transformation and reconfiguration of modern visuality through the concept of spectatorship. Yu Sŏn-yŏng, 'Ch'ogiyŏnghwaŭi suyonggwa kwan'gaeksŏng', in Yun Hae-dong et al., eds, *Kŭntaerŭl tasi ilgnŭnta*, vol. 2 (Seoul: Yŏksabip'yŏngsa, 2006).
30. Ibid.
31. Miyata Setsuko (Yi Hyŏng-nang, trans.), *Chosŏnminjunggwa hwangminhwajŏngch'aek* (Seoul: Ilchokak, 1994); Pyŏn ŭn-jin, 'Ilche chŏnsi p'asichŭmki (1937–45) chosŏn minjungŭi hyŏnsilinsikkwa chŏhang' (Korea University doctoral diss., 1998). Miyata Setsuko's work presents pioneering research on the issue, but she provides a passive interpretation because the rumours of the Korean people did not lead to an antiwar movement that challenged Japanese rule. Criticism of Miyata's work can be found in Cho Kyŏng-dal (Hŏ Yŏng-ran, trans.), *Minjungkwa yut'op'ia* (Seoul: Yŏksabip'yŏngsa, 2009), pp. 288–89.
32. Tanaka Eihikari (Yu ŭn-kyŏng, trans.), *Ch'wihan pae* (Seoul: Sohwa 1999), pp. 188–89.
33. Yi Si-jae, 'Ilchemalŭi chosŏninyuŏnŭi yŏn'gu', *Han'guksahoehak*, 1987. This paper is an analysis of Minami Hiroshi and Satō Kenji, eds, *Kindai shomin seikatsushi*, vol. 4, *Ryūgen* (Tokyo: San'ichishobou, 1985). If the rumours spread in Japan are combined, then the percentage of Korean rumours should be much higher.
34. The story of Chŏng-gam is set in the Chosŏn Dynasty and involves the rise of a hero named Chŏung who saves the people during troubled times. This story spread widely during the Chosŏn dynasty in periods of rebellions and crises.
35. Yi Sijae, 'Ilchemalŭi chosŏninyuŏnŭi yŏn'gu'.
36. Cho Kyŏng-dal, *Minjungkwa yut'op'ia*, pp. 288–89.
37. Chōsensōtokufu keimu kyoku, *Kōtō soto koto geppō*. This source began to be published in July 1939 and contains top secret reference material for the police.
38. Hannah Arendt (Yi Chin-u,Pak Mi-ae, trans.), *Chŏnch'ejuŭiŭi kiwŏn* 1 (Seoul: Han'gilsa, 2006), pp. 267–542 (originally *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 1948); Shinohara Masatakeshi, *Kōkyō kūkan no seiji riron* (Tokyo: Jinbun shoin, 2009), pp. 149–220.

39. This attempt is similar to Mitani Hiroshi's explorations on the possibility of democracies in non-Western societies through the formation of public opinion. Mitani Hiroshi, 'Kōron keisei, hi seiyō shakai niokeru minshuka no keiken to kanōsei', in Mitani Hiroshi, *Higashi ajia no kōron keisei* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdaigakushuppankai, 2004).
40. Kang Sang-jung, Yosimi Syunya, and Kim Kyŏng-wŏn (Im Sŏng-mo, trans.), *Sekyehwaŭi wŏnkŭnbŏp – saeroun konggonggongganŭl ch'ajasŏ* (Seoul: Isan, 2004).

10

The Colonial Public Sphere and the Discursive Mechanism of *Mindo*

Michael Kim

The public sphere plays a central role in the political life of modern societies. Various interest groups articulate their concerns and advocate their political demands through communicative action in the public realm. Yet depending on the political configuration of a particular society, the public sphere may serve as a site for the exchange of democratic ideas or a platform for ritualistic performances of loyalty to mass dictatorships. In this sense, regardless of the political system, the public sphere can enable modern politics by conferring legitimacy to both mass participatory politics and totalitarian mobilisation. Numerous scholars have debated either the presence or absence of the public sphere in authoritarian states, yet few focus on the public sphere's role in encouraging individuals to identify with an 'alternative rationality' that provides symbolic significance to their lifeworlds. Thus, more careful attention to the discursive mechanisms of the public sphere may reveal critical insights into a global modernity premised on the actualisation of individual freedoms yet sometimes faltering into authoritarian excess.

The complex interactions of the public sphere in the formation of a global modernity may be difficult to delineate fully, yet they can perhaps be analysed on a more rudimentary level through an examination of the colonial forms of communicative action. The emerging public spheres of colonial societies have far fewer participants, and there is little need to disguise the hierarchies of power and status behind the rhetoric of social equality. Therefore, power and status relationships within the colonial public sphere are unequivocally clear. The colonial public sphere openly excludes or discounts the voices of the colonised, for colonialism by definition assumes the political infantilism of colonised populations, and strict censorship prevents any meaningful challenges to the state's authority.

However, the highly restrictive nature of colonial systems does not mean that public debates are absent, and there remains the broader question of how to integrate colonial subjects as constituent members of empire. This need for integration arises because colonial occupations gradually shifted from methods of brute terror and indirect rule to more complex forms of governmentality and domination. As Fredrick Cooper notes, 'Where to find a balance between the poles of incorporation (the empire's claim that its subjects belonged within the empire) and differentiation (the empire's claim that different subjects should be governed differently) was a matter of dispute and shifting strategies'.[1] The attempt to incorporate colonial subjects into larger empire-wide political imaginations and political structures necessitated the deployment of various forms of 'imperial citizenship' that place colonial subjects into their designated place within a transnational polity. At the same time, the fact that empires contain both colonisers and colonised meant that stark inequalities and boundaries had to be maintained. Therefore, notions of 'imperial citizenship' inevitably contain within them the logic of exclusion along with the rhetorical promises of political inclusion.

Korea under Japanese occupation provides some instructive examples of how alternative political rationalities can form within the colonial public sphere. The Japanese colonial state justified the continued political exclusion of Koreans through the colonial public sphere, while it also outlined the strict conditions under which they might eventually escape their colonised plight. The complex inner logic of the colonial Korean public sphere can be understood by tracing the trajectory of the term *mindo* (民度), which translates loosely as the 'standard of living and cultural level of the people'.[2] The Japanese deployed the *mindo* concept frequently to justify their unequal colonial policies and explain their rationale for excluding Koreans from the welfare and educational policies instituted in Japan proper. The inequalities of the colonial system persisted throughout most of the period of Japanese rule, but the outbreak of the Great East Asia War in 1937 brought dramatic changes. The concept of *mindo*, which had been used to exclude Koreans, was reformulated to mobilise the entire population for total war. The achievement of imperial citizenship, however, was not unconditional, for Koreans would be tasked with the duty of assimilating fully into loyal imperial subjects and be mobilised for military and labour conscription. Therefore, tracing the development of the term *mindo* within the Japanese colonial context can show how the public sphere can play a critical role in mobilising a population and propagating the rationalities that enable a broad range of empire-wide political imaginaries.

The transformation of the colonial public sphere

While the public sphere may function within colonial societies much as it does in non-colonial situations, certain key aspects require further elaboration. The overall premise behind colonial rule presumes the inability of the colonised to exercise their agency in the political realm, because colonial subjects are inevitably understood to be in an infantile state of political development. In a sense, the colonial public sphere has the peculiar characteristic that the 'public' is largely absent and therefore must be represented by others. Imagining colonised subjects engaging in rational public debate is nearly impossible within the boundaries of the colonial public sphere, because this social space cannot be conceived as a gathering of the kind of autonomous bourgeois individuals that Habermas described in Europe.[3] While the term 'colonial public sphere' will be utilised in this chapter, the concerns Hae-dong Yun raises in Chapter 9 about the limitations of the public sphere in colonial Korea and the potential need for an alternative conception like 'publicness' remains valid. Habermas's historical analysis of privatised individuals gathering together in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to exercise their reason and establish the 'common weal' in a bourgeois public sphere has only limited value in understanding important historical development within a colonial context. Such autonomous individuals as those Habermas describes are not present in the colonies, because colonial sociability operates on a different set of basic assumptions about the political capacity of the colonised. Consequently, much of colonial Korea's politics revolved around both the colonial state and the colonial Korean intellectuals, who contest each other's claims to represent the hapless 'public' within the colonial public sphere.

The unchallenged authority of the colonial state to censor the media ensures that public discussions are restricted to a narrow range of topics. Consequently, rather than serve as a civic gathering place for autonomous self-ruling agents, the colonial public sphere plays a different role as a site for questioning the legitimacy of native or precolonial knowledge and propagating the rationality for colonial governmentality. As Mehta observes, liberal philosophies based on thinkers like Locke and Mill have always justified exclusionary strategies on the grounds of civilisational infantilism.[4] This view, that only an 'enlightened' people is capable of self-governance, has justified the marginalisation of colonial populations, and 'not surprisingly therefore, the structure and project of colonial power was consciously directed upon colonised society itself to produce certain governing-effects on colonial conduct'.[5]

Colonised subjects who have internalised their imagined civilisational infantilism focus not on how they can rule themselves but on how they need to restrain their individual behaviour and overcome their collective backwardness. Therefore, instead of pursuing individual interests, the participants in the colonial public exhort each other to recognise the importance of social cohesion and accept the need for collective action to address the purported flaws in their ethnic characteristics. The end result is the emergence of a public discourse that remains firmly grounded in what David Scott terms 'rationalities that organised the forms of the colonial state'.[6] This colonial rationality has its own particular boundaries as well as its own possibilities for collective action, and its critical function may be better understood through a detailed discursive analysis of the colonial public sphere.

One empire, dual legal systems

The formal political exclusion of Koreans began at the start of colonial rule in 1910. When the Japanese colonised Korea, they initially expressed notions of *isshi dōjin* (一視同仁), which means 'impartiality before the emperor', and proclaimed the arrival of an enlightened form of colonialism. The Japanese announced that the assimilation of Koreans would be the goal of colonial governance and declared that the two populations had a common destiny under the benevolence of the Japanese emperor. However, the Japanese initially relied on ruthless military suppression and other draconian measures to achieve compliance to their colonial rule. Japanese officials spoke rhetorically about the unity of the Korean and Japanese peoples, yet the intense discrimination behind their colonial policies and negative attitudes towards the Korean population led them to pay only lip service to the notion.[7] With the colonial government established as a separate political entity from the rest of Japan, Korea could be ruled through a legal code outside the jurisdiction of the Meiji Constitution promulgated in 1889. Therefore, the colonial system was administered in a fundamentally different manner than the imperial centre, with a military general serving as the governor general, who reported directly to the emperor rather than the Home Ministry under the prime minister.

The division of Japan and Korea into separate systems had considerable ramifications for the Korean population, which was taxed and regulated under a different legal code than the Japanese. While the majority of laws in colonial Korea conformed to those in Japan, there were notable exceptions in key areas such as family registry and criminal laws. The

significant deviations from the Meiji Constitution meant that Koreans had no obligations for military duty, but it also signified their exclusion from the compulsory education system and social reforms undertaken in Japan. Thus, early colonial infrastructure projects may have extended roads and railways throughout the peninsula, but the Korean population as a whole was denied access to political rights, education, health care, and social welfare programmes at the level that applied to the general Japanese population.

The building resentment towards the inequalities of Japanese rule exploded during the March First movement of 1919, which brought over a million Koreans to the streets and led to hundreds of deaths among the protestors. Violent repression and unwanted international attention to the cruel realities of Japanese colonial rule brought about major changes in the direction of colonial policies. The March First movement ushered in policies of accommodation under the slogan *bunka seiji* (文化政治), or 'Cultural Rule'. New laws allowed more Korean participation in the colonial economy, and the relaxation of strict censorship laws allowed for the expression of discontent over colonial policies. Radical activity within the colonial publications initially proved to be a persistent challenge for colonial officials, yet the widespread cultural nationalist movement that emerged after the March First movement openly acknowledged the remoteness of Korean independence and focused instead on moderate cultural and linguistic goals to strengthen the collective capacity of the Korean people.[8] The cultural nationalists occasionally expressed vociferous critiques of colonial policy while working secretly underground to undermine Japanese colonial rule, yet they never openly questioned Japanese legitimacy.

The loosening of censorship regulations and the rise of Korean nationalist associations in the 1920s presented the facade of enlightened colonial governance, yet they ultimately did not alter the stark inequalities, which were fundamentally structural and legalistic in nature. Cultural Rule may have assumed a civilian appearance, but the methods of control and surveillance took on a more sophisticated direction. Furthermore, Cultural Rule's attempt to incorporate Korean elites into the ruling structure triggered numerous cleavages within Korean society between those willing to accommodate and those who actively resisted the Japanese. Most significantly, Korea continued to be ruled under two separate legal codes, and a vast gap existed between the standard of living in the colonies and the imperial centre. The persistence of structural inequalities in the colonies triggered debates in Korea, Taiwan, and Japan over the direction of imperial policies and brought to the fore the critical issue

of incorporation and differentiation. While outright independence for the colonial possessions was unthinkable for Japanese critics of imperial policy, a vocal minority followed the example of Tocqueville and other Western liberal critics in debating how colonised subjects might eventually become members of an imperial polity.[9]

At the core of the colonial issue was whether or not Koreans should be assimilated fully as Japanese or allowed to become associate members of the Japanese Empire and maintain a separate cultural identity. This critical question of assimilation (*dōka* 同化) versus association (*yuwa* or *yugō*, 融和 or 融合) rose to prominence in the debates over the future of colonial policy and the political representation of Koreans. They generally revolved around a collection of arguments that can be referred to as the *naichi enchō* (内地延長) debates, or the 'extension of the Japanese system'. The key points of contention in the *naichi enchō* debates concerned the appropriate political system for Korea within the overall Japanese imperial structure. The debate became the focus of considerable controversy when Soejima Michimasa (1871–1948), the editor in chief of the colonial government organ *Keijō nippo*, penned an editorial supporting a separate Korean assembly in November 1925.[10] Different participants in the *naichi enchō* debates expressed various ideas about the feasibility of extending the Meiji Constitutional system to Korea and making it essentially a provincial region of Japan or creating a separate legislative body and separate legal system to allow Korea to become an 'associate member' of the Japanese Empire.

A wide range of opinions can be found in both Japan and Korea concerning this issue, yet one major commonality among nearly all the participants in the debate is the extremely negative view of the Korean *mindo*. The operative assumption centred on the colonial rationale that the current level of *mindo* was insufficient to allow Koreans to have political participation but that the distant future might bring significant changes. Echoing such sentiments, colonial bureaucrats like Yuke Kōtaro (1881–?), who at the time directed the colonial education bureau, noted that the *mindo* of Koreans did not allow for the same political system as Japan, but he argued that the purpose of the education system was to prepare them for future political participation.[11] Numerous Japanese intellectuals and even colonial bureaucrats proposed arguments in favour of eventual Korean political representation, but nearly all were in agreement that the current *mindo* level of the Koreans made such a development highly impractical in the short term. Therefore, the concept of *mindo* represented an amalgam of reasons why the Koreans could not be incorporated right away as full members of the Japanese Empire. Paying

attention to the development of this discourse can help explicate the peculiar rationality that developed within the colonial public sphere.

The discourse of *mindo* and the rationalities of the colonial state

The concept of *mindo* that appeared so often in the colonial debates about the political capacity of Koreans has a long history in colonial Korea. One of the first instances of the term can be found in the Korean Educational Ordinance, which was promulgated in 1911. The ordinance states that the education systems of Korea and Japan will be equal so long as the '*jisei oyobi mindo*' (時勢及民度), or 'the current conditions and level of people', allows.[12] However, as Mark Caprio notes, the limited education that the Japanese initially provided to Koreans was fundamentally different and more geared to language learning than the curriculum for Japanese colonists in Korea.[13] Therefore, despite the rhetoric of equality, colonial education was available only to a small fraction of the Korean population and had a different emphasis than the Japanese system. It was this critical gap between the rhetoric of colonial equality and the actuality of discriminatory practices that prompted colonial officials to deploy *mindo* as a frequent justification for their policy decisions.

The Japanese had various ways of quantifying the *mindo* of the Korean population. Colonial sources on taxation sometimes refer to *mindo chōsa*, which means 'investigation into *mindo*', when they discussed the assessment of the Korean population's ability to pay taxes.[14] Statistics on crime rates, rampant disease, and low literacy levels would often invite comments from colonial officials about the low cultural level of the Korean population. The statistical information about various aspects of colonial life often was separated into different categories for Japanese and Koreans. The use of statistical data to construct Korean backwardness can be seen in a 1928 colonial study on Korean criminality that explains crime rates as a function of poverty but also notes that the low cultural level of Koreans impacted the high rates of forgery, fraud, murder, injurious felonies, and adultery.[15] In essence, not only did the colonial knowledge generated through various bureaus of the colonial bureaucracy propagate the logic for colonial governmentality; it also provided the basis for generating cultural differences between the colonisers and colonised. Statistics was not the only means of constructing Korean backwardness, as the colonial government commissioned numerous studies on Korean history, folklore, and traditional practices

that argued for the stagnation of Korean culture before the arrival of Japanese colonial rule.

The concept of differing cultural and economic levels, once established, became a formulaic argument for maintaining a separate colonial system and enabling authoritarian practices that were illegal in Japan. For example, colonial officials argued that the low *mindo* of Koreans necessitated a different punishment system, and even though flogging was banned in Japan, the practice was maintained in Korea until after the March First demonstrations, because colonial officials argued that Koreans lacked the capacity for reasoning and had no conception of the passage of time.[16] The notion that the low *mindo* of the Korean population must always be taken into account when implementing colonial policy became a standard rhetorical device that can be found in countless official documents. For example, colonial sources on the regional administration system are filled with warnings about the need to consider the low Korean *mindo* before making policy decisions.[17] The colonial state published numerous statements and regulations concerning the regional administrative system. In a speech delivered in front of an audience of colonial inspectors who were tasked with making sure that local administrations followed central guidelines, Governor General Saito Makoto (1858–1936) highlighted the limitations of the central government's ability to oversee the many regions of Korea, and he emphasised the need to make sure that local policies were appropriate for the level of *mindo*.[18] The colonial state was careful to instruct the local administrators to avoid any demands for autonomy. A Korean local administrator echoed this sentiment when he was quoted in the colonial government's official Korean language journal, *Chosŏn*, saying that the previous system of local administration from the Chosŏn dynasty was not appropriate for the current level of Korean *mindo* yet the recent reforms had greatly improved the situation.[19] However, he repeated that Korea was not yet ready for a completely autonomous local government because the *mindo* was still too low, so the first priority for local governments was to train a small number of individuals with the proper consciousness for bureaucratic duties. Colonial officials were careful to emphasise that Korean *mindo* enabled only a limited local administration, and the entire system was constructed upon the premise that the general Korean population was incapable of autonomous local governance.

The term *mindo* can also be found frequently in colonial sources on financial matters. Colonial officials explained the difficulties in implementing their economic policies because of the low *mindo* of

Koreans. For example, an official at the colonial industrial research centre noted that the major barrier to the development of manufacturing was the competition with companies back in Japan and the low *mindo* of Koreans, which impacted their ability to consume manufactured products.[20] Similar identification of *mindo* as an impediment to economic development can be found in sources on the colonial railroad, which initially struggled financially. In 1917, the operation of the Korean railroad system was transferred to the South Manchurian Railroad Company until 1925, when the colonial Korean government again resumed control of its finances. An explanation offered for the low volume of freight and passengers was the low *mindo* of the Korean people.[21] Yet another instance can be found in the writings of the head of the colonial finance department, Wada Ichirō (1881–?), who cautioned in March 1923 that colonial budgets must be allocated according to the consideration of *mindo* and the economic situation; otherwise underutilised infrastructure developments would have disastrous financial consequences.[22] Thus, *mindo* appeared not only in colonial sources about local governance and taxation but also in documents regarding colonial economic development and budget allocations.

The frequent invocation of *mindo* in the official colonial sources by Japanese bureaucrats ultimately expressed their intention to conduct policies in Korea through the application of an alternate rationality to that in Japan. Rather than conduct policies upon the assumption that its legal subjects were fully capable of autonomous action, colonial governance constructed an infantile colonial subject who could not be vested with full rights and responsibilities. Japanese colonial sources frequently explained that reducing the civilisational and economic gap between Japan and Korea was the overarching goal of colonial rule. An article written in 1943 that discusses the history of colonial finances states that what distinguishes Japanese imperialism from Western imperialism was the objective of raising the *mindo* of the Korean population.[23] The article further explains that the goal of colonial finances was to raise the level of *mindo* and eliminate the backwardness of Asia. As such, a separate budget had been prepared in Korea during the previous decades specifically for this purpose.[24] Thus, the discourse of *mindo* retained a plasticity that enabled Japanese colonial officials to excuse their administrative inaction while simultaneously arguing that their form of colonialism was far superior to the West's, because they alone recognised the need to reduce the civilisational differences between the colonised and the colonisers.

Positioning *mindo* in the colonial political imagination

The colonial discourse of *mindo* clearly had a wide circulation among Japanese colonial officials, yet the concept was not limited to the ranks of the colonial government. The discourse of *mindo* also permeated Korean-language colonial publications, and Korean writers sometimes mimicked verbatim the rhetoric of the colonial bureaucrats when they discussed the backward state of the Korean population. In a sense, the colonisers and the colonised jointly generated the negative representations of Koreans that dominated the colonial public sphere. Yet the discourse of *mindo* among Korean intellectuals addressed a different set of concerns, for they attempted to unite themselves socially as well as divide themselves along class and regional lines through their public discussions.

Numerous examples of Korean intellectuals who internalised the notion of a low Korean civilisational level can be found in vernacular colonial publications. The most prominent journal of the 1920s, *Kaebyŏk* (Creation), laments in the November 1922 issue that Koreans had a high tenant farmer rate and could not establish a system of self-cultivators because of their low *mindo*.[25] The article declares that Koreans must form tenant associations and rural youth organisations and gain the support of intellectuals for agricultural reforms to overcome the national crisis, yet such mutual cooperation was absent. The widespread sense of despair at the plight of the Korean people prompted another article in the nationalist journal *Tonggwang* (Eastern Light) to comment that measles epidemics could be avoided with proper precautions but ignorance of this fact was a fate appropriate to the low level of Korean *mindo*.[26] The vernacular colonial newspapers also expressed negative sentiments about the Korean people. A May 1934 *Donga ilbo* article on the need for Koreans to enlighten themselves observes that the knowledge or ignorance of a people depends on their *mindo*, but this situation could not be impacted by a few great men. The article concludes that the ability to produce great men depended on the living standards of the people, but this fact posed a great challenge because

> [a]lthough it is an unfortunate situation, Koreans are famous for being a people with high illiteracy. Over half of the entire population is illiterate. Furthermore, our inadequate educational institutions can only handle one third of the children who are of school age. When debating this or that issue regarding this situation, we inevitably run

> into the problem of whether or not the level of the people has the fundamental basics for establishing various movements and goals.[27]

The remarks about the low level of the Korean people in this editorial are then followed by encouragements to overcome their common plight through collective mobilisation. The solution offered to improve the situation was the importance of self-conduct and the recognition of social responsibilities. The theme of collective responsibility is echoed in the journal *Tonggwang*, which notes in its August 1931 edition that countries with a high *mindo* have a high awareness of collective wealth, which prevents laziness from forming.[28] The article continues with the observation that raising *mindo* can be accomplished only through collective effort. The calls for self-sacrifice and unity may have been intended to spur Koreans into action, but they also circulated the deeply embedded notions of racial inferiority.

Rather than flatly reject the negative characterisations of Koreans that filled the colonial public sphere, cultural nationalist publications sometimes explained that their traditional practices led them to engage in behaviours that were misinterpreted by the Japanese. The journal *Tonggwang* published an article in 1931 that argued that the high statistics for Korean arrests was not because Koreans broke more laws than the Japanese.[29] Instead, the article posits that the laws criminalised the customary behaviour of rural Korean farmers who did not pay the tax on the traditional rice wine, *makkŏlli*, because their low *mindo* led them to eat the fermented rice as a meal. Thus, even in the process of debunking the negative characterisations of Koreans, this *Tonggwang* article attributes to the low *mindo* of Koreans the source of misunderstandings. The explanation for the higher crime rate in this article also exhibits a strong urban-rural divide, which was another major component of the Korean discourse of *mindo*. An article that reflects this divide can be found in *Kaebyŏk*, when the writer describes a visit to a mountain village in South Hamgyŏng Province that had an especially low *mindo* and had little evidence of commercial activity.[30] Another *Kaebyŏk* article written during a similar period observes the number of arrests for illegal fishing in the coastal village of Yŏngdŏk had risen to 38 incidents involving 170 people and rhetorically poses the question whether or not the *mindo* of the region was in decline.[31] A *Tonga ilbo* article entitled 'Contagious Disease and Superstitions' makes the even more direct observation that disease and superstitions were common in Kowŏn because this entire region had a low *mindo*.[32] The article then calls upon colonial officials to take active measures to

prevent disease and superstition from ravaging the population in this remote region of Korea.

The manner in which colonial Korean intellectuals discussed the rural countryside clearly displayed a perspective similar to the Japanese colonialists'. These urban intellectuals placed themselves in a higher subject position in relation to the rural Koreans they depicted in their writings. The suborientalist depiction of the countryside as hopelessly backwards therefore allowed Korean intellectuals to distance themselves from rural Koreans and elevate themselves closer to the Japanese colonialists' ranks. In a sense, shades of Japan's 'suborientalism' vis-à-vis the West can be found in the discourse of *mindo*. Korean intellectuals' engaging in depicting a hopelessly backwards Korean countryside represents yet another link in the chain of negative representations that travelled from the West to Japan and from Japan to East Asia and finally was projected on the rural areas of Korea.[33]

The Korean appropriations of *mindo*

The frequent appearance of the concept of *mindo* in both the official Japanese documents and the writings of Korean intellectuals may appear at first glance to indicate a static colonial public sphere with few meaningful interactions. However, even though many Koreans internalised the notion of a low collective *mindo* in interpreting their colonial reality, still others appropriated the concept as a means to critique colonial rule and advocate their own interests. Korean reformers from the beginning of Cultural Rule criticised Japanese officials for using *mindo* as an excuse to delay reforms and avoid addressing the myriad problems that plagued colonial society. Various Korean interest groups also used the term *mindo* to protect their economic position and discovered ways to exploit the colonial system to their advantage. Therefore, the Korean appropriation of the term *mindo* is another area that requires closer scrutiny to understand the dynamics of the colonial public sphere.

One of the early critiques of Cultural Rule's use of the term *mindo* can be found in the *Tonga ilbo*, in an editorial about an outbreak of measles. The editorial criticises the lack of effort by the colonial authorities to spread information among Koreans about disease control:

> The reason that the police have become the object of complaints from the people is that they do not pay close attention to whether or not they are disseminating knowledge of hygiene to the Korean people in an appropriate manner. Whenever the Koreans express

> their demands and hopes, colonial officials come up with all kinds of policies that do not solve the problem and claim that they cannot do anything because of the low *mindo*.[34]

The *Tonga ilbo* editorial rejects the colonial government's arguments that the *mindo* of the Korean people was an insurmountable barrier. Instead, the editorial castigates colonial officials for using *mindo* as a poor excuse and criticises them for their ineffective policies. At the same time, the editorial does not challenge the contention that the *mindo* of the Koreans is low, for the focus was the passive attitude of colonial authorities towards solving urgent social and economic problems. Similar arguments that *mindo* was simply an excuse for inaction can be found in the journal *Kaebyŏk*. Criticising the formation of an association to promote harmony between Koreans and Japanese, *Kaebyŏk* observes the following about the changes instituted under Cultural Rule:

> Discrimination under *isshi dōjin* is now called non-discrimination, colonialism is now called *naichi enchō* and *dōka* (assimilation) is now called *yūwa* (harmony). Furthermore, who but the childish are not aware of the rhetorical expression of the officials like 'the government must focus its efforts in consideration of "*jisei oyobi mindo*"' [present conditions and *mindo*].[35]

The criticisms of the colonial government pointed to the cosmetic changes of Cultural Rule, which did not fundamentally alter the unequal colonial system. The critique was intended to spur more colonial governmental action to institute meaningful reforms. And while the criticisms could reach a high pitch, they essentially expressed frustration at the slow pace of change rather than reject the overall legitimacy of colonial rule.

The anger over the slow pace of colonial reform in the area of education was especially contentious. The Korean participants in this debate generally agreed that the *mindo* of their population was too low, and they demanded immediate concrete actions to remedy the problem. Korean intellectuals adamantly rejected the colonial government's argument that the *mindo* of the Korean people did not permit the rapid construction of schools and educational facilities. A March 1927 column in the *Tonga ilbo* points out that there were 20,000 applicants for the normal schools run by the government just in the province of Kyŏnggi alone, but 40 per cent could not gain acceptance. The column demands, 'If the officials have any conscience, they need to provide a

different clear explanation and give a simple reason rather than stating that the problem lies in the *mindo*.'[36] Calls for more educational facilities were just as loud during the 1930s. A *Tonga ilbo* editorial angrily declared that colonial officials always explained the outrageous educational situation with mindless platitudes about *mindo* and the inability of the countryside to bear the cost of supporting the schools.[37] The editorial sarcastically noted that if the colonial officials pursued educational policy with the same zeal they showed when forcing Koreans to stop wearing their traditional white clothing, there would no longer be any problems.

The controversy over colonial education had a caustic tone, and Korean pundits constantly clamoured for more official action. At the same time, Koreans had no decision-making authority in the expenditure of central government budgets and could raise their voices only through the colonial media to demand a faster pace of reform. The gist of their demands was for more investment in colonial education infrastructure, and they repeatedly rejected the argument that the problem lay with the Koreans. Yet implicit and explicit acknowledgements of a low Korean *mindo* greatly undermined their call for greater participation in the colonial system, at least for the general Korean population. Koreans intellectuals at times did argue that the Korean *mindo* was high enough to warrant political participation; one such example can be found in a 1931 editorial in the *Tonga ilbo*. The editorial noted that the current trend around the world was gender equality and democracy, yet

> [e]ven when one looks through a substantial number of official policies with the slogan of 'Freely express the people's will', there is only one place where such a concept may be realized and that is the reforms of the regional administrations. ... However, those with the right to vote are only males who pay at least 5 *yen* a year, while the officials may provide the excuses of gradualism and what is appropriate for the *mindo* of the Korean people, yet this cannot help but be a mistake that runs contrary to the currents of the times.[38]

The editorial observed that trends around the world were leading to universal suffrage and liberal democracy, then made numerous demands for more inclusion of Korean views when formulating policies. However, the concrete demands for change that the editorial proposed reveal the extent to which the critique of *mindo* came from a gradualist position that was firmly within the boundaries of a colonial rationality. The

editorial noted numerous areas that needed attention but highlighted four primary issues that required immediate attention:

(i) Reduce the burden on the people by producing a better managed administration.
(ii) Eliminate the additional salary payments for Japanese within the colonial bureaucracy.
(iii) Expand the education budget, eliminate tuition, and implement compulsory education.
(iv) Protect tenant farmers, and produce a policy to prevent small plots of land from being unfairly purchased.

The urgent calls for change listed in this editorial were essentially demands for efficient government, more education, elimination of discrimination within the colonial bureaucracy, and stabilising the landlord-tenant relationship. Thus, this line of critique essentially argued that the *mindo* of the Korean people should not be a barrier to colonial reforms and expressed discontent with the pace of change. The appeals for more action were tempered by cautionary statements about the need for gradual change in Korean society. A January 1926 *Tonga ilbo* editorial entitled 'Action rather than words' warned that those who advocated changes without consideration for Korean *mindo* would only disrupt society.[39] The nationalist journal *Tonggwang* also editorialised that only socialist ideas appropriate to the level of *mindo* should be introduced.[40] These cautionary statements about the dangers of rapid changes that Korean society could not absorb reveal the class divisions and the anxieties of Korean elite society.

The gradualist critique of colonial policies found within the colonial public sphere was complemented by demands for economic reforms, and it is in this area where the class position of the Korean participants becomes more distinct. Korean elites who stood to benefit from certain colonial policies utilised the *mindo* discourse to strengthen their position, especially in the areas of taxation, economic development, and landlord-tenant relations. The discourse of *mindo* became a rhetorical device for colonial interest groups that wanted to resist the implementation of laws from Japan that they believed disadvantaged their economic position. The dispute over the Agricultural Association Law in the late 1920s is a case in point. The law called for representatives from the farmers in the villages to be appointed to represent their interests. A Korean supporter of the measure noted that the law implemented in Korea was based on the Japanese version of the law, which had led

to criticism that Japanese laws were inappropriate for the low *mindo* of Korea.[41] A similar line of argument can be found when Korean landlords attempted to prevent the implementation of laws in the 1930s that gave tenant farmers more of a voice in rural disputes. A November 1933 *Tonga ilbo* article reported on rumours that an association of landowners had found out in advance about the colonial government's intention to introduce legal measures that would strengthen tenant rights. The landlords lobbied the colonial government against the new measure by claiming that it was not appropriate for the level of Korean *mindo* and would lead to a decline in agricultural production.[42] Thus in the area of landlord-tenant relationships, some Korean participants in the colonial public sphere approached the issue from the same position as Japanese landlords, who also resisted the implementation of rural reform laws from Japan proper.

Many of these conflicts over the introduction of laws from Japan inevitably involved a complex interaction of economic and political interests that had little to do with improving the purported civilisational level of the Korean population. Demands for more industrial and commercial development may on the surface have concerned improving the economic situation of all Koreans. A *Tonga ilbo* editorial of July 1934 criticised the policy of prioritising agricultural developments by emphasising that support for agricultural production alone while ignoring industrial development would not lead to the colonial state's goal of raising the *mindo* of the Korean people.[43] The *Tonga ilbo* advocated more expenditure for economic development but also presented numerous arguments against raising the tax rates of Koreans because their *mindo* was too low. The April 1929 issue of the *Tonga ilbo* featured a headline, directed at the head of the colonial Finance Department, that declared its opposition to the imposition of an income tax that would place an undue burden on the people. Its claim was that the measure was inappropriate to the level of Korean *mindo*.[44] Greater industrial development might benefit all Koreans, but raising taxes was clearly not in the interest of wealthy Korean elites.

Ultimately, the discourse of *mindo* had multiple facets throughout the colonial period and allowed Koreans to channel their critique of colonial policies in directions that did not directly challenge Japanese rule. Korean participants in the colonial public sphere claimed to represent the faceless Korean public, which was assumed to be undereducated and too impoverished to speak on its own behalf. Korean intellectuals warned against rapid change and competed with the colonial state to act as the champion of 'public interest'. At the same time, the existence

of two separate systems in the metropole and the colonies meant that the differing tax rates and legal codes created loopholes that could be exploited for economic benefit. Since the concept of differing civilisational and economic levels lay at the heart of the rationale for maintaining separate systems, it was no wonder that Korean elites utilised the *mindo* discourse to preserve the status quo while demanding incremental reforms that benefited their social and economic positions. Even when the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937, the colonial state initially announced that Koreans would continue to pay a lower per capita tax than the Japanese because of the difference in *mindo* despite the additional cost burdens of the war.[45] Such measures were likely intended to maintain the cooperation of Korean elites during the wartime crisis. Thus, that the concept of *mindo* was fertile ground for reinterpretation by both colonial officials and Korean interests within the colonial public sphere demonstrates the broad range of discourse possible under the dominant colonial rationality.

The late colonial discourse of imperial citizenship and the trajectory of *mindo*

The Korean participants in the colonial public sphere shaped their discourse firmly within the boundaries of a colonial rationality that could not imagine colonised subjects as fully formed political agents. The Japanese colonial state continued to conduct its policies based on the assumption of Korean political infantilism, and its claims to racial supremacy remained unchallenged during most of the colonial period. The outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, however, introduced a new dynamic, as the basic assumptions of the pre-war colonial public sphere quickly gave way to a different kind of wartime logic. Colonial subjects could not be mobilised for military duty because by definition they lacked the proper consciousness to make the ultimate sacrifice for the Japanese Empire. Therefore, the war brought about a sudden need to transform Koreans into loyal imperial subjects who could serve the Japanese Empire during a period of wartime crisis.

The mobilisation of Koreans proceeded with a series of ordinances designed to assimilate Koreans and prepare them for wartime duty.[46] The Korean Educational Ordinance was revised in 1938, and the availability of primary school education was greatly expanded. Increased availability of educational facilities was intended to prepare Koreans for wartime mobilisation. In keeping with the goal of *kōminka*, or 'imperialisation', the teaching of the Korean language was de-emphasised and eventually

banned altogether from the curriculum.[47] The education system that Koreans had demanded for such a long time throughout the colonial period was finally delivered to a certain extent, but the focus of that education was not to produce autonomous political agents but instead to mould their character to become loyal imperial subjects. The primary emphasis of the new elementary curriculum for Koreans during the wartime period was the inculcation of the 'Imperial Way' and the acceptance of public duties. Writing about the Taiwanese situation, Hui-yu Caroline Tsai notes the existence of a subtle distinction between *dōka* (assimilation), *kyōka* (educate and transform), and *kōminka* (imperialisation), with the last being a new project in the late colonial period, one particular to the needs of wartime mobilisation.[48] The goal of imperialisation was far broader in conception than any previous effort to assimilate Koreans, and the primary objective was to awaken among Koreans a willingness to engage in public spectacles of mass communion that demonstrated their loyalty to the Japanese Empire, such as visitation at Shinto shrines, recitation of the imperial oath, and the salutation of the Japanese flag. The aim was to transform everyday life and create a new kind of public sphere, where ritualistic public performances of proper 'imperial citizenship' became evidence for the collective elevation of Korean *mindo* and the promise of full inclusion as constituent members of the Japanese Empire.

The Japanese mobilised the Korean population not only through slogans but through the creation of the National Mobilisation League and various other quasi-official associations that incorporated Koreans into the vast empire-wide mobilisation system.[49] Korean volunteers for the Japanese Army were first selected in 1938, and by 1943 the number reached 6,300 (out of over 300,000 applicants). The volunteer system was a prelude to the announcement of military conscription of Koreans on 8 May 1942 and the full implementation of the system in 1944.[50] However, despite the fact that Koreans were mobilised for military duty, the vast majority were conscripted for labour and sent to the mines and factories to replace Japanese men dispatched to the front. Therefore, even though Koreans did in fact enter the Japanese military, their primary purpose was to provide a pool of conscripted labour for wartime industrial production.

The institution of the military draft and the total mobilisation of the Korean population added an entirely new dimension to the discourse of *mindo* in the late colonial period. Calls for Koreans to improve their *mindo* were now inextricably entangled with demands that they participate in wartime mobilisation. The head of the Chōsen Industrial Bank,

Hayashi Shigezo, implored all Koreans to raise their *mindo* so that they could transform the volunteer army programme into a compulsory military system for all Koreans.[51] The Japanese presented the Korean volunteer programme as an intermediary step towards the eventual military service of all Koreans as soon as the *mindo* of the Koreans reached an appropriate level. In contrast to the early colonial period, Japanese intellectuals and bureaucrats during the wartime mobilisation period suggested that Koreans had greatly improved their *mindo* to a point where a merger between Japan and Korea might be possible. The prominent Japanese educator Kanzuka Tasuku stated in a journal on Korean education that the level of Korean *mindo* had finally risen to the level of Japan's, which would enable the joining of the two races, or *naisen ittai*.[52] While the sincerity of the participants in this debate may be questioned because of the necessities of war, the arguments regarding whether or not the *mindo* of the Korean people was high enough to extend the Japanese system to Korea saw more and more advocates for a complete merger of the political systems.

The significance of the wartime events was clear to Koreans who argued for the recognition of Koreans as full members of the Japanese Empire. The rhetorical slogans of equality between Japan and Korea led a prominent Korean collaborator, Yun Ch'i-ho (1865–1945) to note in his 1939 diary entry that he raised numerous issues in a private discussion with Governor General Minami Jirō (1874–1955):

> I read to him a little paper in which I first thanked him for his efforts to abolish the practice of discriminating against the Koreans and to realise the ideal of oneness of Japan and Korea (內鮮一體). Then I suggested to bring about this realisation that Korean and Japanese students should be admitted to the government schools and colleges on equal terms as to number, that the official appointments should place no discrimination against the Koreans, and that the use and teaching of the Korean language should have no official restrictions.[53]

The rapidly changing situation of wartime colonial Korea emboldened collaborationist Koreans to increase their demands for greater equality. At the same time, the colonial state conveniently ignored Korean concerns such as the continued teaching of the Korean language when they went against the goals of 'imperialisation'. Korean intellectuals publically expressed immense surprise and joy when it was announced that Koreans would enter the battlefield in 1942, for they interpreted

this signal as an indication that the Japanese finally considered them worthy of imperial citizenship. One of the most prominent cultural nationalist intellectuals, Chu Yo Han (1900–79), exclaimed after the May 1942 announcement:

> The opportunity has arrived. Due to great and infinite generosity of our Emperor, the chance for us to take action like human beings has arrived. Koreans suffered a long illness, have been paralysed and emaciated due to the decrepit 300-year rule of letters, but we have now recovered a new energy and exert a new spirit to become leaders in the new heaven and earth of greater East Asia. Whether we can take advantage of this chance of a lifetime and become citizen-like citizens and human-like human beings lies entirely in our hands.[54]

The institution of military conscription enabled Koreans in the colonial public sphere to view themselves as 'citizen-like citizens and human-like human beings' because they were finally allowed to perform all of the public rituals of the Japanese Empire. The late colonial public sphere contained numerous declarations that the *mindo* had finally risen to the same level as the Japanese. Yet the definition of a 'human-like human being' during the wartime period was an individual who could speak Japanese, understood the proper Shinto rituals, and worshipped the Japanese emperor as a divine being. And despite the inclusion of Koreans in the wartime mobilisation system, they were still denied the basic right to vote for representation in the Imperial Diet because the separate systems in Korea and Japan were maintained all the way until Japan's defeat in 1945.[55]

Conclusion

Korean intellectuals in the late colonial period celebrated the elevation of the Korean *mindo* and encouraged their fellow Koreans to worship in Shinto shrines, buy war bonds, work in factories, and sacrifice their lives in the name of the Japanese Emperor. The public displays of loyalty to the Japanese Empire within the late colonial public sphere contained strong undertones that Koreans would be liberated from their marginalised status through their wartime participation. One could argue that the persistence of inequalities in the colonial order encouraged colonised subjects to seek out ways to escape their denigrated status. However, even though Koreans in the late colonial period were depicted as modern individuals who were full members of an imperial polity, in effect they

entered a quasi-fascist public sphere that was more spectacle than an expression of political rights and more symbolic ritual than a true plebiscite of the popular will. The highly visible participation by Koreans in these public rituals was clearly an attempt to show the Japanese colonial masters that their level of *mindo* had risen to warrant full membership in the Japanese Empire. Koreans, however, continued to be denied basic political rights, and the vast political gap between Japan and Korea remained largely unchanged. The experience of Koreans during World War II suggests the need to pay attention to the manner in which the public sphere can serve as a site for imperial/national integration, especially for those groups that had previously been excluded from political participation.

Mindo was ultimately a nebulous concept throughout the colonial period, one that came to life through selective use of statistical data and anecdotal observations about the backwardness of precolonial Korean cultural practices. Prior to the outbreak of war, the Japanese made only sporadic efforts to regulate public behaviour or shape the mental consciousness of their colonised subjects. Rather than equalise the status of Koreans with the Japanese, the colonial state went to great lengths to generate colonial knowledge that disseminated the rationality for colonial governmentality and established firm conceptual barriers between the colonisers and colonised. The pre-1937 debate over the civilisational level of Koreans was largely confined to discussions over colonial policy and a self-critique among Korean intellectuals who internalised the *mindo* concept to lament their colonised fate. At the same time, the dynamic manner in which Koreans appropriated certain elements of colonial rationality for their own interests suggests that the colonial public sphere also allowed space for Korean intellectuals to compete with colonial authorities for the right to represent the colonised masses. The fictitious colonial public came to life through claims by colonial intellectuals to act as champions for impoverished colonised subjects, whom they themselves orientalised. The Korean colonial public had little concrete manifestation and no real shape or form and therefore could be represented in a broad variety of ways through a discourse of collective backwardness that the colonisers and the colonised shared.

The public sphere of wartime Korea, in contrast, provided a detailed performative script for Koreans to follow and bring the colonial public to life through staged public spectacle for mass consumption. The cultural level of Koreans was no longer a vague concept but instead was celebrated in collective performances that confirmed their membership in an imperial polity. Paul Corner in this volume observes how fascism

produced public theatre where the 'people' could only be passive audiences and consumers. In a similar vein, wartime colonial Korea also provided meticulously choreographed productions designed to propagate images of a newly awakened Korean population that accepted the patriotic duty to defend the empire. The reification of imperial unity and the expression of modern subjectivity through ritualistic performances conducted in the late colonial public sphere could potentially take many forms, but they held strong similarities with public productions found in multiple settings throughout World War II. The wartime public performances conducted in Korea exhibited their own local interpretations of the existing global models for performing nationhood, but they essentially shared the basic framework of mobilisation regimes throughout the world. Such a curious convergence in the rise of public performances of national unity in the public spheres of so many disparate locales may provide striking evidence that mass dictatorships are indeed integral aspects of a global modernity.

Notes

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1. Fredrick Cooper, *Questioning Colonialism: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p. 154.
2. Kubota Yūko, 'Chōsen sōtokufu shoki no nihongo kyōiku niokeru "jisei oyobi mindo" nitsuite', *Kyūshū sangyō daigaku kokusai bunka gakubu kiyō* 17 (2000), p. 16.
3. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Thomas Burger, trans. (Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 1989).
4. Uday S. Mehta, 'Liberal Strategies of Exclusion', in Fredrick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds, *Tensions of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 59–86.
5. U Kalpagam, 'Colonial Governmentality and the Public Sphere in India', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 15/1 (March 2002), 37.
6. David Scott, 'Colonial Governmentality', *Social Text*, 43 (Autumn 1995), 197.
7. For more on Japanese attitudes towards Koreans during the colonial period see Mark Peattie, 'Japanese Attitudes toward Colonialism', in Raymon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds, *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895–1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 80–127.
8. For more on the cultural nationalist movement, see Michael Robinson, *Cultural Nationalism in Colonial Korea* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988).
9. In a sense, some Japanese intellectuals like Yoshino Sakuzō (1878–1933) and Yanaihara Tadao (1893–1961) followed the path of such Western critics of

imperial rule as Tocqueville, who attempted to find a rationale for including some French colonial subjects as full members of an imperial polity. For more on Tocqueville's role as the architect of the Algerian colonial assimilation policy, see Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton, NJ, and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2005).

10. Pak Ch'an-sŭng, *Han'guk kŭndae chŏngch'i sasangsa yŏn'gu* (Seoul: Yŏksa pip'yŏngsa, 1992), p. 118.
11. Yuge Kotaro, 'Shōrai no chōsen tōchi ni tsuite', *Chōsen oyobi manshū* (May 1932), p. 29.
12. Kubota Yūko, 'Chōsen sōtokufu shoki no nihongo kyōiku niokeru "jisei oyobi mindo" nitsuite', *Kyūshū sangyō daigaku kokusai bunka gakubu kiyō* 17 (2000) 15–16.
13. Mark Caprio, *Japanese Assimilation Policies in Colonial Korea, 1910–1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), pp. 92–100.
14. Chōsen sōtokufu, *Kanzei chōsa jigyō no keika* (1921), 14. The first time that a comprehensive tax survey took place in Korea was during the 1920s, and one colonial source notes that the process was conducted twice in Japan and four times in Taiwan, so those regions had plenty of experience with and understanding of the system. The source continues, however, to complain that because this was the first time that the survey was carried out in Korea, there were many false rumours about the process due to the low Korean *mindo*. Hagiwara Hikozō, 'Kani kukserŭl hoego hago', *Chosŏnmun Chosŏn*, 100 (February 1926), 22. Colonial officials also emphasised that when Koreans failed to pay their taxes, it was because of their low *mindo*. Chu Wŏn-jŏng, 'Myŏnnae napse ŭimuchaŭi chuŭirŭl ch'okham', *Chosŏnmun Chosŏn* 105 (July 1926), 93.
15. Chōsen sōtokufu, *Chōsen no hanzai to kankyō* (1928), 120.
16. *Colonial Modernity in Korea*, 33.
17. The local administration system was a peculiar feature of Japanese colonial rule. Governor General Saito Makoto announced that regional administrative reforms would be one of the five major policy changes of Cultural Rule. The local administrative system established through these measures ultimately did not play more than an advisory role throughout the colonial period, and a powerful system of colonial inspectors made sure that the local governments did not function outside the central directives. Yun Hae-dong, *Chibae wa chach'i* 96–103.
18. Chōsen sōtokufu, *Shisei ni kansuru yukoku kunji narabini enjutsu* (1922), 8.
19. Kim Yŏng-bŏm, 'Amyŏn hyŏpŭihoewŏn chewiege koham', *Chosŏnmun Chosŏn* (March 1924), 92.
20. Katayama Iwao, 'Chosŏnŭi hwahak kongŏp kwa oin ŭi kago', *Chosŏnmun Chosŏn* (May 1923), 27.
21. Yuge Kotarō, 'Chosŏn ch'ŏlto ŭi sisŏl yohang', *Chosŏnmun Chosŏn* (May 1923), 21.
22. Wada Ichirō 'Taechŏng sipinyŏndo yesane ch'wihaya', *Chosŏnmun Chosŏn* (March 1923), 7.
23. Oda Tadao 'Chōsen zaisei no seikaku to kadai' *Chōsen gyōsei* (November 1943), 14.

24. Ibid., 15.
25. Kim Yŏng-kap, 'Nongch'onŭl pudtaehaya ssŏ chosŏnŭl pudtaehara', *Kaebyŏk* (November 1922), 29.
26. 'Ch'imdae pongso', *Tonggwang* (April 1932), 12–13.
27. *Tonga ilbo* (29 May 1934).
28. Song Man, 'Minjok sahoejuŭi ron'gang', *Tonggwang* (August 1931), 4.
29. Kim Tong-jin Chosŏn kyŏngch'alŭi haepu, *Tonggwang* (February 1932), 31.
30. 'Hamnam Yelŭptaegwan', *Kaebyŏk* (December 1924), 83.
31. Yŏngdŏkŭn ŏstŏhan chipang *Kaebyŏk* (September 1923), 118.
32. *Tonga ilbo* (15 March 1931).
33. The chain of negative representations reflects Japanese attempts to establish cultural and historical distance from the rest of Asia so that they could separate themselves from the negative representations of the West. See Stefan Tanaka, *Japan's Orient* (Berkeley: University of California Press); Lim Jie Hyun, 'The Configuration of Orient and Occident in the Global Chain of National Histories', in Stefan Berger, Linas Eriksonas, and Andrew Mycock (eds), *Narrating the Nation: Representations in History, Media and the Arts* (New York: Berghahn, 2008).
34. *Tonga ilbo* (21 August 1920).
35. 'Ilsŏnyunghwae palkwangtoen yŏngch'ŏnswi', *Kaebyŏk* (September 1923), 104.
36. *Tonga ilbo* (14 March 1927).
37. *Tonga ilbo* (3 January 1934).
38. *Tonga ilbo* (25 March 1931).
39. *Tonga ilbo* (13 January 1926).
40. 'Sasŏl muŏsbodado', *Tonggwang* (May 1926), 20.
41. Im Hong-sun, Nōkairei shiken hitotaba, *Chōsen chihōgyōsei* (March 1927), 100.
42. *Tonga ilbo* (22 November 1933).
43. *Tonga ilbo* (19 July 1934).
44. *Tonga ilbo* (25 April 1929).
45. *Tonga ilbo* (23 February 1938).
46. The Japanese colonial administration began to mobilise the Korean population for its war effort with the passage of the National General Mobilisation Law in 1938 and introduced many significant changes to colonial policies. A discussion of the major social and economic transformations that took place in colonial Korea during the total mobilisation period can be found in Carter J. Eckert, 'Total War, Industrialization, and Social Change in Late Colonial Korea', in Myers and Peattie, eds, *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931–1945*, pp. 3–39.
47. For more on the kominka movement in Korea, see Wan-yao Chou, 'The Kominka Movement in Taiwan and Korea: Comparisons and Interpretations', in Myers and Peattie, eds, *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931–1945*, pp. 40–68.
48. Hui-yu Caroline Ts'ai, 'Total War, Labor Drafts, and Colonial Administration: Wartime Mobilization in Taiwan, 1936–45', in Paul Kratoska, ed., *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire: Unknown Histories* (New York: Sharpe, 2005), pp. 103–5.
49. For more on the mobilisation system and the role of Korean women, see Michael Kim, 'Mothers of the Empire: Military Conscription and Mobilization

in Late Colonial Korea', in Jie-Hyun Lim and Karen Petrone, eds, *Gender Politics and Mass Dictatorship* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 193–212.

50. Far more were mobilised for labour duty; Utsumi Aiko, 'Korean "Imperial Soldiers": Remembering Colonialism and Crimes against Allied POWs', in T. Fujitani et al., eds, *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 199–217.
51. *Maeil sinbo* (23 February 1938).
52. Kanzuka Tasuku, 'Naisen ittai eno shōkei', *Chōsen no kyōiku kenkyū* (September 1939), 6.
53. Yun Ch'iho, *Yun Ch'iho ilgi* [Yun Ch'iho's diary], vol. 11 (Seoul: Kuksa P'yŏnch'an Wiwŏnhoe, 1974), pp. 160–61.
54. Chu Yo-han, 'Hongŭn'gamŭp' [Great benevolence and tears of gratitude], *Taedonga* (July 1942), 29.
55. The Japanese were aware that including Koreans in the wartime system meant they could no longer be indefinitely denied basic political rights and access to education. Consequently, compulsory education for all Koreans was announced in 1943 and scheduled for implementation in 1946. The Japanese Imperial Diet also passed a law allowing Koreans to vote on a limited basis in April 1945. But the end of the war (August 1945) prevented meaningful implementation of full political participation in Korea despite the fact that millions of Koreans had been mobilised for wartime military and labour duty. Ch'oe Yu-ri, *Ilche malgi sikminji chibaejŏngch'aegyŏn'gu* (Seoul: Kukhakcharyowŏn, 1997), p. 245.

Part III

Modern Subjectification and Agency

11

Models of Selfhood and Subjectivity: The Soviet Case in Historical Perspective

Choi Chatterjee and Karen Petrone

Our aim in this chapter is to interrogate the notion of the modern self as a historical category and examine how certain historians working within the American tradition of historiography on the Soviet Union have used it as an entry point to reach a deeper understanding of that society and culture.[1] Within the Western philosophical tradition, the concept of the self has a weighty history, and from the age of classical antiquity to present-day postmodernism, philosophers have debated the nature, the form, the structure, and indeed the very existence of the self, which has been used interchangeably with the terms subject, person, and identity. We start with Jerrold Seigel's overtly Freudian model of the modern self, with its three interconnected layers: first, a biological creature marked by material and bodily needs; second, a self that is deeply implicated in the social discourses and cultural codes of its origin; third, a reflexive self that possesses self-awareness.[2] Seigel's model is useful in reminding us that, although we can privilege one level of selfhood for purposes of analysis, it is unwise to ignore the other layers as sources of affirmation and meaning. Historians have used notions of class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and nationality, to name just a few categories, to employ both the production and the location of the self as an entry point into history. Rare, however, is the historian who has simultaneously considered all levels of the self.

The reflexive self is an active agent that scrutinises both itself and the world it inhabits and thus plays a dynamic role in creating its own narratives of itself. Different thinkers at different times have vacillated between conceptions of a radically autonomous subject able to transcend social and discursive limitations and its polar opposite: the

confined and circumscribed self. Historians tend to agree that modern selfhood is constructed at the intersection of individual agency, the workings of state power and social and political institutions, and the cultural codes and normative discourses deployed by professionals and experts, but they are divided about how much weight to ascribe to the role of agency in self-fashioning. To what extent is self-fashioning and self-authorship a dynamic process of constructing subjectivity out of ideology and local experiences rather than a process preordained by these social locations and normative discourses?[3] To what extent did coercive Soviet state institutions and discourses limit the agency of individuals in constructing their identities, and how, precisely, did Soviet citizens exercise agency in creating their identities from and against prescriptive state discourses?[4]

Rather than try to posit the existence of a singular or authentic Soviet self, our aim is to critically examine some of the paradigms of selfhood that Western historians have used to study Soviet subjectivity in the first half of the twentieth century. Our proposed categories are heuristic devices formulated to understand the various ways that scholars have conceptualised the Soviet self. We are not positing the existence of such clear-cut divisions either in social reality or in the realm of historical research. Our chapter also does not purport to be either a comprehensive or an exhaustive survey of the existing historical literature but a categorisation of the most significant ways in which historians talk about the self and its interaction with the social and political world. There is an equally long and rich history of literary scholars proposing powerful models of selfhood in Russia, beginning with Mikhail Bakhtin and Iurii Lotman and continuing to the present day.[5] But as Irina Paperno and Eric Naiman have cogently argued, literary specialists and historians have fundamentally divergent approaches to the analysis of the self. While historians tend to regard intimate documents such as diaries and memoirs as accessible sources that can reveal historical information about the formation of subjectivity, literary specialists are deeply interested in the mechanics that govern the production, circulation, and reception of these texts. They analyse the art and artifices of language that prevent texts from accurately representing either reality or the self.[6] When these scholars focus on the intersection of selfhood and power, they tend to do so from the point of view of the creative individual and the shaping of his or her literary or creative production.[7] If historians are concerned with questions of subjectivity as they reveal information about social types and historical phenomena, scholars of literature are interested in the radically individual characteristics of the subject/text/author and

are self-conscious that their own theoretically inspired readings of these intimate texts shape their interpretations.[8]

Our discussion concerns the ways in which the early Soviet self has been conceptualised primarily as a modern subject in Western historiography. As David Hoffmann and Peter Holquist have persuasively argued, the Soviet Union represented another variant of modernity and was a legitimate descendent of the Western Enlightenment.[9] The Soviet Union categorised its populations and resources using modern techniques of surveillance and built a massively bureaucratised welfare state. It used mass politics to draw people into the welfare state and sought to inculcate modern values relating to personal hygiene, gender relations, workplace ethics, and national consciousness. Given these conditions we believe that it will be a fruitful exercise to see how Western conceptions of the modern self have been used to understand the formation of selfhood in the Soviet Union, even though we are keenly aware of the incomplete nature of the Soviet Union's inculcation of 'modern' and 'Western' values.[10] Virtually all of the scholarly work on the Soviet self has focused on the construction of subjectivity in the Stalin period. The Stalinist self is our main focus as well, although we cross the boundaries of Stalinism to explore conceptual approaches to modern subjectivity proposed by analysts of the pre- and post-Stalin eras. We feel that such approaches can be judiciously applied to the Stalin era, and that subjectivity, while not completely static, is relatively resistant to change in comparison to other aspects of social and cultural life. It was one thing to aspire to the creation of a New Soviet person and another thing actually to create him or her.

The totalitarian self and its precursors

Scholarly interest in the Russian and Soviet self is not a new enterprise, and Western historians have both explicitly and implicitly drawn on earlier models of selfhood to analyse Russian history. Since the early modern period, European travellers have represented Russia as a barbarous land of slave-like people who were responsive only to the persuasions of the knout wielded by an autocratic tsar.[11] More recently, Larry Wolff has argued that Enlightenment philosophers, led primarily by Voltaire, constructed the image of a despotic and backward eastern Europe in order to validate the idea of a progressive and civilised Western Europe.[12] The American intelligentsia never completely agreed with the demonisation of Russia that was in vogue in Europe in the nineteenth century, but by the late nineteenth century, as Russians and Americans

developed competing imperial interests in East Asia and the Pacific, American scholars began to echo the European descriptions about autocratic oppression and the backwardness of the Slavic people.[13]

In his recent study David Engerman argues that American analysts of the Russian Empire used Victorian racial categories to represent the Russian people as slavish, backward, and unenterprising. These experts argued that a pervasive Asiatic legacy of passivity, fatalism, and lack of hygiene prevented Russia from joining the ranks of the civilised peoples.[14] According to Engerman, this view of the backward Russian national character persuaded American historians and journalists of various political persuasions in the 1920s and 1930s to endorse the Bolshevik project of modernisation, despite the extreme human costs. Given the racial vices of the Slavic peoples, Western observers believed that a coercive and violent path to modernity was a viable alternative for Russia.

In the post–World War II period, when scholarly consensus about innate national characteristics was overlaid with models of analysis drawn from the social sciences, American scholars became interested in the various ways people around the world responded to the stimulus of modernity and modernisation.[15] Instead of positing an a priori Russian self, historians elucidated the ways in which the Soviet state used ideology, violence, and propaganda as it attempted to create the totalitarian Soviet man. Some of the analysts of the Soviet system, influenced by theorists such as Talcott Parsons and Walter Rostow, believed that Soviet citizens required technocratic control and modernising make-overs by elite experts.[16] As Theodore Von Laue observed, 'is it necessarily in the interest of the Soviet peoples to relax the Soviet controls and to allow them to lapse back into the old anarchic spontaneity which lurks beneath the Soviet harness?'[17]

Simultaneously, American scholars, who were also influenced by Hannah Arendt's pathbreaking work, developed a scathing critique of Soviet totalitarianism. Arendt, in her nuanced study of both Nazi and Soviet totalitarianism, located the origins of these systems in social and political developments in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Europe.[18] World War I, the subsequent inflation, and widespread unemployment led to the breakdown of a bourgeois society that was increasingly hated by both the 'masses' and the members of the erstwhile elites. Arendt identifies the masses as a by-product of bourgeois society that is numerically too large to be accommodated by either political parties or organisations and is therefore susceptible to propaganda and attracted to large-scale violence. The atomised individuals of a post-class society

began to scorn the individual rights of man (the essence of liberalism) and democratic institutions and longed to lose themselves in a higher cause. Both the mob and the members of the elite celebrated loss of selfhood, and it was this unholy alliance that paved the way for the rise of totalitarian regimes.[19] Arendt argued that the totalitarian leader was not a tyrant who imposed his arbitrary will on the people but rather, 'thanks to its peculiar ideology and the role assigned to it in this apparatus of coercion, totalitarianism has discovered a means of dominating and terrorising human beings from within'.[20] Totalitarian selfhood, then, is a combination of a transcendental desire of the masses and the elites to lose themselves in a higher cause and the product of a modern system that uses ideology, propaganda, and modern techniques of violence to achieve that particular form of subjectivity.

Arendt's work proved very influential for a generation of scholars, but many questioned her historical preconditions of social atomisation and the extreme alienation of the individual that allowed for the rise of totalitarian governments. Zbigniew Brzezinski and Bertram Wolfe described Stalinism as a system that used ideology and violence to create the abject totalitarian subject who was bereft of both legal protections and the emotional sustenance afforded by the family, church, and other organisations of civil society.[21] These scholars ignored the historical subjectivity of Arendt's protototalitarian citizens who longed to lose themselves in a grand ideological cause and instead focused their historical lenses on the system and the leader who tried to make 'New Soviet Men' out of unsatisfactory human material.[22] The main subject of the totalitarian school of history was the Soviet leader, be it Vladimir Lenin, Josif Stalin, or Lev Trotskij, and secondarily, heroically resisting members of the intelligentsia such as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Boris Pasternak.[23]

Not all of the scholars of the so-called totalitarian school completely subscribed to this bleak appraisal of the oppressed and brainwashed Soviet subject. In their massive study of Soviet citizens based on the Harvard Interview Project of the 1950s, Alex Inkeles and Raymond Bauer argued that although Soviet citizens took pride in the superpower status of their country and the socialist system, they simultaneously voiced their disapproval of the widespread use of terror, criticised the unfair privileges enjoyed by communist leaders and the intelligentsia, and demanded a more equitable and efficient welfare state.[24] Inkeles and Bauer tentatively proposed that Stalinism had created an industrialised country whose citizens did not demand the legal rights and protections of a liberal order but who nonetheless voiced the expectations of

citizens in a modern industrial society. Despite the fundamental divergence they saw between the conceptions of the Western liberal self and the Soviet subject, some Western scholars saw hopeful signs of a degree of convergence in the future.[25]

Pragmatic self

The 'revisionist' wave of analysis, with its emphasis on understanding class as a category of lived experience, was led primarily by the school of social historians, many of whom were influenced by the pioneering work of James C. Scott as well as by new cultural approaches in anthropology and history.[26] Here, the concept of the pragmatic self can be used to analyse the works of both Sheila Fitzpatrick and Stephen Kotkin. Despite their many apparent differences, especially in their approach to the relative importance of the role and function of ideology in Soviet lives, we believe that there are similarities in the way they have constructed the Soviet self. Both historians locate their subjects in the very visible terrain of Stalinist forced modernisation: state-sponsored industrialisation and collectivisation, upward mobility, growth of bureaucracy, the welfare state, massive social dislocation, and a new society with amorphous identities and porous class boundaries.

Fitzpatrick, a social historian whose oeuvre spans more than 30 years, exhibits discomfort with the methodological approach of the newer scholarship that makes the Soviet self the central focus of inquiry. In her recent collection of essays, Fitzpatrick claims she is not interested in self and subjectivity and prefers to work with the categories of identity and identification.[27] As she sees it, although some Soviets tried to make themselves into loyal citizens by writing autobiographies in the state-approved manner, 'the task of self-construction (or self-reconstruction) is very different from the task of self-exploration. Indeed, the two may be incompatible'.[28]

In her article on the two lives of Anastasia Plotnikova, Fitzpatrick considers two versions of 'the truth' about Anastasia. In the first, Anastasia presents herself as an exemplary Soviet citizen who rose from her early life as a *batrachka* (female agricultural labourer) to become chairman of a district Soviet in the 1930s. In the second (official) version, the NKVD (*Narodnyy komissariat vnutrennikh del*, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) denounces her as the daughter of a prosperous *kulak* family and a member of the opposition around Grigorii Zinov'ev. At the end of the article, Fitzpatrick considers the merits of both versions and concludes that 'perhaps the closest we can come to "the truth" about Anastasia Plotnikova is that, like most people, her life

could have taken various courses, and her "identity" (*litso*) – that is, her social position, and her own and others' sense of who she was – would have changed accordingly'.[29] Fitzpatrick seems to reject the notion that there is an essential Soviet self that we can uncover, suggesting instead that as historians we can only consider the various identities or 'file-selves' that Soviet subjects created during the course of the twentieth century.

But despite these disclaimers and her conscious self-distancing from the younger cohort of historians more overtly concerned with Soviet subjectivity, Fitzpatrick has modelled a very complex notion of the self – or what she terms a 'usable self'.[30] In her present work, drawing on the theories of everyday performance elaborated by Erving Goffman, Fitzpatrick looks at the various 'usable selves' that citizens and non-citizens constructed in response to the exigencies of state power, as well as the ways they parodied and rejected prescribed models of Soviet selfhood in the period of high Stalinism and beyond into the post-Stalin and the post-Soviet era.[31]

In the conclusion to *Everyday Stalinism*, Fitzpatrick states that Homo Sovieticus was a survivor; from her earlier work on 'affirmative action' and upward mobility during the Cultural Revolution, to her later work on peasant resistance and everyday life, Fitzpatrick has dealt with the survival strategies that Soviet subjects, both citizen and outcast, employed to cope with the revolutionary times.[32] Fitzpatrick often sees the presentation of the Soviet self as one more means of surviving in a revolutionary situation beset by arbitrariness. Pragmatic self-fashioning or outright fabrication of one's autobiography in the face of a coercive state becomes an important means not only of staying alive but of acquiring access to consumer goods, educational opportunities, and promotions. The young warriors of the Cultural Revolution exhibit a blend of idealism and ambition, and the upwardly mobile beneficiaries of state-sponsored affirmative action are inordinately concerned with rewards and punishments. The losers of the revolution, such as peasants on collective farms, first denounce the privileges of the party elite, cultivate fatalism and passivity, and write vicious denunciations of their bosses, deploying subaltern strategies of deep resistance in the workplace. Later, they develop the common expectations of welfare state citizens: that the regime will equitably distribute resources and benefits. Throughout Fitzpatrick's work, Soviet selfhood, as defined by the narratives of Soviet citizens, is characterised by its unique resilience in the face of obstacles, and Fitzpatrick is content with this level of analysis, feeling no need to examine what is under 'the masks'. The pragmatic

resilience Fitzpatrick describes is itself an interpretation of underlying Soviet selfhood.

While Fitzpatrick barely acknowledges Soviet ideology as a determinant in the construction of the self, Kotkin brings ideology back into the field of play and identifies it as an important element in the formation of Soviet subjectivity: 'Bolshevism itself, including its evolution, must be seen not merely as a set of institutions, a group of personalities, or an ideology, but as a cluster of powerful symbols and attitudes, a language and new forms of speech, new ways of behaving in public and private, even new styles of dress – in short, as an ongoing experience through which it was possible to imagine and strive to bring about a new civilisation called socialism.'[33] In his vivid portrait of the Stalinist industrialisation drive in remote Magnitogorsk, Kotkin maps the creation of this civilisation through means of administrative command, rampant coercion, Utopian heroism, and back-breaking labour. And through his historical reconstruction, Kotkin shows us how the new Soviet man evolved and adapted to this unique Soviet context.

For inspiration in understanding 'the processes by which individuals are made, and also make themselves, into subjects under the aegis of the state', Kotkin turns to Michel Foucault.[34] At one level, the Soviet man can only speak Bolshevik because he inhabits a world of stark ideological choices, a theocratic universe of good and modern socialism and evil and backward capitalism. As the inhabitant of the gleaming city of the future, enmeshed within the growing welfare state, the Soviet subject learns to speak Bolshevik as the state relentlessly ascribes identity markers pertaining to occupation, work histories, address, wages, education, and party membership. Ubiquitous censorship and exposure to the ideology of progressive socialism curtail one's choices, but people notice the discrepancy between socialist realism and everyday reality and deploy what Kotkin calls 'the little tactics of the habitat'.[35] Soviet citizens take pride in socialist civilisation and articulate the values and precepts promulgated by various socialist agencies, but at the same time they shop on the black market, steal, cheat, lie, denounce others, and complain vociferously about their bosses' privileges. Kotkin shows that Magnitogorsk needs Shanghai, the criminal underworld, because that is the only way the fiction of the socialist city on the hill can actually survive. For Kotkin, the Soviet self is the idiosyncratic product of a distinctive Stalinist civilisation. Fitzpatrick's Soviet subjects are better than Kotkin's at improvising various versions of themselves, but Kotkin, like Fitzpatrick, paints an enduring image of a resourceful and pragmatic Soviet self.

Foucault and the autonomous self

Kotkin is a transitional figure in his use of the Foucauldian conception of 'governmentality' to understand the Stalinist state, a state that viewed its population as a legitimate target of surveillance and intervention.[36] Kotkin's practical exegesis of Foucault led the way for later scholars to further develop the idea of Soviet subjectivity.[37] In his early works, Foucault updated the notion of the totalitarian self by offering a much more complex and possibly frightening picture of the self as not merely a passive or resisting object of repressive state power and ideology but as a fictive liberal subject produced by the technologies of power and domination. Foucault argues that modern subjectivity is actually produced by the self, using internalised normative discourses to police, censor, restrain, and ultimately produce the illusion of the autonomous self. In fact, Foucault sees the individual autonomous self as both the agent and object of state domination and as little more than a fiction or a 'power effect' created by discourse (power/knowledge). Instead of the overt and spectacular punishments used by old regime states, the liberal state exercises power through disciplinary practices based on scientific knowledge (gathered through surveillance and categorisation of the results) that are so dispersed throughout the social fabric that they ultimately produce the illusion of the autonomous modern self.[38]

But it is important to remember that in Foucault's later writings on ancient Greece and Rome, he posits a different kind of self. Early on, Foucault was interested in problematising what society considered deviant behaviour – madness, criminality, sexuality – and in seeing how discursive practices led to the elaboration of a subjectivity born in domination, normalisation, and discipline. Later, in his histories of Western sexuality, Foucault was much more interested in what he called the hermeneutics of the self and modes of subjectivisation, or how the self-constituted itself as a subject.[39] Foucault promoted 'a history of the way in which individuals are urged to constitute themselves as subjects of moral conduct' that 'would be concerned with the models proposed for setting up and developing relationships with the self, for self-reflection, self-knowledge, self-examination, for the decipherment of the self by oneself, for the transformations that one seeks to accomplish with oneself as object'.[40]

Foucault argued that in ancient Greece, philosophers advocated self-knowledge and rational self-mastery. They believed that in the process of gaining control over one's appetites and desires, an

individual would produce a self capable of governing both itself and others. Thus, in his later writings, Foucault moved away from a fascination with normative discourses and disciplinary rituals to the practices through which the self is constituted as a subject within society. At the same time, it is important to remember that Foucault located the hermeneutics of this self in classical Greece and Rome, possibly implying that such an expansive notion of the self was only possible in a pre-Christian and pre-monotheist world. With the turn to monotheism and the creation of external and purportedly universal rules of conduct in early Christianity, Foucault showed that the emphasis was not on care of the self but on renouncing the sinful self through confession and penance. Since Foucault died before he could produce further studies on the modes of subjectification in modernity, care must be taken when applying both his methodology and his findings to the modern era.

The normative self

As we examine what we have termed the normative self – a subjectivity born of normative discourses and exemplified in the works of Oleg Kharkhordin, Igal Halfin, and Jochen Hellbeck – we will also explore the creative application of Foucault's ideas.[41] In these works, modernisation is an interior phenomenon that happens at the level of the subject and, more pertinently, within the soul. Processes of industrialisation, collectivisation, the apparatuses of terror, and social formations play a limited role in these histories. The geographical specifics of space, where the subject can be located, are left unacknowledged. These historians have used Foucault's works as a toolbox in assembling their conceptions of the Soviet self. They agree with Foucault's dictum that power – in this case Soviet power – did not merely repress and efface the individual and his thoughts but actually created individuals, both as objects of knowledge to be moulded and perfected (individuation) and as subjects capable of action and agency (individualisation).[42] Soviet power and the Bolshevik revolution gave common people an uncommon opportunity to reflect on themselves and to constitute their identities and sense of subjectivity. While Kharkhordin is primarily interested in outlining the normative discourses on selfhood as exemplified in party manuals, rules of conduct, handbooks of self-criticism, and both pedagogical and psychological tracts, Halfin discusses the 'hermeneutics of the soul' – the ways in which party members determined 'who was worthy to belong to the brotherhood of the elect'.[43] Hellbeck analyses how Soviet citizens

used these Stalinist discourses for self-scrutiny, empowerment, and individualisation.

Kharkhordin starts with Foucault's premise that power creates subjects, but he shows that the process was radically different in the Soviet context. He argues that if Western man was created while in the process of privately confessing to his priest/psychoanalyst/teacher/doctor, the righteous Soviet self came into existence through the rituals of public penance, admonishment, and excommunication that allowed hostile elements to be purged. The process of disclosing (*oblichenie*) one's private self in the public realm of the collective had a long history in Orthodox monastic practices, and the Soviet regime intensified the pre-existing techniques of horizontal and mutual surveillance (*krugovaia poruka*) that existed prior to the revolution. Thus both Russian history and Soviet ideology worked to produce a Soviet self that was prone to perpetual and public penance, because the self was constituted by the gaze of the collective. In the post-Stalinist era as the purges subsided, the murderous process of denunciations mutated into more orderly and peaceful practices of mutual surveillance and self-policing. Yet the Soviet project of fashioning a public and penitential self led to dissimulation in the public sphere and often a formal imitation of the lives of Bolshevik heroes rather than a true internalisation of their values.

Kharkhordin is more interested in elaborating the discursive practices constituting the Soviet self, but Hellbeck uses Foucault's methodology as outlined in his notions of the care of the self or the technologies of the self to document how authentic Cartesian selves willed themselves into existence through the process of conscious reflection – in this case by reflecting on the meaning of the Bolshevik revolution.[44]

Hellbeck's *Revolution on My Mind* offers an innovative approach to understanding Stalinism. He has shifted the analytical focus away from the physical and mental violence that the state enacted on the Soviet self toward the psychological dynamics of the formation of the Stalinist self, as exhibited in dozens of personal diaries written during the Stalin era. Hellbeck cautions historians not to remake Stalinist actors in our own image as 'liberal subjects: individuals in pursuit of autonomy who cherished privacy as a sphere of free self-determination'.[45] Many diarists sought to transform themselves into conscious historical actors who would merge with the collective, experiencing an 'integrated selfhood in which the personal would be raised to the level of the social'.[46] For these diarists, resistance to Soviet ideology did not play out as a struggle between the individual and society but as a battle within the self, where

'doubting Soviet subjects' appeared not as 'heroic liberal agents' but as 'atomised selves in crisis, longing to overcome their painful separation from the collective body of the Soviet people'.[47]

Hellbeck argues that the diarists' desires to perfect their revolutionary selves were not imposed from without but were evidence of 'individual agency, agency that is not autonomous in nature but is produced by, and dynamically interacts with, ideology'.[48] His work integrates the emphasis on ideology of the totalitarian theorists with the championing of agency in the 'revisionist' social history to create an account of agency with the ideology left in. Furthermore, Hellbeck amply demonstrates the centrality of collective subjectivity to the revolutionary era by tracing the strong pre-revolutionary antecedents that made this particular view of the self attractive to large swathes of the Russian intelligentsia. By privileging collectivism, however, he downplays other competing discourses of pre-revolutionary selfhood and citizenship.[49]

In Hellbeck's work, the content of Stalinist ideology consists of an anticapitalist mentality, faith in the socialist Utopian future, and a self that can feel validated only while merging with a collective that is in step with the Hegelian laws of history. Whether it is the lonely and hysterical spinster Zinaida Denisevskaia, the more upwardly mobile Leonid Potemkin, or the desperate Aleksandr Afinogenov trying to reinstate himself at the Stalinist court, we see Soviet subjects working on themselves, purging doubts, cleansing themselves of ideological impurities, suppressing deviance, banishing the banality of daily life in a transcendental attempt to merge into the glorious history of the nation. Hellbeck argues that Soviet subjects were neither automatons nor brainwashed individuals. Instead they exhibit a rich interiority, a vibrant mental landscape filled with doubts and anxiety. They use tools of self-fashioning, such as intense introspection, self-doubt, and writing a diary, but they are ultimately impoverished by the paucity of their desires and imagination. In their attempts to align their lonely lives with the Stalinist collective, Hellbeck's protagonists are indifferent to both the vicissitudes and the victims of history. Because Hellbeck does not heed the contradictory elements in the texts that resist his overarching interpretation, his readings of the diarists' senses of selfhood and their inner lives are curiously attenuated and tend toward the one-dimensional. Apart from their theoretical commitment to the revolution, Hellbeck's protagonists lack any sense of what constitutes a full life. They do not believe that personal relations, family, or the sphere of domesticity can be sources of meaning and affirmation.

The banal self

Kharkhordin ends his book with tantalising comments about the individual's relationship to the collective in Russian and Soviet history but does not really elaborate on these ideas. Similarly, Hellbeck's diarists long to join the Soviet collective, but the collective is never theorised and remains in the realm of inarticulate desire. In contrast to this idea of the collective, both Svetlana Boym and Barbara Walker have reintroduced the concept of the domestic or the banal self. By redirecting attention to the banality of everyday life in the Soviet Union, which necessitated multiple negotiations and compromises with the theoretical norms of Stalinist subjectivity, Boym and Walker have positioned the Soviet self as both an individual and a part of the social realm in the contextualised domestic settings of the family and the intelligentsia *kruzhok* (circle).[50]

Boym's work is distinct from the other scholars discussed in two regards: she is a literary scholar rather than a historian, and her work focuses on the post-Stalin period. Despite these differences, her emphasis on historicising the everyday offers an important tool for the study of the self that is equally applicable to the early Soviet period. Boym turns her attention to the post–World War II generation and critically analyses the polar opposites of Hellbeck's aspiring revolutionaries: the *poshlye meshchane*, the ones who longed to decorate their apartments with porcelain elephants and keep yellow canaries in cages.[51] Soviet poet Vladimir Maiakovskii wrote that it was 'Better to twist off canaries' heads/ So communism won't be struck down by canaries'.[52] Hellbeck's heroes longed to do away with their private lives and merge with the revolution; Boym considers the literary representations of people who wanted both a canary and an apartment to put it in. Her approach differs sharply from Vera Dunham's seminal work on materialism in Soviet literature.[53] Dunham sternly criticised the new Soviet middle class for giving up their revolutionary asceticism, condemned their obsession with private life and material possessions, and berated them for their poor aesthetic taste. Boym, on the other hand, takes to task the generations of Russian and Soviet intelligentsia who have valorised the sacrifice of daily life in the name of utopia, be it religious or secular. She asks provocatively, 'The question is, do these theorists describe Russian culture or perpetuate its cultural mythology? Why is there such a national insistence upon the uniqueness of the Russian conception of the everyday, and a desire to live out what appears to be a common romantic metaphor of the battle against the ordinary?'[54]

In her insightful analysis of the banality of everyday life in the post-Stalinist era, Boym reprises the literary representation of the domestic that Hellbeck's subjects try to banish and critiques the attitudes that led to the banishment of the domestic in the first place. Exhibiting an ironic nostalgia, she revisits the various artefacts of late Soviet apartment life, such as the carefully guarded porcelain tea sets, the bound volumes of Aleksandr Pushkin that adorned the glass bookcases of the Soviet intelligentsia, and the records of Bulat Okhudzhava, the bard of antiheroic everyday life in the Soviet Union. As she says, 'the so-called domestic trash rebelled against the ideological purges and remained as the secret residue of privacy that shielded people from imposed and internalised communality'.[55] The objects might not have been precisely the same in the Stalin era, but there is no doubt that analogous 'domestic trash' performed a similar function.

According to Boym, while the Stalinist state created models of heroic selfhood, such as Pavlik Morozov, the heroic Young Pioneer, Stalin's subjects never adapted their behaviour in accord with these models. Using intelligentsia memoirs, Boym briefly mentions several forms of diminished and attenuated selfhood that existed under Stalinism: one was intent on survival, another focused on momentary gratification, and yet others engaged in varying forms of compromise, betraying their inner selves by public compliance. Although Boym never elaborates on these tantalising reflections on selfhood, she points to the necessity of integrating everyday life into our public histories of Stalinism.

Like Boym, Walker, in her innovative biography of Maksimilian Voloshin, locates her subjects in precise modern geographies of the kitchen, the dacha, the *dom otdykha* (rest house): the familiar sites of intelligentsia performance, self-understanding, and self-representation. Walker, in a nuanced and accessible work, has explicated the complicated relationships that link the Soviet self, the community, and domestic existence. Rather than consider Voloshin as a literary figure par excellence, Walker sees him as a successful intelligentsia patron who not only possessed a refined literary sensibility but was at the same time a mentor to a generation of intellectuals. Voloshin was one of the few intellectual patrons – apart from Maksim Gor'kii, of course – who was able to conduct a literary salon across the revolutionary divide of 1917 with courage, aplomb, and success. He parlayed his advantages of class, education, and extraordinary networking skills to secure an existence for his circle in the new Soviet order.

Literary critics have focused on the literary and intellectual contributions of the patrons of these circles. Walker argues that one should

also consider Voloshin's managerial abilities, since he kept the circle intact through the intelligentsia quarrels of the pre-revolutionary era. During the early Soviet period, as the recurrent economic crises forced the once oppositional intelligentsia into an uneasy alliance with the state, Voloshin demonstrated his negotiating skills by securing a rest house for his protégés in Koktebel in the Crimea, as well as financial resources, food, and provisions that became crucial for the circle's survival. Rather than portray the intelligentsia as a hapless pawn in the hands of the Soviet state, Walker, in a novel argument, shows how Voloshin was able to balance the state's demands for political allegiance while extracting considerable resources from the new bureaucratised circuits of state patronage to maintain the domestic life of his circle. But Walker does not ignore Voloshin's interior world and, much in the manner of Hellbeck, explores the multifaceted dimensions of Voloshin's extraordinary personality, his intellectual world, and the private life that nurtured his networking skills. Voloshin and the members of his circle shaped their selfhood through the complex personal, domestic, artistic, economic, and political relations within the *kruzhok* and through its interactions with Soviet authorities.

Over the past 50 years, Western historians have applied distinct models of selfhood to the various dimensions of Soviet subjectivity and used these to explore its location and performance in the realms of the private and the public. The members of the totalitarian school, while acknowledging that the backward Russian nation required rapid modernisation, simultaneously created the image of a lonely, atomised, and fearful Soviet self, unable to take action against state violence and terror. Within this framework, the Soviet subject lacked the autonomy of private and intimate spaces to nurture a liberal selfhood that was capable of resistance. Fitzpatrick and Kotkin have argued against the totalitarian model that saw the Soviet self as a passive recipient of ideology and violence and have shown how the pragmatic Soviet subject dodged, wheedled, cajoled, bribed, and in the final analysis, both internalised and resisted the Soviet norms of selfhood. But both Fitzpatrick and Kotkin see the private sphere of Soviet life as a series of public spaces where Soviet subjectivities were performed. In Kharkhordin and Hellbeck's analysis, it is not the state but the Soviet subjects themselves who banish and negate the validity of private existence. While Kharkhordin has outlined the penitential model of the public self that was constituted in the realm of normative discourses, Hellbeck has shown how some Soviet citizens attempted to align their identity with the demands of Stalinist ideology in the intimacy of their souls. Boym and Walker have brought us down

to earth from the heights of revolutionary rhetoric to the domestic interior and the banality of everyday life in the Soviet Union, the practices of communal living, the petty jealousies, the quarrels, and the nostalgia. While Hellbeck's subjects try to purge the detritus of domesticity, the unbearable ordinariness of the self outside the revolutionary narrative, Walker posits daily life as a continuum that exists alongside revolutionary and Utopian existence. She argues that the analytic integration of the two makes possible both the heroic Soviet self and its banal domestic twin.

Despite its focus on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century history, another model of selfhood has great potential for explaining Soviet subjectivity. Emphasising agency in the elaboration of Russian selfhood, Laura Engelstein and Mark D. Steinberg seek to elaborate the ways in which modern Russian subjects fought to expand the spheres of their own autonomous actions.[56] In her erudite interpretation of the 'search for happiness' in fin de siècle Russia, Engelstein documents the clash between the old patriarchal order and the newly emerging liberal order, in which professionals such as doctors and jurists regarded the individual as an object of discipline rather than a subject enmeshed in the hierarchy of paternal control and reciprocal obligations. But as Engelstein astutely points out, in an absolutist context, the Russian liberal self did not function as it was supposed to. Jurists, medical experts, and criminologists framed themselves as purveyors of expert knowledge with a right to regulate the public and private behaviour of the masses, but they refused to see women, homosexuals, and criminals as self-actuating civic subjects. Rather than work with the tsarist state to create the modern welfare state, these Russian experts clashed with the absolutist state over who should frame the object of discipline and how knowledge should be applied.

Furthermore, the identities of Russian liberals were not grounded in their expertise alone, and Engelstein shows that they were equally receptive to the lures of the market, modernism, popular literature (both Western and native), pornography, and eroticism. Liberals were inhabitants, consumers, and shapers of the market of opinion, not just purveyors of normative discourses with a messianic belief in the future. Like Engelstein and her liberal subjects, Steinberg interrogates the mentality of a class that came into existence because of modernisation and industrialisation in the Russian Empire in the late nineteenth century. Steinberg shows that the worker intelligentsia, through its access to literature and philosophy, was able to use both Western and Russian discourses and cultural tropes to fashion a distinctive sense of

ambivalent selfhood that was rich in contradictions and complexities. These individuals used religious metaphors to express their tragic sensibility and their location in a community marked by exploitation and suffering. But at the same time, the proletarian poets Steinberg studies exhibited a messianic self-realisation and saw themselves as symbols of the future. Despite their ambiguous feelings about modernisation, these proletarian poets looked forward to an apocalyptic revolution in which their individual selves would become part of a suprahistorical class.

Engelstein and Steinberg have created complex portraits of potentially liberal subjects who exercised agency in self-fashioning, were sceptical of the law, and were divided about the future. Both the experts and these literate, thoughtful workers saw themselves as superior to the crowd but conjoined with them by suffering and oppression. Although creatures of modernity, they exhibited profound misgivings about modernisation. Finally, liberals and workers used an eclectic palette of ideas, literature, and philosophies, both high and low, imported and local, to construct a sense of self that was intimately tied to different imaginary collectives. As Steinberg has shown, this model of ambivalence continued across the revolutionary divide, and the Soviet state used strict censorship and didactic literary models to purge proletarian prose and poetry of its doubts, quasi-religious sensibility, and regretful nostalgia.

But to what degree was the state successful in purging ambivalence and imposing a single framework for interpreting and locating selfhood? After all, ambivalence has proven to be an enduring hallmark of both the modern and the postmodern condition. Quintessentially modern subjects suffer pangs of intense self-doubt even as they reflexively affirm and fashion their subjectivities from the available cultural repertoires and within the material constraints of the system. Indeed the insecurity of modern subjects may result from their innate capacity to reflect on themselves. Hellbeck's subjects yearn to locate themselves within Stalinist ideological time, but as Charles Taylor has elaborated in his concept of 'epistemic gain', the transition from one moral framework of self-understanding to another is rarely an absolute phenomenon.[57] Older evaluative frameworks lurk in the background, and the transition may sometimes take an epoch to complete. The Soviet self was likely produced in these dynamic encounters between the partially Sovietised individual and the marginally more Sovietised agents of a didactic and coercive state. The individual was supposed to imbibe and enforce a variety of prescribed behaviours, but every performance of the self on the violent stage of Soviet modernisation had the potential to alter the

script, transforming both the nature of the Soviet social world and the identities of the actors.

If we allow for multiple and nuanced readings of the scripts of discourse, the performances, and the selfhood of the actors, we can acknowledge that it was possible for the Soviet self to possess contradictory sensibilities and exhibit mixed emotions as it negotiated biological needs, interpreted cultural codes, and constructed self-definitions in dialogue with state and community precepts. Could faith in the revolutionary utopia and socialist mores coexist with disbelief, irony, and even resistance to certain aspects of the system? Finally, was it possible to generate entirely new cultural codes of meaning about identity and selfhood through both scripted and unscripted performances?[58] Party and state activists, like welfare professionals in the West, attempted to create disciplined and modern citizens in such sites as the factory, the collective farm, and the labour camps and cultured and discerning socialist consumers in the home. Their project, like other attempts to construct utopias of modernity, fell short of its purported goals and instead produced new and unexpected identities. As long as we keep essentialising the Soviet self and ascribing to it a single set of identifiable characteristics, we will continue to reproduce the singular Soviet citizens of our theoretical dreams rather than address the complex subject positions that they fashioned, inhabited, and exhibited.

The capacity for introspection and self-creation is an important attribute of the modern self, but Taylor has also identified work, family, relationships – in short, what he calls the 'ordinary life' – as important sources of affirmation and meaning for individuals. Social scientists have an easier time accessing the performance than the self that produces the performance, but this fact should not lead them to deny that Soviet citizens possessed an authentic sense of self that was nurtured and created in the realm of the ordinary.[59] The private/intimate/domestic spheres of existence are neither ahistorical nor transhistorical phenomena, and new monographs in the field have shown us that these intimate realms of existence in both Russia and the Soviet Union were dramatically shaped by the forces of history. As Alf Lüdtke's sensitive work on everyday life in Nazi Germany has shown, subjects in totalitarian societies exerted agency in interpreting politics and ideology within the daily conditions of their existence and derived subjective affirmations from various microhistorical settings.[60] Private life, instead of disappearing from the Soviet Union in accordance with the dictates of historical materialism, reappeared in various and ingenious forms of domestic arrangements and social relationships in communal apartments, tent cities, barracks,

dachas, labour camps, and places of exile, providing fertile soil for the creation and articulation of new identities. We need a methodology that integrates the notion of the authentic self, the domestic sources of affirmation, the larger frameworks of meanings, and the various sites of its performance. Perhaps if we can situate the Soviet self along a continuum of the domestic setting, the intimate collective, the larger socially imagined realities of class, ethnicity, gender, religious affiliations, and nationality and explore how it intersects with the discourses and practices of the state, we might better be able to trace the individual's range of possible actions within his or her complex and multiple subject positions.

Finally, we need to consider our own positionality and our own stance as supposedly neutral observers of the Soviet self, given that we are shaped by the modern Anglo-American and Indian models of selfhood. As various commentators on the subject have warned us, the self-reflexivity of the historian should not be an excuse for either self-indulgence or narcissism.[61] But although the danger of projecting one's own particular selfhood on the subjects of historical inquiry is ever present, historians must remain connected to their own experiences as a point of comparison for any meaningful historical examination lest they fetishise an impossibly exotic Soviet other.

Notes

We thank various people whose excellent suggestions and criticisms have greatly enriched this essay. They include the anonymous reviewers of *Slavic Review*, as well as Kate Brown, Deborah Field, Lisa Kirschenbaum, Alf Lüdtke, Rennie Schoepflin, Mark D. Steinberg, Barbara Walker, and Scott Wells. We also thank Jie-Hyun Lim, who invited us to present a version of this essay at the fifth conference on Mass Dictatorships organised by the Research Institute of Comparative History and Culture at Hanyang University, in Seoul, Korea, June 2007.

1. For an excellent example of this type of work, see Laura Engelstein and Stephanie Sandler, eds, *Self and Story in Russian History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).
2. Jerrold E. Seigel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experience in Western Europe since the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 3–44. Choi Chatterjee and Karen Petrone, 'Models of Selfhood and Subjectivity: The Soviet Case in Historical Perspective', *Slavic Review* 67/4 (Winter 2008), 967–986.
3. Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).
4. We thank Deborah Field for emphasising the role of agency in understanding the formation of the self.
5. Andreas Schönle, ed., *Lotman and Cultural Studies: Encounters and Extensions* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006); Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais*

and His World, trans. Hélène Iswolsky (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1968); Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. R. W. Rotsel (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1973).

6. Eric Naiman, 'On Soviet Subjects and the Scholars Who Make Them', *Russian Review* 60/3 (July 2001), 307–15; Irina Paperno, 'What Can Be Done with Diaries', *Russian Review* 63/4 (October 2004), 561–73. See also Thomas Lahusen, *How Life Writes the Book: Real Socialism and Socialist Realism in Stalin's Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). Thus Boris Wolfson in his essay on the writer Iurii Olesha's diaries has two distinct goals. While he documents Olesha's efforts at self-surveillance and self-censorship as the writer tries to attain the status of the new man, Wolfson is equally interested in Olesha's attempts to create a new literary form and language by purging plots, characters, and excessive literary ornamentation from his prose. Wolfson, 'Escape from Literature: Constructing the Soviet Self in Yuri Olesha's Diary of the 1930s', *Russian Review* 63/4 (October 2004), 609–20.
7. Thus Paperno, in her nuanced analyses of Soviet memoirs and dreams, is careful to present the idiosyncratic voices of her subjects along with her conclusion that there was 'a sense of self derived from the experience of fear, repression, and deprivation imposed by the state; a self worthy to be submitted as historical material'. Paperno, 'Personal Accounts of the Soviet Experience', *Kritika* 3/4 (Fall 2002), 609; Irina Paperno, 'Dreams of Terror: Dreams of Stalinist Russia as a Historical Source', *Kritika* 7/4 (Fall 2006), 793–824. Paperno makes a conscious attempt to sustain the multilayered subjectivity of her subjects and the distinctiveness of their inner lives within her larger generalisations about Soviet subjecthood.
8. Lilya Kaganovsky, 'How the Soviet Man Was (Un)Made', *Slavic Review* 63/3 (Fall 2004), 577–96. For a historical reading that is particularly sensitive to literary concerns, see Anna Krylova, 'In Their Own Words? Soviet Women Writers and the Search for Self', in Adele Marie Barker and Jehanne M. Gheith, eds, *A History of Women's Writing in Russia* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 243–63.
9. David L. Hoffmann and Yanni Kotsonis, eds, *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledge, Practices* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); David L. Hoffmann, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917–1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003); Peter Holquist, *Making War and Forging Revolution: Russia's Continuum of Crisis, 1914–1921* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).
10. David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931–1956* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Choi Chatterjee, *Celebrating Women: Gender, Festival Culture and Bolshevik Ideology, 1910–1939* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002); Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of Nations (*Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005); Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Douglas Northrop, *Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004) ; Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). See also Frederick Cooper's critical discussion on the overextension of the term modernity by historians in

his monograph *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

11. The most famous example from this corpus of European literature is of course Astolphe, the Marquis de Custine's classic 1839 text, *Empire of the Czar: A Journey through Eternal Russia* (New York: Doubleday, 1989); Irena Grudzinska Gross, "The Tangled Tradition: Custine, Herberstein, Karamzin, and the Critique of Russia," *Slavic Review* 50/4 (Winter 1991), 989–98.
12. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994) ; see also Marshall T. Poe, *"A People Born to Slavery": Russia in Early Modern European Ethnography, 1476–1748* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).
13. John Lewis Gaddis, *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: An Interpretive History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1990); Christopher Lasch, *The American Liberals and the Russian Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962); Norman Saul, *Concord and Conflict: The United States and Russia, 1867–1914* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996); Frederick F. Travis, *George Kennan and the American-Russian Relationship, 1865–1924* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1990); William Appleman Williams, *American-Russian Relations, 1781–1947* (New York: Rinehart, 1952).
14. David Charles Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
15. Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
16. See esp. E. H. Carr's multivolume *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917–1923* (New York: Macmillan, 1950).
17. Theodore H. Von Laue, *Why Lenin? Why Stalin? A Reappraisal of the Russian Revolution, 1900–1930* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1964), p. 206.
18. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966).
19. Ibid., p. 315.
20. Ibid., p. 325.
21. Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski's *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956); Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1962); Bertram Wolfe, *An Ideology in Power: Reflections on the Russian Revolution* (New York: Stein and Day, 1969). See also Choi Chatterjee, 'Ideology, Gender, and Propaganda in the Soviet Union: A Historical Survey', *Left History* 6/2 (Fall 1999), 11–28. In addition to Friedrich and Brzezinski, the classics of the totalitarian school of historiography include Merle Fainsod, *How Russia Is Ruled*, rev. edn (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); Adam Ulam, *Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1960); Donald W. Treadgold, *Twentieth Century Russia* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1959); Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). For a recent view based on archival evidence, see Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1993); Vladimir Brovkin, ed., *The Bolsheviks in*

Russian Society: The Revolution and the Civil Wars (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

22. See Stephen Cohen's excellent critique of this school in *Rethinking the Soviet Experience: Politics and History since 1917* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
23. Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* (New York: Macmillan, 1968); Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879–1929: A Study in History and Personality* (New York: Norton, 1973), and *Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above, 1928–1941* (New York: Norton, 1990); Mikhail Heller and Aleksandr Nekrich, *Utopia in Power: The History of the Soviet Union from 1917 to the Present*, trans. Phyllis B. Carlos (New York: Summit Books, 1986).
24. Alex Inkeles and Raymond A. Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen: Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959).
25. Moshe Lewin was one of the more vocal proponents of Soviet modernisation and the convergence theory; see his perceptive work *The Gorbachev Phenomenon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). See also Mark Edele, 'Soviet Society, Social Structure, and Everyday Life: Major Frameworks Reconsidered', *Kritika* 8/2 (Spring 2007), 349–73.
26. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Jacques Rancière, *The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); William Sewell, *Work and Revolution in France: The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963) ; Ronald Grigor Suny's article, 'Revision and Retreat in the Historiography of 1917: Social History and Its Critics', *Russian Review* 53/2 (April 1994), 165–82, offers an excellent account of the paradigm shift from social to cultural history.
27. Sheila Fitzpatrick. *Tear off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 8–9.
28. Ibid., p. 151.
29. Ibid., p. 113.
30. Ibid., p. 152.
31. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959).
32. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), *The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky, October 1917–1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), and ed., *Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928–1931* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978).
33. Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p. 14.
34. Ibid., p. 22.

35. Ibid., pp. 147–55; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action,* trans. Randal Johnson et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).
36. 'Governmentality', in Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, eds, *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984* (New York: New Press, 2003), pp. 229–45.
37. Igal Halfin and Jochen Hellbeck have accused Kotkin of insufficiently theorising Soviet subjectivity, but we believe that Kotkin facilitated Foucault's acceptance in our field. See their review 'Rethinking the Stalinist Subject: Stephen Kotkin's "Magnetic Mountain" and the State of Soviet Historical Studies', *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 44/3 (1996), 456–63.
38. Works by Foucault consulted include *Madness and Civilization* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965); *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977); *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978). See also Rabinow and Rose, eds, *The Essential Foucault*; Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); See Jerrold Seigel's penetrating analysis of Foucault's writings on self in *Idea of the Self*, pp. 603–50; James Miller's biography, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), is an excellent introduction to the life and thought of the philosopher.
39. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton, eds, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* (London: Tavistock, 1988).
40. Michel Foucault. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality* (New York, 1985), 2, p. 29.
41. Oleg Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Igal Halfin, *From Darkness to Light: Class, Consciousness, and Salvation in Revolutionary Russia* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000), and *Terror in My Soul: Communist Autobiographies on Trial* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). On Foucault's applicability to a non-Western context, see Laura Engelstein, 'Combined Underdevelopment: Discipline and the Law in Imperial and Soviet Russia', *American Historical Review* 98/2 (April 1993), 338–53; Jan Goldstein, 'Framing Discipline with Law: Problems and Promises of the Liberal State', *American Historical Review* 98/2 (April 1993), 364–75; and Jan Plamper, 'Foucault's Gulag', *Kritika* 3/2 (Spring 2002), 255–80.
42. Benda Hofmeyr, 'The Power Not to Be (What We Are): The Politics and Ethics of Self-Creation in Foucault', *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 3/2 (July 2006), 215–30; T. J. Berard, 'Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, and the Reformulation of Social Theory', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 29/3 (September 1999), 203–27.
43. Halfin and Hellbeck show how individuals who enthusiastically supported the Bolshevik project actually constituted themselves through their engagement with revolutionary ideology. Halfin emphasises that the communist biographies were essential tools for the moulding of the self and the purification of the soul. To be absolutely pure, however, communists also had to see into the

souls of others and assess their purity. Evaluation of self and surveillance of others were thus thoroughly intertwined. Halfin, *Terror in My Soul*, 7.

44. See Svetlana Boym's interesting comments on Hellbeck's construction of Soviet subjectivity. 'Kak sdelana "sovetskaia sub'ektivnost'"'? *Ab Imperio* 3 (2002), 285–97.
45. Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind*, 3.
46. Ibid., pp. 93–4.
47. Ibid., p. 114. See also Anna Krylova, 'The Tenacious Liberal Subject in Soviet Studies', *Kritika* 1/1 (Winter 2000), 119–46; Yanni Kotsonis, '"No Place to Go": Taxation and State Transformation in Late Imperial and Early Soviet Russia', *Journal of Modern History* 76/3 (2004), 531–77.
48. Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind*, 12.
49. Eric Lohr, 'The Ideal Citizen and Real Subject in Late Imperial Russia', *Kritika* 8/2 (Spring 2006), 173–94.
50. Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994); Barbara Walker, *Maximilian Voloshin and the Russian Literary Circle: Culture and Survival in Revolutionary Times* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005).
51. The history of domesticity and everyday life is beginning to attract the attention of both Russian and Western scholars. See G. Andreevskii, *Povsednevnaia zhizn' Moskvy v stalinskuiu epokhu, 1920–1930-e gody* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia 2003); Christina Kiaer and Eric Naiman, eds, *Everyday Life in Early Soviet Russia: Taking the Revolution Inside* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); N. B. Lebina, *Povsednevnaia zhizn': Normy i anomalii, sovetskogo goroda 1920/1930 gody* (St Petersburg: Zhurnal "Neva": Izdatel'sko-torgovyi dom "Letnii sad", 1999); N. B. Lebina, *Entsiklopediia banalnostei: Sovetskaia povsednevnost'— Kontury, simvoly, znaki* (St Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2006); N. B. Lebina and A. N. Chistikov, *Obyvatel'i reformy: Kartiny povsednevnoi zhizni gorozhan v gody NEPa i khrushchevskogo desiatiletiia* (St Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin, 2003); Stephen Lovell, Alena V. Ledeneva, and Andrei Rogachevskii, eds, *Bribery and Blat in Russia: Negotiating Reciprocity from the Middle Ages to the 1990s* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000); Timo Vihavainen, *Normy i tsennosti povsednevnoi zhizni: Stanovlenie sotsialisticheskogo obraza zhizni v Rossii, 1920–1930-e gody* (St Petersburg: Zhurnal "Neva", 2000).
52. Quoted in Boym, *Common Places*, 34.
53. Vera S. Dunham, *In Stalin's Time: Middle-class Values in Soviet Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
54. Boym, *Common Places*, 30. Historians who have investigated the forms and nature of pre-revolutionary private, domestic, and intimate life include Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read: Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861–1917* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Mary W. Cavender, *Nests of the Gentry: Family, Estate and Local Loyalties in Provincial Russia* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007) ; Edith W. Clowes, Samuel D. Kassow, and James L. West, eds, *Between Tsar and People: Educated Society and the Quest for Public Identity in Late Imperial Russia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Louise McReynolds, *Russia at Play: Leisure Activities at the End of the Tsarist Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003) ; and John Randolph, *The House in the Garden: The Bakunin Family and the Romance of Russian Idealism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

55. Boym, *Common Places*, 150.
56. Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in fin de siècle Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); Mark D. Steinberg, *Proletarian Imagination: Self Modernity, and the Sacred in Russia, 1910–1925* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).
57. Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989). See Craig Calhoun's excellent review essay 'Morality, Identity, and Historical Explanation: Charles Taylor on the Sources of the Self', *Sociological Theory* 9/2 (Autumn 1991), 232–63.
58. Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), raises these possibilities in the post-Stalin era.
59. Beth Holmgren has also argued about the importance of the gendered domestic sphere in the framing and shaping of Soviet political dissidence. See Holmgren, *Women's Works in Stalin's Time: On Lidiia Chukhovskaia and Nadezhda Mandelstam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).
60. Alf Lüdtke, ed., *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, trans. William Tempter (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).
61. Susan A. Crane, 'Historical Subjectivity: A Review Essay', *Journal of Modern History* 78/2 (June 2006), 434–56; Ruth Behar, *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), and *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993); Philip Carl Salzman, 'On Reflexivity', *American Anthropologist* 104/3 (September 2002), 805–11; Nina Turnarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

12

The End of the Weimar Republic: Individual Agency, Germany's 'Old Elites', and the 'Crisis of Classical Modernity'

Peter Lambert

This chapter reconsiders developments in high politics in Germany in the period 1930–30 January 1933. It seeks in particular to review the manoeuvres that culminated in Hitler's appointment as chancellor in the light of the two approaches which have underpinned much research on the Weimar Republic in general in recent decades. On the one hand, the Fischerites and Bielefeld School had argued that the fundamental problem of the Weimar Republic lay in its want of modernity, in the many hangovers from imperial Germany which characterised it, and most of all in the continuing and structurally determined power of Germany's 'old elites' working together in a close 'alliance'. This perspective was anchored in the *Sonderweg* thesis, which, positing a 'Western' norm of modernisation, held Germany to have been an aberrant exception. Detlev Peukert challenged this approach at its roots. In a seminal study first published in 1987 under the title *Die Weimarer Republik: Die Krisenjahre der klassischen Moderne*,[1] he here asserted that Weimar Germany, far from having missed some kind of alleged opportunity to modernise, represented a paradigmatic, indeed a 'classical' case, of modernity. An advanced capitalist economy, a welfare state that was even enshrined in the constitution, a large and growing service sector, bureaucracy and administrative systems, a shared belief in science and scientificity as a kind of cure-all – these are among the hallmarks of 'classical modernity' as he defined it. Mass participatory politics is another. Peukert argued that a *crisis* of classical modernity unleashed 'pathologies' whose virulent *potential* had always been embedded in

modernity itself. Of the two aspects of a 'Janus-faced'[2] modernity, it was the grim visage, the 'dark side',[3] that thus came to dominate. Germany's 'old elites' cannot, therefore, be held solely or simply responsible for the advent of the Third Reich.

In one respect, Peukert's thesis sought to lead historians *away from* the death agony and *toward* the earlier and middle years of the Weimar Republic. In so doing, he sought to accomplish two goals. First, he wanted to encourage a view of the 1920s in Germany that would allow them to be understood *in their own terms*, not only as a kind of midrange prelude to Nazism. Second, he wanted to challenge one shibboleth of the historiographical left, arguing that the fundamental weaknesses of German democracy *cannot* be laid chiefly or straightforwardly at the door of a 'failed' or 'uncompleted' revolution of 1918–19. The 'failure' in question had been located precisely in the fact of the survival of the 'old elites' – with much of their old wealth and power still intact. Given that (rather oddly) big business was generally included in definitions of what constituted 'old' elites, Marxist and non-Marxist left-wing historians could find broad agreement that it was herein that key problems for the Weimar Republic were to be found. The 'German Revolution' had accomplished only surface changes: in society and the economy, deep continuities remained.

Peukert, however, pointed out that a 'less "unfinished" revolution would have had to battle against the same difficulties'[4] as those in fact encountered by the Weimar Republic. The social and economic problems Germany faced after the First World War are not explicable principally in relation to vestiges of an old order. Rather, they were essentially generic to the modern condition. In as much as they were especially acute in Germany, that is so because of the dangerously combustible admixture of unrealistic, utopian hopes invested in modernity on the one hand and, on the other, the inordinately burdensome legacy of the war, rendering any possibility of fulfilling those expectations infinitely remote. In consequence, Peukert argued, contests over the distribution of resources grew in scale and intensity through the 1920s, and room for manoeuvre in addressing them diminished. Thus, the broad direction of his argument seems clear. Even *if* the power of the army officer corps – and of the aristocracy within it – *had* been broken in 1918–19, even *if* the great estates east of the Elbe *had* been broken up, even *if* the upper echelons of the civil service *had* been somehow democratised, and even *if* cartels and the power of big business *had* been ended, there is no reason to suppose that the Depression would not have hit Germany in much the way that it in fact did or that

the conditions within which a mass movement of fascism flourished would never have arisen.

What happened between 1930 and the Nazi 'seizure' of power, Peukert suggested, is testimony, not to the strength, but precisely to the weakness of the elites. Again, the drift of his argument seems to confirm the modernity of Germany's condition – particularly as the Republic's final crisis loomed. In 1930, the elites' attempted political comeback through rule by presidential decree had been rendered possible only because the beginning of the Depression had brought about a power vacuum in the Reichstag. Intent on bringing pluralist parliamentary democracy to an end and gathering more and more of the trappings of power in the hands of ever fewer of their individual representatives, the elites created a conundrum for themselves. They ruled in the name of a restoration of law and order, of a restoration of 'domestic peace', and imagined a 'restoration' in a much broader political and cultural sense. The society over which they nominally presided, however, was becoming increasingly lawless, disorderly, and violent. There was no force they could muster to offset mass politics. 'If the Brüning and Papen regimes had been successful,' Peukert suggested, 'there might perhaps be some justification for enlisting their traditionalism as evidence in favour of the hypothesis of a "Sonderweg". But their very failure shows that the dynamic thrust of the process of modernisation could no longer be held in check.'[5] The logic of these circumstances drove elite representatives into the Nazis' arms. This argument was and is a familiar one: only with the Nazis' mass base of support could the elite hope to secure their authoritarian project. In desperation, they turned a blind eye to the radicalism and dynamism of Nazism. And then, of course, it proved in the longer run that the conventionally conservative ends did not justify the new, Nazi, means. The means ineluctably and fundamentally altered the ends, so that of course the outcome was not the 'restoration' of a modified imperial German authoritarianism but the Nazi mass dictatorship.

Peukert's work has of course provided an agenda for a host of scholars. Recent work on welfare, health, and medicine – the areas most closely identified with Peukert's own pioneering research[6] – continues to tease away at the questions he asked and the insights he offered.[7] Caught between the desire to help their clients and to discipline them and working with resources that were manifestly inadequate in the years of mass unemployment in particular, hard-pressed welfare workers looked for new, 'scientific' ways of discriminating between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' poor. Faced with the same kinds of demand on their limited time and resources, many health care professionals tried to

discriminate between their patients. In the domain of mental health, for instance, murderous potential was already identifiable in the way they reasoned. The victim of a temporary nervous breakdown, for instance, deserved all their care and attention: she or he could return as a useful, active member of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Attending to the needs of the incurably ill, by contrast, served only to prevent doctors and nurses from achieving that goal. Here was an ethical dilemma. How might doctors or nurses square it with their consciences were they to neglect one kind of patient in favour of another? Science seemed to offer a route out. The form of eugenics increasingly associable with Nazism suggested that frittering resources away on 'life not worth living' was itself immoral. Everywhere historians have looked, scientism and rationality in the Weimar Republic appeared capable at the least of exhibiting pathological tendencies.

If Peukert himself suggested that the advent of the Nazi regime and the attendant dismemberment of the *Rechtsstaat* were nevertheless necessary further conditions for all that murderous potential to be unlocked, Nazism itself was modern. Again, recent research has confirmed this impression over and over. In its electoral appeal – to take just one example – the Nazi Party alone among the parties of the Weimar Republic prefigured the political parties of the Federal Republic of Germany. It was a *Volkspartei*, uniquely capable of bridging the gulfs – of class, region, religion, and political culture – that had long kept German voters divided into quasi-tribal camps. In that respect, it prefigured the politics of the Federal Republic of Germany through most of the second half of the twentieth century.[8]

Yet a close reading of Peukert reveals what appear to be vestiges of the (now all but notorious) *Sonderweg* thesis. For all his insistence – alongside Weimar's modernity – on the weakness of the 'old elites', he assigned a crucial role to them. It was they, according to Peukert, who tilted a delicately balanced political position decisively in the Nazis' favour. Specifically, they were directly party to the deal that brought Hitler into office. It had emerged as a distinct possibility in the course of 1932 and was brought to fruition in January of the following year.[9] Tellingly, in identifying the non-Nazi authors of that deal, Peukert used such phrases as 'the political clique surrounding the Reich President' and 'the consortium of elite representatives' virtually interchangeably.[10] Indeed, it was 'only thanks to' that elite 'consortium' that 'Hitler was given the chance of translating the destructive dynamism of the National Socialist movement into the *Machtergreifung*, the seizure of power', and so in turn 'released the destructive energies of the "Third Reich"'.[11] The Nazis

could not have taken power by any other means. They 'lacked sufficient electoral backing to assume power on their own'.[12] Indeed, the NSDAP (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, National Socialist German Workers' Party) was given power at a point when it 'had reason to fear a haemorrhage of its own supporters'.[13] And more: if the old elites had simply walked into a political void in 1930, their own subsequent efforts in groping for authoritarian solutions had only succeeded in adding to problems: having themselves 'destroyed what was left of the republican constitution', the elites had 'created' a circumstance in which a 'power vacuum' persisted until 30 January 1933.[14]

Unmistakably, then, and in some of the very last passages in his book, Peukert moved the 'old elites' back to centre stage. Should we regard Peukert's last-minute restoration of the elites to that focal point as a mere anachronism, an archaic remnant of an older view which, had he completed his own paradigm shift, he would have thought better of? I myself – for reasons that will, I hope, become clear – do not think that Peukert was wrong in this. Least of all do I imagine that he might have been wrong simply because remnants of an older orthodoxy are visible in the closing sections of his highly innovative account of Weimar. But that he of all people should have placed so much emphasis on the role of the old elites does raise problems regarding the rest of his contentions.

First, I think that it provides good grounds for reopening the sequence of 'what if?' questions raised above. *Had* the German Revolution settled accounts with the landed aristocracy and the army officer corps, it is difficult to imagine a Hindenburg candidacy for the presidency in 1925, let alone the well-funded campaign that Hindenburg went on to win in that year. It is at least as hard to imagine another candidate around whom that anti-Republican right could have gathered forces at that point. Without Hindenburg (or a similarly inclined individual) occupying the presidency in 1930, there is no reason to suppose that successive governments would have made a virtue of the necessity of ruling by presidential decree or used it as a device to diminish the role of the parties and of the Reichstag. Reviewed in this way, the notion of an 'uncompleted revolution' comes close to being returned to its old significance.

Second, I take Peukert's work as a cue for reopening the issue of the logic that impelled the old elites to make an accommodation with Hitler. What *exactly* was that logic? Was the Nazis' victory really ineluctable? If so, from what point in time and why? Over the last few years, those elements in Peukert's thinking, which seem to me to echo the *Sonderweg* thesis, have been subjected to a good deal of criticism. In particular, three distinct arguments have been advanced. First, a number of historians

have emphasised the fragmentation of Germany's elites and denied that there was any kind of 'alliance of the elites' at the end of the Weimar Republic. They overlap to some extent with a further group of historians who, second, have denied – as Peukert had claimed – that only democratic and totalitarian ways out of the crisis remained open in the early 1930s. Third, H. A. Turner even suggested that the decision to give the keys to office to Hitler lay *exclusively* with a handful of individuals whose disparate and intensely personal motives bore no relation to those of the old elites and who should in no sense be seen as 'representatives' of those elites.[15] These critical contentions are of course not directed at Peukert's work alone. Hans Mommsen had put the 'orthodox' case as forcefully as any and more elegantly than most:

> The final crisis of the Weimar Republic, together with the progressive destruction of its parliamentary system and the political neutralisation of the SPD [Social Democratic Party], … are not explicable solely by reference to the actions of individual politicians; they merely executed the carefully planned designs of certain dominant social forces.[16]

Historians who have, by contrast, understood the outcome of that 'final crisis' as contingent on individual agency, have sought to bypass *both* the Sonderweg thesis *and* the diagnosis of a crisis of modernity. While they allow that structural factors may have had a conditioning effect on political decisions at the end of the Weimar Republic, they attach agency in the decision-making processes leading to Hitler's arrival in the chancellory emphatically to individuals acting in virtual isolation from social forces. In Turner's view, there is absolutely no merit in the alternative view. 'It has been alleged', he has written, 'that the men whose actions bestowed power on Hitler were merely the pawns of powerful behind-the-scenes vested interests, but a half century of research has yielded no credible support for that contention.'[17]

An 'alliance' of the elites?

Was the authoritarian experiment and its ending in the Nazi terror the product, as Fritz Fischer argued, of the continuing power of an 'alliance of the elites', or was it the product of their weakness, as Peukert has suggested,[18] and arguably still more of their fragmentation?[19] Whether it is possible to speak of an 'alliance' of the elites depends on what exactly one means by this term. That there was no *conspiracy* between them

has been clearly demonstrated by H. A. Turner.[20] Big business, including even the sector that had little or no interest in export, was opposed to what it saw as the economic imbecility of agrarian protectionism. Where the actions of industrialist and agrarian organisations had congruent aims and contributed to an actual outcome, there is no evidence of the orchestration of such actions or of collusion between the industrial bourgeoisie and landowners. Furthermore, they did not enjoy the same degree of political clout during the Depression. Hindenburg's occupation of the presidency guaranteed that the great estate owners enjoyed a proximity to the centre of decision making comparable to the position they had occupied in imperial Germany. In the crisis of the early 1930s, then, political power did not reflect economic power, and the increasing economic desperation of many East Elbian estate owners coincided with the extension of their political influence.

The elites lacked not only shared material interests but also organisational homogeneity. But – and this Turner failed to note – where they could and did find common ground was precisely in their common determination to alter the constitutional fabric in an authoritarian spirit.[21] In this sense, a grand political project served to paper over the divergent material interests of the elites, the mutual hostility of their organisations, and their different perspectives on day-to-day politics. Incapable of resurrecting unity *in pursuit* of that goal, elite representatives persuaded themselves that unity would be secured *in consequence* of its having been achieved.

The whole of the period from March 1930 through to 30 January 1933 was characterised by an endeavour to create a stable, authoritarian, conservative regime. The fundamental problem with this experiment at counter-revolution – at a return to authoritarian rule – was that the more authoritarian Germany actually became over this period, the more unstable it appeared *to the protagonists of authoritarian solutions themselves*. As conservative elites contrived accretions of power into their own hands, so the fragility of their regime grew in proportion. They presided over an increasingly divided and unstable nation. Their initiatives contrived only to heighten tension and to contribute to polarisation.

The fall of the Great Coalition may indeed be ascribed to the actions of industrialists and agrarians.[22] Thereafter, these two groups signally failed to exert a commensurate, even any, direct influence over the choice either of the mode or the personnel of government. Decisions were taken, rather, by Hindenburg and the military-bureaucratic cabal surrounding him, acting on their own initiative. Nevertheless, the conservatives responded triumphantly to Hindenburg's imposition

of a chancellor of his own choosing. That choice fell on the Centre Party politician Heinrich Brüning. The conservatives equally approved Hindenburg's preparedness to use emergency decrees to empower the chancellor in the face of an unenthusiastic Reichstag. These initiatives did not, of course, constitute an upper limit of all conservative ambition. Among those close to Brüning, the notion of a restoration of the substance of the Bismarckian constitution was popular. This would have entailed the continued existence of the Reichstag but would have freed the government from dependence on it. Further to the right, this seemed at once too modest an ambition and an inherently dangerous one. The existence of a pluralist party system was widely blamed for the division that, according to the common nationalist myth, had cost Germany the First World War. The *Herrenklub* and Young Conservative circles had long conceived of such steps as Brüning took at the beginning of his administration as constituting only stages in a plan of creeping reaction. They sought to refashion the republic without risking a single, clean, break with the constitution. Elements of the East Elbian aristocracy risked the alienation of more moderate conservative opinion, parading themselves as the elite of the future, irrespective of whether the monarchy was restored.[23] Brüning himself, though he offered a post hoc rationalisation of his policies as a grand design in his memoirs, seems to have had neither a fixed nor a detailed agenda. Perhaps for too long, historians have been embroiled in debates about whether Brüning should be seen as the 'last bulwark of democracy' or as a reactionary authoritarian. I doubt that it much matters who is right.

If we view Brüning not so much from his intentions as from the outcome of his domestic policies and their impact on the state and the prospects for parliamentary democratic rule, the revisionism of a gaggle of historians – Andreas Rödder, William Patch, and (to a lesser extent) H. A. Winkler, who have sought in some respects to rehabilitate Brüning by portraying him as a loyal parliamentary democrat[24] – seems to have no wider significance. The concern of Hans Mommsen, Brüning's chief accuser among historians, seems more material in this context.[25] It is above all to emphasise that while clearing a path for more authoritarian policies in the future, Brüning's specific initiatives nevertheless proved self-defeating. Indeed, all Brüning's strategies for stabilising his rule failed and tended to cancel each other out. He sought to strengthen the *Reichsrat*, based on representatives of the individual *Länder*, at the expense of the Reichstag. Yet his attack on the finances of regional government, accompanied by a drive toward centralising state authority, provoked an effective coalition of the *Länder* against him. Civil servants'

satisfaction with the dramatic shift of power to the executive gave way rapidly to apprehension as they witnessed an assault on their profession undertaken as an integral part of Brüning's quest for cuts. Thereafter, the civil service increasingly switched its allegiance to the 'national opposition' and provided fertile ground for Nazi recruitment drives. That Brüning should have squandered the considerable reserve of sympathy among civil servants for his wider political project was the more serious for his prospects given the highly bureaucratised nature of his rule.[26] His cabinet colleagues had little reason to accord him loyalty, since he openly preferred the advice of their civil servants. Altogether, his secretive methods made him widely mistrusted. Unable to find appropriate ways of dealing with power brokers and elites and disdainful of anything that smacked of populism, he unwittingly increased his dependency on the president and so had nowhere to turn once Hindenburg's confidence was withdrawn.

Mommsen, in a rare moment's contemplation of the possibility, concludes that 'even had Brüning wanted to keep open the option of a return to parliamentary government' immediately after the 1930 election, 'this would have been impossible given the attitude of the *Reichswehr* and the various interest groups exerting influence on the Reich president.' Parliamentary institutions were thus reduced to an 'empty shell' that whether by design or not, Brüning contributed to hollowing out.[27] This is a view that even Patch does not really contest.

Certainly, the political forces that conspired to bring him down were intent on embarking on a still more right wing course. But Brüning himself would have shifted the government further to the right, dropping his more 'moderate' allies as soon as his immediate ambitions in foreign policy had been crowned with success. In fact, Mommsen argues, he was in large measure a victim of that very success. The further diminution of international influence over domestic politics in Germany meant that Hindenburg could dispense with his services just as he proposed to dispense with the services of those who had cooperated with him throughout his period in office. There are thus good grounds for resisting any temptation to exaggerate the break marked by Brüning's dismissal.

Missed opportunities for a coup d'état?

Nevertheless, it had long been a commonplace even among historians who were highly critical of Brüning to see the next two cabinets in a different light to Brüning's. They had been characterised as an

intermezzo, and historians had concentrated their gaze on the sequence of events that led to 30 January 1933. This approach has recently been challenged. Eberhard Kolb, Wolfram Pyta, and H. A. Turner have taken Detlev Peukert's dictum that we should judge the Weimar Republic 'in its own terms' to a new extreme by applying it to the Papen and Schleicher governments. Hitler's shadow, they argue, should not be allowed to dominate our view of high politics over the last six months, indeed even over the last few days, of non-Nazi rule. Elite politicians, they insist, still had realistic options that would have averted the catastrophe of the Third Reich.[28] From Hindenberg's haughty rejection of Hitler's equally peremptory claim to the chancellorship on 13 August 1932, Pyta stresses, the Nazis' road to power was still 'twisted', and 'plans for the declaration of a state of emergency and the imposition of martial law had matured to the point of their execution being a practicable option well into January 1933'.[29] Parliamentary democracy, then, tends to fade out (although it does not entirely disappear from) Pyta's and Kolb's (ultimately also Turner's) view of alternatives. The options narrow down to a choice between a military coup and a Nazi dictatorship. Pyta emphasises the fact that neither of the chief protagonists of the former path were in any way concerned 'to rescue Weimar parliamentary democracy' by the 'unconventional means' of army intervention.[30] Indeed, as he and Kolb have acknowledged, any contemporary democrat would necessarily have seen this as a 'choice between the plague and cholera'.[31]

Brüning was succeeded by von Papen. Until recently, von Papen remained almost as much of an enigma to historians as he had to the vast majority of Germans at the point of his arrival in office. His reputation had been that of a 'man about town', most readily to be observed in public at horse races. As a parliamentarian (a member of the Roman Catholic Centre Party's Reichstag fraction), he had made no comparable impact in terms of public recognition. Joachim Petzold's study, however, has finally made sense of him – as an established and pivotal figure on two counts. First, he had played a vital part in securing the presidency for Hindenburg in 1925 by leading an assortment of right-wing southern German Roman Catholic aristocrats and their supporters in a revolt against the Centre Party's own candidate. In 1932 Hindenburg remembered, and he repaid his debt. Second, von Papen had married into an industrialist family and become a conduit through which (chiefly Protestant) business covertly bought shares in the Catholic media, then used the attendant power to eradicate the influence of Catholic trade unions and of the Centre Party's left wing.[32] That long relationship of

mutual trust and understanding was clearly to prove crucial to Papen when big business gave him virtual carte blanche in the negotiations with the Nazis in the immediate run-up to Hitler's gaining office.

Von Papen's 'Cabinet of Barons' was supported in parliament by the conservative and antidemocratic *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* and the now minute right-wing liberal *Deutsche Volkspartei* alone and outside it by big business, the army, and the Stahlhelm paramilitary. Papen's coup against the Prussian state government brought down the last bastion of parliamentary democracy in Germany. The new government, drawing on the thinking of the conservative intelligentsia, drew up plans for constitutional reform, which would have resulted in an unequal franchise, the virtual obliteration of the remaining powers of the Reichstag and the removal of political parties from elections. All of this was designed to provide in every sense an elitist government, with freedom from democratic and constitutional restraint. The condition of dependency on article 48 of the constitution would no longer pertain.[33] However, the Papen government's strategy for securing such an outcome had originally been predicated on the acquisition of Nazi support, and Hitler proved immune to the temptation of being made vice chancellor.

If Papen's position at the moment of his appointment was less than strong, it was weakened by the outcome of the July election he had called. From the new Reichstag, in which the Nazis and Communists constituted a sort of 'negative majority', no toleration of the government was to be expected, let alone the kind of positive collaboration in extinguishing the parties' powers von Papen had hoped for. Until early August 1932, the new chancellor and his allies had, however, contrived to convince themselves that the cabinet *would* be tolerated. This illusion, Kolb and Pyta suggest, caused its failure 'resolutely to prepare for a state of emergency'.[34] Nor did the government as yet have agreed and sufficiently detailed plans for authoritarian constitutional revisions, although it was already committed in principle to undertaking such changes.[35] On 30 August, a cabinet delegation secured from Hindenburg an undertaking to dissolve the newly elected Reichstag immediately and, in direct contravention of the constitution, to postpone new elections indefinitely.[36] On the same day, the first session of the Reichstag elected Hermann Göring as its speaker and a Centre Party delegate as his deputy in what was a 'Marxist-free presidium'. Göring, in what was clearly an attempt pre-emptively to delegitimate action by Papen and Hindenburg, argued that the new presidium afforded evidence that this Reichstag enjoyed a 'large nationalist working majority and that

the prerequisite for a state of emergency is by no means at hand.' On 12 September, Papen went to the second session of the new Reichstag expecting it to receive his government's declaration, the only business on the day's agenda. He had at his disposal an undated presidential order dissolving the Reichstag. In the event, however, he was ambushed by his parliamentary opponents. The order of business was altered to allow first for a vote on a Communist motion of no confidence in the government. Although Papen formally dismissed the Reichstag before the vote could be taken, Göring ignored his intervention and a vote was held in any case. The Communists' resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority of Reichstag delegates.[37] The bulk of the cabinet's members now felt themselves forced onto the defensive and too isolated to risk an immediate breach of the constitution, agreeing instead to hold new elections within the prescribed 60 days from the dissolution. With that, Kolb and Pyta suggest, what was perhaps the optimal moment for a coup d'état had been allowed to pass.[38] The ensuing discussions in and beyond the cabinet over how to respond to the deepening crisis of legitimacy revealed far-reaching discrepancies between the positions of Papen on the one hand and of Kurt von Schleicher on the other.

Each was committed to an authoritarian line, and both had hoped for Nazi support in securing it. Nor did they disagree in identifying the chief threat to their schemes as coming from a revival of parliamentary power. Strikingly, the fear of a Nazi reversion to insurrectionary tactics, which justifiably alarmed Hitler, played no part in the thinking of either. In common with the DNVP (*Deutschnationale volkspartei*, German National People's Party), they were concerned rather at the prospect of the Nazis' 'going native' in the Reichstag, a prospect awakened by Nazi support for the KPD's (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, Communist Party of Germany) motion of no confidence and now emphasised by the deals between the Nazis and the Centre Party. But that was as far as Papen's and Schleicher's agreement went. The plans for constitutional reforms inaugurating a 'new state' were above all Papen's baby and that of his Minister of the Interior, Gayl. They were of no interest to Schleicher. He desired Nazi collaboration not in order to promote them but to build up the army by integrating the SA into it. For as long as Nazi support had seemed to be in the cards, Papen and Schleicher could each pursue his pet project in the expectation that they were at least not mutually incompatible. With Papen now set on a course of confrontation, the integrity of Schleicher's project was threatened. From Schleicher's perspective, Papen's intention to declare a state of emergency and push through his package of reforms, with the authority of the president as his sole source of legitimacy, appeared to incur tremendous

risks for little tangible advantage. Under a state of emergency, the army would at best be obliged to fulfil a policing role and could bid farewell to the promise of recruiting from the SA. At worst, it might face a general strike and, as Schleicher himself argued, the hostility of nine-tenths of the population on the streets. As if the prospect of facing a civil war were not bad enough, the army must also bear in mind the possibility that the Polish military might exploit the German confusion. Planning for the event of a state of emergency appears to have been fairly well advanced, but simultaneously always had the character of a feasibility study.

On 25–6 November, military personnel convened to play a war game – the *Planspiel Ott* – in Berlin. The affair was shrouded in secrecy. But we do know that the army begged hard to be absolved of the task of having to play the crucial and nakedly coercive role in propping up an unpopular government.[39] Given the army's want of enthusiasm, Papen's own cabinet deserted him. Schleicher's alternative, renewing overtures to the Nazis while dropping notions of constitutional reform, had at that point to appear a much safer strategy. In advancing that proposal, Schleicher was merely reverting to a position he had adopted before. In August 1932, indeed, he had promoted Hitler's own claims to the office of chancellor.

Over the final weeks of 1932, Weimar's remaining democrats were more optimistic about their prospects than they had been at the beginning of the year. In retrospect, Hindenburg's refusal to hand the chancellorship to Hitler on 13 August 1932 now appeared to intelligent observers as a turning point, and the fall in the Nazi vote from the November general election onward seemed to confirm that optimism was now warranted. In Thuringia, the very first of the German *Länder* to have included Nazis in a coalition government, the Nazis crashed to so grave a defeat in an early December election that in some districts they polled fewer votes than they had done in the 1930 Reichstag election. Indeed, democrats and social democrats had good reason, it seemed, to welcome Kurt von Schleicher's arrival in office. He rescinded the most reactionary of Papen's emergency decrees and rapidly acquired the reputation of being a 'social general'.

Although Schleicher did go some way toward restoring civil service confidence in the government, he alienated both individuals and entire sections of the elites. Hindenburg had appointed him reluctantly and continued to keep Papen close to his elbow. Industrialists, too, found him far less congenial than Papen, and they, too, maintained their links with him. The agrarians' hostility to the new government was unremitting from the outset and independent of Schleicher's attempts to

bring Brüning's plans for large-scale settlement on bankrupt East Elbian estates back to life.[40] Nor, as I will argue, could he depend even on the loyalty of the army officer corps. In the event, therefore, of his failing to secure Nazi support, he had rather fewer resources to fall back on even than Papen had had in a similar predicament.

Schleicher's objective was to facilitate militarisation through the acquisition of a broad social base for his rule. His strategy for accomplishing this combined a general endeavour to display himself as a 'social general' with a particular attempt to win over Nazis and, to a lesser degree, the free trade unions. While this has often been represented as a 'politics of the diagonal' and an attempt to drive a wedge between Gregor Strasser's so-called left wing of the Nazis and the SA on the one hand and Hitler on the other, Turner is right to have suggested that he was really using Strasser in an attempt to gain leverage on Hitler and not to split the Nazi Party.[41] The scheme was based at once on an overestimation of Strasser's influence within the NSDAP and an underestimation of Hitler's obduracy in clinging to his demand for the chancellorship.

Individual or collective agency?

The present obsession with seeking to demonstrate that up to the very moment of Schleicher's resignation as chancellor, there was a high degree of contingency in Hitler's assumption of power is a by-product of a rightward methodological shift in historiography and theory of history. Increasingly, broadly structuralist models of interpretation are being challenged by historians who reassert the dynamic impact of individuals within broad contexts defined by structures. Christopher Lloyd's dictum that 'persons have agential power, structures have conditioning power'[42] sums up an emergent position sometimes termed 'structurism' or 'structurationism'.[43] While H. A. Turner had, in his earlier work, sought to burden pre-industrial elites and simultaneously offload responsibility for the Nazis' victory from industrialists,[44] by the mid-1990s he was arguing that responsibility was ultimately confined to just six individuals who 'were free to make political decisions according to their own predilections'.[45] In his account, the embittered personal rivalry between Papen and Schleicher, the ambition of Hindenburg's chief of staff Otto Meißner, Hugenberg's desire not to be left out in the cold, and the irrevocable breakdown in the personal relations of Schleicher and Oskar von Hindenburg feature prominently. They are the actors; Hitler merely reacts.[46] Structural factors, Turner acknowledged, gave rise to the crisis, but individual agency was crucial in determining that the way out of

the crisis actually selected produced the Nazi dictatorship. Pyta – a little paradoxically given that he is one of Germany's principal practitioners of a social history of Weimar politics – makes a similar point in respect of the 'limits of the explanatory force of the milieu-based approach' to understanding the triumph of Nazism. He emphasises the 'incalculability to which the political process was subject, its structural moorings notwithstanding. For socio-cultural structures do not win through of their own accord: in order to unfurl their historical potentialities, they always require mediation through individuals who are more than mere executors of anonymous social forces'.[47]

Turner clung tenaciously to his view that Schleicher and his remaining allies continued to enjoy room for manoeuvre in mid to late January 1933. He then proceeded to imagine such a regime in operation. He admitted that the scenario he offered is unattractive in itself (involving, for instance, a war against Poland, but not a *world* war) but reasoned that, unsavoury as such a government would have been, it would nevertheless have been vastly preferable to the Third Reich. He argued that it could not have outlived its first leader and would ultimately have given way to a process of redemocratisation.[48] Turner explained that the schemes to create a military dictatorship were never put into operation by emphasising the inability of the army officer corps in general to furnish a sufficiently active putative dictator and a lack of will and an insufficient appetite for power on Schleicher's part in particular.[49] Are his speculations legitimate?

One might, of course, at least as readily imagine a radically different development. Precisely in the light of the fact that, as Turner, Kolb, and Pyta all acknowledge, the conditions for a purely military dictatorship of any longevity were lacking in Germany, such a regime would have been obliged to acquire fascist attributes in proportion to the growth of popular resistance to it. Such objections aside, for this sort of 'what if?' history to function not as idle speculation but as a means genuinely of illuminating the contingencies of what in fact did happen, it should satisfy some clear conditions. First, it needs to be able to demonstrate that a particular course of action had real prospects of success but, second, that it was also seriously contemplated by a sufficient body of relevant contemporaries.

On the first count, Turner's ruminations do seem to be legitimate if not altogether persuasive. The army had indeed been substantially strengthened since the end of November 1932 thanks to Schleicher's reforms. A military regime, so long as it had the blessing of Hindenburg, need not have entailed so very much more abrupt a departure from

the constitution than had already been committed by other presidential cabinets. Resistance to a coup would have been as fragmented as the parliamentary opposition to the Papen government. And any new regime would have had opportunities of making political capital out of economic recovery, the credit for which Schleicher certainly had a better claim to than most, since it did owe something to his own work-creation projects. Yet there are weighty grounds for being sceptical of so 'rosy' a portrayal of the prospects of a coup. Firstly, the army was itself far from being immune to the appeal of Nazism. If more conventional right-wing politics dominated among high-ranking officers, then pro-Nazi sentiment was very strong among their juniors in the officer corps.[50] Second, far from wanting a still more prominent political role than they already enjoyed, senior officers felt that their interests would best be served by a return to civilian rule. Third, irrespective of whether a civil war really would have transpired in consequence of a declaration of a state of emergency, inviting popular disturbances still seemed to involve high risks.

On the second count (i.e., of adequate contemporary contemplation and preparation of a given course of action), however, Turner's approach fails the test of plausibility comprehensively.[51] Here, invention lacks a basis in the historical record. It is true that on 28 and 29 January in particular, Papen, Hitler, and their fellow conspirators were in a real enough state of alarm about an impending coup. Yet Turner's account contains a curious omission: there is no detailed discussion whatever of such discussions of a revival of the Ott 'plan' as there were. Nor has the gap been convincingly plugged by the documents recently discovered by Wolfram Pyta. These do show that far from being buried, the preparations for countering popular resistance to unconstitutional governmental action that had been addressed by the *Planspiel Ott* had developed apace, so that military action was still theoretically available to Schleicher as a reserve strategy. Preparations ranged from the establishment of 'Guidelines for the use of tear gas' through the 'Reactivation of the Technical Emergency Assistance' corps as a uniformed strike-breaking organisation to regulation of cooperation between the military and civil authorities.[52] Kolb and Pyta suggest that the prospects for such action were far more propitious in January 1933 than they had been two months earlier:

> A political general strike, fed by social protest, undertaken against the 'social general' who had rescinded the especially objectionable passages of Papen's emergency decrees, was hard to imagine. Furthermore,

> Schleicher could be sure of the support of the Reichswehr if things came to a head: the general political situation had relaxed to such an extent that the military would not have to fend off the allegation of having to deploy armed force against the 'people' merely in order to preserve the interests of a narrow upper class.

The 'psychological blocks' which had hampered the thinking of the military in November 1932 had, Kolb and Pyta reason, fallen away.[53]

One need not, therefore, go quite so far as Erich Eyck did in his aged narrative, first published in 1956, of Hitler's route to office and discount the coup as a matter of mere 'rumour' which had grown over time to become one of the 'legends about the past'.[54] There was indeed debate as to the advisability of a coup that took place in circles close to Schleicher in the morning of 28 January 1933. But crucially, the accounts of F. L. Carsten and of Winkler demonstrate that it in fact concerned pre-empting or overthrowing, not a Hitler-led government, but a politically isolated confrontational cabinet (*Kampfkabinett*) headed by Papen and Hugenberg![55] In other words, Schleicher and the chief of army personnel von Hammerstein shared Hitler's own anxiety lest Papen's negotiations with Hitler prove to be a sham after all and lest Papen emerge as the new chancellor pursuing the very strategies of confrontation that had cost him the job in November and December. Thus, the only kind of military coup that the generals and cabinet ministers mulled over at this late stage was based on a false premise, for Papen was perfectly sincere in his dealings with Hitler at least to the degree that he promoted Hitler's pretensions to the chancellorship in his conversations with Hindenburg even while Hindenburg continued to try to persuade Papen to resume that office himself. The arguments raised in favour of a coup seem to have been influenced as much as ever by the prospect of a civil war. But whereas in November a coup would, in the estimation of the military, have brought a civil war on, it was reconsidered in January as a means of averting a civil war or at least the intensification of unrest that another Papen cabinet would indeed have engendered. Schleicher weighed the pros and cons of a coup only as a fallback position to his own preferred solution; namely, to secure the chancellorship for Hitler through his own efforts and retain the Defence portfolio. Of course, Schleicher failed to foresee that Papen's rival conspiracy was to deliver office to Hitler and so oblige the general's retirement from politics. In any event, the generals who had discussed a coup agreed among themselves that Hindenburg would oppose it. That ended the

argument; they were unanimous in the view that they should not mount a direct challenge to their commander-in-chief.[56] At the last, then, both Hitler's immediate predecessors in the chancellor's office were engaged in a headlong rush to surrender that office to Hitler. It was a telling conclusion to what Mommsen has termed the 'illusion of government without parties'.

Irrespective of the intentions of the non-Nazi conservatives, the results of their actions should be understood as phases of the same process. The Nazis' emergence as a mass party coincided with the period of authoritarian conservative dominance in high politics and was in part a response to the policies pursued in that period. Conservatives who, in March 1930, had appeared confident of being able to establish a regime of their own and gave scarcely any regard to the Nazis had come to think very differently by 1932. It was not that they failed to imagine a variety of paths out of what was universally recognised as crisis. Rather, they understood that an *authoritarian* route was no longer conceivable without some measure of Nazi collaboration.

Reactionary change at the end of the Weimar Republic contributed to the weakening of institutions, most notably the civil service, on which conservatism is generally reliant. As Ian Kershaw has suggested, individuals filled the spaces institutions left vacant. Adventurism and irresponsibility characterised their 'more or less wildly extravagant' initiatives. Accordingly, 'the role of the individual grew in direct proportion to the loss of power [suffered by] the institutions of the state.' But Kershaw goes on to warn (in an implicit challenge to the approach of Turner, Kolb, and Pyta) against 'excessively personalising the history of Weimar's final phase. How much power did these individuals really have – except as the agents of 'important lobbies and interest groups'?[57] Brüning, Papen, and Schleicher all liked to think of themselves as Bismarck's heirs. All thought in terms of elaborate arrays of alternative strategies, of 'stopgap systems' and fallback stratagems: a labyrinthine conception of politics. Each considered himself a master of intrigue and evidently thought that to be a vital attribute of a statesman. Historians who argue that this trio did indeed have room for manoeuvre and merely misplayed their hands risk overestimating the significance of intrigue to much the same degree. At worst, they misunderstand the character of modern German politics, following precisely in Brüning's footsteps as they exaggerate the freedom of action available to elite politicians.[58] Yet the entire history of the repeated overtures the elites made to the Nazis suggests that the former were at least more aware of the constraints that the existence of a politics of mass mobilisation placed on them than are Kolb and

Turner. Peukert has put the alternative interpretation as forcefully as any: 'The more talk there was of a "new state" governed by the old elites, the more impotent the small number of surviving wire-pullers around Hindenburg actually became.'[59]

In the very act of displacing political parties and parliament in their centrality to the functioning of the Weimar Republic, the elites deepened the crisis of legitimacy confronting the German state. They pursued ends of stability and security, but their means consisted in scheming and adventurism. Inevitably, the means infected the ends.

It was this logic that led the elites to seek progressively more improbable and eventually desperate 'solutions' to a problem that was very largely of their own making. The conservatives' relations with the Nazi Party loomed ever larger under these conditions. While only a minority of elite representatives found a place directly in the Nazis' ranks and whereas nobody who remained outside the Nazi Party wished to deliver all power to Hitler, conservatives were overwhelmingly inclined to see the Nazis not only as competitors but also as potentially valuable allies. Only after they had tried and failed to reduce the Nazis to tools of elite strategy occupying positions in every way subordinate to their own did conservative leaders take a 'leap into the dark' and offer Hitler the chancellorship in the hope that, even then, they could control him.

Of course, this does not yet amount to a full explanation as to why it was not until the Nazi Party's electoral support had begun to slide away, its membership to suffer a swathe of resignations, its leadership to become disheartened and embroiled in arguments about the party's aims and strategies, and the SA to become mutinous that elite politicians turned to Hitler with the offer of the chancellorship. The weakening of the Nazis coincided with a crisis of the authoritarian experiment itself. Both were products of the fact that the Depression had bottomed out and of the fact that contemporaries knew it and were becoming more optimistic about the economy. Paul Reusch, writing at the end of December 1932, both expressed the fears of the elites and underscored the fact that they had one last hope of bringing their plans to fruition. There was a new urgency to his tone:

> It is precisely now, while the crisis is still at hand, that we must make the decisive incisions into the organism of the state! The will to undertake reforms cannot be put on ice at one's pleasure! When, after an improvement in the economic situation, the financial pressure on the organism of our state has let up to the point at which it can draw a deep breath again, then the strongest impulse toward the

> implementation of a truly far-reaching reform will have been lost irrecuperably.[60]

The very factors that were giving democrats cause to find hope at the turn of the year in 1932–33 were propelling Papen, Otto Meißner, the Hindenburgs, Hugenberg, and finally even Schleicher, and with them Germany's agrarian and industrial elites, into the Nazis' arms. What they most feared was what democrats desired – namely, a restoration of parliamentary rule in the foreseeable future.

The Third Reich ultimately disappointed conservatives' expectations. Not only did they themselves progressively lose power within it, but the regime itself proved inherently unstable: its policies, like the conservatives' own, produced only problems on an escalating scale. In this respect, the dynamics of Nazi rule, whereby radicalisation operated as a kind of surrogate for absent stability, were prefigured during the chancellorships of Brüning, von Papen, and Schleicher.

None of this, of course, is to deny that the elites in general did rather well for themselves in the Third Reich. A handful of individuals may have lost their property and even their lives. For the rest, however, the loss of political dominance did not mean the loss either of social prestige or of its material base.

Notes

1. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp Verlag. All further references are to the English translation: Detlev J. K. Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (London: Penguin, 1991).
2. Peukert, *Weimar Republic*, 277.
3. Ibid., p. 280.
4. Ibid., p. 279.
5. Ibid., p. 271.
6. Peukert, *Grenzen der Sozialdisziplinierung: Aufstieg und Krise der deutschen Jugendfürsorge von 1878 bis 1932* (Cologne: Bund Verlag, 1986).
7. To name just a few of the more important contributions: David Crew, 'The Ambiguities of Modernity: Welfare and the German State from Wilhelm to Hitler', in G. Eley, ed., *Society, Culture, and the State in Germany 1870–1930* (Ann Arbor: University Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 319–44; idem, *From Weimar to Hitler: Germans on Welfare, 1919–1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Young-Sun Hong, 'The Weimar welfare system', in Anthony McElligott, ed., *Weimar Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 175–206; E. Dickinson, 'Welfare, Democracy and Fascism: The Political Crises in German Child Welfare, 1922–1933', *German Studies Review* 22/1 (1999), 43–66; idem, 'Biopolitics, Fascism, Democracy: Some Reflections on our Discourse about "Modernity"', *Central European History*

37/1 (2004), 1–48; Elizabeth Harvey, *Youth and the Welfare State in Weimar Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism 1870–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Paul Lerner, *Hysterical Men: War, Psychiatry, and the Politics of Trauma in Germany, 1890–1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

8. See Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack, eds, *Elections, Mass Politics and Social Change in Modern Germany* (Washington, DC: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
9. Peukert, *Weimar Republic*, 269–70.
10. Ibid. Quotations at 270 and 267, respectively.
11. Ibid., p. 276.
12. Ibid., p. 265.
13. Ibid., p. 270.
14. Ibid., p. 267.
15. H. A. Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996).
16. Hans Mommsen, 'Heinrich Brüning as Chancellor: The Failure of a Politically Isolated Strategy', in idem, *From Weimar to Auschwitz. Essays in German History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 119–40; quotation at 119.
17. Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 167.
18. D. J. K. Peukert, *The Weimar Republic* 258–72, 280.
19. I. Kershaw, 'Der 30. Januar 1933: Staatskrise und Staatsverfall', in H. A. Winkler (ed.), *Die deutsche Staatskrise 1930–1933* (Munich: Oldenbourg,1992), pp. 205–14.
20. H. A. Turner, '"Alliance of Elites" as a Cause of Weimar's Collapse and Hitler's Triumph?', ibid., pp. 205–14.
21. Cf. Hans Mommsen, 'Government without Parties: Conservative Plans for Constitutional Revision at the End of the Weimar Republic', in Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack (eds), *Between Reform, Reaction and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789–1945* (Providence and Oxford: Berg, 1993), pp. 347–74.
22. Idem, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), pp. 287ff.
23. Stephan Malinowski, *Vom König zum Führer. Sozialer Niedergang und politische Radikalisierung im deutschen Adel zwischen Kaiserrich und NS-Staat* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003), pp. 448–59, 312ff.
24. Andreas Rödder, 'Dichtung und Wahrheit. Der Quellenwert von Brünings Memoiren und seine Kanzlerschaft', *Historische Zeitschrift* 265 (1997), 77–116; William Patch, 'Heinrich Brüning's Recollections of Monarchism: The Birth of a Red Herring', *Journal of Modern History* 70/2 (1998), 340–70; idem, *Heinrich Brüning and the Dissolution of the Weimar Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); H. A. Winkler, *Weimar 1918–1933. Die Geschichte der ersten deutschen Demokratie* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1993; 2nd edn, 1994), esp. pp. 376–476.
25. Hans Mommsen, 'Heinrich Brüning as Chancellor'.
26. Jane Caplan, 'Profession as Vocation: The German Civil Service', in Geoffrey Cocks and Konrad H. Jarausch, eds, *The German Professions, 1800–1950* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 163–182, 175–76;

Hans Mommsen, 'State and Bureaucracy in the Brüning Era', in idem, *From Weimar to Auschwitz*, 79–118.

27. Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), p. 317.
28. E. Kolb and W. Pyta, 'Die Staatsnotstandsplanung unter den Regierungen Papen und Schleicher', in Winkler (ed.) op. cit., 155–82.
29. Pyta, *Dorfgemienschaft und Parteipolitik. Die Verschränkung von Milieu und Parteien in den protestantischen Landgebieten Deutschlands in der Weimarer Republik* (1996), 19.
30. Idem, 'Vorbereitungen für den militärischen Ausnahmezustand unter Papen/Schleicher', *MGM* 51/2 (1992), 385–428, 385.
31. Kolb and Pyta, op. cit., 180.
32. Joachim Petzold, *Franz von Papen. Ein deutsches Verhängnis* (Munich and Berlin: Buchverlag Union, 1995), pp. 17–63.
33. U. Hörster-Philipps, 'Conservative Concepts of Dictatorship in the Final Phase of the Weimar Republic: The Government of Franz von Papen', in M. Dobkowski and I. Wallimann, eds, *Towards the Holocaust: The Social and Economic Collapse of the Weimar Republic* (1983), pp. 115–30, 123.
34. Kolb and Pyta, op. cit., 163.
35. Ibid., p. 162.
36. Ibid., 165; cf. *AdR Kabinett Papen* 1, 474–79. Winkler points out, however, that 'there were German constitutional experts willing to justify such a step as an *ultima ratio*'. See Winkler, *Weimar*, 518–19.
37. Winkler, *Weimar*, 521–23 (quotation at 521).
38. Kolb and Pyta, op. cit., 166.
39. Pyta, 'Vorbereitungen'; Blasius, op. cit., 136–42.
40. B. Hoppe, 'Von Scheicher zu Hitler. Dokumente zum Konflikt zwischen dem Reichslandbund und der Regierung Schleicher in den letzten Wochen der Weimarer Republlik', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 45/4 (1997), 629–57.
41. Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 24–5.
42. Christopher Lloyd, *The Structures of History* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), p. 46.
43. For a general and positive reception of 'structurationist' approaches, see Philip Pomper, 'Historians and Individual Agency', *History and Theory* 35 (1996), 281–308. Pomper argues for their particular applicability to periods – such as the first half of the twentieth century – in which structures and mentalities were in a state of flux so that the individual was relatively less prone to being 'conditioned' e.g., by his or her socialisation.
44. Turner, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), esp. 324ff.
45. Idem, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 168.
46. Idem, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 179–182
47. Pyta, *Dorfgemeinschaft*, 19–20.
48. Turner, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, 173.
49. Ibid., pp. 170–75.
50. T. S. Hamerow, *On the Road to the Wolf's Lair. German Resistance to Hitler* (1997), 90ff.
51. An argument essentially similar to my own is presented by Blasius, *Weimars Ende*, 175ff.

52. Pyta, 'Vorbereitungen', 415–428.
53. Kolb and Pyta, op. cit., 178.
54. Translated into English as E. Eyck, *History of the Weimar Republic*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 482–3.
55. There has been no recent attempt to dispute that these were Scheicher's and his collaborators' motives. For more details, see F. L. Carsten, *The Reichswehr and Politics 1918–1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 391ff; H. A. Winkler, *Weimar 1918–1933. Die Geschichte der ersten deutschen Demokratie* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1993; 2nd edn, 1994), p. 589. Cf. also H. Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy*, 523.
56. Carsten, *The Reichswehr and German Politics*, 392.
57. For Kershaw's comments (originally in German) on the Kolb and Pyta thesis, see Winkler, ed., *Die deutsche Staatskrise*, pp. 202–3.
58. Cf. K. D. Bracher, 'Brüning's unpolitische Politik und die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 19/2 (1971), 113–23, esp. the remarks on 113.
59. Peukert, *The Weimar Republic*, 263.
60. Cit. after Larry E. Jones, 'Von Weimar zu Hitler. Deutschlands konservative Eliten und die Etablierung des "Dritten Reiches" 1932–1934', in Dietrich Papenfuß and Wolfgang Schieder, eds, *Deutsche Umbrüche im 20. Jahrhuindert. Tagungsbeiträge eines Symposiums der Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung Bonn-Bad Godesberg* (Cologne, Weimar, and Berlin: Böhlau Verlag, 2000), pp. 191–205, 201.

13

Total, Thus Broken: *Chuch'e Sasang* and North Korea's Terrain of Subjectivity

Cheehyung Kim

Vinalon (vinylon) is a textile fibre made from the common chemical compound polyvinyl alcohol. In North Korea it is often called *chuch'e som*, or 'cotton of self-reliance'. Vinalon was so named due to its place in North Korea's history as a home-grown product that relieved the dire need for textiles in the post–Korean War period. Recently, this most independent fibre made a comeback in North Korea, when the February Eight Vinalon Complex – the factory where vinalon was first produced, back in 1961 – reopened in 2010 after a 16-year-long hiatus that began as North Korea's state-socialist economy collapsed in the mid-1990s. During his visit to the factory in February 2010 to provide 'on-the-spot guidance' (made famous by his father), Kim Jong Il (Kim Chŏngil) called the factory the model of *chuch'e kongŏp* (industry of self-reliance) because its workers had 'revived the dying factory with their indomitable will'.[1] His visit made the front page of *Rodong Sinmun*, the main party newspaper, and in the newspaper's multiday coverage, the word *chuch'e* is mentioned numerous times in reference to vinalon, the factory, and the workers. The word describes not only *things* but also *people*: the fabric of self-reliance can come only from the hands of indomitably willed workers.

Chuch'e is a sacred yet common word in North Korea. It is first and foremost the official name of Kim Il Sung's (Kim Ilsŏng) concept of the relationship between human beings and the world, romanised in North Korea as *Juche*.[2] As a reified ideology – *ideology-as-a-thing* – the term is commonly expressed in Korean as *chuch'e sasang* (*sasang* means 'thought' or 'ideology'). Incontrovertible in its origin and message, what it claims is the truth about human beings and things. At the same

time, the application of the word, as some kind of a paradigm, has no boundary. From economic policy and law to the arts and household agriculture, *chuch'e* is constantly deployed as a discursive platform that sustains the link between the word, beings, things, and phenomena. Thus we have *chuch'e som*, which conveys a circular definition, 'whatever our way is, it is the way of *chuch'e*, and there is no better way for us', as offered by Kim Jong Il.[3]

Outsiders, be they news observers or researchers, encounter *chuch'e* as soon as they gather any information about North Korea. They are faced with both North Korea's internal discourse about the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea) as a land of self-reliant *chuch'e* beings, who have survived war and poverty, and outsiders' discourse about *chuch'e sasang*'s function in turning the North Korean people into blind followers of the regime. Even after all it has gone through, North Korea still presents the image of a place ruled by a single dynastic regime and fortified with the monolithic *chuch'e sasang*. Despite its ubiquity and contradictions, *chuch'e sasang* is still regarded as a definitive feature of the place, its system, and its lived reality.

This chapter deals with both the specificity of *chuch'e* as North Korea's ideology-as-a-thing and its ubiquity as a word denoting the subject. The specific and ubiquitous features of *chuch'e* are examined in two ways. First is the historical tracing of *chuch'e sasang* as the philosophic ideology attributed to Kim Il Sung. This section is a brief look at the transformation of *chuch'e* from an utterance in a speech in 1955 to a dominant discourse that, by the early 1970s, exerted its influence in areas ranging from law to everyday life. Second is an analysis of *chuch'e* logic – what it says about the relationship between the world and the beings living in it. On the one hand, this relationship strives for coherence towards totality, a totality involving *chuch'e* ideals, party leadership, state policies, and the everyday life of North Korean citizens. The revival of the vinalon factory was commemorated precisely as the 'strength of invincibility … of [the North Korean] people who have become a single body with the party and leadership'.[4] The dream of all modern power is totalitarianism, as Jie-Hyun Lim says, whose idea of 'mass dictatorship' entails the very attempt by the state to create a total body that links subjectivity with domination.[5]

On the other hand, what we actually discern from this logic in the last instance is ambivalence; the moment of totality is also the moment of the dissolution of the coherent subject. Through various materials from the 1950s to the 1970s, including the popular magazine *Ch'ŏllima* and a 1972 movie called *Salesgirls on the Train* (*Uri yŏlch'a p'anmaewŏn*),

we see how *chuch'e* sasang is built as the monolithic ideology about the subject and, at the same time, how it is deployed in the space of everyday life, where the moment of the totality of the subject reveals its fundamental condition of indeterminacy. But the all-too-swift conclusion of indeterminacy is not how we ought to end, and the concluding section of this essay returns to possible moments of subjectivity within the very insistence of a socialist totality. One contention of this essay is therefore that – apart from any reified ideology and separate from North Korea's *chuch'e sasang* – the autonomous subject coexists with that of ambivalence and the space of totality is also the space of possibilities.

Further consideration of the term

Fundamentally, *chuch'e* is a word that refers to the condition of subjectivity; it is not at all limited in use to North Korea. The two syllables and their corresponding Chinese characters (主體) mean 'main' and 'body', and it is a commonly used word in countries with Sinic linguistic roots (for example, *zhuti* in Chinese, *shutai* in Japanese, and *chủthể* in Vietnamese). One can make a statement such as 'the people are *chuch'e* of history' without referring explicitly to the idea used in North Korea. What, then, is North Korea's version of *chuch'e*? For an official definition, we turn to Kim Il Sung's own words. The following comes from an interview Kim Il Sung gave to journalists from Japan's *Mainichi shimbun* in 1972:

> In a word, *chuch'e sasang* says the subject of revolution and construction are the masses, and the power that drives the revolution and construction also resides within the masses. To put it differently, it's an ideology that says the self is the master of one's own fate and that the power to create one's fate also belongs to the self. … *Chuch'e sasang* is expressed as political independence, economic self-reliance, and self-defense.[6]

This interview was the first time *chuch'e* was defined as a thought, but the concept had been brewing for a while. According to Hwang Changyŏp (1923–2010), the scholar-politician who played a key role in developing the ideology and who defected to South Korea in February 1997, the press conference was organised to announce the result of three years of theoretical research on *chuch'e*.[7] The core message of *chuch'e sasang* is rather simple: one's life is determined by oneself, and by extension,

the course of the nation and the state are determined by the people. The three types of independence that arise from *chuch'e* – in politics (*chaju*), in economy (*charip*), and in defence (*chawi*) – have since become a common slogan of the party and the state.

In content, *chuch'e sasang* is a metaphysical statement about the nature of human beings. Its subject is an autonomous, self-contained entity, potentially free from the dominating forces of life, whether psychological or material. This autonomous subject is in possession of a will that can be expressed to create a world coherent with consciousness. Such a subject is not unlike the modern notion of the subject, with which we are all familiar and with which various institutions of our modern world operate, from schools and the family to the market and the state. Historically, for instance, we can trace this notion of the self in the Enlightenment tradition that proclaimed (not without criticism, of course) the self as the ground of knowledge and experience, possessing rational faculties to order the world.[8]

The comparison between the self in *chuch'e sasang* and the general sense of the self (as derived from Enlightenment thought) is to suggest that its essential ideas are by no means strange or contradictory to our modern sense of the self. But to be sure, *chuch'e sasang* is not an inclusive idea in and of itself but part of a system set up by the nominal socialist revolution, on the one hand, and by the need to reproduce the conditions of domination, on the other. What is in need of critical attention is therefore not the tenets of *chuch'e* ideology but the total system in which it functions – that is, not so much its mundane and general ideological content as its ideological form. As a form, *chuch'e sasang* contributes (always incompletely) to sustaining the structures of despotic power and to making conditions of domination appear as independence and the subjugated self as the 'master of one's fate'.

A serious question that arises here has to do with utility: did the ideas of independence and subjectivity schematised in *chuch'e sasang* correspond to the material world of North Korea? Did it really create self-willed beings that order the world according to their consciousness? The answer is indisputably negative. The discursive world of *chuch'e* was sharply contradictory to North Korea's political economic reality. Indeed, Hwang Changyŏp's lasting critique of *chuch'e sasang* points at this contradiction. He says that the leaders of North Korea made it into a 'weapon against the human mind that turns the North Korean people into slaves' while claiming to the outside world that they had constructed a socialist paradise of *chuch'e* beings, even as millions were starving to death.[9]

Among the denouncers of *chuch'e sasang*, no one is as vocal as B. R. Myers, whose criticism of it as a pseudo-doctrine begins with its birth from the racist ideology of Japanese fascism. Myers is dismissive (rightly so) on all sides. For Myers, *chuch'e sasang* seen from within North Korea is a 'xenophobic, race-based worldview derived largely from fascist Japanese myth'.[10] From without, as it 'decoys the outsiders', the 'world sees a reassuringly dull state nationalism conceived by post-colonial Koreans, rooted in humanist principles, and evincing an understandable if unfortunate preoccupation with autonomy and self-reliance'.[11] Myers's critique of *chuch'e* in its utility is especially forceful: he sees the notion of self-reliance as empty, having no function in North Korea's state practice. When foreign aid is flowing in, he writes, 'North Koreans take it indefinitely, and when it does not, they do without; a concern for self-reliance *per se* does not enter into things'.[12] He is intolerant of any reading of *chuch'e sasang* that gives it a substantive or causative character. For Myers, not only is its utility in political economy ineffective, its role as a dominating tool of the human mind is suspicious. Ideology is important in North Korea, Myers concedes; it is not a tool that is related to independence and self-reliance, however, but one stemming from 'paranoid, race-based nationalism'.[13]

What is instructive for us in Myers's highly charged assessment is that *chuch'e sasang* is often made out to be, even for those who are critical of it, more than what it is, and it is precisely this substantiation that supports its status in the world. This adds another task to our historical analysis of *chuch'e sasang*: the distinction of what appears as ideology but has no real material connection. Such a thing, even if used as a tool of domination, is fragile, as ideology devoid of social practice is easily broken. For this, Terry Eagleton's emphasis that ideology is rooted in 'lived relations' arising from the 'material structure of society as a whole' is our starting point.[14] The connection – and equally disconnection – between ideas, social relations, and material reality, captured by the notion of totality, is therefore one central theme of this chapter.

Part 1: A historical understanding of *chuch'e sasang*

An important, ongoing criticism of socialist states of the twentieth century, all of which fell to various forms of totalitarianism or dictatorship, is that the state sacrificed individualism for collectivism; that the self was given over to some kind of mass order governed by

supra-individual institutions of the party and the state. It was none other than Hannah Arendt who said that 'total domination [strives] to organise the infinite plurality and differentiation of human beings as if all humanity were just one individual'.[15] The thorny element in her critique was the subject: there seemed to be no room for genuine subjectivity within the planned, collective, and repressive apparatuses of state socialism. If subjectivity was to be found, it was found outside the party-state domain – underground, at home, in the black market, among the exiled.

At the same time, we have come to know, not only through critical research but also directly from socialist rhetoric itself, that the socialist states of the twentieth century actually paid a great deal of attention to subjectivity. The construction of proper socialist subjects through education, the arts, and labour, among others, was a major project for all socialist states. The individual subject and the collective subject were to not to be antagonistic entities, for the collective had to consist of self-willed subjects with a singular aim. For example, cinema in the Soviet Union was instrumental in transforming the 'accidental crowd (the mass-in-itself) into the self-conscious, purposeful crowd (the mass-for-itself), with at least the potential of acting out its own destiny'.[16] Perhaps the ideal species here was the labour hero, an ordinary being who becomes the universal, imitable subject by transforming the self in the face of difficulty. Changing oneself – reinventing the subject, as it were – was hence a constant theme in socialist rhetoric. In his study of autobiographical texts from the early Soviet period, Hellbeck writes that through 'subjectivizing practices' such as writing autobiographies, Soviet citizens became 'aware of their "selves" as a distinct political category … as an entity to be molded and perfected through work on oneself'.[17] After looking at the various discourses on the Soviet self, Chatterjee and Petrone make an observation pertinent to our approach: 'Soviet power … gave common people an uncommon opportunity to reflect on themselves and to constitute their identities and a sense of subjectivity'.[18] The self was, in no small way, central to building socialism.

As object of construction

One of the earliest uses of the word *chuch'e* in modern Korea, to mean self-reliance and sovereignty in relation to statehood, was in the writings of the nationalist-turned-anarchist historian Sin Ch'aeho.[19] As a radical and militant scholar-activist living in exile in China during the Japanese

colonial period, Sin's call for independence in politics, economy, and defence was in part articulated in terms of *chuch'e*. Whether Kim Il Sung read Sin or not, Sin's thought was influential in the development of Korea's nationalism, an orientation towards which Kim Il Sung was consistent in throughout his life. But for North Korea to be described as the 'socialist motherland of *chuch'e*', as in the revised constitution of 1972, it would take a system of scholarship, propaganda, and education – the discursive and institutional system developed in the late 1960s by people like Hwang Changyŏp.

In the official history of *chuch'e* ideology, the beginning is traced back to a single speech given by Kim Il Sung to party propaganda workers on 28 December 1955, perhaps the most hyperbolised speech in North Korea's history of thought. Titled 'On Eliminating Dogmatism and Formalism and Establishing *Chuch'e* in Our Ideological Project', Kim Il Sung asks, 'What is *chuch'e* in our party's ideological project?'

> We're carrying out a Korean revolution, not a revolution of another country. This Korean revolution is therefore the *chuch'e* of our party's ideological project. That is why all ideological projects must be done for the benefit of the Korean revolution. When we study the history of the Soviet Communist Party or the history of the Chinese revolution or the principles of Marxism-Leninism, we're doing it in order to properly carry out our own revolution.[20]

Made during a time of open criticism among competing political groups, the speech signals the beginnings of Kim Il Sung and his faction's dominance in the party and the state. 'Some people say that the Soviet way is good or the Chinese way is good', Kim Il Sung says, 'but isn't it time to make our own way?'[21] 'Our own way' is of course the way of the Kim Il Sung faction, which was emerging as and was made into the only genuinely independent voice in North Korea's post–Korean War period.

We notice that in the speech the word *chuch'e* is not used as an independent concept with its own explication, let alone a system of thought. The word does not have a force of its own; it is still merely a descriptive word to indicate a way of carrying out a task. In fact, as Myers notes, there doesn't seem to be a published version of this speech before 1960, the word appearing in the dictionary only in 1962.[22] Positively, what can be distinguished from the 1955 speech is that *chuch'e* has the meaning of a goal to be achieved or a thing to be established. This was the case throughout the 1950s and 1960s. In the following, which comes from

a lecture Kim Il Sung gave in Indonesia in April 1965, we can see this more clearly:

> The establishment of Juche means holding fast to the principle of solving for oneself all the problems of the revolution and construction in conformity with the actual conditions at home, and mainly by one's own efforts. … If one fails to establish Juche in the ideological and political sphere, he will be unable to display any initiative because his faculty of independent thinking is paralyzed …[23]

The earliest phase of *chuch'e* as a thought is its articulation as an object of construction, one to be forged as a *form* in ideology and politics. According to Hwang, the projection of *chuch'e* as an object was especially noticeable after the Fourth Party Congress in 1961.[24] This congress, publicised as the 'Congress of Victors', was a momentous event: the party announced that all forms of production had been nationalised and the political monopoly by the Kim Il Sung faction in the party and legislature had been surely achieved. As North Korea proclaimed the arrival of state-led socialism, *chuch'e* emerged from utterance to object, to be constructed by individuals and the state alike. Once constructed, *chuch'e* would function as the structural basis of all social and state practices.

Subjectivity as submission

The situation in which *chuch'e* developed into a reified ideology of human centrality, as we know it today, was shaped and supported by at least four supranational happenings. First was de-Stalinisation within the Soviet Union, which began in February 1956 with Khrushchev's speech condemning Stalin's dictatorial rule and personality cult and which shook Soviet domination in the socialist world. Second was the related happening of the so-called Sino-Soviet split, which lasted throughout the 1960s, during which North Korea criticised both states – first, the Soviet Union after the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 (for being soft against capitalism), then China from the onset of China's Cultural Revolution in 1966 (for being unaware of its own situation). Third was the extensive political purging within North Korea that began during the Korean War, targeting the members of the former South Korean Workers' Party Faction, the Yanan Group (made up of veteran Korean revolutionaries from China), and the Korean Soviets, who had entered North Korea with the Soviet occupation in 1945 (these purges resulted in Soviet and Chinese intervention in North Korea's domestic politics,

with the two powers demanding apologies from Kim Il Sung). And fourth was the sharp decrease in foreign aid from the Soviet Union and eastern Europe in the 1960s, aid which had amounted between 1946 and 1961 to more than five billion roubles, about 124 dollars per capita per year, a scale that was matched in the world only by South Korea's foreign aid.[25] As the entire global socialist economy slowed down during the mid-1960s, foreign aid to North Korea diminished to a comparatively low level.

In conjunction with the supranational situation, a more affirmative phenomenon within North Korea that had a transformative effect on *chuch'*e was the *Ch'ŏllima* Work Team Movement. Begun in March 1959 and officially initiated by a steel worker named Chin Ŭngwŏn of Kangsŏn Steelworks in Namp'o (but unofficially organised by the party central committee with the aim of completing the Five-Year Plan ahead of schedule), the movement spawned a nationwide campaign of competition to increase production and productivity.[26] At the end of 1960, 22,083 work teams and 387,412 workers were participating in the movement.[27] By 1963, over 3 million workers were participating in the movement, with 13,626 teams receiving the title of *Ch'ŏllima* Work Team[28] (Chin Ŭng-wŏn himself became a labour hero in August 1960). The 1960s was the final period of North Korea's tremendous growth following liberation in 1945: between 1946 and 1969, the total industrial output increased 21 times, or at an average rate of 42 per cent annually.[29]

The *Ch'ŏllima* Work Team Movement was seen as a vital factor of this economic growth. Moreover, the movement's impact was more than economic, for it left a real sense of purpose, accomplishment, and togetherness among the people. Even Hwang Changyŏp, who became very critical of *chuch'e*'s development into an apparatus of domination later in life, recognised the ethico-moral effect of the movement. 'Those who participated in the movement', he writes, 'felt a large change in their mental and ethical character, strengthening the political and ideological unity between the guiding party and the guided masses.'[30]

Within the transnational situation and from the experience of the *Ch'ŏllima* movement, the decisive step in the development of *chuch'e* ideology occurred in the early 1970s. This step was the inclusion of the notion of the centrality of the human being, which transformed *chuch'e* into a 'human-centred philosophy', as it is labelled in North Korea. Hwang Changyŏp's seminal contribution to *chuch'e* ideology, for which he came to be called its 'architect', seems to have come at this point.[31] The essential idea here entailed the self as the ultimate agent of the

world, and this subject-as-agent was to be the foundation of political sovereignty and economic independence. Announced to the public – particularly the foreign public – in September 1972, in an interview in Japan's *Mainichi shimbun* (see above), *chuch'e sasang* was now an ideology foremost about the autonomous and rational being with innate faculties to construct the world.

The 1960s is known as North Korea's golden period, when the goals of the party and state were at least partially realised. What became eminent in the philosophical discourse that explained and legitimised this transformation was not so much class struggle as mass struggle, in which the basic unit of change was the self. In the context of, on the one hand, crises caused by the supranational situation and, on the other, affirmation of people's capacity shaped by the *Ch'ŏllima* Work Team Movement, the coherent self capable of ordering the world came to be the central tenet of *chuch'e*.

The most enduring expression of *chuch'e sasang*, as it became a more refined and reified thought, was its translation into law, appearing in the new constitution in late 1972. Named from here on the Socialist Constitution of Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it was adopted by the legislative organ Supreme People's Assembly on 27 December 1972 and printed in full in *Rodong Sinmun* the following day. *Chuch'e* made its appearance in article 1, section 4: 'The Democratic People's Republic of Korea holds the *chuch'e* ideology of the Korean Workers' Party, which has creatively applied Marxist-Leninism to the reality of our country, to be the guiding principle of our activities.'[32] The editorial stated that the inclusion of *chuch'e* in the constitution was an 'expression of the need to make permanent the victory of socialist revolution and construction'.[33]

The socialist constitution has undergone four revisions since its adoption (in 1992, 1998, 2009, and 2010). Starting with the 1992 constitution, the clause about the application of Marxist-Leninism was erased from the *chuch'e* section. This removal was largely connected to the dissolution of Moscow-tied communist, socialist, and labour parties across eastern Europe that threatened state socialism as a viable system. At least in rhetoric, North Korea was already responding to the cataclysmic change brought on by the dissolution of state socialism when, in 1991, the party declared the beginning of 'socialism of our style'. An important component here was the prominence of Kim Il Sung's ideas over other socialist ideas: since the early 1970s, *chuch'e* and Kim Il Sung had become synonymous, and the acceptance of one was the acceptance of the other. The erasure in the 1992 constitution was the reflection

of North Korea's reality, where *chuch'e* had existed for over two decades in support of Kim Il Sung's immense authority and as an ideology that reproduces Kim's power. The logic of this reproduction can be outlined as the following:

(1) The human-centred world view is based on ideological consciousness.
(2) Ideological consciousness arises from the teachings of the leader.
(3) Absolute obedience to the leader is thus necessary.
(4) Absolute obedience to the successor is also necessary.[34]

Before being embedded into the law, *chuch'e* was operating in reality as a double mechanism of self-empowerment that simultaneously aligns the subject with the name of the leader. Empowerment and domination emanated from the same word.

The 1970s saw the publication of numerous treatises on the 'human-centred philosophy', including the important *Ch'ŏrhak kangjwa* (Philosophical lectures) of Kim Il Sung in 1973. This treatise was typical of the period in that the link between Kim and *chuch'e* was pronounced and that *chuch'e* was presented as a new philosophy that surpassed Marxism and Leninism – as North Korea's own communist dogma.[35] Kim's writings in the 1970s, in turn, formed the basics of a canon that replicated itself and gave birth to various *chuch'e* discourses throughout the world. The most ardent champion of *chuch'e sasang* was Kim's eldest son, Jong Il, who in 1985 directed the publication of the defining canonical work *Widaehan chuch'e sasang ch'ongsŏ* (Collected works on the great *chuch'e* ideology). Kim Jong Il's involvement in the ideological project, which began in the mid-1970s, signalled on the one hand a major refinement of the discourse about the relationship between subjectivity and submission that had started in the post-war period and, on the other hand, the broadening of ideological authority to himself. In the 1980s, as North Korea entered the Kim Jong Il era, *chuch'e* was seen as simultaneously the product of North Korea's experience and the cause of its transformation.

Product of splendour, cause of misery

Interpretations and perceptions of *chuch'e sasang* outside North Korea have been diverse. When speeches and essays on the idea began to be published in foreign languages in the 1970s, North Korea presented an image of a small but in many ways successful industrialising state (albeit

highly despotic and militaristic). The success was explained not only in economic terms but also in metaphysical terms, as an outcome of a certain consciousness. In this logic, *chuch'e* was an ideological mindset that had accelerated North Korea's recovery from war and its establishment of a state-socialist economy. The key here was that such a mindset arose from learning and realising Kim's thought, a process that was portable and accessible to anyone. (Ho Chi Minh's thought had a similar effect.) *Chuch'e sasang* had a certain appeal and found audiences all over the world willing to discover its message. From the late 1970s, the Korean Workers' Party began to directly organise these audiences by establishing study centres, publicising Kim Il Sung's thought through them, and often funding the members to continue studying *chuch'e sasang*.

The audiences were not only in newly emerging post-colonial countries like Uganda and Ethiopia but also in established capitalist countries like Spain and the United States. Many attempts in various sizes and longevity were formed to study *chuch'e* and engage with North Korea. For example, North Korea and Ethiopia (under the Mengitsu regime) were active economic and military partners, especially in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and there was an unavailing effort to study *chuch'e* and apply it to Ethiopia's context.[36] In the United States there was the interesting case of the Black Panther Party, whose leading member, Eldridge Cleaver, once its Minister of Information, endorsed the *chuch'e* idea and in 1972 wrote the foreword to an English-language book on *chuch'e* and Kim Il Sung's writings, published by a New York publisher.[37]

The most dedicated and widespread support of *chuch'e* outside North Korea was in Japan, among the Korean Japanese population. They were members of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (*K. Chaeilbon Chosŏnin Ch'ongryŏnhaphoe*; *J. Zai-Nihon Chōsenjin Sōrengōkai*), which had a membership of more than 200,000 at its height in the early 1980s. They had adopted the principles of *chuch'e* and aligned themselves with the North Korean state. This was in opposition to the Koreans organised under the South Korea–leaning Korean Residents Union in Japan (*K. Chaeilbon Taehanmin'guk Mindan*; *J. Zai-Nihon Daikanminkoku Mindan*), which was from the beginning heavily critical of North Korea's system.[38]

As North Korea became better known to the world, the world in turn began to see that North Korea was failing to reproduce the success of the *Ch'ŏllima* period. North Korea's non-military economy foundered throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and in the early 1990s it collapsed. Agricultural and industrial production stopped due to the combined

effects of natural disasters, trade inactivity, inadequate resources, workers' attrition, and international embargoes. The public distribution system, which had once provided essential food items to all parts of the country, broke down, and official stores were empty of purchasable consumer goods. Workers tore apart their machines to sell them as scrap metal, children begged on the street, and millions starved.[39] Now seen in this horrific context, *chuch'e sasang*, in its double (and conflicting) demands for autonomy and loyalty, was the cause of something terribly wrong. The writings of Han S. Park, a leading scholar of *chuch'e* in the English language, represent this view well. While recognising it as an ideology constructed by actual experience, Park sees *chuch'e sasang* as a major factor in creating an isolated economy that has suppressed competition, quality, diversity, and trade while giving priority to manufacturing weapons.[40] On a similar note, in the studies of Natsios as well as Haggard and Noland, the *chuch'e* principle is viewed as one definite cause of North Korea's famine in the late 1990s, which killed at least several hundred thousand people.[41]

Perhaps the strongest criticism of *chuch'e* is that it functions as an oppressive apparatus that subsumes human beings under ideology, removing the very potential for subjectivity that it claims to nurture (the so called brainwashing argument). For Han S. Park, because the ideological control over the people is so strong – because absolute obedience has become a way of life – 'severe economic hardship, including food shortages, has not caused any appreciable degree of popular unrest or a legitimacy crisis'.[42] The assertion here is not only that *chuch'e* has taken away the people's capacity to make claims against the state but also that the ideology has prevented the manifestation of a certain category of life outside state control. A study done by the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul (a graduate school devoted solely to research and education about North Korea) follows such logic. Ham T'aekyŏng and Ku Kab'u, researchers at the university, have searched for the formation of a private sphere in North Korea through its markets. They write that because *chuch'e* has 'functioned – and is currently functioning – as an ideology that dominates the tendency toward collectivity, it can only be a barrier to the expansion of the private sphere'.[43] The private sphere, an essential category of life, is seen as being deprived by an ideology that has blocked its manifestation.

In sum, the historical understanding of *chuch'e sasang* presented here is marked by at least three phases: first, the moment of utterance of the word and its fixation as an object of construction by the state (mid-1950s–mid-1960s); second, the inclusion of the idea of human

centrality and its expression in law (mid-1960s–mid-1970s); and third, the expansion of *chuch'e* as a system and its fixation as the product and cause of North Korea's situation, as both propaganda and criticism (1972–the present). *Chuch'e* as an ideology-as-a-thing, a reified thought embodied by the subject, was an effect of – and partially responsible for – the complex situations of post-war North Korea. The internal crisis arising from de-Stalinisation and the affirming experience of the *Ch'ŏllima* movement are two important components here.

The interpretations and perceptions of *chuch'e* have been complex as well. On the one hand, it is easy to see it as an all-controlling ideology that has turned citizens into executors of party-state aims; on the other hand, it is easy to see it as a failed idea that has had disastrous material consequences. Both views are instructive. Žižek, that masterly thinker in the mode of paradox, has a relevant point when he says that ideology 'resides in externalisation of the result of an inner necessity'.[44] Ideology always speaks of a certain truth, but that truth is deployed as a means of domination within the ideological form – this domination taking place in action, in lived reality, and in material life. The ideological rendering of truth as means of domination is a universal phenomenon. The critique of *chuch'e* as an ideology is thus a challenging question, pointing at the intersection of power, material structure, and human reason.

Part 2: Total, thus broken

What was the logic of *chuch'e sasang* that found its way into North Korea's popular imagination? How was it represented? These questions are approached in this section with the concept of totality. Totality has a range of understandings, one of which is the connotation of mass suppression, but the particular understanding employed here is a more generic one: as a willed or unwilled universal attempt, by various actors, at coherence between the subject and the world. From this perspective, totality is especially not a description of mass utopia, created when society reaches the stage of communism, although such an imagination is part of twentieth-century socialist revolutions. The notion of totality as mass utopia is avoided altogether in this chapter because, strictly speaking, North Korea was not and is not a socialist country moving toward communist utopia. The nationalisation of all forms of production by the late 1950s does prompt us to recognise the state's effective appropriation of total surplus, but as far as human emancipation is concerned, strong levels of despotism, nationalism, and industrialism

prevented any real emancipatory practice. However, whether North Korea is a socialist country or not, albeit an important question in its own right, is not crucial to our understanding of totality.

Totality in the generic sense has both theoretical and practical conceptions: knowledge finds structure and generality through it, and specific groups find certainty by participating in it.[45] As Lefebvre says, each human activity aspires to universality: 'it tends effectively towards totality'.[46] Moreover, this tendency develops with and against other activities. Struggle is thus inherent in totality, and struggle keeps totality from completion – this is Lefebvre's key point. 'The moment it becomes totalised', Lefebvre writes, 'is also the moment when its immanent failure is revealed. The structure contains within itself the seeds of its own negation: the beginning of destructuring'.[47] Jie-hyun Lim makes a similar point when he says that the content of totality – a plan to dominate rationality, emotion, will, and even desire – is a utopian impossibility.[48] Totality as an essentially incomplete and impossible practice – we approach the logic of *chuch'e* with such an understanding.

The mass logic of *chuch'e*

In 1973, the popular monthly magazine *Ch'ŏllima*, widely published since 1959, devoted the entire year to introducing *chuch'e sasang* to the public. This was part of a major effort by the North Korean state to inform and educate the public about the newly minted ideology, as it recently had attained a monolithic position in the socialist constitution of 1972. This was a tremendous effort: publications and artistic productions in the 1970s on the themes of *chuch'e*, from philosophical texts and children's books to movies and paintings, were, to say the least, voluminous. Among them, the articles in the *Ch'ŏllima* magazine are exemplary in that the idea was presented in a way that was clear and applicable to the unspecialised population. Each issue of *Ch'ŏllima* included an article explaining various terms related to *chuch'e* and why *chuch'e* mattered to North Korea. All written by one Ch'oe Hojin, the 12 issues were divided into the following six titles and themes: 'Why We Need to Arm Ourselves with *Chuch'e Sasang*' (issue 1); 'The Basics of *Chuch'e Sasang*' (issues 2–5); '*Chuch'e Sasang* is a Marxist-Leninist Guiding Ideology of Our Era That Guarantees Victory in Revolution and Construction' (issues 6–8); 'Our Country Is the Gatherland of Great *Chuch'e Sasang*' (issues 9–10); 'What Is Our Task in Realizing *Chuch'e Sasang*?' (issue 11); and 'Let us Brighten *Chuch'e Sasang* by Raising the

Chuch'e Flag' (issue 12). The magazine begins the yearlong process by stating the need to embody *chuch'e* ('because no matter how valuable the other's experience is, you cannot transfer it mechanically!').[49] Then it moves on to introduce the basic concepts with which it can be understood, including ideology itself – '[the] standpoint … arising from … how one looks at natural and social phenomena'[50] – and ends the year by mentioning specific acts that ordinary people can do to become a nation of *chuch'e* (strengthening the 'project of people', discussed below).[51]

The fundamental ideas of *chuch'e* are distilled into four principles: (1) the people are the master of everything and decide everything; (2) an independent and creative position is necessary for revolution; (3) *chuch'e* makes the people the master of nature and society; and (4) *chuch'e* opposes all reactionary and opportunistic thought.[52] To be sure, a constant reference is made to Kim Il Sung as its creator and ultimate practitioner: 'the decisive factors that made our country into the great fatherland of *chuch'e sasang* are the birth of comrade Kim Il Sung and his leadership in the Korean revolution'.[53] What comes off immediately to the reader is that the writing is easy and the message simple. There is nothing difficult about the philosophy of a person considered to be the absolute leader. What he thinks is completely understandable by anybody – that 'anybody' being the coherent subject who makes connections between the self and the world. The easiness of the idea lies in its characteristic of totality, as an idea that emerges from real experience articulated by the omnipresent leader, witnessed in the actual material transformation, and reproduced tautologically as the product and cause of revolution. The mass logic of *chuch'e* was entrenched in the immediate totality of the autonomous subject.

The mass logic of *chuch'e* perhaps found its most overdetermined (therefore total) utility in social practice. This involved the instruction on how one should act as ideological beings in relation to others. Called the 'project of people' (*saramgwa ŭi saŏp*), Kim Il Sung had remarked that the most important element in establishing *chuch'e sasang* was remaking the people.[54] The people project consisted of two parts: first was the 'project of remodeling people's ideological consciousness', and second was the 'project of mobilising the strength and wisdom of the masses as they adhere to party policy'.[55] The relationship between ideology, consciousness, and action was so overdetermined – so symbolically linked – that any deviation in the relationship was rationalised as a result of outside interference, whether that was capitalist imperialism or a remaining

bourgeois mindset. The totality of *chuch'e* was dependent upon the causative relationship between ideology and action, and this certainty was in turn the foundation of the belief that humans can be remade; that anybody could be converted into a proper socialist being.[56] Sanctioned by the eminent authority of *chuch'e sasang*, human conversion was the duty of all North Korean citizens.

The total logic of *chuch'e* comprised both theoretical and practical dimensions. As a theoretical project, the conception of the human being was primarily based on the autonomous and coherent subject. The self as an ambivalent being, in which subjectivity is really an objective condition within some kind of hegemony, had no place in the socialist project of transforming the world and its inhabitants. In this formulation, the relationship between consciousness and action was a causative one, put into motion by ideology. As a practical project, the mass logic of *chuch'e* called for the remaking of people into proper socialist beings: the 'project of people'. The call for human conversion was made to ordinary citizens in their everyday life. On the one hand, each citizen had the duty to help others realise their potential and to pull those lagging behind into the socialist project at large. On the other, human conversion was the everyday expansion of ideological domination. Life and its activities were sets of overdetermined codes orchestrated by the party state but made to appear as subjective practices through the space of everyday life.

The dual conception of totality was, however, an incomplete project (an impossible utopian dream): the moment of totality was also the moment of its destructuring. This destructuring was not just the discrepancy between theory and practice but the impossibility within each as well as with the other. In other words, the totality mapped out by *chuch'e* was doomed because it began with the inherently impossible coherent subject. Thus the failure of totality does not have to do solely with the characteristic of the everyday that resists domination; though the everyday that resists domination is a crucial dimension, this phenomenon is only secondary in significance. At the initial point, the failure is with the impossible anticipation of the coherent being in relation to world order.

The next section examines the precarious relationship between ideology, subject, and world order. The materials used are part of the official discourse of *chuch'e*, and they aim to represent its mass logic; but it is the inherent collapse of that logic that highlights the moment of the destructuring of totality.

The fragile divide: representing totality

In the 1972 North Korean film *Salesgirls on the Train*, the members of a sales team of a regional train station, all of them women, become obsessed with increasing their revenue. Early on in the film, the sales team has a meeting about the railroad policy that measures performance by the amount of sales. The room is sparsely decorated, but on the front wall hangs a photo of Kim Il Sung. The team leader proposes to sell special – and thus more expensive – items in order to generate more revenue, but the saleswomen complain:

> TEAMLEADER: So from today, we'll start receiving special items. I want to hear your opinion on whether we will meet our target as long there is a supply of these goods. In the station and on the train, we'll have to carry more expensive items, not beverages.
> SALESWOMAN1: How can we not sell beverages in this hot summer? The passengers keep demanding cold things. Do you think it feels good to hear their grumbles?
> SALESWOMAN2: That's right. You need to know our feelings, too.
> TEAMLEADER: All right, all right. That's enough. I know how you feel, but do you think the main office cares how you feel? They judge our performance by the amount of sales.[57]

There are several scenes like this throughout the film – on the train, in the household – in which the dialogue is dominated by the importance of profit. Unlike what you would expect, references to Kim Il Sung, the nation, or revolution are surprisingly few. When they do occur, they are at the individual level. For example, Sŏnhŭi, who is new to the team and shy about approaching the passengers, gets motivated by Kim Il Sung's message that train vendors should create a good travelling environment by selling items that are unique to a region. She thus travels to a local grape farm, without telling her team, in order to secure grapes to be sold on the train, overcoming many bureaucratic barriers in the process. Overall, dialogues about railroad work, team performance, and sales concern concrete situations – fixing a broken refrigerator, acquiring the supply of grapes.

Eventually, the sales team succeeds: the passengers, moved by the relentless and yet honest promotion of the sales team, buy up the fruits and bottled spring water well known in the region. The cash in the register piles up, and the sales team, at first divided in opinion about the sales policy, becomes united and proud of their achievement. In the

final scene, they are standing at the back of the moving train, looking at the landscape that passes before them. The final scene seems to tell us that socialist revolution in North Korea happens in small increments, through not only large industries (the preferred method of the period) but also a few bucks at a time.

This film, directed by Ko Hakrim, shot at P'yŏngyang's Art Film Studio (Chosŏn Yesul Yŏnghwa Ch'walyŏngso), *and* in conformance with the propaganda and censorship standards of the time, is a typical North Korean film in its focus on the people's overcoming of barriers in life. It was released in 1972, when the North Korean state was proclaiming the arrival of the era of *chuch'e sasang*, but we do not need to be too meticulous about picking out *chuch'e* messages. Any movie made in post–Korean War North Korea is in line with the dominant discourse of the party. Furthermore, *chuch'e sasang* should not be seen as a unique element but a continuous historical process that is highlighted by symbolic chains of images and discourses.

The film, however, is logically strange. As soon as the characters step into what seems like the domain of the public, they are simultaneously outside it. The public debate about sales policy involves private matters: the disagreement about sales policy is based on individual feelings, not on some common revolutionary goal. The film does not show a clear role of the nation or socialist principles: the grape farmer agrees to supply grapes to Sonhŭi not because supplying it fits in with some state plan but because of Sŏnhŭi's individual effort. Nor does it show a public sphere whose form is consistent with content. The public and the private exist simultaneously in a single space, both in form and content. But of course the logical strangeness of this film poses no real problem to the characters. In the film, as in life, logical inconsistency hardly matters: distinctions between the public, the private, and the state all collapse on the social terrain. The social, as the film shows very well, refuses to be categorised or, more specifically, totalised.

Any positive traces of the social become ambiguous at the moment of bracketing; both the public and the private aspects of the social – two positive qualities – lose their logical grounds at the moment of their totalisation. If there is any real distinction made by the public sphere, it is thus the separation between the state as a positive entity and the social as a negative and fundamentally open non-objective entity. Referring back to the film, the hustle of the sales team to follow state policy shows a public sphere that exists apart from the objective power of the state – not because the public sphere guarantees any real or seemingly

real protection from the state but because the private sphere discloses the non-objective nature of the social, which appears to us as a logical conflict between the public, the private, and the state.

In my reading of this film, the public sphere has two dimensions: first, the public sphere is a discursive category of North Korea's totality formulated by the state; and second, the public sphere is an analytic category for understanding the social and the subject. Regarding the first dimension, the public sphere is a discursive structure that is part of the totality imagined by the state – that is, the objective power of the state (the non-coercive means of organisation and motivation) that requires the identification of society as positive and autonomous. Regarding the second dimension, the public sphere as an analytic category points to the unstable and indeterminate nature of the social and the subject. Any attempt to categorise them necessarily runs into the problem of logical contradictions.

The thread that runs through ideology, the state, and the subject agent leads to North Korea's totality of the nation. *Chuch'e sasang* is an ontological orientation of the subject, the nation a totality within which the subject becomes the actor. The nation, then, is a specific kind of totality, abstract and dependent on positive characteristics of society and the subject. Social totality can only be *represented* and is thus inherently exclusive. That is, any representation of totality excludes antagonisms and indeterminacy, which are unrepresentable. What we get – or what gets represented to us – is the positive, closed society that is discursive in structure.

The engraving *Talbam* (Moonlit Night, 1975), by Yi Ilbok, speaks of a tranquil night of leisure. The people, dressed in a modern style, come out of a theatre, which is showing *P'i pada* (Sea of Blood), the famous opera and film about a woman who leads a revolutionary fight for the nation against the Japanese. The people are never alone; the one who stands alone is merely waiting for someone. This village is covered in snow; it is in the mountains, and yet all houses and buildings are lit. The power lines carry electricity and provide warmth; the riverbanks are walled with stone, and the bridge seems strong. Nature – the river and the winter season – is tamed, and social life is its harmonious counterpart (Illustration 13.1).[58]

This engraving shows the simultaneous appearance and disappearance of society. On the one hand, the socially integrated people of the mountain village surely live in some kind of a society, with houses, a theatre, what seems like a school, and benches that face the river. On the other hand, this objective society is infused with the state and the

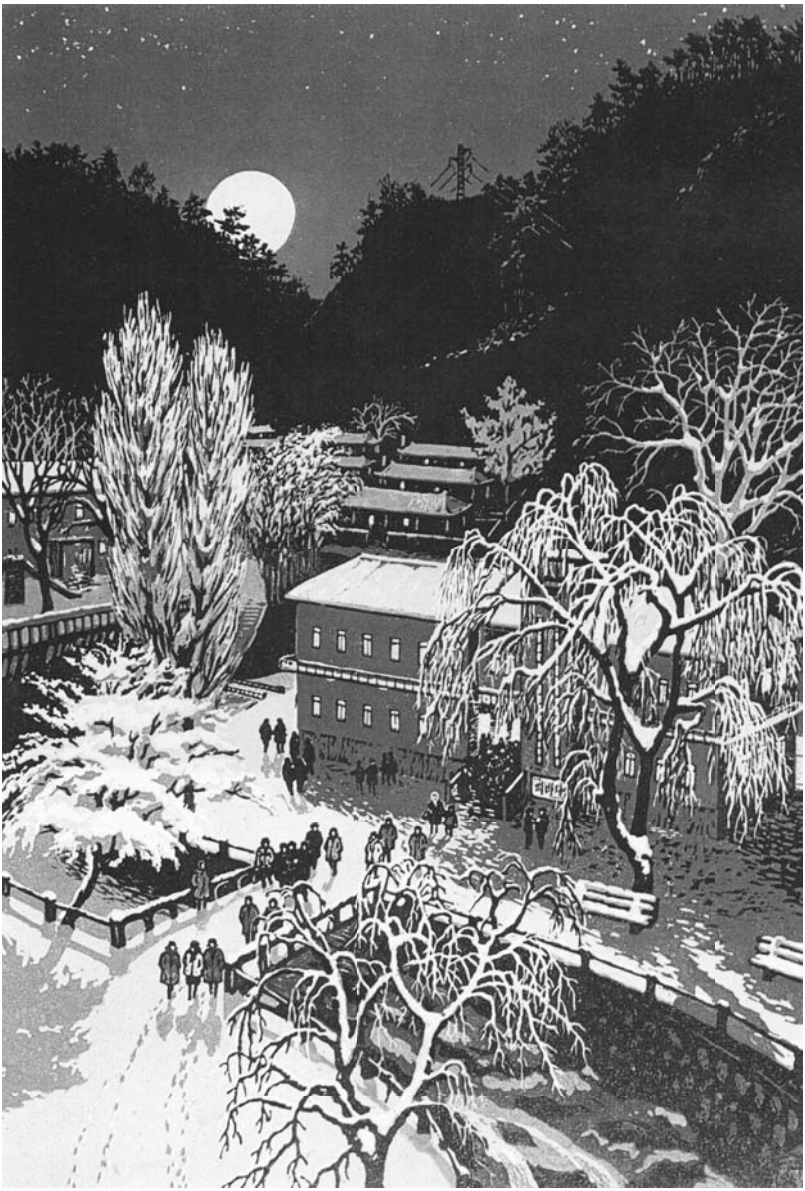

Illustration 13.1 Yi Ilbok, *Talbam* (Moonlit Night, 1975). Reproduced by permission from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Copyright Office, P'yŏngyang, through the North/South Economic Cultural Cooperation Foundation in Seoul, Republic of Korea

party – the power lines built by the state run through the hills, and the theatre is putting on the play *P'i pada*, which carries the message of the party. From the electricity provided to all buildings (all windows are lit!) to the stone-walled riverbank, the extensiveness – the penetration – of the state renders society indistinguishable from the state. Without the state, there would be no such society, or put differently, social totality is possible only in relation to the state.

The schema of coherence involving the subject, the state, and ideology indicates both the transparency and ambiguity of society – transparent because it presents an objective and distinct picture of the social and ambiguous because any distinction of a disparate society immediately disappears within the boundary of the state. Nonetheless, society indeed appears to us as a real thing autonomous from the state. Against logical rigor, the discourse of totality has the effect of objectivity, closing at least at the discursive level what is inherently open. This misrecognition is a fundamental part of the objectifying process. Social totality is thus the misrecognition or partial recognition of the fundamental ambiguity of the social. It recognises only the positive dimension of society, the representable dimension: that which can be captured in language, through experience, within discourse, all the while remaining distanced from the real social which escapes any kind of totality.

Let us take a look at another painting from North Korea, a piece called *Hakkyo ka kŭriupkŏnman* (How I Long for School, 1975), by Kang Mansu (Illustration 13.2).[59] The painting depicts the past, before North Korea has been established, the period before revolution. The two boys standing outside the classroom are poor peasants, while the students in the classroom are from a privileged class that can afford the luxury of learning. The wall divides the two social classes and differentiates their subject positions. The window allows the two to observe each other and to understand the difference as more than just difference. The difference between the two is, after all, founded upon the subordination of one to the other. Simultaneously, the window allows the peasant boys to dream, to long for something they do not possess: to someday sit inside the classroom. The wall must be torn down, perhaps with the axe on the boy's back. Once the wall is torn down, the two sides are forced to participate in a new totality, where actual differences in subject position are replaced by the abstract, totalising hegemony of the nation state. However, even with the axe or revolution, the subject position of the peasants does not transform from an absence to presence, from a lack to fulfilment. The new subject position is no less based on absence or

Illustration 13.2 Kang Mansu, *Hakkyo ka kŭriupkŏnman* (How I Long for School, 1975). Reproduced by permission from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Copyright Office, P'yŏngyang, through the North/South Economic Cultural Cooperation Foundation in Seoul, Republic of Korea

a lack. Because the new subject position locates itself within a totality of the nation state, it undergoes abstraction that replaces one negative identity, the lack of identity possessed by the other, with another negative identity, the solidarity based on the totality of the nation. The revolution necessarily involves the submerging of various interests and needs in order to place various subject positions within the single framework of the nation state.

Conclusion: moments of subjectivity within totality

Is this the end? Is diversity an end to our inquiry on the subject? However important, does the recognition of plurality and multiplicity of subjectivity solve the problem of ambiguity of the subject or the abstracting power of totality? What do we do with the social, which will always refuse to be captured through the plurality of identities? What do we do with the fact that the appearance of multiple public spheres still does not prevent the hegemony or despotism of the state? Regarding *chuch'e sasang*, are we to be satisfied with the knowledge that subject making was the obverse of state making, hence domination? Can we speak of a genuine subjectivity in North Korea? On the ambiguous position of the subject, Laclau asks,

> What could such a position be but a special location within a totality, and what could this totality be but the object of experience of an absolute subject? At the very moment in which the terrain of an absolute subjectivity collapses, it also collapses the very possibility of an absolute object. … [T]he very possibility of the subject/object distinction is the simple result of the impossibility of constituting either of its two terms.[60]

No matter how many subject positions we come up with, the solution is not about formulating the right subject position. As long as the subject, as both an agent and object of change, is rooted in an abstract and negative discourse of totality, however particular and removed from the state, the hegemony of totality would remain unchanged. In short, any struggle of the subject against a hegemonic system will always depend on the presence of such a system, inevitably resulting in the subsumption within that system. However, the impossibility of an absolute subject helps us to recognise the small truth that hegemonic totality is also impossible. Impossibility is not a limitation but rather the moment of rupturing. What is central here is that the indeterminacy of the subject is also the

grounds for new discursive and practical structures – the grounds that could lead us to envision moments of subjectivity based on the infinite possibilities of the subject.

Janice C. H. Kim's *To Live to Work* is, I believe, a work making such an attempt. In her nuanced research on women factory workers in colonial Korea, which conjures up the image of the most oppressive kind of setting, she is careful not to frame her story as that of domination versus resistance, collaboration versus sabotage, or subjugation versus agency. Such dichotomised structures are certainly conceptually distinguishable, but in historical reality numerous forces and agencies surfaced in positive reality as a confluence, in which, as she writes, '[a]lthough the colonial state and Japanese capital influenced the experiences of the working women, so did their immediate communities and families'.[61] The complex question of agency, Kim asserts, was not limited to conflict but concerned the 'dynamics between the political, the personal, and the individual' that integrated the forces of industrialism with short- and long-term personal and familial goals.[62] The subject agents existed within hegemony, or as Kim elegantly concludes, '[r]esistance was only made possible by endurance'.[63]

Subjectivity within totality, as demonstrated in Janice C. H. Kim's work, is not just an analytical framework. It is to be recognised as practice that anticipates the destructuring of totality in reality. In addition to Lefebvre's and Laclau's thoughts, we can here bring in Karatani's illuminating argument, in *Transcritique*, that says that the workers in the capitalist system are transformed into subjects as consumers ('laborers qua consumers'), as the workers buy back what they produce *in totality* (not as individuals).[64] Totality here is the circulation in which 'capital purchases labor power from living laborers, who, in consequence, buy back what they produce from capital'.[65] Subjectivity within totality, in Karatani's analysis, hinges on capital's inescapable dependency, in the last instance, on consumers' wilful moment of buying (which is also the moment when surplus value is realised for capital). This is a categorical shift in the workers' position from 'being the labor-power commodity to being the money en masse that buys commodities … workers as the other – the one who capital can never subsume'.[66] To be sure, the ultimate aim of Karatani's analysis is to provide a way of blocking the formation of surplus value and to propose alternative forms of production and consumption, but the initial lesson here is that the moment of domination and the moment of empowerment are to be found in a single total process. The impossible totality is thus the grounds for the affirmation of a genuine subject that takes shape inside the domain of hegemony.

Regarding North Korea, our analysis of subjectivity – born from the impossible totality – offers two points. First is that ideological control is always incomplete, and by extension, the notion that *chuch'e sasang* has prevented the formation of a certain capacity or category in the life of North Korean people (e.g., the capacity to resist or the category of private sphere) may be a highly mistaken notion. Subjectivity emerges not only from resistance or the private sphere but also from subtle, everyday activities, the detection of which is necessarily difficult. Second, analogous to Karatani's treatment of consumption (which is mostly thought of as an act that perpetuates the capitalist system), our discovery of a genuine subjectivity within North Korea's socialist system may lie in the process of production (which is commonly thought of as a hallmark of the planned socialist system). The moments when the North Korean people are assumed to be under the greatest control may actually be the moments of agency. We can include here activities such as the tearing apart of machines to be sold on the black market (as happened in the late 1990s), as well as the more official activities, such as the workers' on-site innovations and labour heroism, which had been promoted by the North Korean state since the beginning. The concluding remark is that the socialist economy depended on the workers' spontaneous innovations and labour heroism for the economy to actually work. These two types of production were not parts of central planning: you could not plan for spontaneous acts or heroic levels of productivity (though you can certainly demand them). Spontaneity and heroism were, in other words, subjective acts – made within the labour process, where hegemony and self-will converged.

Notes

1. Nodong sinmun chŏngch'i podobu, 'Widaehan yŏngdoja Kim Chŏng-il tongji kkesŏ hyŏndaejŏk ŭro kkuryŏjin ip'al pinallon yŏnhapgiŏpso rŭl hyŏnjijido hasiyŏtda', *Nodong sinmun* (8 February 2010), 1–2.
2. Except for direct quotes from North Korea's English language publication, the word is spelled *chuch'e* throughout this chapter.
3. Hŏ Myŏngsuk, 'On nara ga hŭngsŏng inda', *Rodong Sinmun* (11 February 2010), 4.
4. Nodong sinmun chŏngch'i podobu, 'Widaehan yŏngdoja Kim Chŏng-il tongji kkesŏ hyŏndaejŏk ŭro kkuryŏjin ip'al pinallon yŏnhapgiŏpso rŭl hyŏnjijido hasiyŏtda', 1.
5. Im Chihyŏn (Jie-hyun Lim), 'Ilsang ŭi miro e kach'in kwŏllyŏg ŭi kkum', in Lim Jie-Hyun and Kim Yong-Woo, eds, *Taejung tokjae: Ilsang* ŭi *yongmang kwa mimong* (Seoul: Ch'aeksesang, 2007), p. 555.
6. Kim Il Sung (Kim Ilsŏng), 'Uri tang ŭi chuch'esasang kwa konghwagukjŏngbu ŭi taenaewejongch'aek ŭi myŏtkaji munje e taehayŏ', *Kim Il-sŏng chŏjakchip* 27 (P'yŏngyang: Chosŏn Rodongdang Ch'ulp'ansa, 1984), pp. 390–94.

7. Hwang Changyŏp, *Pukhan ŭi chinsil kwa hŏwi* (Seoul: Sidae Chŏngsin, 1999), pp. 146–47.
8. Nick Mansfield, *Subjectivity: Theories of the Self from Freud to Haraway* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), p. 15.
9. Hwang Changyŏp, Pukhan ŭi chinsil kwa hŏwi, 156.
10. B. R. Myers, *The Cleanest Race* (New York: Melville House, 2010), p. 47.
11. Ibid., p. 47.
12. Ibid., p. 50.
13. Ibid., p. 17.
14. Terry Eagleton, *Ideology* (London, Verso, 2007), p. 30.
15. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1968), p. 438.
16. Susan Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld and Catastrophe* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), p. 140.
17. Jochen Hellbeck, 'Working, Struggling, Becoming', *Russian Review* 60, no. 3 (2001), p. 358.
18. Choi Chatterjee and Karen Petrone, 'Models of Selfhood and Subjectivity', *Slavic Review* 67/4 (2008), 978.
19. Michael Robinson, 'National Identity and the Thought of Sin Ch'aeho', *Journal of Korean Studies* 5 (1984), 121–42.
20. Kim Il Sung, *Kim Ilsŏng chŏjakchip* 27, 468.
21. Ibid., p. 477.
22. B. R. Myers, 'The Watershed That Wasn't', *Acta Koreana* 9/1 (2006), 104–5.
23. Kim Il Sung, *Revolution and Socialist Construction in Korea Selected Writings of Kim Il Sung* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), pp. 87, 89.
24. Hwang Changyŏp, *Pukhan ŭi chinsil kwa hŏwi*, 139.
25. Yoon T. Kuark, 'North Korea's Industrial Development during the Post-war Period', *China Quarterly* 14 (1963), 61.
26. *Ch'ŏllima* means 'thousand-ri-horse', a mythical horse that can travel a thousand ri (393 km) in a single day; the maximum distance a real horse can travel a day is about 160 kilometres. As with other socialist states, there have been throughout North Korea's history numerous small and large mass campaigns to increase production and productivity, but the *Ch'ŏllima* Work Team Movement is the most propagandized and, in a way, the most successful. The spirit and actual achievements of this movement have had a lasting effect on North Korea, reappearing once again as a national campaign in 2009. See ch. 2 of Cheehyung Kim's dissertation, 'The Furnace Is Breathing: Work and the Everyday Life in North Korea, 1953–1961' (Columbia University, 2010), for more on North Korea's mass movements.
27. Chosŏn Chigŏp Ch'ongdongmaeng, *Ch'ŏllima kisu tokbon* (P'yŏngyang: Chigŏp Tongmaeng Ch'ulp'ansa, 1963), p. 26.
28. Ibid., 30.
29. Central Statistical Board, *Statistical Returns of National Economy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (1946–1960)* (P'yŏngyang: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961), pp. 36–7.
30. Hwang Changyŏp, *Pukhan ŭi chinsil kwa hŏwi*, 143.
31. Hwang says that at the end of 1960s he 'parted ways with the class-oriented perspective and came to pioneer the philosophical principles centred on the human being'. Hwang Changyŏp, *Pukhan ŭi chinsil kwa hŏwi*, p. 146.

32. Nodong sinmun sasŏl, 'Chosŏnminjujuŭi inmingonghwaguk sahoejuŭi hŏnpŏp', *Nodong sinmun* (28 December 1972), p. 2.
33. Nodong sinmun sasŏl, 'Widaehan chuch'esasang ŭi pitballo sahoejuŭi, kongsangjuŭiŭi sŭngniŭi kirŭl palk'yŏjun tagwŏrhan magsŭ-reninjuŭi munhŏn', *Nodong sinmun* (27 December 1972), p. 2.
34. Sin Ilch'ŏl, *Pukhan chuch'e ch'ŏrak yŏn'gu* (P'aju: Nanam, 1993), p. 192.
35. Sin Ilch'ŏl, 'Pukhan ideology ŭi ponjil', *Kyegan Sasang* 7 (1990), 304.
36. On the international spread of *chuch'e*, see Charles K. Armstrong's 'Juche and North Korea's global aspirations', *North Korea International Documentation Project*, Working Paper #1 (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2009).
37. Kim Il Sung, Li Yuk-Sa, and Eldridge Cleaver, *Juche! The Speeches and Writings of Kim Il sung* (New York: Grossman, 1972).
38. The story of Korean-Japanese who are pro–North Korea is complex. The membership of the General Association has declined today to around 150,000 (out of over 600,000 Korean residents in Japan), and their relationship to North Korea has changed. They no longer officially endorse *chuch'e*, and they are more critical of the North Korean state. Nevertheless, they maintain that the ethnic nationalism created and promoted by North Korea is important to their identity. On this topic, see Sonia Ryang's *North Koreans in Japan: Language, Ideology, and Identity* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997).
39. The estimates of the number of people who died during the 1990s due to famine and disease range from 200,000 to 2 million. The 1990s was the most difficult period for the North Korean people since the Korean War. On the accounts of life during the 1990s, see Choŭn pŏttŭl, *Pukhansaramdŭri malhanŭn pukhan iyagi* (Seoul: Chŏngt'o Ch'ulp'an, 2000).
40. Han S. Park, *North Korea* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2002).
41. See Andrew S. Natsios, *The Great North Korean Famine* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2001), and Stephan Haggard and Marcus Noland, *Famine in North Korea* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
42. Han S. Park, *North Korea*, 87.
43. Ham T'aekyŏng and Ku Kab'u, 'Pukahan ŭi konggwa sa: ironhwa rŭl wihan pigyo', in Yi Wuyŏng, (ed.), *Pukhan tosijumin ŭi sachŏk yŏngyŏk yŏn'gu* (Paju: Hanul, 2008), p. 31.
44. Slavoj Žižek, 'Introduction: the Spectre of Ideology', in Slavoj Žižek, ed., *Mapping Ideology* (London: Verso, 1994), p. 4.
45. Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, vol. 2 (London: Verso, 2008), pp. 180–81.
46. Ibid., p. 182.
47. Ibid.
48. Im Chihyŏn (Jie-hyun Lim), 'Ilsang ŭi miro e kach'in kwŏllyŏk ŭi kkum', 556.
49. Ch'oe Hojin, 'Uri nŭn wae chuch'esasang ŭro mujanghaeya hanŭnga', *Ch'ŏllima* 1 (1973), 39.
50. Ch'oe Hojin, 'Chuch'e sasang ŭi kibon e taehayŏ (che-sam hoe)', *Ch'ŏllima*, 4 (1973), 57.
51. Ch'oe Hojin, 'Chuch'e sasang ŭl kuhyŏn hagi wihan tangmyŏn chungsim kwaŏp ŭn muŏsin'ga', *Ch'ŏllima* 11 (1973), 14.
52. Ch'oe Hojin, 'Chuch'e sasang ŭi kibon e taehayŏ (che-il hoe)', *Ch'ŏllima* 2 (1973), 43, 45; 'Chuch'e sasang ŭi kibon e taehayŏ (che-i hoe)', *Ch'ŏllima*

3 (1973), 30; 'Chuch'e sasang ŭi kibon e taehayŏ (che-sa hoe)', *Ch'ŏllima* 4 (1973), 25.
53. Ch'oe Hojin, 'Uri nara nŭn widaehan chuch'esasang ŭi chogugida', *Ch'ŏllima* 9 (1973), 31.
54. Ch'oe Hojin, 'Chuch'e sasang ŭi kuhyŏn hagi wihan tangmyŏn chungsim kwaŏp ŭn muŏt in'gam', 14.
55. Ibid., p. 14.
56. The malleability of human character was an important premise in the socialism of the twentieth century. As Fitzpatrick writes, 'human remaking was part of the whole notion of transformation that was at the heart of the Soviet project'. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 75.
57. Chosŏn Yesul Yŏnghwa Ch'waryŏngso, *Uri yŏllch'a p'anmaewŏn* (P'yŏngyang, 1972).
58. Yi Kuyŏl, *Pukhan misul osipnyŏn* (Seoul: Tolbegae, 2001).
59. Ibid.
60. Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation(s)* (London: Verso, 1996), p. 21.
61. Janice C. H. Kim's *To Live to Work* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 76.
62. Ibid., p. 100.
63. Ibid.
64. See chs 6 and 7 in Karatani Kojin, *Transcritique* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003).
65. Ibid., p. 235.
66. Ibid., pp. 293–94.

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