

“member state,” scholars should not. There are thousands of nations in the world—none of them members of any international organization—and only 193 states, of which 31 are NATO members. Further, the words “alliance” and “allies” are not spelled with a capital *a*.

### Human Rights and Transnational Democracy in South Korea.

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South Korea is now known to be a democracy and a state that fully protects all aspects of human rights. However, not as many people realize that the country went through a tough transition from authoritarian regimes to a democracy. During the 1970s and 1980s, authoritarian regimes continually used the supposed communist threat from North Korea and the need for rapid economic development as justifications for their repressive rule that restricted fundamental human rights and inhibited democratic processes. This authoritarianism was reinforced by South Korea's geopolitical location: the country was under the influence of superpowers and strong stakeholders in the region, including Russia, China, Japan, and the United States. But it was also bolstered by the continual provocation from North Korea, which had been an ongoing security challenge since the war that the two Koreas had fought from June 25, 1950, until July 27, 1953. Arguably, the Korean War has technically not yet ended because no permanent peace regime has been put in place on the Korean peninsula, except for the temporary armistice agreement signed in 1953.

In this context, Ingu Hwang's book, *Human Rights and Transnational Democracy in South Korea*, is an excellent resource for those interested in developing a better understanding of the contemporary history of South Korea. Covering Korea's political changes and the development of its human rights and democracy movements from 1945 until now, Hwang marvelously navigates the turbulent waters of South Korean modern history and reviews important incidents from the last 70 years. He looks deep into local demands for human rights and democracy against the backdrop of the “quiet diplomacy” of the United States and the various activities of transnational advocacy networks.

This book successfully connects the political changes in South Korea to the international human rights regime and to the activities of transnational civil society. By comparing local human rights activities under the influence of Amnesty International's minimalist approach with those based on the maximalist approach of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches in Korea,

Hwang offers an eloquent explanation of how human rights and democratization movements developed in South Korea. He also emphasizes that South Korean human rights movements enriched the globalization of human rights by influencing the activities of transnational advocacy networks and their campaigns.

This meticulous account of the process of vernacularization of global human rights within South Korean grassroots movements is a significant academic achievement. The book also describes how Korean people developed a critical stance toward the United States in the 1980s after experiencing the “quiet diplomacy” of the Carter administration and the embrace by the Reagan administration of the authoritarian regime established after the massacre in Gwangju in May 1980.

The experience of the atrocities of the Nazi Holocaust in World War II led the postwar international community to adopt global human rights standards that have become universal norms. After the Nuremberg Tribunal in 1945, which was based on the International Military Tribunal Charter, and the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948, this movement gained international support. Subsequently, human rights treaties, such as the International Covenant on Civil Rights, Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, were adopted. These global human rights norms were introduced to South Korea along with the establishment of the South Korean government around 1948. Several civil society organizations were active as early as the 1950s. Some of these aimed to strengthen Korean human rights movements by establishing Amnesty International (AI) Korea.

However, localizing international human rights norms requires more than the transplantation of global human rights standards. To illustrate this, Hwang draws readers' attention to the disagreement between South Korean human rights activists and the AI headquarters in London and in the United States over issues of political neutrality, nonpartisanship, and prohibition of activities in Korea by the Korean branch. AI headquarters wanted AI Korea to maintain the non-interference principle that would ban AI Korea members from engaging in advocacy activities on domestic issues. However, this principle could not be sustained because the key members of AI Korea were arrested and strongly persecuted by the repressive Park regime. AI was forced to intervene in Korean affairs in the 1970s. AI also had a policy of non-intervention in national security law and espionage cases, but when the regime's emergency decrees created numerous prisoners of conscience, including AI Korea members, they had no choice but to engage in domestic matters, thereby localizing international human rights principles. Because of AI's narrow interpretation of human rights, the human rights approach in Korea was less popular than that of the

religious movements in securing the democratization of the country by building direct solidarity with the people in fighting against the regime.

As the author argues, the global human rights discourse changed when it was implemented in Korea. The transnational campaigns of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) facilitated greater engagement with the people engaged in the democracy movements. Their maximalist advocacy activities supporting workers' fights for economic and social rights contributed to the localization of human rights. Both AI's campaigns for the prisoners of conscience and anti-torture and the activities of the WCC and NCCCK tackling the rights of workers in the workplace contributed a great deal to Korean democratization: indeed, the process infused global human rights in the local democratization movements in South Korea. This supports Hwang's assertion that South Korea's experience influenced the way global human rights organizations performed their roles locally.

Hwang also acknowledges that South Korean civil society and religious movements fighting against Park Chung-hee regime's dictatorship were greatly encouraged by President Jimmy Carter's campaign for human rights diplomacy in the 1970s. However, the United States silently lowered the banner of human rights diplomacy and ultimately abandoned the role of defending human rights under Park Chung-hee to safeguard its Cold War security interests. Moreover, it tolerated the coup d'état of Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo who moved troops from the DMZ to Gwangju to suppress the citizens' uprising in 1980. Furthermore, President Reagan embraced the military dictatorship by inviting Chun Doo-hwan as a state guest to the United States. This process increased anti-American feeling among Korean people. Hwang's assertion is telling: "The Carter administration remained committed to preserving the status quo in South Korea, even if it meant supporting an authoritarian regime's suppression of pro-democracy forces."

It would have been helpful for the book to include more discussion of North Korea, inter-Korean relations, and unification issues alongside the South Korean democratization process. Similarly, there could have been some more attention to the constituent elements of diverse civil society organizations, student activism, trade union movements, labor organizations, and underground organizations. The political struggles between ruling party leaders and opposition party leaders, as well as the relationship between political parties and civil society organizations, should be addressed in future research.

Overall, this book is an excellent academic accomplishment in the field of Korean modern history. The author's meticulous analysis of Korean social movements and political changes, combined with the exploration of the

influence of global human rights organizations and transnational advocacy campaigns, makes this book a must-read for scholars and students who want to obtain a better grasp of civil society movements in South Korea.

**Waiting for Dignity: Legitimacy and Authority in Afghanistan.** By Florian Weigand. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022. 384p. \$140.00 cloth, \$30.00 paper.  
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The dramatic images from Bagram Airbase depicting desperate Afghans attempting to flee the country following NATO's withdrawal and the subsequent collapse of its army in the face of the Taliban's rapid advance have come to symbolize the failure of state-building interventions in so-called failed or fragile states. Since the end of the Cold War, places such as Afghanistan, East Timor, Mali, DR Congo, Somalia, Colombia, and South Sudan have been portrayed as breeding grounds for a litany of interconnected threats to global security, including terrorism, transnational crime, drug trafficking, epidemics, and illegal migration. It has been argued that the root cause of these global threats is the inability or unwillingness of rulers to govern in accordance with supposedly universal norms of statehood, such as democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, rational-legal bureaucracy, and a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. The international community has constructed a formidable intervention apparatus, often referred to as the "security-development nexus," to counter these perceived threats under the banner of "state-building." However, in many instances, interventions have fallen short of their lofty goals, with the failure of the US-led mission in Afghanistan serving as a spectacular example.

As the dust settles on the failure in Afghanistan, the lingering question is, why did NATO's and the wider international community's mission fail so spectacularly, despite the enormous resources deployed and the support of the world's most powerful military alliance? Florian Weigand's book *Waiting for Dignity: Legitimacy and Authority in Afghanistan* addresses this question. Drawing on in-depth qualitative research and state-of-the-art theory, the book meticulously explores how authority and legitimacy were either produced or were absent in Afghanistan during the intervention of the US-led alliance. This question has troubled political leaders throughout history, be they imperialists, colonizers, kings, diplomats, or presidents. Therefore, the findings and analyses of this book extend beyond Afghanistan and should interest scholars across various fields within the social sciences.

The main argument of the book posits that *interactive dignity* is the key factor determining whether people