Transnational Coalitions in Northeast Asia: Search for a New Pathway of Japanese Local Government

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Abstract

In the heyday of the Cold War, local communities in Northeast Asia were ideologically and militarily divided across national borders. Yet the break-up of the Soviet Union fundamentally altered the strategic landscape of Northeast Asia. The old ideological and military divide began to be replaced by new forces such as political decentralisation and regionalism in which local actors were increasingly involved. Japanese local government that had been strategically handcuffed now looked for its new partners beyond the old network across national boundaries. This project is about the role of Japanese local government in transnational relations. It provides a better understanding of new security issues by illustrating a potential role of local government in partnership with the emergence of private transnational interests and identities in civil society. This study's central claim is that the possible source of cohesion among these diverse transnational forces lies in a particular role of local government.

Introduction

There is currently a sparked new interest in the role of civil society as a pivot for social renewal. This is primarily due to two problems: the overloaded welfare state that has been under siege for extended austerity; and economic rationalism that has been said to fail to meet social equity. The term “civil society” has accordingly carried new connotations in recent years. In an attempt to help correct those state and market failures, it often refers to the associational and

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voluntary institutions and networks that emerge beyond the reach of the state and operate outside the dominance of market forces.[1] It has further expanded to include transnational connections of people and places. Worldwide problems, such as the continued poverty in developing countries, global warming, and the HIV/AIDs epidemic, have stimulated and brought this idea into the conceptualisation of "global civil society" or "transnational civil society."[2] Lipshutz and Wapner describe global civil society as a means of making up for the dysfunction of the state system, and Falk sees it as a counterforce of economic globalisation. In the process of conceptualisation, some argue that democratic legitimacy, which drives from political participation in a defined national territory, must be reconstituted beyond national boundaries on an international level.[3] In response, others propose ways to participate in and influence decision-making and promote democracy in the global context.[4]

These scholars in essence take a normative approach to such a conceptualisation. Positivists (realists, neorealists and neoliberalists) in international relations have challenged normative approaches that, in their view, fail to develop hypotheses testable with empirically observable phenomena.[5] The concept of global civil society also theoretically poses difficulties for state-centered approaches. Traditional realists are unable to include this concept in their theoretical framework, since they see international society in principle as a place

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1. Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Social Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992); Michael Foley and Bob Edwards, "The Paradox of Civil Society," *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 7, No.3 (July 1996) pp. 1-21; Goran Hyden, "Building Civil Society at the Turn of the Millennium," in John Burdge, ed., *Beyond Prince and Merchant: Citizen Participation and the Rise of Civil Society* (New York: Pact Publications, 1998); Alison van Rooy, ed., *Civil Society and the Aid Industry* (London: Earthscan, 1998).

2. Ronnie D. Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society," *Millennium*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Winter 1992), pp. 391-407; Paul Wapner, "The Normative Promise of Nonstate Actors: A Theoretical Account of Global Civil Society," in Paul Wapner and L. E. J. Ruiz, eds., *Principled World Politics: The Challenge of Normative International Relations* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefields Publishers, 2000); Richard Falk, "Global Civil Society and the Democratic Prospects," in Barry Holden, ed., *Global Democracy: Key Debates* (London: Routledge, 2000).

3. Daniele Archibugi and David Held, *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

4. Richard Falk, *On Humane Governance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Mary Kaldor, "Transnational Civil Society," in Tim Dunne and Nicholas Wheeler, eds., *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

5. See, for example, Robert Keohane, ed., *International institutions and State Power: Essays in International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1989).

among states.[6] There is thus no place for civil society that private actors constitute at the international level. Moreover, as compared with state-society relationships in the domestic sphere, one may question how the emergence of global civil society can be examined without a supranational state.[7] By contrast, neoliberalists suggest that global civil society, if it emerges, can be observed, not in a normative sense, but in a physical place of international institutions and the global economy.[8] Some positivists argue that mounting evidence in all parts of the world that people are forming transnational associations alone would not account for the emergence of transnational civil society.[9]

To seek a solid assessment of transformational possibilities in world politics, this study participates in the debate. To this end, it methodologically attempts to bridge the gap between positivism and post-positivism, i.e., normative approaches. Those who pioneered in developing the concept of transnational civil society for democratic-building tended to see this society as a unitary network that speaks with one voice and cooperates without internal divisions.[10] Such a normative approach may underestimate contention and discrepancies that exist within transnational political communities. Whether change is possible, one must begin with an empirical examination of the world as it is. Private transnational networks and coalitions evolve, and they are political loci in motion among different actors in a pluralistic fashion.[11] The more sinister side of transnational civil society should not be overlooked; such forces as drugtrafficking and terrorist networks are also active in the process of globalisation.[12] Some scholars have empirically demonstrated that private transnational networks challenge, irritate

6. See Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

7. Randall Germain and Michael Kenny, "International Relations Theory and the New Gramscians," *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 24, No.1 (1998), pp. 3-21.

8. Robert O'Brien et al., *Contesting Global Governance: Multilateral Economic Institutions and Global Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

9. Ann Clark, Elisabeth J. Friedman, and Kathryn Hochstetler, "The Sovereign Limits of Global Civil Society: A Comparison of NGO Participation in UN World Conferences on the Environment, Human Rights, and Women," *World Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (October 1998), pp. 1-35.

10. See, forexample, Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics," pp. 391-407.

11. Jessica T. Mathews, "Power Shift," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 11 (January/February 1997), pp. 63-65; O'Brien et al., Contesting Global Governance; Wapner, "The Normative Promise of Nonstate Actors."

12. Phil William, "The Dark Side of Global Civil Society: The Role and Impact of Transnational Criminal Organizations as a Threat to International Security," in Muthiah Alagappa and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *International Security Management and the United Nations* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 1999), pp. 173-209; James Mittelman, *Globalization Syndrome: Transformation and Resistance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), Chapter 11.

and redefine state interests in global issue areas such as human rights and the environment[13] and even in conventional security areas.[14] They certainly have gone beyond the line of neoliberal argument by illustrating the cases that state policy changes, not due to interstate bargaining, but rather directly due to concerted nonstate actors' pressure. But it is not clear how those actors in two or more issue areas become linked and seen as a stepping-stone to transnational civil society. This study attempts to sort out the confusing array of data in the literature.

In this study, apart from this positivist approach, to empirically examine whether change is possible in the pluralistic arena, norms, values and knowledge are considered to work for or against physical forces, such as political power (realism) and market forces (neoliberalism). In other words, no matter how anarchical the international system is, transnational forces are motivated by norms, values and knowledge, and there are always normative choices during the course of action. But what brings civility and the functioning consensus of norms and values to diverse actors? My preliminary answer to this question claims that the possible source of cohesion among these transnational forces lies in a particular role of local government.[15] Much of conventional attention to local government has focused exclusively on the question of how local government relates to central government. The studies of central-local government relations are one of the sub-fields in political studies. There is a growing body of this literature.[16] This study, however, views local government as a partner of nongovernmental forces as well as part of the state apparatus.[17] Its dual involvement places local government in a strategic position between citizens (private transnational forces) and states. Local government that has acquired a high status as a comprehensive source of expertise on problem-solving has the

13. Audie Klotz, Norms in International Relations: *The Struggle Against Apartheid* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1995); Paul Wapner, "Politics Beyond the State: Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. 47, No. 3 (April 1995), pp. 311-40; Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Relations* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998).

14. Richard Price, "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Summer 1998), pp. 613-44.

15. Yasuo Takao, "Building Transnational Civil Society: Can Japanese Local Government Bring it Together?" Working Papers No. 12, Monash University Press, 2003.

16. See Yasuo Takao, *National Integration and Local Power in Japan* (Aldershot, UK: Ashagte, 1999).

17. Yasuo Takao, "Participatory Democracy in Japan's Decentralization Drive," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 38, No. 10 (October 1998), pp. 950-67; Yasuo Takao, "The Rise of the Third Sector in Japan," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (March/April 2001), pp. 290-309.

potential to provide uneven transnational networks in different policy areas with a common core of belief.[18] Patterns of local government's access to and delegation of central authority could provide private transnational forces with a means of influence on the promotion of advocacy objectives. Local government's initiatives could encourage wider citizens' participation in this promotion process.[19] Some scholars have talked about regional linkages between local groups in Northeast Asia yet failed to acknowledge local government's strategic position that straddles the division between transnationally linked local groups and states.[20] A handful of scholars consider local government to be the subject of international relations but primarily provide a heuristic illustration.[21]

To provide the enquiry into local government with an analytical strength, this study deals with the term *transnational* in a specific way. The study focuses on two types of private actors in transnational relations—those pursuing public purposes outside of the formal apparatus of the state and those motivated mainly by economic gains. The former includes sinister terrorist networks, while the latter range from multinational corporations to criminal drugtrafficking networks. Actors of the first category are motivated by norms, values, and principled ideas to achieve their advocacy objectives. But how do they affect state interests, policies, and inter-state relations? (1) To answer this question, the study adopts Risse-Kappen's transnational relations approach, which focuses on the policy impact of transnational relations, while examining the way in which local government provides the availability of channels for them into the political system.[22] Equally important, given the diverse nature of transnational forces, how do they gain trust and confidence? There are no direct mechanisms such as electoral politics to hold private actors in transnational relations accountable to beneficiaries and supporters. Self-regulations are not enough to assume that the

18. World Bank, *Governance and Development* (Washington, D. C.: World Bank, 1992); World Bank, *Governance: The World Bank's Experience* (Washington, D. C.: World Bank, 1994).

19. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Development Cooperation* (Paris: OECD, 1993).

20. Peter Katzenstein, "Regionalism in Comparative Perspective," *Conflict and Cooperation*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (1996), pp. 123-59; Tsuneo Akaha, "Asia-Pacific Regionalism and Northeast Asia Subregionalism," *Global Economic Review*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (1998), pp. 20-44; Gilbert Rozman, "Flawed Regionalism: Reconceptualizing Northeast Asia in the 1990s," *Pacific Review*, Vol. 11, No.1 (1998), pp. 1-27.

21. Nobuya Banba, *Aidentiti no kokusai seijigaku* (International Politics from the Viewpoint of Identity) (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1986); Yuzo Yabuno, *Rokaru inishiatibu* (Local Initiative) (Tokyo: Chuokoron, 1995).

22. Thomas Risse-Kappen, ed., *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 8.

actors regularly work towards positive goals. (2) To overcome this democratic deficit, the study focuses on accountability mechanisms through which local government might help increase the participation of local communities in the process of transnational activities. Finally, the original concept of transnational relations is defined as interactions across state boundaries[23], but my preliminary research on foreigners' voting rights at local elections suggests that this definition fails to highlight a new aspect of transnationalism.[24] Foreigners' political participation has a potential for helping to build transnational civil society in the sense that the national identities and sense of community cross borders even if the transactions do not. The traditional concept is too much wedded to a one-dimensional understanding of actors inside/outside the territorial boundaries. With regard to voting rights for foreigners in their host country, the inside/outside distinction does not relate to the physical location of these individuals, but rather to their rights and obligations. It therefore makes sense to include such a case as transnational. (3) In the study, transnationalism is thus used to refer to phenomena that transcend physical state borders and/or non-nationals' socio-political boundaries. This modified concept allows us to seek a comprehensive assessment of local government's contribution to building cohesive transnational forces.

Using three specific localities in Japan as an illustration, this study will explore local government's initiatives for developing civil society with transnational interests. To sustain the central claim, the information will be gathered from three critical cases: (1) networking between the Far East (Russia) and Niigata (Japan) over regional development at the periphery; (2) inter-municipal collaboration between Dalian (China) and Kitakyushu (Japan) over pollution control; and (3) coalitions between local governments and foreign residents in Kawasaki (Japan) over local suffrage for foreigners.

Analysis

It is possible to distinguish three broad dimensions that may be used to evaluate the salient features of transnational networks and coalitions toward building transnational civil society: sustainability, accountability and advocacy. These

23. Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane, eds., *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), x-xi.

24. Yasuo Takao, "Foreigners' Rights in Japan: Beneficiaries to Participants," *Asian Survey* (May/June 2003), pp. 527-52.

dimensions can be seen as a means of distinguishing ways in which such networks and coalitions may attempt to change policy in a given issue-area. A number of possible variations of collective action may be observed along these three dimensions to produce the policy impact of transnational nonstate actors. To facilitate such transnational activism, how does local government play an important role in integrating the fragmented transnational coalitions and networks?

Sustainability

The first dimension, sustainability, refers to the extent of how to expand and sustain interactions and collaboration among transnational nonstate actors.[25] The question then becomes how local governments can strategically ensure the sustainability of transnational institutions.

Participatory Loci

Spontaneous grassroots activities evolve, transform, yet often lack a permanent institutional infrastructure. Should this occur, local government may afford to provide them with a corresponding public space of contacts and negotiations. Perhaps the most noteworthy example in this respect is the one based on the 1992 memorandum agreed on between the "Primorskiy local representatives" (the Primorskiy Kray and the Vladivostok Aviation Enterprise) in the Russian Far East and a Study Group for the Improvement of Vladivostok Airport Facilities (the City of Niigata and the Soviet Investment Environment Improvement Company) in Niigata. It was agreed that both the parties would establish a joint enterprise to build a large-scale terminal building at the Vladivostok Airport. Subnational links across the sea between the Primorskiy Kray and the City of Niigata over the Vladivostok Airport project provided local business and grassroots groups on the both sides with a continuing place for information exchange and negotiations.

Their ultimate goal was to open a regular airline route between the two cities by implementing the project. The memorandum can then be initially regarded as a public international agreement between local governments in different

25. For the relevant arguments, see David Korten, "Third Generation NGO Strategies: A Key to People-Centred Development," *World Development*, Vol. 15, Supplement (Autumn 1987), pp. 145-59; Falk, "Global Civil Society and the Democratic Prospects," pp. 162-78.

countries. In April 1993, however, this agreement was replaced by a private international agreement when the Soviet Investment Environment Improvement Company alone made a contract with a "privatized" Vladivostok Aviation Enterprise.[26] In so doing, both the parties avoided having to assert their diplomatic rights vis-à-vis central authority.[27] Nonetheless, the Soviet Investment Environment Improvement Company was financed not only by local business, but also partly by both Niigata City and Niigata Prefecture. The nature of the agreement remained predominantly public in the sense that its purpose was to pursue the establishment of transportation networks between the two cities.

The coalition of Dalian and Kitakyushu Cities also provided local residents with a participatory locus. As a nonprofit organization, the Kitakyushu International Techno-Cooperative Association (KITA) proposed the initial idea of a Dalian Environmental Model Zone project, the inter-municipal coalition effectively identified Japan's ODA funds as a means of achieving the project. The locally initiated ODA project, while implemented through inter-municipal networks, encouraged broad-based community participation. The successful fund-raising gained popular support through processes of participation, although a wider range of people's association began at the implementation stage of the project. With a view to systematically transfer the environmental management and technology accumulated in Kitakyushu to Dalian, the team of citizens, professionals, researchers, and government officials worked on a set of environmental targets to last beyond the year 2010. It had not only transferred the basic expertise and technology, but also produced a wide range of locally specific and practical environmental measures to the Model Zone project.[28] The Dalian-Kitakyushu inter-municipal network was a place where such a team was able to maintain a long-term commitment rather than seek a skimming strategy to produce short-term project outcomes that national government would require every fiscal year.[29]

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26. *Niigata Nippo*, 9 April 1993.

27. Hiroshi Otsu, "Jichitai Gaiko no Hori" (Legal Theory on Local Government Diplomacy), in Masami Hagai and Hiroshi Otsu, eds., *Jichitai Gaiko no Chosen* (Local Government Diplomacy Challenge) (Tokyo: Yushindo, 1994), pp. 44-47.

28. KITA, *KITA Kankyo Kyoryoku Senta Jigyo Gaiyo* (KITA's Performed Projects and Financial Report in FY 1998) (Kitakyushu: KITA, 1999).

29. Hiroshi Mizoguchi, "Jyukogyo Toshi to Kankyo" (Industrial City and the Environment), in NEAR Intellectual Infrastructure Committee, ed., *Bodaresu Jidai no Chiikikan Koryu* (Sub-national Cooperation in the Borderless Era) (Tokyo: Aruku, 1999), pp. 146-47; Azuma Kido, KITA, interview by author, Kitakyushu, 27 June 2000.

A public venue that local government could provide for participation was equally important to foreign residents and migrant workers in Kawasaki City, yet it was not transgovernmental at the subnational level but situated within the subnational sphere. In Japan, the state incapability for managing international migration put local communities on the spot to deal with the increasing presence of foreigners. The municipal government became an immediate rescue center to which individual citizens, including foreigners, could resort to assure individuals' security. About 20,000 permanent residents of foreign nationality in Kawasaki were eligible for membership in a consultative assembly for foreigners and advisory councils attached to the city administration, and for city government jobs. Given this type of institutionalization in municipal policy toward foreigners, a new pattern of relationships among residents and the city authority seemed to emerge in the mid-1990s.[30] By the mid-1990s, ethnic groups, especially "old-comers", i.e., long-term Korean residents, were more trusted as a partner in Kawasaki. Although new foreign comers were not yet well organized to articulate and aggregate their interest, Korean ethnic groups took full advantage of the institutionalisation.[31] Those groups participated in the city's decision-making (e.g., the revitalization of the multi-ethnic Oohin district and the organization of a "Korea Town" in Hama-cho).[32] The mutual trust seemed to open the door to further cooperation in the future. Local residents began not only to acknowledge the community membership of foreign residents, but also to accept their ethnic identities within the community. Korean ethnic groups developed a sense of belonging to Kawasaki, yet share their ethnic identity with overseas Koreans in other states.

Information Transmitter

Local government may help transmit correct information and useful expertise to transnational coalitions and actors. Without its help, participants in

30. Naoto Higuchi, "Taiko to Kyoryoku" (Resistance and Cooperation), in Takashi Miyajima, ed., *Gaikokujin Shimin to Seiji Sanka* (Foreign Citizens and Political Participation) (Tokyo: Yushindo, 2000), pp. 27-32.

31. Ibid.; Takao Yamada, " Kawasakishi Gaikokujin Shimin Daihyosha Kaigi no Seiritsu to Genjo" (The Establishment and Present Situation of the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents), in Takashi Miyajima, ed., *Gaikokujin Shimin to Seiji Sanka* (Foreign Citizens and Political Participation) (Tokyo: Yushindo, 2000) pp. 51-57.

32. Takao Yamada, "Kawasaki ni okeru Gaikokujin tono Kyosei no Machizukuri no Taido" (Signs of Town-Making Coexistent with Foreigners in Kawasaki) *Toshi Mondai*, Vol. 89, No. 6 (June 1998), pp. 58-63.

transnational networks may have failed to recognize specific information as being important, or they could not have afforded the time nor the money for specific expertise. In specific policy areas, such as community development, the environment, and social welfare, Japanese local governments often coordinated policymaking better than national government, while accumulating the know-how of policy-making and implementation.[33] Certainly, local government can act as an information transmitter for eliminating networking uncertainty. This elimination may shift transnational societal movements as a whole in a desirable direction.

Niigata prefecture clearly saw the infrastructure of information as particularly important, in order to serve as a means of gathering, exchanging, and bringing about the transmission of information on Japan Sea Rim affairs. In 1993 it took initiatives to create such an information provider, the Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA) whose financial contributors today include seven local business firms and ten other prefectural governments on the coast of the Japan Sea. The ERINA vigorously carried out information dissemination in a wide range of issue areas such as transportation, information and telecommunications, energy and the environment, food, and trade/investment.[34] Information was regularly presented to the community (i.e., local business and more than 50 transnationally linked grassroots groups in Niigata prefecture) and periodically exchanged through international conferences with knowledgeable participants from East Asia. Niigata's commitment evolved further as an information coordinator, who took a multifaceted approach to community development. In 1998 the Acid Deposition and Oxidant Research Center (ADORC) was established in Niigata. The ADORC started its activity as a branch of the nonprofit organization Japan Environmental Sanitation Center, which was located in Kawasaki. Since 1993, expert meetings on air pollution and acid deposition have been held by several East Asian countries, and in 1998 Niigata was designated as the interim network center for dissemination of monitoring data and other information to the participants.

The construction of information infrastructure was facilitated further by competition amongst the Japan Sea coastal prefectures and cities, which had

33. See, for example, Steven Reed, "Environmental Politics: Some Reflections Based on the Japanese Case," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (April 1981), pp. 253-69.

34. See ERINA, Research Projects, Energy Security and Sustainable Development in Northeast Asia, Northeast Asia Economic Conferences, ERINA Forums, *http://www.erina.or.jp/eHP1.html*, 4 April 2002.

promoted their own position as the gateway to East Asia.[35] In 1995 the Academic Forum for Northeast Asia was set up with the financial backing of Kyoto prefectural government. The Tottori Research Center, which was sponsored by local governments and business in Tottori, was inaugurated in the same year. In 2000 Shimane prefecture established the Institute for Northeast Asia at the University of Shimane. Some local governments, like Niigata's ADORC, also extended the focus of information dissemination to specific issue areas. In 1997 Toyama prefectural government created a nonprofit organization for the conservation of the Sea of Japan, the Northwest Pacific Region Environmental Cooperation. Competition among local governments was notable in their efforts to set up information providers; on the other hand, their concerted efforts for cross-prefecture information dissemination was just beginning as described later in this article.

The greatest potential for information dissemination lies in local government's expertise transfer to overseas counterparts. The Dalian-Kitakyushu "friendly" relationship that had been officially established in 1979 built up a high level of information exchange between the two cities. In the field of environmental issues, as early as 1981, Kitakyushu began to transfer the know-how of local planning and management to Dalian. From 1996 to 2000, Kitakyushu City in collaboration with the KITA conducted energy efficiency improvement projects. In 1998 environmental experts, engineers and city officials presented to Dalian through the KITA a set of 18 preventive environmental proposals including pickling/heat treatment process improvement in steel works, production conversion of sulfuric acid in a chemical plant, and nitration process improvement of chlorobenzene in a dye factory.[36] In the same year, the KITA co-organized with the UN Centre for Regional Development a training seminar in Dalian to inform outcomes of the Model Zone project.

Fund-Raising

In industrialized nations, government funds are increasingly available to transnational nonstate actors. In 1989 Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs began to provide financial assistance to Japan-based NGOs and non-Japanese NGOs, while holding regular meetings with Japanese NGOs engaged in Third World community development. Given the close NGO contact with the Ministry as a donor, there is an obvious fear that national funding might reorient NGOs'

35. See, for example, *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 26 September 1994.
36. KITA, *KITA Kankyo Kyoryoku Senta Jigyo Gaiyo.*

missions and decision-making away from the grassroots, and impose performance criteria defined by the national government on NGOs. Indeed, Japanese conservative politicians, bureaucrats, and big business leaders tend to see private nonprofit actors as playing a role that is only complementary to government's lack of mobility.[37] Perhaps the most critical potential for eroding the self-governing of transnational societal movements could thus be found in their financial dependence on state authority.

To be autonomous, transnational nonstate actors may seek local self-action through the mobilization of local resources. In transnational networking between the Russian Far East and Niigata, local banks in Niigata created with Niigata City and Niigata prefecture the Soviet Investment Environment Improvement Company, which was engaged in investment activities for the improvement of business and living infrastructure in the Russian Far East. In 1993 the Company was renamed the Eurasia Investment Promotion Company and took a leading part toward the 1999 opening of an international terminal building at the Vladivostok Airport. However, this local innovation may be an isolated success; transnational nonstate actors in OECD countries are highly dependent on funding from their own national governments.[38]

In this respect, the locally initiated ODA project, the Dalian Environmental Model Zone, may bridge the gap between local autonomy and national funding practices or between transnationally-linked local needs and state interests. The coalition of Kitakyushu and Dalian was not simply assisting activities that were nationally defined, but rather took initiatives on a transnational basis in response to some sense of common local problems, crossing state borders. The idea of the model zone came from below, and the coalition had the project adopted by the Japanese government. The national government financed the project, but it depended on the Kitakyushu team for the successful planning and implementation.

In practice, 95 percent of prefectures and 91 percent of state-designated cities in Japan have already participated in ODA projects; however, ODA projects by local governments have yet to be institutionalized.[39] Since 1998, the national

37. See, for example, Koichi Kato, speech delivered to the Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, National Diet, 132nd sess., 27 January 1995; and Yoshio Okawara, keynote address delivered to the Local Government International Exchange Seminar, Tokyo, 11 November 1996.

38. Kees Biekart, "European NGOs and Democratization in Central America," in Michael Edwards and David Hulme, eds., *Beyond the Magic Bullet: NGO Performance and Accountability in the Post-Cold War World* (West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, 1996), p. 85.

39. Hitoshi Yoshida, *Chiho Jichitai no Kokusai Kyoryoku* (International Cooperation by Local Government) (Tokyo: Nihon Hyoronsha, 2001), p. 131.

government and the National Diet have increasingly seen the role of local government and NGOs as important in ODA projects, launching the notion of "national participation" in international cooperation. It is worthy of note that a 1998 report, produced by a study group in the Economic Planning Agency, acknowledged local ODA approaches as the alternative to nationally defined ODA projects.[40] Equally important, in 1998 a round-table conference, attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, proposed a "contract-out" method in which local government would take initiatives to plan their own projects.[41] Unfortunately, a 1999 ODA Mid-Term Policy, initiated by Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi in 1998, neither clearly stated the introduction of ODA funds to locally independent projects nor mentioned the importance of local government's partnerships with citizen groups.[42] Considering the limited scope of local ODA in this announcement, Kitakyushu has done pioneering work toward viable alternatives to the present ODA system .

Accountability

The second dimension refers to the accountability of transnational collective action. How can local government help transnational nonstate actors gain trust and confidence? In domestic democratic politics, the publicly elected government is held accountable to voters for its performance. But there are no such direct mechanisms as electoral politics to hold transnational nonstate actors accountable to beneficiaries and supporters and in a lesser sense to their donors and staff. Self-regulation and voluntary information disclosure are not always enough to ensure accountability. To overcome this democratic deficit, local government that has ready-made networks with local residents is a natural place to look for help. Local government's partnership may raise the public awareness of transnational linkage of local problems and issues. Equally important, upward accountability toward national government for funding can be transformed into accountability to local government, as national government delegates decision-

40. Japan, Economic Planning Agency, *Keizai Kyoryoku no Isso no Kaikaku ni Mukete* (Toward Further Reforms of Economic Cooperation) (Tokyo: Economic Planning Agency, 1998). For the same line of argument, see Liberal Democratic Party's ODA Basic Law Draft cited in *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 18 September 1998.

41. Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *21 Seiki ni Mukete no ODA Kaikakukondankai, Saishu Hokoku* (Final Report of ODA Round-Table Conference toward the 21st Century) (Tokyo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998).

42. Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Seifukaihatsuenjo ni kansuru Chukiseisaku (ODA Mid-Term Policy), *http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/oda99/jo/js5.html*. 7 December 2000.

making authority to local government. Transnational nonstate actors may be properly held accountable to local government, which is more adaptive than uniform state administration.

Knowledge-Intensive Community

Local government may help develop value-based networks (or epistemic community) across the two arenas of local and transnational, linking like-minded community members with transnational coalitions. From the viewpoint of accountability, local government is not seen as a mere transmitter of information but a facilitator providing a responsible and value-based rationale for the collective action of community members. Networking members can be made up of academics, grassroots movement members, local government officials, local business leaders, journalists, and others. They are like-minded in the sense that they, unlike narrowly focused interest groups, pursue their objective knowledge, and further share normative commitments to problem-solving, thus applying their knowledge to problem-solving.[43]

Perhaps the most vigorous initiative for building intellectual infrastructure in the Japan Sea Rim was taken by a private and voluntary group, the NEAR (North-East Asia Region) Intellectual Infrastructure Committee. In 1992 an idea of intellectual infrastructure, built by the collaborative work of China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia, was proposed at the NEAR Niigata seminar, sponsored by the Sasagawa Peace Foundation. The driving force behind this process was a coalition of like-minded community opinion leaders on the Japan Sea coastal areas from newspapers, universities, community libraries, think tanks, agricultural communities, and local governments. Their 1992 Shimane agreement provided cooperation on eight projects among the four countries in four fields: information exchange, joint research, education, and technological cooperation. By 1998, 59 committee members (China-13, Japan-16, Russia-17, and South Korea-13) took part in efforts to build intellectual infrastructure.[44] The widely shared motivations for their efforts were not only scientifically objective, but also committed to giving effect to an idea. As one of the Chinese members strongly put

43. Peter Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination," *International Organization*, Vol.46, No. 1 (Winter 1992), pp. 1-35. Also see Ernst Haas, *When Knowledge Is Power* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990).

44. NEAR Intellectual Infrastructure Committee, *Bodaresu Jidai no Chiikikan Koryu* (Inter-regional Exchange in the Age of Borderless) (Tokyo: Aruku, 1999), pp. 198-201.

it, "being all talk and no action, a purely research-focused project is useless."[45]

To implement one of the NEAR projects, multilateral subnational links in the Japan Sea Rim emerged beyond the developed bilateral subnational links across the sea. In 1997 thirteen regional governments from China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia collectively implemented the "NEAR Exchange Ship" joint project. Their involvement widely publicized the project mission, giving 358 youths on board from the participating counties an opportunity to visit the subnational coastal parts in the Japan Sea Rim. This support for the NEAR Intellectual Infrastructure Committee stemmed from the first Conference of Regional Governments in Northeast Asia, which was initiated and held by Shimane prefecture in 1993 to explore new forms of multilateral coalitions among regional governments.[46] The NEAR project was taken up for discussion at the second Conference, sponsored by Hyogo prefecture in 1994. The momentum behind this process resulted in the 1996 establishment of the Association of Regional Governments in Northeast Asia, joined by 36 regional governments from China, Japan, Mongolia, Russia, and South Korea.

In the case of the Dalian Environmental Model Zone, the KITA, which the Kitakyushu municipal government supported in administrative and financial terms, played a key role in maintaining a responsible commitment throughout the course of the project. To promote the collective betterment of the environment in a responsible way, professionals, researchers and local government officials at the KITA were able to provide the coalition of Dalian and Kitakyushu with a valuable operational project. Vice-Director of the KITA Environmental Cooperation Center, Hiroshi Mizoguchi, argued to support the Kitakyushu experience by pointing out that the grassroots ODA initiatives were truly hands-on, provided follow-up support, helped create self-reliance, and maintained a long-term commitment.[47] While, as stated in KITA's mission, emphasizing its assistance to self-help activities for solving problems in the developing countries, the KITA was effectively accountable to its beneficiaries, staff, and local supporters through the inter-municipal link. The Dalian-Kitakyushu network was not merely a participatory locus, but a quite accountable one encouraging local business and grassroots groups to participate in ODA activities and raising a level of public awareness in the both cities. Some argued that the emphasis on local

45. Ibid., 19.

46. Statement by Shimane Governor Nobuyoshi Sumida at the Japan Sea Rim Exchange International Seminar, Matsue, Japan, 21 October 1992.

47. Mizoguchi, "Jyukogyo Toshi to Kankyo" pp. 146-7.

participation in ODA would also offer the possibility of improving Japan's notorious reputation for ODA implementation, such as aid tied to orders for goods and services from Japanese big business and corrupt practices by government officials in recipient countries.[48]

Interest Coordination

In this study, it was evident that local residents learned by firsthand experience at the grassroots level, and local government responded to it. The coalitions of local authorities and residents took initiatives to solve problems that had been poorly attended to or neglected by the state. Local government's response helped clarify the articulation and aggregation of community interests and encouraged citizens' further participation in the process.

Local government may also help defuse their networks' ideas to other issue areas in policy coordination. At the national level, legislators are not primarily motivated by the public interest, but most obviously by electoral considerations; and bureaucratic bodies are in a position to preserve their budgets and jurisdiction. At the local level, by contrast, elected representatives and officials are more likely to be accountable and responsive to residents; a direct election in which a smaller number of residents vote for fewer candidates increases the ability of residents to solve major community problems. Local government has potential for bringing different community issues together with a common policy enterprise. It may further operate transnationally as a result of the diffusion of community concerns and ideas through its intergovernmental relations with overseas counterparts.

Niigata prefecture played such a role in interest coordination regarding local revitalization. In December 1993, when the Japanese government made a historic decision to open its rice market, Japan had already witnessed a new political landscape. The election for the House of Representatives in July 1993 marked an end to 38 years' rule by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which had rewarded farmers' votes with agricultural subsidies. The mechanism of periphery's dependence on the center eroded further in other areas. Subsidies to local governments also declined significantly. Specific-purpose subsidies reached a high of 3,833 programs in 1979 and fell continually to 2,223 programs by 1996; and

48. See, for example, Zhaowen Tu, "Kan-Nihonkai-Ken e no Teigen" (Proposals for the Japan Sea Rim Sphere), *Sekai* (World), No. 549 (January 1991), pp.164-5.

national transfers to local governments as a percentage of national tax revenue dropped from 64.8 percent in 1981 to 41.2 percent in 1991.[49] In 1985 farsighted local business in Niigata established the Japan Sea Rim Economic Institute, in order to create communication networks with counterparts in the Russian Far East and China. The Japan Sea Rim Study Group of Niigata University also initiated a new stage of local revitalization in 1988 when it began working on the issues involved with experts in China, Russia and South Korea. Pursuing self-reliant community developments, academics and the Niigata Committee for Economic Development (a local business organization) further proposed to the prefectural governor a local revitalization plan.[50] In response to these initiatives, the Niigata prefectural government was processing and consolidating community interests into a long-term prefectural plan. By the late 1990s, more than 80 percent of Niigata residents were aware of the "Japan Sea Rim" integration project.[51]

In the case of Kawasaki, the municipal government tried to provide local and foreign residents with a common social base, creating a new public sphere that would bring them together as participants in community development. From the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, predominantly Japanese citizens organized and operated support groups as service providers to foreigners. Such a pattern of support can be found in the large number of study support groups for foreigners' school children (e.g., as of 1998, 146 such groups in Kanagawa prefecture).[52] Their members were company workers, housewives, university students, and retired elderly, who helped provide mobile assistance beyond the scope of public education. Such support groups in Kawasaki tended to see foreign residents as beneficiaries of help rather than participants in community's decision making.[53] The City of Kawasaki, coordinating with citizens' groups who acted as co-investigators, conducted an extensive survey (1993) on and interviews (1995) with foreign residents about their problems

49. Figures provided by Japan, Ministry of Finance on July 17, 1996 to the Local Decentralization Promotion Committee.

50. *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 11 August 1996.

51. See the October 1998 survey on intellectual infrastructure of four cities, i.e., Fukui, Kanazawa, Niigata, and Toyama, which was funded by the Tokyo Foundation.

52. Tetsuo Ogimura, Kanagawa International Exchange Association, interview by author, Yokohama, 6 July 2000.

53. Kawasaki City, *Kawasakishi Gaikokuseki Shimin Ishiki Jittai Chosa Hokokusho: Jirei Mensetsu Hen* (Report on Investigation into the Actual Condition of Foreign Residents' Perception: Case Studies and Interviews) (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City, 1995), p. 15.

and needs.[54] This type of coordination played a key role in bridging the gap between local and foreign residents. In Kawasaki, by the mid-1990s, some citizens' groups began to emphasize equal partnerships between foreign and Japanese citizens. Support groups for promoting Japanese literacy among foreign residents, for example, viewed Japanese language skills as a means to represent foreigners' interest, not a forced assimilation process.[55] These support groups began to encourage foreign residents to participate in the process of community development rather than provide services one-sidedly to them.

Support for Marginalized Need

The economic interests that are mediated at the national level are primarily those aggregated on the basis of big business and nationally organized professions and labor. By contrast, at the local level, community interests could be consolidated to meet social needs that central authority wishes to close off to popular demand.[56] Local government, whose first priority has been to provide for social requirements, often has no choice but to act as a rescue center to meet a pressing community need. It is in a position to provide community members with support for their sometimes economically and politically marginalized community interests.

Such a safety net role played by local government can also be found at the transnational level. In 2000 Japan's National Associations of Governors and Mayors launched the International Agreement Local Entities Liaison Council seeking their concerted voices heard more loudly by state authority who negotiate for international agreements — particularly those of global standardization related to safety, the environment, trade, and ethics. The emerging subnational links among China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia in the Japan Sea Rim clearly acknowledge the impact of global standards on their relations. This

54. Kawasaki City, Investigation Committee for Foreign Residents' Perception, *Kawasakishi Gaikokuseki Shimin Ishiki Jittai Chosa Hokokusho* (Report on Investigation into the Actual Condition of Foreign Residents' Perception) (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City, 1993); Kawasaki City, *Kawasakishi Gaikokuseki Shimin Ishiki Jittai Chosa Hokokusho: Jirei Mensetsu Hen*; Kawasaki City, Citizens' Bureau, *Kawasakishi Shimin Ishiki Jittai Hokokusho* (Report on Investigation into the Actual Condition of Kawasaki Residents' Perception) (Kawasaki: Kawasaki City, 1999).

55. See Kawasaki City, Promotion Committee on Regional Japanese Language Education, *Kyosei Machizukuri o Mezasu Nihongo Gakushu no Arikata* (The Ideal of Japanese Language Learning for Making One Community) (Kawasaki: the Committee, 1997).

56. See, for example, Peter Saunders, "Rethinking Local Politics," in Martin Boddy and Colin Fudge, eds., *Local Socialism*? (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 22-48.

acknowledgement puts local government on the spot to provide a safety net for protecting residents from the risk of globalized market forces. In Niigata, some local government officials and researchers are just beginning to consider information exchange as well as research with Russian counterparts on the globalization issue, and monitor involvements in this issue by the Assembly of European Regions and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions.[57]

Such concerns developed in the Russian Far East - Niigata networking. In the early 1990s, the mass media emphasized the vertically complementary aspect of forging a new economic space in Northeast Asia. The Russian Far East would supply its vast raw materials, Japan and South Korea would provide the necessary capital, and China would give the labor force.[58] Following this line of argument, the president of the Korean General Technology and Finance Company stated at the 5th Northeast Asia Economic Forum of Niigata in 1995: "Japan's and South Korea's capital and technology and Russia's natural resources are complementary. In particular, intermediate technology transfer from South Korea to Northeast Asia is effective." [59] Interestingly enough, at the same conference, Primorskiy Kray Vice-Governor reported: "We would like to transform raw material dominated exports into high-technology oriented ones."[60] A Russian analyst even resentfully argued against the vertical complementariness: "the solid base of intellectual and technological infrastructures is already well developed in the southern regions of the Russian Far East."[61] Perhaps the most important single factor promoting the Russian Far East is foreign investment. Yet the locals, while feeling their increasing vulnerability to exploitation by big business, wish to ensure that the interactions of Russian Far East-foreign partners will be horizontally managed by socially responsible partnership on equal terms. They fear that economic liberalization will simply transform their status as resource colonies for Moscow into a periphery of the advanced countries of the Pacific Rim.

In the Russian Far East, two oil and gas projects started operation in 1996. The Sakhalin I Project is based on the multinational consortium: Exxon, SODECO (a Japanese state-supported company), Russian companies, SMNG-

57. Hirofumi Arai, ERINA, interview by author, Niigata, 14 December 2000.
58. *Yumiuri Shinbun*, 1 January 1991; and *Los Angeles Times*, 5 November 1991.
59. The 5th Northeast Asian Economic Forum, Niigata City, 16 February - 18 February 1995.
60. Ibid.
61. ERINA (Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia) Seminar, Niigata City, 24 February 2000.

Shelf and Rosneft-Sakhalin. The Sakhalin II Project is managed by the Sakhalin Energy Investment Company whose shareholders are Marathon Oil Company, Mitsui, McDermott, Shell, and Mitsubishi. In both projects, it was agreed that 70 percent of machinery and materials would be supplied locally. The requirement of local content was expected in the long run to make deep penetration into the local manufacturing sectors. In July 1999 the Sakahalin II Project started producing oil; the first shipment was sold to South Korea. While the Ministry of Natural Resources of Russian Federation preferred more profitable buyers, Khabarovsk Kray Governor Viktor Ishayev and Primorskiy Kray Governor Yevgeniy Nazdratenko expected the oil and natural gas produced to go for local supply in a bid to overcome energy shortages and high transportation costs of the Russian Far East.[62]

Small business in the Russian Far East is not alone in trying to overcome structural underdevelopment. Local business in Niigata has faced similar conditions directed by the interests of big business in Tokyo. Local business organizations, such as the Niigata Committee for Economic Development, argue that Niigata has remained linked to the "exploitative" big business in Tokyo.[63] This local concern is well expressed in the use of Niigata harbor facilities: "It is almost impossible to change a trade port unless we have the ear of the leading trading company (the fruit and vegetable industry)"; "We'd like to use the East Port close to our factory, but due to the interest of the general trading company, we must ship via Kobe or Yokohama (the chemical industry)"; and "(We) engage in foreign trade through trading companies and wholesalers; it is not at our discretion to change a trade port (the manufacturing industry)."[64] As informed of a wide range of Russian Far East marketing opportunities by Niigata Prefecture and the ERINA, local business firms could realize a loss of potential profits by not handling the trading activities directly. Some have thus set up their own market network with the Russian Far East. By doing so, as much as 42.5 percent of export goods made in Niigata were in their own control in 1993, up from only 32.1 percent in 1991.[65] In 1996 Niigata economic organizations established a

62. Parvel Minakir and Sergei Leonov, "Economy and Local Finance in Russian Far East for 1999-2000," *Monthly Bulletin on Trade with Russia and East Europe*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (February 2000), p. 40.

63. *Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, 11 August 1996.

64. Niigata Prefecture, Department of Commerce, Industry and Labor, *Niigataken Butsuryu Mondai Chosa Hokokusho* (Investigation Report on Traffic in Niigata Prefecture) (Niigata: the Department, 1995), p. 70.

65. Ibid.

permanent exhibition place in Khabarovsk for their business firms.

The Niigata prefectural government seeks self-reliance by developing its communities through transnational contacts. Likewise, the challenge of the Russian Far East probably lies in ensuring that extractive projects are geared to serve the improvement of infrastructure, manufacturing sectors, and defense conversion. In other words, vertical relationships between foreign capital and the raw material sector need to be reconstituted on horizontal relationships. Given local initiatives to boost the local manufacturing sectors, the Russian Far East-Niigata transnational networking could provide a foundation for high levels of intrasectoral trade.

Advocacy

By advocacy, this study refers to initiatives for transnational social change, i.e., supporting grassroots level struggles by changing decision-making structures at an international level. This dimension raises the question of effectiveness and autonomy that transnational nonstate actors pursue. Traditional realist accounts fail to recognize the role of private groups that are organized transnationally to bring their collective pressure to bear on interstate relations. They presume that social groups are organized domestically to act through their national government, lobbying the government to represent their interest on the international agenda. The numerous events of transnational cooperation among social groups do not fall into these accounts. A dramatic display of successful advocacy were campaigns by a private transnational coalition for a total ban on anti-personnel mines. The coalition played a key role in activities leading up to state acceptance of the Ottawa treaty.[66] It is also true that, as the New Medievalists point out, transnational activists, such as Oxfam, have often worked through private transnational networks to achieve some of their ends without pressuring states.[67]

Nonetheless, one may say that these cases are seen as ad hoc and took place without the basis of familiar ground rules that were understood by both state and non-state actors. This argument may emphasize further that not targeting interstate relations but changing individual states' policies has remained a

66. Richard Price, "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines," *International Organization*, Vol. 52, No. 3 (Summer 1998), pp. 613-44.

67. See Wapner, "Politics Beyond the State: Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics," pp. 311-40.

primary strategy of activities by nongovernmental organizations. This emphasis is true, yet it is extremely important to note here that citizen activists, although trying to change national policy, are not necessarily acting alone within the confines of national or territorial boundaries but linked in a transnational way for action. Citizen activists are able to exercise influence over their home governments that they may not be able to produce by acting alone within the national or physical boundaries.

One measure of advocacy is the extent to which transnational nonstate actors have access to national governments and international institutions. Their access refers to the nature of contacts between these actors and states and of participation in interactions at an international level.[68] We need to examine the extent of access through which transnational nonstate actors are able to change the agenda in international rule-making and through which they are able to change state policies. Another measure is the extent to which transnational nonstate actors are autonomous or the extent of their room to manoeuvre for advocacy initiatives. These actors may have limited access, being shut out of the most crucial stage of international rule-making. However, if they act toward self-help to achieve their ends, they may have greater scope for transnational social change.

Given the advocacy measurements, i.e., access and autonomy, what then can be the peculiar role of local government in promoting their advocacy objectives? Transnational nonstate actors lobby parliaments and petition governments to support their cause. They increasingly incorporate the mass media into their effort to change state policies. Nonetheless, the action of lobbying or petitioning tends to be a one-way action. They bring to bear pressures on state elites, simply wishing the decision makers to listen to their views and representations. The use of the globally organized mass media is also a more indirect mode of resource mobilization. Local government may occupy a strategic position since its regularized two-way relationships with national government provide a ready-made channel through which citizen activists try to change state policies. In some countries, such as Britain and Sweden, local authorities and their national associations are consulted for approval in national policy-making relating to their interests.[69] The consultation opens the door to bargaining and negotiation, rather

68. See, for example, Clark, Friedman, and Hochstetler, "The Sovereign Limits of Global Civil Society," p. 4.

69. See, for example, Tage Magnusson and Jan-Erik Lane, "Sweden," in Edward Page and Michael Goldsmith, eds., *Central and Local Government Relations: A Comparative Analysis of West European Unitary States* (London: Sage Publication, 1987), pp. 12-28; R. A. W. Rhodes, *The National World of Local Government* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986).

than lobbying and petitioning, between national and local government. Transnational nonstate actors may thus seek to channel patterns of access through their partnership with local government.

Another component of promoting their advocacy objectives is self-help. In this respect, transnational nonstate actors need to be autonomous in self-help. Perhaps the most important agency for facilitating their independence is a policy community of local government officials in transgovernmental networks. These local government officials may facilitate the actors to take care of their affairs independently. The facilitation basically takes three forms. First, their autonomy may be strengthened by local government officials' ability to provide an adequate financial base, as mentioned in the section on fund-raising. Second, transnational nonstate actors may be endowed with a range of freedoms to the extent that national government delegates decision-making authority to local government officials. Third, they may share functional autonomy with local government officials to the extent that local government is free to use the field-level expertise and engage in its activities without state intervention. These forms may help enhance the ability of transnational nonstate actors to seek their own agenda, act on their own, and be responsible to themselves.

Access to the Center

Different modes of access to national government exist in different countries. Through channels of access to the center, national and local governments are linked with constant interactions and overlap between the administrative and political arenas. Their contacts can be used as a means of influencing the center as well as a form of state control over local affairs. In Japan, nearly 60 percent of department chiefs of prefectural governments are officials sent from national ministries. This institutionalised practice provides local authorities with a favourable opportunity to negotiate with bureaucrats in the national ministry concerned. Equally important, more than half as many prefectural governors have been ex-national bureaucrats who run successfully in elections by claiming their connection to the center to be beneficial. In France, the communication channels of *cumul des mandats*, which allows a politician to retain two or more public offices at different levels of government, have developed as an institutional form, while in Italy about four-fifths of local representatives and the majority of local public employees belong to national political parties, directing local pressures toward the center. Besides these more direct forms of access, the

pressure group forms of access have also been institutionalised in some countries where local authorities conduct routine negotiations with the center, as described earlier.

In the past, those patterns of access have been studied in the context of central-local relations, but this study found that they could serve to reinforce the position of transnational coalitions, giving them a strong voice to achieve advocacy objectives and even change state's position in interstate relations. Let us look at the coalition of Dalian and Kitakyushu. Dalian was a state-designated city as well as one of the fourteen Coastal Open Cities where local residents experienced every imaginable environmental problem. In 1993 the KITA presented the Dalian Environmental Model Zone project for considerations to a Chinese state department official who had a connection with the City of Kitakyushu.[70] In 1994 China's National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) accordingly adopted as a priority project the KITA proposal. On his visit to China in the same year, the mayor of Kitakyushu received a declaration of intention of implementing the Model Zone project from both Vice-Premier Zhu Rongji and NEPA Director General Jie Zhenhua.

Dalian agreed with Kitakyushu on making a master plan based on site investigations. But the coalition of Dalian and Kitakyushu had shortages of financial resources and staffing for implementing it. China's NEPA recognized the financial losses caused by pollution but found difficulty in handling localized development with shortages of capital for environmental management.[71] Both the cities thus agreed that they would appeal for Japanese official development assistance (ODA). Dalian as a nationally designated city was able to appeal directly to the Chinese government for conducting site investigations. In 1995 the Chinese government subsequently turned to the Japanese government for help. Meanwhile, the mayor of Kitakyushu, an ex-national bureaucrat, presented his position as necessary for cross-border pollution control, thereby exerting pressure on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to adopt Kitakyushu's idea as an ODA project. The planning and implementation of foreign aid policy in this case was dependent on field-level information from the coalition of Dalian and Kitakyushu. In 1996

70. Kitakyushu City, Bureau of the Environment, *Kitakyushu Kogai Taisakushi* (Kitakyushu's History of Pollution Control Measures) (Kitakyushu: Kitakyushu City, 1998), p. 217.

71. Vaclav Smil, "Environmental Problems in China: Estimates of Economic Costs," *East-West Center Special Reports*, Vol. 5 (1996), pp. 1-62; Eduard Vermeer, "Industrial Pollution in China and Remedial Policies," *China Quarterly*, No. 156 (December 1998), pp. 986-1016.

the Japanese government pledged ODA funds to China for the local project of the Dalian Environmental Model Zone. It grew into a project worth over US$ 300 million.[72]

Perhaps the most interesting finding is the locus of "local diplomacy" where Dalian's access to the Chinese government allowed Kitakyushu City and the nonprofit organization to contact Chinese state authority without the involvement of Japanese state authority. In this respect, both the cities could share accesses that are transnationally transferable to each other through the coalition. At the same time, they individually channeled the interests of their ODA project to their own national government in a conventional way. All these efforts were effective enough to persuade the Chinese government to ask Japan for this purpose of foreign aid, resulting in the Japanese government-funded project.

Such a pattern of multilateral diplomacy can also be found in the establishment of airline routes in Northeast Asia. During the Cold War period, an airline route between Khabarovsk and Niigata, beginning operations in 1973, was the only regular international route in Northeast Asia. In 1989 a new airline route between Harbin (China) and Khabarovsk was opened, taking the lead for further airline networking. In this process of negotiations, a delegation from Niigata ignored the traditional boundaries of diplomatic circles. The Niigata team successfully mobilized a number of persuasive information sources through their overseas partners' access to the center to influence interstate decision-making between China and the Soviet Union. The Niigata team tenaciously and successfully persuaded Chinese government officials of the need to open a Harbin-Khabarovsk route for a Northeast Asian network.[73] Following a Niigata City delegation's visit to Harbin in January 1986, prefecture-wide business leaders and citizen groups in Niigata visited China five months later. Hosted by Dalian, Harbin, and Sian Cities, they were able to meet government officials for foreign trade and transportation in Beijing, strongly pushing China for a Harbin-Khabarovsk route. The momentum was growing behind this process. In July 1988 the governor of Niigata Prefecture, academics, business leaders, and citizen groups chartered a flight to Harbin, and launched a campaign to coordinate local counterparts in China for promoting the opening of that route. Niigata's effort

72. This section is based on Kitakyushu City, Bureau of the Environment, *Kitakyushu Kogai Taisakushi*, 177-81 and 217-18.

73. Kazuo Ogawa, "15 Years of Economic Cooperation in the Sea of Japan Region: A Commemorative Lecture on Receiving the Niigata Prize," *Monthly Bulletin on Trade with Russia and East Europe*, Vol. 45, No. 1 (January 2000), p. 127.

was immediately joined by Heilongjiang Provincial government, which was a much needed source of influence at China's national level. The coalition forged by Niigata played a key role in adding a new item on the diplomatic agenda of Sino-Russian negotiations. This is a striking example of diplomacy pluralized with nonstate actors from a third country.[74]

By this time, the strategically important naval port city of Vladivostok began to seek open economic ties with Asian countries. Following Moscow's messages of economic reforms at home and military cutbacks abroad, two regular airline routes were established: Irkutsk (East Siberia)-Niigata in 1991 and Vladivostok-Niigata in 1993. In response to this new development, many chartered flights to cities in Northeast Asia were organized by grassroots groups, local banks, and small business to promote further airline networks. Local community-led efforts to build an airline network with the Russian Far East often irritated Japan's Ministry of Transportation when ministry officials were bypassed in the consultative process.[75] The Ministry of Transportation was quick to question the profitability of proposed regular air routes between the Russian Far East and Japanese cities. Japan's Defense Agency also strongly argued against such local initiatives limiting the air space of defense exercises. In February 1992, the Primorskiy Kray governor and directors of the Vladivostok and Khabarovsk Airports visited Niigata to exchange views of developing their airline networks. In February and April 1992, the prefectural governor of Niigata, the mayor of Niigata City, and community leaders successfully channelled their access to Moscow through their coalition with the Russian Far East, and "negotiated" with aviation authority officials in Moscow. Japan's national transportation officials briefly tried to prevent the local initiatives but soon realized that they had no choice but to negotiate with Russian aviation authority officials. These Russian officials were reported to be ready for the opening of eight new regular routes that the envoys of Japanese local governments "promised" to set up.[76] The link of Russian Far East—Niigata provided the local initiatives with greater leverage against the Ministry of Transportation at home. The Russo-Japanese bilateral aviation negotiations eventually created two new regular airline routes: Vladivostok-Toyama in 1994 and Khabarovsk-Aomori in 1995.

74. This section is based on Niigata, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Niigata Shoko Kaigisho Hyakunenshi* (A Hundred Years of Niigata Chamber of Commerce and Industry) (Niigata: the Chamber, 1997), pp. 302-8.

75. *Asahi Journal*, 18 October 1991, pp. 84-85.

76. *Asahi Shinbun*, 17 May 1992; and Otsu, "Jichitai Gaiko no Hori," pp. 47-48.

The third case, while focusing on cross-border identities and sense of community, found the links of overseas Koreans and their home government to be transnational in a traditional way. It also found that local governments' initiatives calling for granting foreigners' local suffrage made the channels of communication between the proponents of local suffrage and national lawmakers. Korean residents in Japan have built networks linked by their country of origin. They have developed their identities and acted in those networks that connect them further to two or more communities in both Korea and Japan. In the early 1990s, Japan's Korean Residents Union, which was recognized as an official organization by South Korea in 1948, worked hard without electoral resources to generate public interests in foreigners' political participation and contacted their home government through their networks with communities in South Korea. In the 1991 Korea-Japan Memorandum, President Kim Dae Jung accordingly urged the Japanese government to allow South Korean residents in Japan to vote in local elections.[77] In support of the Korean ethnic initiatives, by the late 1990s about 1,400 local governments in Japan had called for the granting of foreigners' rights to vote in local elections, representing over 70 per cent of the total population. This climate allowed local/foreign residents' groups to direct pressure to national politicians. Some political parties saw foreigners' suffrage as a way to enhance their support base, setting a National Diet agenda on foreigners' voting right in 1998. On his visit to Japan, President Kim Dae Jung stated: "Korean residents have paid taxes and contributed greatly. I hope the Japanese government will grant local suffrage to them."[78]

Delegation of Decision-Making Authority

Delegation is inevitable as state activity expands. More to the point, local government is increasingly expected to solve problems independently. The principle of subsidiarity, emphasizing that "problems are best solved in the subsystem where they arise," is to bring decision-making within the local community as close to the grassroots level as possible.[79] Publicly elected local

77. See, for example, "Debate Simmers over Voting Rights for Foreigners," *Yomiuri Shinbun*, 5 May 1999.

78. *Asahi Shinbun*, 9 October 1998.

79. See the preamble and Article 10 of the initial draft of a World Charter of Local Self-Government, http://www.habitat-lac.org/habitat-lac/documents/english/toward wcharter.htm#PART%20C, 7 April 2001.

officials are likely to take any chance to meet their local residents' need, while being responsible for assigned functions to state authority. In this respect, transnational citizen activities, while not directly acting through or against formal state policies, may be empowered in partnership with local government to which delegation gives more room for decision making.

One of the most important forms of delegation is the financial one allowing local government to be free to use national funds as it chooses. In Japan, the Ministry of Home Affairs (Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications renamed in 2001) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have jurisdiction over the policy area of international cooperation by local governments. Since 1994, the Ministry of Home Affairs has appropriated nearly US$ 1 billion every fiscal year in the budget item of "internationalization promotion measures" taken by local government. Local governments have received funds of this budget item in the form of a block grant (not tied to specific projects). Since the late-1990s, an extra-departmental body of Home Affairs, Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, has also subsidized a considerable number of independent local projects for international cooperation.

Equally important is *de facto* delegation. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs used to undertake its own international cooperation projects or unilaterally provided local governments with funds for certain categories of international cooperation (e.g., subsidies for technology exchange since 1971). In recent years, however, it has been more dependent upon local governments for the successful planning and implementation of various projects.[80] One such project was the Dalian Environmental Model Zone. As discussed earlier, ODA's delegation to local government has yet to be institutionalized. It is also important to note that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a Grassroots Grant Aid Program in 1989, which was designed to provide overseas local governments, grassroots groups and educational organizations with grants for integrated community development. The program budget increased rapidly to 5.7 billion yen for 1,064 projects in 1998.

Local Government Discretion

National government regulates local governments by means of budgetary instruments and legal measures. Beyond the budgetary and legal constraints,

80. For the details of such cases, see Japan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Waga Kuni no Seifu Kaihatsu Enjo—ODA Hakusho* (Japanese Overseas Development Assistance—ODA White Paper) Vol.1. (Tokyo: Kokusaikyoryoku Suishinkyokai,1999) pp. 29-30, 49, and 85-87.

however, there is no general predisposition to accept national government advice or even directives. Moreover, the financial and statutory instruments are frequently imprecise, so that the implementation of national policy leaves local governments with some degree of discretion. There is also a vacuum in the state administration where national law does not explicitly deny local government the legal power of decision-making in some policy areas. In some countries, local government has developed a safeguard against arbitrary state control. Local government has a potential for functioning according to criteria of human and social needs as a counter to criteria based on the "national interest."

In terms of transnationalism, perhaps the most important of local government discretion is its discretionary power to ease the claimed state right of a spatial exclusion against foreigners. In 1994 the municipal assembly of Kawasaki was the first in Japan to urge the national government to grant foreign residents the right to vote and run in local elections. Meanwhile, in 1996 it unanimously passed a municipal ordinance for the establishment of a consultative assembly that would give foreigners a voice in local community. Such assemblies were picked up on discretionary innovation and adopted by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 1997, by Kyoto City in 1998, by Kanagawa Prefecture in 1998, and by Mitaka City in 1999. In 1996 Kawasaki also became the first government-designated city to eliminate the nationality clause for hiring city employees. This policy diffused among other local governments with astonishing speed. As of January 2002, it was adopted by all government-designated cities except for Chiba and Tokyo, and by 11 out of 47 prefectural governments. The mayor of Kawasaki hoped that the publicized municipal assemblies for foreigners would act as a stepping-stone to national legislation regarding foreigners' local suffrage.[81] Not coincidentally, the late 1990s was precisely the period in which the general public became interested in foreigners' political participation. The nationwide opinion poll of September 2000, which had surveyed eligible voters' attitudes toward foreign residents' right to vote in local elections, showed that more than 64 percent of all the respondents favored the idea while only 28 percent did not.[82]

81. Kiyoshi Takahashi, Mayor, speech delivered to the Municipal Assembly, Kawasaki City, 18 March 1994.

82. The Asahi Shinbun conducted an opinion poll across the nation on randomly selected 3,000 eligible voters. Out of 3,000, 2,147 were interviewed in person on September 24 and 25, 2000. See *Asahi Shinbun*, 9 November 2000.

Conclusion

This study demonstrated an early sign of transnational penetration to some Japanese communities where local governments occupied their strategic position to help construct new identities and interests providing a basis for transnational coalitions or networks. The local governments in this project had been active in both the utility and the normative sense. They deployed both norms, such as environmental and foreigners' rights, and material resources, such as expertise and fund-raising, to bring local communities to their view. In so doing, they brought together otherwise unconnected domestic actors in a manner that produced a transnational interest that had not existed before. Although considerably driven by material interests, they showed a potential to facilitate the mechanism in which norms would convert raw physical materials into resources for transnational activities. The local governments in Kitakyushu and Niigata, working with their counterparts and through their own national government, also demonstrated a potential to help develop transnational ties that could be mobilized to put pressure on a target state and further pluralize diplomatic channels.

Mass-based transnational social movements are difficult to construct and sustain, are hard to gain trust and confidence, and have limited opportunities and resources for changing decision-making structure at an international level. No doubt, local government will have a significant influence on these movements. Yet further studies need to be done in a broader comparative perspective by exploring differences in domestic structures and degree of international institutionalization.