Local Government as a Social Construction Agent in Transnational Relations:
Some Reflections Based on Three Cases in Japan

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Abstract

This article suggests that local government can help initiate a process of norm shift in world politics. In Japan, transnational issues have brought a new dimension to local communities. In this context, local government occupies a strategic position to act as an intermediate agent in reconnecting citizens with states. On the one hand, local government as part of the state apparatus has a range of political access to national authority. On the other hand, local government is the immediate body that tries to assure individuals' safety and health in local communities and can be seen as potential partner of civil society groups. Once individuals and domestic groups bypass their own states and directly seek counterpart groups beyond national borders, or establish their alliances with non-national citizens to solve those issues, this strategic position of local government provides political access, leverage, and opportunities to the transnationally connected groups. The *transnational advocacy coalitions* of civil society groups who work with local governments would create the opportunity structure. Local government has the potential to act as a key agent in converting the moral authority of civil society groups into a source of power to change state policies and practices. The theoretical purpose of this article is to bridge two sets of literatures: the literature on material, utility-based positivism (i.e., neorealism and neoliberalism) in world politics, and the literature on transnationalism and norms (i.e., constructivism) in sociology and international relations. It looks at the interplay of material forces and normative rationality in the process of transnationalization. This study specifically examines the mechanism by which local government may transform its material access and opportunities into a form of power for morally principled coalitions.

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Civil Society as a Narrow Concept

In recent years, socially mobilized citizens have reacted around the globe to contradictions in the structure of the nation state.[1] There has been a remarkable upsurge of voluntary associations of citizens outside the formal apparatus of the state. One of the most compelling reasons for this is that socially mobilized citizens compensate for those areas in which the state and the economy have failed to meet societal needs (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990). The rise of citizen associations is said to represent an inevitable development evolving out of the failures of the two existing sectors (Salamon 1994). At the global level, socially mobilized citizens are further experiencing the transnational aspect of those failures; both the sovereign nation state and the market mechanism have been increasingly unresponsive to the needs of maintaining or achieving the basic living infrastructure of healthy human life (UNDP 1994). Socially mobilized citizens have been playing an indispensable role in establishing a normative framework, "human security," which can be used to protect people from starvation, pollution and violence. In this context, the conceptualization of civil society in this article is an attempt (1) to grapple with the central problem: how to find a way for civic participation between state authorities and market forces, and (2) to further reconstitute democratic legitimacy that derives from social solidarity and civic participation across state boundaries as well as in a defined national territory.

For understanding transformational possibilities in world politics, the term, "civil society," can be employed in a particular way with analytical and practical value. The hope is that civil society as a concept will help to understand the rise and structure of spontaneous or voluntary groups and organizations with transnational identities and interests. In this article, civil society is conceptually differentiated from both the state and the economy; it refers to a sector of agents, that is, socially mobilized citizens considered independent of power-controlling state actors or profit-seeking economic actors (Cohen and Arato 1992). In analytical terms, the autonomous agents outside the state and the market can produce independent views and initiatives for social renewal. These agents are

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1. This article is presented to provide a theoretical observation to three case studies: networkings between the Russian Far East and Niigata over community development, inter-municipal collaboration between Dalian and Kitakyushu over pollution control, and coalitions between Kawasaki City and foreign residents over local suffrage for foreigners. These case studies are fully described and empirically analysed in "Transnational Coalitions in Northeast Asia: Search for a New Pathway of Japanese Local Government" *Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies* Vol. 2 (2003), pp. 75-104.

assumed to constitute an ideal public space where social interactions between the state and the market take place.[2]

In this study, adhering to de Tocqueville's position, civil society is conceived of the sphere of voluntary associations. Spontaneous and voluntary associations of citizens, while making the citizens less controlled by political authorities, are essential to enhancing the ability and willingness of an individual to pursue public purposes and social change. Non-voluntary character of associations such as schools and hospitals, which could easily be co-opted by the state and significantly driven by the necessity of profit-seeking, is of secondary importance to finding a third way between state and economic actors.

In the political processes of advanced democracies, political parties and other political public institutions have played a mediating role between the state and civil society. They are depicted as ones that represent interests in civil society, and ultimately seek to maximize votes or to control state power. By contrast, normatively, civil society does not take part in political activities for the sake of power acquisition but does so to put on the public agenda issues and problems ignored by governments and corporations. I subscribe to a conception of civil society as a space that does not include those organizations interested primarily in acquiring political power. Interestingly enough, low voter turnouts in most advanced democracies imply that a large proportion of eligible voters are opting out of the party political process yet increasingly influencing the state without party affiliation (Takao 2004).

The market mechanism, under capitalism, is conceptually separated from the state and removed from the influence of civil society. In this context, trade unions and other economic public institutions have provided a mediating role between civil society and the market mechanism. In most industrialized nations, labor unions' repeated pressure for wage increase has played a key role in expanding the domestic market by increasing domestic consumption. But obtaining satisfaction of their economic need alone would fall short of pursuing objectives unattended by the state or unprotected by the market.[3] In conceptual terms, civil society is a massive array of private organizations that are not primarily

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2. Despite Gramsci's firm belief that civil society cannot be autonomous from state and corporate sector, a large number of recent case studies do not support this claim. See, for example, Richard Higgott, Geoffrey Underhill and Andrea Bieler, *Non-State Actors and Authority in the Global System*. New York: Routledge, 2000.

3. In practice, labor movements have often been politicised in most countries, and they have been closely affiliated with political parties to represent their interests in the party political

dedicated to receiving narrow material benefits, but rather to seeking broad public purposes. In all highly industrialized nations, the union participation ratios have been on the decline; reformed labor laws and standardized personnel practices have significantly eliminated the differences between union and non-union members. On the other hand, the citizen activism of engaging in persuasion with, and exerting pressures on, profit-seeking corporations, for example, consumer boycott for environmental protection, has been producing an array of tactics to enhance the wider public interest.

Civil society, the state and the market, are highly interactive and must be analyzed in relation to one another. But the three spheres are conceptually differentiated to see the nature and direction of interactions among them. To see its role in making up for both state and market failures, civil society is seen as the sphere of non-state institutions in which socially mobilized citizens exercise a high degree of autonomy. This conceptualization would allow us to assess the extent to which civil society is self-maintaining and independent from state and corporate power.

Civil Society Actors in Transnational Space

Numerous scholars describe what civil society actors do and how they operate in transnational space. They often neglect to make clear distinctions between different categories of transnational activities and thus are unable to identify how these activities relate to each other. There seem to be two different types of spontaneous and voluntary associations of citizens in civil society: nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and nonprofit organizations (NPOs). NGOs can be defined as service-oriented organizations that deal directly with clients or beneficiaries, while NPOs can be seen as primarily self-help-oriented membership organizations (Uphoff 1996, pp. 23-39). In this sense, NGOs serve those who are not members of the organization; and NPOs operate on behalf of their own members. Although the two are overlapping sets in practice, it is analytically useful to make a distinction between them. This clear analytical distinction will make it easier, for example, to examine civil society actors' contribution to democracy-building. NGOs tend to have "democratic deficits" to the extent that beneficiaries cannot hold NGOs accountable for actions in the similar direct manner that members can.

How then do NGOs operate in transnational space? International NGOs (INGOs) are composed of members from at least two countries, and organized to

provide services to non-members of other countries through established transactions with individual citizens, states, corporate firms and international institutions (Tarrow 2001, p. 10). By contrast, transnational NGOs embrace this type of international NGOs and expand to include domestic NGOs that provide services to citizens of other countries. NPOs may be transnationally organized not only with members in at least two countries, but also with members of at least two different nationalities that nationals and foreigners might have respectively in the host country. From the viewpoint of transnational NPO activity, transnationalism is used to refer to phenomena that transcend physical state borders and/or non-nationals' socio-political boundaries (Takao 2003a).

Today INGOs often operate in alliances with other state and nonstate actors to play a major role in consciousness-raising and advocacy. This is a dynamic and transformational category to the study of transnationalism - "transnational advocacy networks" (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Some scholars argue that transnational advocacy networks are not alternative to social movements, because these networks not only contain INGOs, but also work with allied agents of government and of international institutions (Imig and Tarrow 2001). Smith, Chatfield and Pagnucco (1997) identify social movements by socially mobilized private groups alone and their goals of social change. Yet some recognize that such a definition of social movements could include passive and service-oriented groups, and thus identify social movements by the specific type of action: sustained contentious interaction with powerholders (Tarrow 2001, p. 11).

To seek a solid assessment of transformational possibilities in world politics, however, the narrow definition of social movements in contentious politics could miss out important civil society actors who are affiliated with government (especially as a financial contributor) and international institutions yet neither co-opted by government nor by the power of multinational corporations in transnational space. To overcome this definitional problem, I propose the notion of *transnational advocacy coalitions* (TACs), which is designed to embrace the two categories of transnational advocacy networks and social movements and to add analytical value. TACs are sets of spontaneous and voluntary associations of citizens who coordinate transnational campaigns through information exchange to influence social change.[4] Although Keck and Sikkink (1998, p. 30) distinguish professional

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4. Khagram, Riker and Sikkink (2002) suggest three forms of transnational collective action: networks as information exchange, coalitions as coordinated campaign tactics, and movements as joint mobilization. These forms present a pure typology of transnational collective action. In this study, transnational collective action in TACs is seen as their efforts to use the three forms for influencing social change.

networks from networks of activists who share basic values for social change, I propose TACs whose membership includes academics, professionals, and scientists as well as community activists and activists beyond national borders. Scientists and experts are forming associations with activists not only to pursue their objective knowledge but to share normative commitments to social change (Takao 2003b, pp. 88-90). In other words, my preliminary research shows that scientific actors in TACs not only generate expertise, but also strategically use objective information to convince target audiences and to gain resources for political action. It is analytically appropriate to look at all these actors together as a coherent, like-minded, force in transnational space. In my view, people are rational, in both the normative sense and the objectivity sense; the two modes of rationality are not mutually exclusive in transnational space. Whether activists or scientists, they develop complex ways of balancing values and objectivity for social change.[5]

I identify TACs as the kind of autonomy with which civil society actors are engaged in sustained interaction with agents of government and of international institutions. The nature and scope of autonomy are assumed to allow TACs to achieve the goals of social change. The dimension of autonomy is based on three fundamental variables: delegated autonomy – the extent to which government or international institutions delegate decision-making to civil society actors; administrative autonomy – the extent to which civil society actors are free to engage in their activities without intervention by government; political autonomy – the extent to which civil society actors get an issue on the international agenda, change state policies and stances, and wield influence on institutional procedures of interstate relations.[6] This produces a definition of TACs as a coalition of transnationally organized NGOs/NPOs who work with agents of government and of international institutions and promote social change. TACs' advocacy activities are described as transnational NGOs/NPOs that have shared values, engaged in sustained interaction with supportive agents of government and international institutions, and that pressure and persuade a target state, international institution or multinational corporation for social change.

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5. cf. M. J. Peterson, "Whaler, Cetologists, and Environmentalists, and the International Management of Whaling," *International Organization* 46 (Winter 1992), pp. 149, 155. He distinguishes scientists and experts from activists, who are not driven by scientific reasoning but in simple terms as dividing the world into right and wrong.

6. Keck and Sikkink (1998, p. 25) neatly summarize the types of political autonomy transnational activists seek: (1) agenda setting, (2) influence on the discursive positions of international actors, (3) influence on institutional procedures, and (4) influence on policy change.

The Process of Transnationalization

There are no systemic mechanisms that have been proposed to explain how domestic actors are mobilized to become transnational ones and transformed into TACs, and how domestic actors link through TACs to states and international institutions. Neo-medievalists observe that transnational activism is able to achieve its advocacy objectives without state involvement (Wapner 1995). Some scholars further predict new forms of non-territorial institutional governance without government at the international level (Lipschutz 1996, Young 1997). Despite these arguments, it is important to note that changing individual states' policies as well as targeting interstate relations has remained a primary strategy of transnational activism. Others emphasize the new yet contentious world of transnational social movements (Smith, Chafield and Pagnucco 1997, Guidry, Kennedy and Zald 2001). O'Brien et al (2000) specifically predict worldwide social movements spreading across transnational activities to contest international economic institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO. Social movement theorists tend to highlight a contentious interaction with powerholders against states, international institutions or multinational corporations, and neglect to examine a cooperative relationship between TACs and agents of government/international institutions for social change. Transnational activity does not necessarily occur at the cost of states. World polity theorists in sociology describe overall characteristics of and changes in cultural structures by looking at organizations in the global aggregate (Boli and Thomas 1999), but they tend to focus on the commonalities of institutions at the global level rather than on the social processes that link citizens transnationally. Yet some institutional sociologists do examine the interaction of individual actors for an understanding of these processes but do so exclusively in particular policy areas (Finnemore 1996a, Meyer et al 1997).

International Norms as a Source of Influence[7]

To identify such systemic mechanisms, we need to address the questions of why some TACs succeed and others fail to achieve their advocacy objectives. TACs

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7. According to constructivists, such as Peter Katzenstein (1996) and Martha Finnemore (1996b), norms are defined as collective expectations held by a community of individuals for the proper behavior with a given identity. Norms are regarded as intersubjective beliefs about appropriate behavior, while ideas are defined as beliefs held by individuals. International norms

usually neither have at their disposal legally coercive powers associated with states nor financial power associated with corporations. Many scholars thus turn to the examination of how TACs promote international norms to change state policies and stances. They primarily focus on the independent impact of norms on agents; they look at the independent and structural accounts of international norms but fail to examine individual agents as independent variables. It is needless to say that the existence of relevant international norms can be one of necessary conditions for the success of activism (Burgerman 2001). However, this approach does not focus on accounts of the successes or failures of individual activism and therefore does not answer those questions. A few studies attempt to identify where international norms come from and examine feedback effects from local agents onto these norms (Keck and Sikkink 1998). In an attempt to answer the questions, this study treats local government as an intermediate agent or as a source of coordination at work between the state and citizens in the process of norm-oriented transnationalization. It examines how local government could provide incentives for domestic actors who are otherwise reluctant to participate in TACs. It explores how local government could help TACs to build transnational normative consensus that may result in international norms being capable of constraining state behavior.

Expertise and Morality as Sources of Influence

Apart from international norms, expertise authority and moral authority are regarded as other main sources of influence exerted by TACs (Haas 1992, Higgott et al 2000). Peter Hass (1992) developed the notion of epistemic community where like-minded community members not only pursue objective knowledge but also share normative commitment and gain access to political offices for problem-solving. Objective expertise and persuasive ideas can have an independent impact on agents and be heard seriously by policy-makers (Evangelista 1999). In some cases, experts are included as stakeholders in government negotiation delegations (Evangelista 1999, Johnson 2000, Khagram 2000), although in most cases their

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may accordingly be defined as collective expectations or standards of proper and legitimate behavior recognized by states and international orgnizations. International norms may not only result from common practice among states, but also be consciously cultivated by other actors, such as multinational corporations and TACs. Significant parts of international norms neither meet the needs of states in maximizing material power nor serve the interests of corporate firms in maximizing profits. To understand the emergence and diffusion of international norms, one of the aims in this study is to examine the crucial role of local governments in helping the collective beliefs of citizens transform into international norms.

expertise tends to influence only at the prenegotiation stage (Clark 2001). Those like-minded community members tend to believe not only that their expertise is objectively valid, but also that their advocacy objectives that their expertise supports are morally right. This moral authority is another important source of influence exerted by TACs (Sikkink 2002). Nonetheless, moral principles, which TACs wish to promote, are often seen as imposed Western values in some parts of the world. The key reason that TACs find difficulty in being fully accountable to their stakeholders concerns the self-defining orientation of advocacy objectives. There are no accountability mechanisms in which the performance of TACs is externally accepted (Uphoff 1996). It is also important to note that as many case studies have shown, moral principles and material power are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, some demonstrate moral principles not only as a source of influence, but as another form of power that interacts with material power to achieve advocacy objectives (Florini 2000, Sikkink 2002).

Some argue that normative analysis is compatible with empirical research strategies (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). A few studies address the relative effectiveness of norms and material interests in transnational relations (Clark 2001). But there is no systematic research that offers evidence as to how material resources transform into part of normative forces and how norms create material resources for transnational actors. This project innovatively looks at local government as a source of coordination at work in these processes among diverse transnational actors.

Issue Areas Amenable to Solution

Keck and Sikkink (1998, p. 27) point out that issues involving "bodily harm to vulnerable individuals" and "legal equality of opportunity" are transnationally appealing to people. Increasing legal equality of women also appears to be in successful transnational campaigns. This implies that it is less likely to exert a significant impact on the hard cases of national security. Recent studies, however, demonstrate that TACs challenge, irritate and redefine state interests in even conventional security areas (Price 1998, Evangelista 1999). Some respond to the puzzle of why hard security cases can be susceptible to popular resistance (Mann 1988, p. 27, Tilly 1990, p. 83, Linklater 1998, p. 218). Although legal coercion by violence is the monopoly of the state, the continuance of state power must be answerable to popular demand. Coercive exploitation, such as unpopular conscription and restricted individual rights for a war effort, needs to withstand public scrutiny and concede constraints on state control.

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Local Government as an Intermediate Agent in Transnationalization

Resource mobilization theories emphasize political entrepreneurship, which is driven by material interests to influence others. Political opportunity theories stress a structure of access, constraints and opportunities that make actors succeed or fail in political action. Nonetheless, TACs are distinctively value-based for problem-solving, although significantly driven by material interests to preserve and strengthen their normative commitments. Those actors deploy both principled ideas and material resources to bring others to their normative commitment. On the other hand, even nation-states with the overwhelming material resources do not act completely outside of normative structures. Perhaps, the key question is how normative ideas convert raw physical materials into political opportunity for TACs. Based on my earlier observation (Takao 2003b), I claim that local government is in a strategic position between citizens and states to help TACs create different kinds of power resources for a responsible and value-based rationale.

There are certain sources of influence, which can be seen as transnational activists' capacity to make others behave differently than others would have otherwise for normative purposes: (1) information and expertise, (2) accountability, (3) norm diffusion, (4) norm evolution, and (5) legitimacy and moral authority.

Information. TACs generate and use information strategically to achieve advocacy objectives. To generate a set of strategic information that citizens need, information exchange is a crucial part of transnational collective action. How do citizens know if relevant information exists in the first place? Only citizens who live in a specific place may hear of relevant information sources and have physical access to relevant documents. The first task is entrusted to their innovative ability to identify and collect relevant information at the immediate site. Their successful task is to provide information that would not otherwise be available and increase opportunities for information sharing with others. Information exchange makes connections between otherwise unconnected citizens in different parts of the world in a way that creates an embryonic solidarity and identity.

At the grassroots level, the ability of domestic groups to identify relevant information is rather limited. My earlier studies show that local government occupies a strategic position to provide and transmit alternate sources of information to NPOs and NGOs (Takao 2003b, pp. 83-85). In Japan, local governments have increasingly been involved in information collection and

management and they have created a more open information policy (Takao 1998). Without help from local governments, citizens might not otherwise hear of sources or might not know that documents exist. In this respect, local government can act as an information provider for bringing citizens together for information sharing and eliminating networking uncertainty. The preliminary studies also suggest that local government provides spontaneous associations, which lack a permanent institutional infrastructure, with a continuing public place for information exchange (Takao 2003b, pp. 81-83). Such a venue that has been provided by local government may help to overcome the weakness of social networks outside people's immediate localities.

Accountability. How does the strategic use of information gain influence for promoting value-based principles? Information becomes a source of influence when spontaneous and voluntary associations provide alternate sources of information that supports the value-based principles of these associations. Information may be directed toward the general public and toward states and international organizations. The former raises the issue of TAC accountability; the later requires the issue of governments' or international institutions' accountability. In these flows of information, accountability can be seen as a source of influence exerted by transnational activism. The strategic goal of downward accountability to the general public, for which TACs publicize and persuade of new norms and discourses, is to gain support and trust among the general public. That of top-down accountability, for which TACs hold states and international institutions, is to embarrass the power-holders with dishonest implementation of a normative principle they publicly committed themselves to.

Probably the best example of top-down accountability in the preliminary study was the ability of the inter-municipal Dalian-Kitakyushu coalition to use Japan's concern regarding its international reputation. Japan has been criticized for its policy of tying foreign aid to commercial interests; it has recently been extremely sensitive to complaints coming from this type of aid. The inter-municipal Dalian-Kitakyushu coalition successfully held the Japanese government accountable for a principle of humanitarian and less commercially tied assistance (Takao 2003b, pp. 98-99). Concern for reputation may also involve the calculation of the physical costs of a possibly damaging reputation, but the value based rationale for environmental protection successfully converted this physical material into resources for transnational activism. In this respect, it is important to note that the municipality of Kitakyushu did not act as a branch of

the state apparatus, but rather as part of the transnational coalition.

The downward accountability of the Kitakyushu-Dalian coalition was ensured by the City of Kitakyushu through information learning and sharing with local business, researchers, journalists and citizens'groups. The City of Kitakyushu informed local communities that the domestic "Kitakyushu Method" alone could not cope with the spillover effect of environmental degradation and that acid rain was the most pressing transnational pollution problem. Kitakyushu's information sharing, which was combined with their coalition activities, such as international conferences on acid rain, Dalian-Kitakyushi joint seminars on pollution control, and Kitakyushu's dispatch of experts to Dalian, helped to increase the participation of local communities in Kitakyushu (Takao 2003b, p. 82). In this way, local government has a potential to overcome the weakness of social networks beyond outside residents' immediate living areas and to promote the construction of transnational collective identities.

Norm diffusion. Local government may strategically occupy a position to help activists promote international norms to change the policies and practices of national governments. International norms, such as the Landmines Convention and the International Criminal Court statute, are not simple reflections of powerful states. Even if normative origins are initially reduced to the interests of big powers, once established these norms are mandated to autonomously affect state policies and practices. In this context, local government could create political opportunities and resources for activists wishing to persuade governments who would otherwise be reluctant to act consistently with international norms. Local governments provide activists with privileged access to, preexisting domestic preferences of, national government, and connect activists and national governments transnationally for norm diffusion. Activists routinely reason about value-based objectives, yet justify the use of material and utility-based access that local governments offer to generate for winning policy coalitions. As international norms do not diffuse automatically around the globe, local government could play the role of norm diffusion as an agent in transnationalization.

Both Korean residents and migrant workers have been discriminated against, legally or unofficially, in Japan. But, in recent years, discriminatory policies have changed significantly to protect foreigners' rights. International norms have been playing a critical role in these changes. What is the mechanism of norm diffusion? My previous study (2003a) indicates that local government is the single most important factor for promoting foreigners' rights in Japan, while

allying itself with local activists. Well-organized policy coalitions among foreign and local residents and local authorities have developed beyond the reach of the national administration. Local governments in Japan have taken a wide range of measures for promoting the protection of foreigners' rights: direct relief to short-stay or overstay foreigners, subsidies for foreigners' medical treatment, hiring foreigners as local civil servants, and others. The adoption of international norms in local venue has been demonstrated at the national level. The national government has often followed local government initiatives by implementing norms into national legislation or at least recognized many of local government policies for protecting foreigners' rights.

The diffusion of international norms varies over different policy areas. In 1972 China began to introduce environmental concerns at the policy level, while participating in the UN Conference on Human Environment at Stockholm. But China took a rigid ideological approach by regarding Western capitalists' profit maximization as the causes of environmental degradation. Under Deng's economic reform in the 1980s, however, coastal communities began to experience every imaginable environmental problem. The Chinese government consequently recognized the financial losses caused by pollution (Takao 2003b, pp. 98-99). The Kitakyushu-Dalian coalition successfully persuaded Beijing to turn to the Japanese government for help; it autonomously promoted international norms to change the practices of the Chinese government. This coalition did not have strong physical materials at its disposal, but its successful persuasion offers evidence as to how the cost calculus of industrial pollution converted into resources for the value-based common objective of the coalition. The diffusion of international norms, i.e., industrial pollution control, took place in specific domestic contexts in China to achieve the causes of the coalition.

The above observations show that norms exert different influences on different national governments, and that local governments accordingly act as agents to defuse norms in their domestic processes. To defuse norms, local governments must help TACs gain access to the domestic political system of their target state. Further research is required to systematically demonstrate how variations in domestic structures, such as regime types and societal structures, will affect the impact of local authorities-assisted TACs in norm diffusion, while making clear distinctions between different types of local government systems.

Norm evolution. The effectiveness of international norms, such as those regarding slavery, human trafficking, and racism, cannot be simply reduced to

the military power of powerful states or the financial power of multinational corporations. International norms must originate from somewhere else. How do new norms emerge and become standards of legitimate behaviour? Socially mobilized groups purposefully make efforts to change social norms and rules or develop new norms. Getting the issue on the international agenda is a key to the successful development of new international norms. One such example was the total ban treaty of anti-personnel mines for which a collation of like-minded NGOs had got and kept the issue on the international agenda. In most cases, socially mobilized groups are more likely to develop norms building on the basis of already existing international norms that they wish to improve. In my earlier study, it was shown that local governments along with activists promoted the extension of foreigners' rights to political participation, which was joined to foreigners' economic and social rights previously accepted in international conventions (Takao 2003b, pp. 83, 101).

Local governments in Japan, which have often closely allied themselves with foreign residents' groups, have successfully kept the extension of foreigners' rights to political participation on the public agenda (Takao 2003a). In the 1991 Korea-Japan Memorandum, President Kim Dae Jung urged the Japanese government to allow Korean residents in Japan to vote in local elections. Since the mid-1990s, following his request, several local governments in Japan began to operate local assemblies in which foreigners were able to propose a range of measures for solving community problems. On his visit to Japan in 1998, President Kim Dae Jung put pressure on Japan's National Diet to pass a bill that would give permanent residents such rights. By 2001, nearly 1,500 local governments in Japan had passed resolutions calling for foreigners' local suffrage. Surprisingly, South Korea's Ministry of Home Affairs announced a plan to grant local suffrage to foreign residents for nationwide local elections in 2002. Accordingly, since 1998 Japanese lawmakers have continued to retain a National Diet agenda for foreigners' voting rights at the local level. A local suffrage bill has yet to be passed in the National Diet, and the extension of political rights to noncitizens has yet to become common practice among states. Nonetheless, local governments have helped foreign residents' and support groups gain access to the political system of Japan through two channels: local authorities' contact with central authority on the issue and international connections between foreign residents and the home country. Material utility was deployed in the form of political access by local authorities to assist in realizing the shared normative commitments to foreigners' political rights. In this process, we need to do further research on feedback effects

from local agents onto the global normative fabric of human rights.

Since the mid-1990s, many OECD member countries, including the U.S. and Britain, began to turn away from excessively market-driven neoliberal policies and to express their concern about the social costs of neoliberal globalization that is experienced unevenly across a nation and the world. In the earlier study, the transnational collective action of Russian Far East – Niigata involved their attempt to change norms of global economic governance and practices of states (Takao 2003b, pp. 92-95). Local authorities in both regions played a critical role in an effort to together move out of their similar conditions of underdevelopment under which the Russian Far East had been a resource colony for Moscow and Niigata had been marginalized by Tokyo. They were expanding their transnational ties (e.g., a joint enterprise of the Vladivostok Airport terminal building and the establishment of new airlines routes) that would be designed to provide local business and residents with loci to participate in local revitalization. Now they feared that neoliberal globalization would transform their status into a resource colony for major international oil companies or a periphery of big business. Local government officials and researchers on both sides sought to have their concerted voices heard by Moscow and Tokyo, who had negotiated for and concluded international agreements – particularly those of global standardization related to the environment, ethics, safety and trade. Like the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, they pursued provision of a safety net for protecting residents from the risk of globalized market forces. Each of their transnational collective action interacted in an already accepted structure of norms and was intended to change norms. The social costs of neoliberal globalization had been ignored by multinational corporations and some governments and unattended by existing norms. The Russian Far East and Niigata individually called for domestic control over market excesses, and at the international level, expertise and experience at the local level provided the conceptual development of global governance that must be restructured in the interests of local communities in all parts of the world. The new notion that was put forward by worldwide concerted voices could significantly influence at an early stage the initial drafting for economic international institutions.[8]

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8. The recent defeat of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) reflects this trend. Negotiations for the MAI began in 1993 at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). However, the negotiations failed to produce an agreement. Mobilized local NGOs and elected officials became active in efforts to persuade their governments to kill the agreement.

Legitimacy and moral pressure. Local government's claims to legitimacy may derive from three key grounds: representation of citizens, objective expertise, and delegation by national government. First, local government is reliant for its legitimacy in national policymaking of the home country or the targeted country on its ability to act as spokesperson of affected communities. Local government can legitimately claim to offer an indispensable contribution to state policies and practices: first-hand voices from communities affected by state policies and practices. Second, objective expertise and persuasive ideas that local government can produce in cooperation with activists and academics would be heard seriously by national policy-makers. Persuasiveness partly comes from causal ideas supported by scientific evidence to which local government appeals as legitimate. Third, local government may claim its ability to help affected community areas and issue areas wherein national government is not effective enough to serve their needs. Local government may be legitimately expected to solve problems autonomously with decision-making power delegated by national government (Takao 2003b, pp. 101-102).

Ideas are not only based on objectivity about cause and effect, but also appeal to moral authority about right and wrong. Moral concerns are a source of influence. Individuals hold certain principled ideas about right and wrong. Like-minded individuals may consequently share these value-based ideas for advocacy objectives. This study focuses on the process assisted by local government through which briefs held by individuals are converted into collective briefs. Whereas socially mobilized groups are morally right in harnessing objective expertise for their causes, local government helps to bring their moral concerns to light and raise the moral consciousness of citizens.

On the one hand, moral authority requires TACs to gain support and trust among the general public. Moral concerns about clear right and wrong are appealing, and incite strong feelings toward popular support. Environmental sustainability, for example, can be seen as a struggle in a public locus where negotiators seek material utility, such as resource use and property rights, that are compatible with ethical considerations. In the case of Dalian-Kitakyushu observed in my earlier study, the sources and costs of industrial pollution were very visible. The City of Kitakyushu kept the local residents informed about its useful experience and expertise (Takao 2003b, p. 85). Because of the visible costs of human life and health, the social benefits of industrial expansion in an irresponsible manner were not acceptable to the local residents.

On the other hand, moral authority requires the exercise of political leverage in motivating a change in government policies and practices (Keck and Sikkink 1998, pp. 23-24; Florini 2000, p. 10). To this end, moral authority is used both as a principle for persuasion (moral leverage) and as an instrument of power (material leverage). Local government may help to shape norms by persuading national authority to change its stance about what government should be doing. It may also indirectly do so by altering the public opinion of what government should be doing. When popular pressure is generated on politicians to change their minds, moral authority is transformed into a source of material leverage. If politicians change their minds, then this success is more likely due to the cost considerations of electoral politics rather than moral considerations. The exercise of material leverage carries some forms of coercion rather than those of persuasion. The practice of "shaming" that exposes the behavior of the target state to international scrutiny is one such example of coercion. Yet the coercion derives from moral authority; moral authority is converted into a form of power. One such conversion can be seen in the previously mentioned case of foreigners' local suffrage in Japan. Local governments, representing three-quarters of Japan's total population, called for foreigners' local suffrage. Accordingly, the related news that had appeared on the mass media rose dramatically; the rapid growth of pro-local suffrage among voters coincided with that trend. The exercise of material leverage for promoting foreigners' rights resulted in this issue being placed on the National Diet agenda in 1998 (Takao 2003a).

Local Government's Transnational Contact with the Target State

To assess the effectiveness of sources of influence (i.e., information and expertise, accountability, norm diffusion, norm evolution, legitimacy and moral authority) we need to examine the nature and types of contacts between TACs and states. In order to exert impact, TACs must gain access to the political processes of their target state. While access is primarily driven by physical, utility-based calculations, those sources of influence are based on normative considerations. How do norm considerations interact with utility calculations? How does local government help to convert political access and opportunities into resources for value-based TACs? Political opportunities provide spaces to access. While local government generates variations in domestic opportunity structures, inter-local-government relations formed beyond national border create an international opportunity structure. The dual opportunity structures interactively explain the scope of TACs' success.

It is very likely that differences in domestic opportunity structures will determine the availability of political access for TACs to change state policies. Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995, p. 6) argues, "the more the state dominates the domestic structure, the more difficult it should be for transnational actors to penetrate the social and political systems of the 'target' country." The effectiveness of TAC pressure may be undermined by a closed authoritarian structure where domestic groups do not have direct access to and influence on national government. To overcome this impenetrability of the domestic structures, some propose the dynamic interaction of the domestic structure with an international opportunity structure, i.e., the "boomerang" effect (Keck and Sikkink 1998, pp. 12-13) and "spiral model" (Risse-Kappen and Sikkink 1999). Both theories suggest that socially mobilized domestic groups may look for transnational contacts beyond the scope of the domestic structure. In their view, it is "blockage" caused by repression and authoritarianism that persuade groups to appeal to the transnational arena. In the boomerang process of interaction, domestic groups may leverage pressure on their repressive national government from outside by working with other groups, who leverage pressure on another state and/or international organization, which in turn bring pressure back on the first state. According to the spiral model, the target state initially adopts principled norms in a reluctant way for utility calculation, but it will eventually internalize these norms as habitual rules.

How then can local government act as an intermediate agent in such a situation of the transnational arena? The inclusion of local governments in the transnational arena has significant implications for the resources of and potential repertoire of action by domestic groups. Repressive governments are probably inaccessible or blockaded to private, domestic groups; however, their local governments are more likely to have close contacts with central authority. Local government accordingly has a potential to play a dual role both as part of the state apparatus and as partner of counterpart local governments in the transnational arena, in order to change state policies and practices. In Keck and Sikkink's model, wealthy domestic groups, while working through their own national governments or international institutions, bring coercive pressure on a target state. Given the involvement of local governments, however, this study suggests another dimension of transnational collective action. Local governments work not through their own national government, but through counterpart local governments, to influence a target state. Counterpart local governments are part of the target state apparatus and have direct access to the target national

government. Local governments could thus establish contacts with the target states via counterpart local governments. In so doing, they could simultaneously activate TACs to influence target state policies. This will lead to the establishment of potential channels between a target state and TACs, formed via inter-local-government relations beyond national borders.

As my earlier study illustrates, these channels provide a potential, not only to allow states to put pressure on a target state, but to persuade a target state to turn to other states for help for adopting international norms domestically (Takao 2003b, p. 98). Moreover, to exert Keck and Sikkink's boomerang influence, domestic groups need to develop specific expertise and tactics concerning the contents of international norms and the procedures of negotiations with their own national government. By contrast, the earlier study suggests that local governments have existing political opportunities and access to the center, and know how things worked with national authority in the past. Local governments maintain contact with national authority, for example, on the basis of face-to-face meetings or indirectly through their national association, although they may have limited discretion, being subject to national constraints in the form of advice, grants and laws.

The earlier study found that Dalian, as a nationally designated city, was able to appeal directly to the Chinese government, which in turn approached the Japanese government for help. Meanwhile, the mayor of Kitakyushu, an ex-national bureaucrat, was persuading Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to adopt Kitakyushu's idea as an ODA project. Perhaps the most interesting finding is the locus of "local diplomacy" where Dalian's access to the Chinese government allowed Kitakyushu City and nonprofit organizations to contact Chinese state authority without the involvement of Japanese state authority (Takao 2003b, pp. 98-99). In this respect, both the cities could share accesses that are transnationally transferable to each other through the coalition. Such a pattern of multilateral diplomacy can also be found in the establishment of a new airline route between Harbin (China) and Khabarovsk (Russia) (Takao 2003b, pp. 99-100). The Niigata team in Japan successfully mobilized a number of persuasive information sources through its overseas partners' access to the center to influence interstate decision-making between China and the Soviet Union. Following a Niigata City delegation's visit to Harbin, prefecture-wide business leaders and citizen groups in Niigata visited China. 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 governor of Niigata Prefecture, academics, business leaders, and citizen groups together 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 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 the new item on the diplomatic agenda of Sino-Russian negotiations.

The boomerang effect derives primarily from coercive pressure, which is not brought to persuade a target state to adopt norms as habitual rules but rather to force it to adopt them for avoiding political costs (Keck and Sikkinks 1998, pp. 12-13). The spiral model suggests that domestic and international pressures are initially required to encourage a target state for the domestic adoption of international norms, but that only over time do these pressures become unnecessary for international norms to be accepted and institutionalized within domestic practices (Risse-Kappen and Sikkink 1999). Risse-Kappen and Sikkink (1999, p. 5) argue that the greater the extent and length of time of those pressures, the more likely that target states will limit and eventually alter their practices. But focus on this contentious nature would miss out on a wide range of other relationships between states and citizens, which have potential for influencing state policies and practices. Social change and renewal do not necessarily require contentious interaction with government. Socially mobilized groups are often affiliated with government and international institutions yet neither co-opted by government nor swallowed by the power of multinational corporations in transnational space. In this study, the essence of TACs lies at the degree of autonomy with which citizens are engaged in sustained interaction with governments and international institutions. The dual functions of local governments, i.e., both as part of the state apparatus and as partner of civil society groups, would help autonomous TACs pursue the goals of social change. In this process, local government has a potential to convert its physical access and opportunities into resources for norm-based groups.

Conclusion

Realists assume that nonstate actors must equally possess and mobilize the power quality of states to be influential. Yet the sources of influence that civil society groups exert are quite different from that of states or multinational corporations. The influence of moral authority by these groups deviates from the

prominent theory of realism in international politics. Constructivists' approach to transnational activism argues that non-material forces, such as expertise and moral authority, have causal effects on state policies and practices. Although the causal status of expertise and moral authority has significantly been established in recent cases studies, the scope of normative influence tends to be squeezed out when contradicted by material calculation. Even civil society groups who organize around their moral convictions are considerably driven by material support to pursue their normative commitment. In this context, local government can supply a potential source of cohesion between norms and material opportunities to civil society groups, engaged in sustained interaction with states and international institutions. Local government may bridge the gap between ideas and pragmatism by making it possible to transform moral principles into a form of power.

Further research is necessary to make a clearer contribution to a comparative theory of local government in transnational relations. This study does, however, suggest some plausible hypotheses about local government's role in the process of international norm shift.

(1) Norms are by themselves the complete source of influence, once norm-consistent behavior is expected. To be norm-consistent, norms must become infused into a state's structure and practices. To this end, the state needs to be persuaded to institutionalize its norm-consistent policies and practices. Local government can provide TACs with political access and opportunities to persuade states to comply with international norms. The mechanism of material power that local government provides is a public locus for creating the independent effects of international norms.

(2) Objective knowledge that TACs provide can be heard by power-holders, but its influence is minimized when negotiations enter the main phase of interest-driven competition. Local government's access to national authority has a potential to make necessary information and expertise be heard throughout the entire process of negotiations.

(3) Local government helps to shape a new international norm by supporting the new way TACs collectively think and by providing local feedback effects from the national agenda to international structures.

(4) Local government as an agent allows domestic and transnational political opportunity structures to interact with each other, which would produce the multi-layered opportunity structure to influence state policies and practices along with TACs.

(5) The use of local government's resources and reputation empowers resource-poor TACs to serve their normative cause.

The new form of transnationalism where local government plays a key role may be seen as a way of social renewal, yet does not necessarily occur at the cost of states. Local government as part of the state apparatus informs and persuades national authority to adopt or change certain positions, and in so doing, as partner of civil society groups supports and promotes civil society to pursue civic values. Local government has a potential to act as an agent for developing transnationalism both pragmatically and normatively.

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