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Japanese Journal of Political Science / Volume 13 / Special Issue 04 / December 2012, pp 473 - 476
DOI: 10.1017/S1468109912000229, Published online: 01 November 2012

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S1468109912000229

How to cite this article:

TAKASHI INOBUCHI (2012). Introduction to the Special Issue: Soft Power of Civil Society in International Relations. Japanese Journal of Political Science, 13, pp 473-476 doi:10.1017/S1468109912000229

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Introduction to the Special Issue: Soft Power of Civil Society in International Relations

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This special issue focuses on the role of civil society in international relations. It highlights the dynamics and impacts of public opinion on international relations (Zaller, 1992). Until recently, it was usual to consider public opinion in terms of its influence on policy makers and in terms of moulding public opinion in the broad frame of the policy makers in one's country. Given that public opinion in the United States was assessed and judged so frequently and diffused so globally, it was natural to frame questions guided by those concepts which pertained to the global and domestic context of the United States.

Two concepts, anti-Americanism and soft power, have attracted wide attention, prompting intensive research (Nye, 2004; Katzenstein and Keohane, 2007; see some empirical analyses, for example Berinsky, 2009; Datta, 2009; Goldsmith *et al.*, 2005; Goldsmith and Horiuchi, 2012; Jacobs and Page, 2005; Sobel, 2001; Stimson, 2004). First, the popularity of the concept of anti-Americanism in empirical studies has led policy makers in the United States to become increasingly interested in public opinion in foreign countries, especially whether public opinion is favorable or unfavorable to the United States. Second, the popularity of the concept of soft power means that policy makers in the United States have also become very interested in soft power methods to exert influence on policy makers in other countries, methods that nurture and use resources of power other than military power and economic power. Soft power is the ability to attract others, not only among policy makers in foreign countries but also publics in foreign countries. It is natural that empirical research based on these two concepts has thrived primarily in the United States if only because of the global and domestic responses to the alleged hegemony of the United States as well as to the alleged decline of the United States.

This special issue is meant to open a new page on the role of civil society in international relations. The advance in technology in communications has made it easy to assess what may be called the international relations of civil society. Over the last decade, it has become not uncommon for public opinion in one country to

influence policy makers not only in that country and but also policy makers in other countries. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for there to be a cross-over effect, that is for public opinion in country X and in country Y to affect each other. This represents the emergence of civil society's international relations. It is not far fetched to argue that the anti-Americanism concept and its popularity reflect the intellectual mind-set in an era when American hegemony seems to be placed in the context of slow but growing doubt. In a similar vein, it is not far fetched to argue that the soft power concept and its popularity reflect the intellectual mind-set in an era of globalization and digitalization, when the government seems to be placed in the context of slow but growing doubt about its ability to navigate among many actors at home and abroad.

This special issue presents some empirical analyses in a relatively new genre of international relations of civil society. Broadening the widely used concepts of soft power and anti-Americanism while deleting their American flavor, we present four empirical examinations using the AsiaBarometer data (on the AsiaBarometer, see Inoguchi, 2012; Shin and Inoguchi, 2010; Inoguchi and Fujii, 2012; Inoguchi *et al.* (eds.), 2005, 2006, Inoguchi (ed), 2008, 2009).

The first two articles in this special issue deal with perceptions of China's influence in Asia. Both utilize the AsiaBarometer survey data collected in 2006, 2007, and 2008. However, the hypotheses and their testing differ somewhat. While Nelson and Carlson construct and test their hypothesis with a hierarchical nested model and with 19,545 observations, Liley, Reilley, and Goldsmith construct and test their hypothesis with separate 14 country-specific models and with observations ranging between 972 and 801. In terms of variables, Nelson and Carlson include both country-level variables, such as trade, UN vote, democracy, and conflict, and individual-level variables, such as identity, contact, and interests. Liley, Reilley, and Goldsmith use only individual-level data, on country-specific data sets, on interests, education, information, and contacts, identity, core values, and socio-demographic characteristics. Clearly, the country-specific model tells us more about country-specific features (Linley, Reilley, and Goldsmith), whereas the hierarchical nested model (Nelson and Carlson) tells us more about those systemic features, such as conflict and democracy.

More substantively, both find out that on the whole the Asian publics are favorably disposed towards China, with a clear plurality or a majority of respondents viewing China favorably except in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam, as of 2006 through 2008 (i.e., Beijing Olympic Games). The negative perception of respondents about China in many of Southeast and East Asian countries heightened in 2012, a fact that the AsiaBarometer data obviously do not catch.

The third article in this special issue deals with perceptions of Australia's influence among citizens in Asia. Goldsmith and Linley construct and test an hypothesis on separate 14 country-specific models with observations ranging between 810 and 1,884. The key finding is that, despite all the increasingly dense and strong ties of Australia with Asia, perceptions of Asian citizens about Australia's influence are feeble and vague with the best predictor of Asian individuals' perceptions being their perception of the

influence of the United States and China over the respondents' own country and their internationalist orientation.

The fourth article by Collet and Inoguchi tests Samuel Huntington's 'core state' assumptions among the publics of the Asia-Pacific. According to him, civilizational identities are a key to the dynamics of global politics: 'publics would identify more strongly with the core states of their civilizational identities and, as such, view the core states of rival civilizations more negatively'. Religiosity also comes in here to strengthen their attachments: 'Globalization, defined here as an individual's everyday exposure to foreign cultures, would strengthen this pattern.' With the AsiaBarometer data, they have found that Asian patterns are far more complex than the clash of civilizations framework and that the growing influence of globalization gives a strong challenge to Huntington's hypothesis.

It is our hope that such microdata as those we have utilized would be more vigorously used in research on international relations when individual citizens increasingly come to the fore as actors in, as well as observers of, international relations.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all the participants in the 2010 Tokyo workshop on survey research and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation which supported it. Besides those contributors to this special issue, I would like to note my special gratitude to Pascal Chelala, Seiji Fujii, Ijaz Gilani, Michael Hsiao, Yoshikazu Iwabuchi, Kimikazu Iwase, Wolfgang Jagodzinski, Yoshiaki Kobayashi, Takao Kuramochi, Kazufumi Manabe, Kazuaki Nagatomi, Chong-Min Park, Gill Steel, Etsushi Tanifuji, Yasuharu Tokuda, Yasuharu Ukai, who made invaluable comments on earlier drafts of those papers.

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