

# Introduction to the special issue of *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*

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## 1 The AsiaBarometer Survey: a treasure-trove

Peter J. Katzenstein (2006) calls the AsiaBarometer Survey (ABS) a treasure-trove. It systematically digs many under-investigated aspects of daily lives of 29 Asian societies (Inoguchi *et al.*, 2005, 2006; Inoguchi, 2007a, b, 2008). It is near-comprehensive in terms of the number of those societies surveyed in Asia. They are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam. It covers East, Southeast, South, and Central Asia. Timor-Leste and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have not yet been surveyed. Nevertheless, no other survey has achieved this comprehensiveness before (Inoguchi and Fujii, forthcoming; also see Appendices 1, 2, and 3: 'Appendix 1: List of the Participants of the AsiaBarometer Workshops 2003–2007', 'Appendix 2: The Literature on the AsiaBarometer classified by country', and 'Appendix 3: The Literature on the AsiaBarometer Survey' available at the AsiaBarometer website: <https://www.asiabarometer.org/en/publications>).

Surveys were conducted in these 29 societies during the period about 10 societies each year from 2003 through 2007. A number of societies have been surveyed more than once (see Table 1 – we are planning to expand the survey to Australia, Russia and the United States in 2008). It is rich in covering many aspects of daily lives of ordinary people. A number of surveys conducted

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**Table 1** Societies and year(s) AsiaBarometer Survey was (plans to be) conducted

	Society	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1	Afghanistan			○			
2	Australia						○
3	Bangladesh			○			
4	Bhutan			○			
5	Brunei		○				
6	Cambodia		○			○	
7	China	○	○		○		○
8	Hong Kong				○		
9	India	○		○			○
10	Indonesia		○			○	
11	Japan	○	○		○		○
12	Kazakhstan			○			
13	Kyrgystan			○			
14	Korea(South)	○	○		○		
15	Laos		○			○	
16	Malaysia	○	○			○	
17	Maldieves			○			
18	Mongolia			○			
19	Myanmar	○	○			○	
20	Nepal			○			
21	Pakistan			○			
22	The Philippines		○			○	
23	Russia						○
24	Singapore		○		○		
25	Sri Lanka	○		○			
26	Taiwan				○		
27	Tajikistan			○			
28	Thailand	○	○			○	
29	Turkmenistan			○			
30	The United States						○
31	Uzbekistan	○		○			
32	Vietnam	○	○		○		

in the non-Western world have been on the steady increase and yet the substantive foci have tended to be placed on those concerns of Western designers of surveys. They have tended to focus on democratization (Dalton and Shin, 2006; Dalton and Klingemann, 2007), modernization (Lipset, 1960; Inglehart

and Welzel, 2005), and anti-Americanism (Katzenstein and Keohane, 2007; Pew Research Center) for a number of obvious reasons: democratization because it is often regarded as a self-evident path for the non-West; At the same time it has been hotly disputed (Rich, 2007); modernization because it is often regarded as an inevitable path for the non-West; At the same time it has been repeatedly questioned with the argument for multiple modernizations (Eisenstadt, 2003); anti-Americanism because it is often believed that America represents those values that others are bound to be lured. At the same time it has been skeptically rejected (Lal and Nandy, 2005). Needless to say, other lines of surveys have been mainstreamed as well: general social surveys and quality of life surveys come immediately to one's mind. General social surveys have been conducted by sociologists, demographers, and household economists in a number of countries including the United States. More recently, Japan, China, and South Korea have been conducting general social surveys or their equivalent (Tanioka *et al.*, 2007; Bian *et al.*, 2008). Quality of life surveys have been persistently conducted by medical doctors, public health experts, sociologists, political scientists, and social psychologists in many countries (Møller *et al.*, 2008). General social surveys and quality of life surveys are often in a good contrast in that the former tends to have a large sample size and conduct randomly chosen sampled surveys whereas the latter tends to have a smaller sample size and select interviewees in a more narrowly focused manner. And mass-media driven surveys have been abundant in number not only in the United States but also elsewhere, covering on a number of hot issues like soft power, anti-terrorism, climate change, the rise of the rest, and HIV/AIDS.

The ABS has no less important other features as well. It has three lines of principles: open global access, collaborative undertakings with those Asia-residing social scientists, and publication and dissemination in local languages as well as in English (Inoguchi, 2004). First, the principle of open global access is underpinned by the scheme of direct downloading from the website: <https://www.asiabarometer.org/> as well as through the University of Michigan's Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research and the University of Tokyo's Social Science Data Archive. To further this first principle, Kazufumi Manabe and his associates including the author of this essay plan to establish what may be called a Japanese Consortium for Survey Research to facilitate survey research and consolidate its infrastructure (Manabe, forthcoming). The ABS will be a good founding member of this forthcoming organization. Since the installment of the open direct access and downloading scheme in June 2007, the number of requests is registered five on average every month. Not only these 29 Asian countries but also such places as Hanoi, Durban (South Africa), Cologne, Irvine (California) are registered to the ABS access file. Secondly, the principle of joint endeavor in terms of questionnaire drafting, workshop participation with papers, and many other

feedbacks and discussion is underpinned by the AsiaBarometer annual workshops based on annual survey data in which social scientists residing and working in surveyed countries present their papers analyzing their respective country and getting feedbacks. I deem it very crucial to regional academic community formation for academics to work together and to produce together (Inoguchi, 2005). Needless to say, collaboration with Western scholars has been carried out productively as one can see the ABS project-led publication list. Thirdly, the principle of publication and dissemination in local languages as well as in English has been assiduously conducted. The AsiaBarometer annual volumes are published in English and in Japanese. Also a few articles have been published in a number of languages like in Russian in Kazakhstan, in Chinese in China, and in Korean in South Korea (Inoguchi and Fujii, forthcoming). I deem it very important that findings are published in local languages as well as in English because local readers come to understand their own comparative standings in various terms in relation to many neighbors. No less importantly those using the ABS data have come to publish their analyses in book and other forms. One of the latest is a volume in which not only Pew Research surveys, Gallup International surveys but also ABSs have been fully utilized (Bobrow, 2008). Having briefly introduced readers to the ABS project, I now turn to the special issue itself.

## 2 Framework of the special issue

In this issue I have featured the following two subjects: Legitimacy and Effectiveness in Demi-Democracy, Thailand, and Anti-Americanism in Asia. The first article is an attempt at the bottom-up approach to a semi-democratic or quasi-authoritarian regime in Thailand before and after the September 2006 military coup d'état. Curiously enough, a bulk of comparative political regimes literature adopts the top-down approach starting from Aristotle, Montesquieu, Dahl, and Linz. Their presumption is that once a regime is determined, democracy or dictatorship, the penetration of regime norms is a matter of time and how citizens relate themselves to the regime and by extension to the state does not concern them to much. In contrast, the bottom-up approach to the problem of regime determination tries to see how citizens affect regime determination. The bottom-up approach to comparative regime determination is not abundant at all, however. A contrast between a huge number of books on the state and those on citizens is just staggering as far as comparative regime determination literature is concerned (Inoguchi, forthcoming). This article argues that when citizen preference for democracy is lukewarm and wishy-washy, and when portions of citizens place very solid confidence in a certain institution and can build coalitions surrounding it, then a bottom upward regime change might be feasible. It empirically

demonstrates on the basis of the ABS data on Thailand in 2004 and 2007 that that is the case with Thailand in September 2005. Those who place rock-hard confidence in the military pushed their preference forward when Prime Minister Thaksin Sinawatra's style verging on populist dictatorship and his policy substance taking on the inclusionary economic and social policy line deeply alienated what may be called the Bangkok establishment which consists of royalists, middle class, business, and the military (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005; Suehiro, 2008). The article also illustrates the merit of the bottom-up approach to regime determination using the systematic empirical method.

The second article deals with anti-Americanism in Asia. Anti-Americanism is meant citizen's negative expression about what and how the United States acts, but not the inherent hate and prejudice directed at Americans. The ABS has a number of questions such as how friendly you are to the United States and how much influence, positive or negative, you think the United States has on your own country. As a most comprehensive work on anti-Americanism by Katzenstein and Keohane (2007) amply shows, the manifestations of anti-Americanism are enormously diverse. So are its origins and causes. A comparative and systematic work by Goldsmith *et al.* (2005) shows at the same time that three key explanatory variables do exist in determining citizen support for the war in Afghanistan of 2001: interests like trade with the United States and alliance with the United States, socialization like past terrorist incidents, Muslim population, GNP per capita and democracy score, and influence like economic aid from the United States and press freedom. The second article, heeding these latest findings and focusing on AsiaBarometer's 29 Asian countries, argues that in Asia anti-Americanism is not that strong unlike in Western Europe even in the wake of the 9/11 terrorism. The article corroborates well the above-mentioned works on the nature and manifestation of anti-Americanism.

Having summarized above the two articles, I now turn to the meanings of the ABS in a number of directions. First, Asia has visibly closed the gaps with the United States and Western Europe as pointed out by Katzenstein (2006). It is significant in that all the chorus of the Western bias has to be amended by feeding more systematically collected empirical data covering the non-West into the academic community, by putting forward conceptual schemes and empirical testing of hypotheses derived from such conceptual schemes to the global academic community and thus by facilitating to correct whatever biases may exist in the Western dominated work. Secondly, Asia has to know itself better. Without having an abundant range of comparative systematically collected empirical data about themselves in Asia, Asian citizens and academics are not able to more fully and comparatively locate themselves. The ABS has a distinctive feature of Asian social scientists working together, analyzing together, and discussing together. The intimacy which might come from carrying out joint

endeavor might enable them to know each other more deeply and by big extension might lead to regional academic community formation. Thirdly, Asia has to train itself about reality-check and hypothesis-testing in the social milieu. The ABS provides such grounds. You can check many facets of reality against ABS data which can be downloaded directly. The near-monopoly of only meagerly grasped empirical realities by power holders and has tended to stymie and ossify what would be the otherwise more vigorous and lively academic community in many parts of Asia. If self-training goes well, one might be able to envisage the application to better public policy on a regional scale.

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