

Network-Building: Development of the Anti-Yasukuni Transnational Advocacy Network, 2002-2007*

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Although Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink formulated the concept of a transnational advocacy network (TAN) as a tight-knit community of transnational nongovernmental individuals with shared beliefs and identities, they did not go on to trace the dynamics of the development of such a network. This paper claims that "shared values" is an insufficient explanation for network-building. It further expands on the analytical framework for the development of a TAN by discussing the following three main themes: (1) the political opportunity that catalyzes the emergence of the activists; (2) the network "glue" that facilitates cohesion and closeness in the TAN; and (3) the network organization that defines the participation and problems related to role distribution with respect to the activists in the TAN. This study examines the case of the anti-Yasukuni TAN comprising activists from Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan, and finds that the TAN was transformed in terms of its function and strategy as activists of different national origins joined it. From the evidence gleaned from structured in-

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terviews, it was found that activists from Taiwan instilled the TAN with a revolutionary character that facilitated the mobilization of wider social support. Ambitious activists from South Korea then added a greater international dimension to the TAN. Although the groups from Taiwan and South Korea tended to accelerate the development of the TAN and diversify it, the Japanese group reminded the developing TAN of its original target. Thus, a TAN is a far more complex entity with a mixture of multinational and cultural attributes rather than a simple and steady network formed by transnational actors with shared beliefs, as Keck and Sikkink have posited.

KEYWORDS: transnational advocacy network (TAN); Yasukuni; transnational politics; Junichiro Koizumi; network-building.

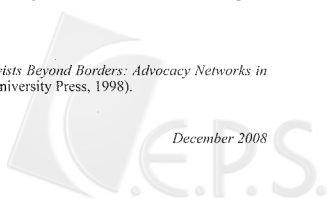
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Although scholars have widely recognized the role of transnational actors and their impact on international politics, sophisticated analyses with respect to their development have been minimal. Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink's conceptualization of a transnational advocacy network (hereafter referred to as a TAN) makes a considerable contribution toward a deeper understanding of the subject.¹ Keck and Sikkink firstly explain the power of principled beliefs and identify a TAN as a transnational liaison among nongovernmental actors who share these beliefs. They claim that the TAN, empowered by shared principled values, works as a single actor in carrying out its political aims by means of aggregation. The introduction of the concept of the TAN has opened a new page in the study of transnational politics, and it has formed the theoretical basis of numerous empirical studies.

However, despite its wide usage, the concept of the TAN remains incomplete. In particular, the question of what actually builds the TAN remains unanswered. While Keck and Sikkink define the TAN as a ready and tight-knit moral community with a voluntary and reciprocal character, they neglect the complexities involved in the formation of the TAN. This paper does not reject the theory proposed by Keck and Sikkink with respect

¹Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998).



to the TAN, but it finds the argument that actors in the TAN are bound together by shared beliefs insufficient. Hypothetically, the TAN is a complex mixture of multinational attributes, shaped by activists of diversified political backgrounds and different national origins. Moreover, the TAN, as a network, has to overcome hurdles related to network cohesion and operation. It is natural that problems related to network-building will arise in a political environment within which the activists' behaviors and attitudes evolve. Thus, this research borrows the concepts of political opportunity structure and network studies from the scholarship of social movements and public policy, and adds the following three main themes to the analytical framework of the formation of the TAN: political opportunity, network "glue," and network organization. In addition, it is hoped that the proposition can be developed by providing an in-depth case analysis of the anti-Yasukuni (靖國神社) TAN, highlighting the dynamics of the emergence of the network participants and the network. This should provide a more thorough understanding of the building of the TAN.

This study is based on field research undertaken from 2005 to 2007 on the anti-Yasukuni TAN which comprises activists from Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. The TAN is essentially a noteworthy yet generally ignored and under-documented subject in East Asian transnational politics. Here, an overview of the history of the Yasukuni controversy will be presented to set the TAN in its political context. This will be followed by an introduction to the theory of the TAN and network-building. The development of the anti-Yasukuni TAN will then be reviewed, based on the analytical framework. Given the complexity and dynamics of a TAN, as revealed in the anti-Yasukuni case, this paper concludes with a critical examination of TAN building as it has taken place in this specific instance of the anti-Yasukuni movement as it has developed to date.

The Yasukuni Problem

The Yasukuni Shrine, or Shrine of the Peaceful Country, is frequently at the center of political debate. The shrine was built on the orders of

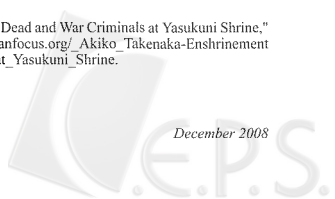
Emperor Meiji (明治), originally to honor those who had died in the civil war that brought about the Meiji restoration of 1868. The shrine rapidly became the center of National Shintoism (神道教), the new national religion propagated by the Meiji leaders which is based on traditional Japanese animistic beliefs of loyalty, patriotism, duty, and sacrifice. Since the Meiji era, the spirits of all of those who died in war, including soldiers, nurses, and civilians killed in bombing raids, have been honored at the Yasukuni Shrine, which is managed and guarded by the Japanese navy and army.

After World War II, in accord with the separation of religion and state under the constitution of 1947, the shrine was supposed to be purely a religious institution and was no longer permitted to be used as a device for the spiritual mobilization of the Japanese people. After the Japanese surrender, twenty-five military and political leaders were charged with class-A war crimes, or crimes against peace, at the international war crimes tribunals conducted from May 1946 to November 1948. Of these, seven were executed in Sugamo Prison (巣鴨監獄) on December 23, 1948.² Accordingly, in this new political context, the Yasukuni Shrine was not solely associated with war dead.

The shrine became the focus of controversy again in 1979, when the media revealed that fourteen of these war criminals, including the seven who were executed, five who died while serving their sentences, and two who died before the final trial, had been quietly enshrined at Yasukuni.³ Since then, state involvement in Yasukuni affairs, particularly the visits of the prime minister to the shrine on or around the date of the Japanese surrender on August 15, has been subject to international and domestic scrutiny, particularly in those Asian countries which suffered from Japanese aggression in the first half of the twentieth century. According to figures published by the Yasukuni Shrine, 28,863 Taiwanese and 21,181 Koreans are enshrined at Yasukuni. The majority of those died after being

²Akiko Takenaka, "Enshrinement Politics: War Dead and War Criminals at Yasukuni Shrine," *Japan Focus*, June 10, 2007, http://japanfocus.org/_Akiko_Takenaka-Enshrinement_Politics_War_Dead_and_War_Criminals_at_Yasukuni_Shrine.

³Ibid.

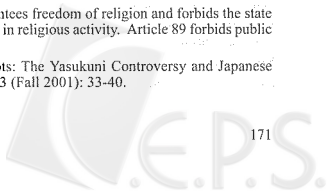


forcibly conscripted in Taiwan or Korea, both of which were Japanese colonies, during World War II. The traumatic fact was that a majority of the enshrined Taiwanese and Koreans were victims of colonial rule who were forced to sacrifice their lives for Japan on the battlefield. It was difficult to convince the bereaved families that their loved ones would have been happy to be remembered as Japanese aggressors and worshipped at the Yasukuni Shrine, which is an institution for glorifying the state rather than merely a memorial to the dead. It is possible that the victims and their families would have felt insulted. For these reasons, Japanese political leaders were cautious in dealing with the issue, as official visits to the shrine were not only politically provocative but could also be seen as violating the Japanese constitution, which forbids political intervention in religious affairs.⁴ For example, the late Emperor Hirohito (昭和) abstained from visiting the Yasukuni Shrine after the war criminals were enshrined there, although he never provided any public explanation for this.⁵ His successor, Emperor Akihito (明仁), has never visited the shrine.

Japanese prime ministers, however, did not appear to be able to avoid the shrine. The shrine was symbolically linked with politics again after the visit of Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida (吉田茂) in 1952. Nevertheless, a majority of the prime ministerial visits to the shrine have been kept rather low-profile, the only exception being the visit of Yasuhiro Nakasone (中曾根康弘), a self-proclaimed nationalist, who offered official tributes there on August 15, 1985, the fortieth anniversary of the end of World War II. The subsequent court case against Nakasone led to similar cases against Junichiro Koizumi (小泉純一郎), the last Japanese leader to visit the shrine in his official capacity. Such visits were later ruled unconstitutional by the three high courts of the nation—Tokyo (東京市), Sendai (仙台市), and Osaka (大阪市)—thereby making it problematic for subsequent prime

⁴Article 20 of the Japanese constitution guarantees freedom of religion and forbids the state and its official apparatus from being involved in religious activity. Article 89 forbids public support for religious institutions.

⁵Masaru Tamamoto, "A Land without Patriots: The Yasukuni Controversy and Japanese Nationalism," *World Policy Journal* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2001): 33-40.



ministers to follow in Koizumi's footsteps.⁶ It is only by political sleight of hand—maintaining that the visits are private and personal—that a Japanese prime minister is able to visit Yasukuni and thereby galvanize his core constituencies. For example, Ryutaro Hashimoto (橋本龍太郎) chose to visit the shrine on his birthday in 1996 and claimed that he went there to honor his cousin. Similarly, Masayoshi Ohira (大平正芳), Zenko Suzuki (鈴木善幸), and Kiichi Miyazawa (宮澤喜一) all emphasized the private nature of their visits in 1979, 1982, and 1992, respectively. However, despite the low-key nature of these visits, each time a national leader recognized the war dead at Yasukuni, international and domestic protests followed. Even the outspoken Nakasone did not risk revisiting the shrine.⁷

Hence, when Junichiro Koizumi⁸ repeatedly visited the shrine in the face of domestic and international protests, outraged Asian civil groups with a deep-seated animosity toward Japan's wartime aggression vowed to bring the issue before the Japanese courts. As a result, an unexpected liaison against Koizumi and the shrine began to emerge. The coalition, comprising activists mainly from South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and Okinawa, gradually developed and expanded into an apparently tight-knit yet loosely-organized TAN, which launched a series of high-profile protests. By insisting on acting against Koizumi amid fierce debates and different political pressures in various East Asian countries, the activists have been successful in publicizing their protest and in 2005 they convinced the Osaka High Court to rule that Koizumi's visit to the shrine was unconstitutional—the first ever such court ruling in Japan.

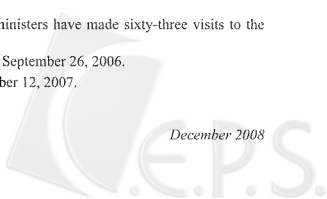
The anti-Yasukuni TAN was not content with the outcome of the lawsuit, and it continued to plan further actions when the uncompromising Koizumi refused to comply with the court ruling, and his successor, Shinzo Abe (安倍晋三),⁹ also endorsed the Yasukuni visit. There is no sign of an

⁶Jeff Kingston, *Japan's Quiet Transformation: Social Change and Civil Society in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2004), 241.

⁷From 1952 to 2006, twelve Japanese prime ministers have made sixty-three visits to the Yasukuni Shrine.

⁸Koizumi was in office from April 26, 2001, to September 26, 2006.

⁹Abe resigned from the premiership on September 12, 2007.



end to the struggle between the TAN and the Japanese government. This paper addresses the underlying whys and hows behind the functioning of the TAN.

TAN-Building in Theory

The TAN, first recognized by Keck and Sikkink, is a configuration of transnational alliances among actors for the purpose of advancing their shared policy goals. These actors in the TAN are "bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services"¹⁰ in order to function internationally on an issue. The definition is indicative of the peculiar characteristics of the TAN in terms of its structure, function, and impact on the interstate world.

First, TANs are not alternatives to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or social movements; on the contrary, these latter could be contained within the TAN since its members may include individuals, civil groups, businesses, and even governmental or intergovernmental organizations in either their official or unofficial capacities. The governmental and nongovernmental membership of TANs indicates that they have a delicate relationship with states. Unlike the simple claim of global civil society against the international state system, the TAN does not necessarily stand in opposition to states or state systems "because part of states and international organizations also participate in these networks," and "the process of negotiation within the emergent cosmopolitan community is not outside the state."¹¹ In fact, since TANs are less bureaucratic and more flexible, states or international organizations occasionally even use TANs for tasks that they themselves cannot perform. Loosely organized, a TAN is not a bureaucratic institution with formalized membership, but a decentralized and horizontal communicative apparatus used for gathering information for

¹⁰Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, 2.

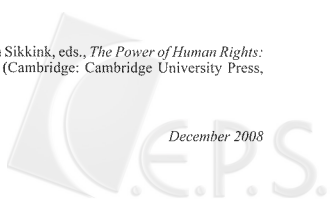
¹¹*Ibid.*, 216.



discourse and planning actions for specific purposes. The thesis of the TAN proposed by Keck and Sikkink hence permits the study of transnational politics to go beyond that of social movement or NGO research; moreover, it recognizes the diversified identity of transnational actors, which blurs the boundary between civil society and government. For example, a single politician, an NGO, a small or large group of volunteers, and a government could be informally, unexpectedly, and loosely connected across national borders and act for the same goal. The anti-Yasukuni TAN has a similar composition. Thus, a TAN is not identical to an NGO or an international NGO; it is indicative of more than civil society; the concept reflects a phenomenon that cannot be captured by the cliché of international governance.

The manner and extent to which a TAN could work to achieve its purpose is another focal point of academic discussion. A TAN which has emerged as a moral community with shared values tends to form around normative areas like issues related to human rights. Instead of resorting to mass mobilization in the manner of international social movements, TAN activists focus more on communication and information. Although collective mobilization is an option, a TAN usually functions by creating discourse, framing issues and putting them on the international agenda. Despite the examples of the successful impact of TANs on target states collected by scholars, how and under what conditions a TAN could successfully pressurize target states for new norms remains unclear. There have been various attempts to answer these questions. For example, decades ago the English School of thought and, more recently, the constructivists noted the influence of normative structure and power of discourse on the modern state system, and that norm diffusion per se may entail a lengthy process. On the basis of constructivist beliefs, Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink developed the spiral model in order to describe the possible phases and complex linkages between international and domestic actors.¹²

¹²Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds., *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).



A successful case of "norm socialization" may require experience, i.e., repression and activation of network, denial by target, tactical concessions of target, prescriptive status, and rule-consistent behavior of target. Thus, the effect of the functioning of the TAN would not be immediate, since norm socialization has to go through its entire life cycle in order to emerge and diffuse. Meanwhile, other literature based on traditional international relations theory emphasizes the impact of international material and institutional conditions. The realist proposition, for example, argues that the more the TAN succeeds in changing the preferences of the most powerful states, the greater will be its impact on international politics.¹³ Some other researchers, such as Sidney Tarrow¹⁴ and Fredrik Galtung,¹⁵ stress the importance of the TAN's strategies and communicative processes for a successful campaign. These studies point to factors such as the TAN's characteristics, network density, material resources, and communication processes including shaming, learning, and arguing.

Despite these penetrating academic insights with respect to the propositions determining the impact of the TAN, on which this paper does not intend to expand, it is surprisingly unclear as to whether or not and to what extent the TAN, which is assumed to be a single international actor, can be bound by the shared beliefs of its members. While the power of principled beliefs is relevant in world politics and may help to unite members, the more interesting and basic question that arises is why and under what circumstances this happens. The proposition that principled shared beliefs bring together a network is obviously derived from the growing literature

¹³Stephen D. Krasner, "Power Politics, Institutions, and Transnational Relations," in *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions*, ed. Thomas Risse-Kappen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 257-79.

¹⁴Sidney Tarrow, "States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 41-61.

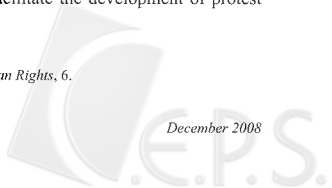
¹⁵Fredrik Galtung, "A Global Network to Curb Corruption: The Experience of Transparency International," in *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*, ed. Ann M. Florini (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange/Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), 17-47.

on the impact of ideas and norms in international politics. However, rejecting the dominant realist view of politics, ideational theorists emphasize ideas and communicative processes as the primary determinants that influence the understanding of interests, preferences, and political decisions. They criticize the state-centric paradigms that focus on material powers and argue that it is the normative and ideational concerns that initially define which material factors are perceived as relevant and influential. Despite claiming that it is the causal relationship between material and ideational factors that is important, even the theorists of ideational politics cannot deny the importance of material power. For instance, Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink point out that they do not intend to ignore material conditions.¹⁶

It is not the intention of this paper to join the long battle between the value-free science of politics and ideational concerns; instead, this paper will add to the analytical framework of the development of the TAN, based on the premise that the explanation of "shared values" with respect to network-building is insufficient. Further, this discussion follows the following three main themes: (1) the political opportunity that catalyzes the emergence of the activists; (2) the network "glue" that facilitates cohesion and closeness in the TAN; and (3) the network organization that decides the participation and problems related to role distribution with respect to the activists in the TAN.

Domestic politics mediate or filter the opportunities that are available to the activists who need to define their positions and share of power in domestic politics in order to generate and/or contribute to network policy. The proposition that domestic politics conditions the birth and evolution of the TAN resembles, to some extent, the suggestions in the literature on social movements that political opportunity structure is an important factor in explaining the success of new social movements. According to Herbert Kitschelt, political opportunity structures are comprised of specific configurations of resources, institutional arrangements, and historical precedents for social mobilization which facilitate the development of protest

¹⁶Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink, *The Power of Human Rights*, 6.



movements in some instances and constrain them in others.¹⁷

In contrast to the constructivist approach introduced by Keck and Sikkink, the political opportunity structure perspective emphasizes the importance of the domestic political environment to the success or failure of a movement organization. Thus, political opportunity structures, "as the consistent dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for collective action," are not necessarily formal or permanent;¹⁸ rather, it is the political context in which the social movements operate which affects the ability and strategies of a movement organization.¹⁹ Furthermore, Tarrow suggests that the more open and less centralized a political system, the easier it is for coalition-building to take place. Accordingly, it is difficult for the TAN to operate in the context of dominant state-society relations. Following these propositions, the concept of political opportunity has been widely employed to explain the domestic political settings in which a national social movement operates. Thus, it can be stated that the political structure provides the opportunity for the formation of the TAN, which, regardless of whether it is located principally at the grass-roots level of society or whether it directly involves governmental decision-makers, emerges as a consequence of the political pressures within or the lobbying efforts made by members of civil and/or civic society.

Although the TAN is created in response to new policies or as a reaction to an alteration of policies, the other factor that plays a significant role in determining the extent to which the TAN is able to develop is the network "glue" that creates its internal cohesion. The building of a high degree of mutual reliance is necessary in order to develop long-term collaboration and cohesion.²⁰ Thus, apart from the shared values that are the

¹⁷Herbert P. Kitschelt, "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protests: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Democracies," *British Journal of Political Science* 16, no. 1 (1986): 57-85.

¹⁸Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 77.

¹⁹Kerstein Martens, "Applying the Concept of Political Opportunity Structures in European and International Studies," *Associations Transnationales* 1 (2001): 2-9.

²⁰Myrna P. Mandell, "Managing Interdependencies through Program Structures: A Revised Paradigm," *American Review of Public Administration* 24, no. 1 (March 1994): 99-121.



primary source of the network glue, exchanges of resources, both material and symbolic, are crucial for the cohesion of the network. For example, material resources include cash, goods, information, or services, and symbolic resources are comprised of the acquisition of political power or legitimacy, vitality, and the character of an organizational image or reputation with respect to a particular issue.²¹ Despite the egalitarian view of the TAN as proposed by Keck and Sikkink, hypothetically the more interdependent the network activists are, the closer the TAN is glued together.

Closely related to the issue of cohesion is the question of network organization, which here refers to the critical dimension of intra-network relations, namely, the fact that activists may hold different organizational powers and play different roles, which may result in different modes of organization. Although institutional arrangements such as the organizing of regular meetings and workshops may help to bring the participants into common arenas, empirical investigations have shown that networks with a high degree of internal factionalism, exclusion, or a hierarchical structure tend to (1) discourage new entrants who are seeking entry into the circle of inter-connected participants and (2) marginalize weaker members by denying them access to the decision-making process.²² However, it remains unclear whether and by what means the problems of network power differentiation can be solved. While some have suggested democracy and decentralization, this research, in contrast, posits that a plural political culture consisting of activists adopting different roles in the network may help with the organizational problem and further provide a broader spectrum of political influence.

The following discussion of the case of the anti-Yasukuni TAN will examine the political context and the attitudes and behaviors of the TAN members in order to show how the activists of different national origins

²¹The list of material and symbolic resources is suggested by Anna Workman in an unpublished manuscript, "Inside the Transnational Advocacy Network: Towards a Critical Politics of NGO Relations."

²²Robert Agranoff and Michael McGuire, "Managing in Network Settings," *Policy Studies Review* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 18-41.

emerged, loosely united together, and further evolved into a tight-knit network, sharing different roles and responsibilities.

TAN-Building in Practice

The Issue

The dispute between Yasukuni and the families of those who lost their lives in World War II began as early as the 1960s. In 1968, a Japanese Protestant priest, Saburo Tsunoda (角田三郎), became the first Japanese relative to ask for the removal of his two brothers from the shrine. Tsunoda said that he preferred to mourn his relatives privately according to the rites of his own religion. This request was rejected by the shrine on the grounds that "enshrinement was carried out exclusively in accordance with the emperor's wishes" and could not be undone.²³ Another request for removal from enshrinement was received in the 1970s. In the summer of 1977, the Yasukuni Shrine handed over a list of approximately 28,000 enshrined Taiwanese to a group of Taiwanese visitors. In subsequent years, certain Taiwanese residents in Japan became aware of the list and criticized the shrine for ignoring the feelings of the bereaved families. Legal proceedings were then initiated for the removal of the Taiwanese from the shrine. Eight bereaved Taiwanese families, seven of whom were indigenous Taiwanese, joined in the demand, which was rejected by the shrine on the grounds that the enshrined were Japanese when they died and remained Japanese souls.²⁴ Since then, the shrine has quietly but persistently refused

²³Takahashi Tetsuya, "The National Politics of the Yasukuni Shrine," in *Nationalism in Japan*, ed. Naoko Shimaza (London: Routledge, 2006), 178.

²⁴Ibid. On page 176, Tetsuya quotes *Asahi Shimbun* of April 16, 1987, which reported that the shrine authorities provided the following reply to the Taiwanese: "At the time when they died they were Japanese, so it is not possible for them to stop being Japanese after they died. As Japanese soldiers, they fought and died with the feeling that they were going to be worshipped at Yasukuni, so they will not be removed from enshrinement as the relatives have asked. It is natural that they are worshipped at Yasukuni because they cooperated in the war in the same way as other Japanese and participated in the war as Japanese. In Taiwan, the vast majority of bereaved families are grateful for their relatives' enshrinement."

to consider the demands of people from Japan and its former colonies for the removal of their relatives from enshrinement; this includes bereaved families from Korea as well.²⁵

Yasukuni once again became a major issue after 2001, when Koizumi began to pay controversial visits to the shrine.²⁶ This section will commence with an analysis of the political structure of the anti-Yasukuni activists in order to indicate the manner in which the Yasukuni issue was treated in the domestic politics of each of the three countries involved—Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.²⁷ This is followed by an exploration of the manner in which the activists created the TAN, taking into consideration the opportunities and/or constraints provided by the political structure of each country, intra-network relations, and the attitudes and behaviors of the network members.

Activists and Initiation of the TAN

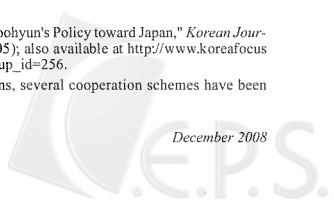
South Korea: The Yasukuni enshrinement problem and other historical issues are unfinished business for South Korea, a target of Japanese colonial aggression. In fact, history-related issues have become a chronic sore spot in relations between the two countries; for example, relations were strained in 1982 and again in 2001 over the history textbook controversy.²⁸ Memories of harsh Japanese colonial rule were so deeply ingrained in South Korea that it took the Koreans twenty years to decide to normalize diplomatic relations with Japan after World War II. Nevertheless, the South Korean government did not approve of civil actions against Japan or other history-related issues during the Cold War period, partly because the two countries were part of the U.S. security alliance²⁹ and partly because the

Tetsuya criticized this by arguing that, according to the shrine, those who died in the war from former colonies will always remain under colonial rule and prisoners of their colonial masters; this was not respect for the dead—it merely indicated an attitude of arrogance and self-righteousness.

²⁵Ibid., 176.

²⁶Hosup Kim, "Evaluation of President Roh Moohyun's Policy toward Japan," *Korean Journal of International Relations* 45, no. 2 (2005); also available at http://www.koreafocus.or.kr/design1/layout/content_print.asp?group_id=256.

²⁷Since the two countries normalized relations, several cooperation schemes have been



functions of civil society were rather limited and subject to authoritarian control at that time.²⁸ History-related disputes were generally handled through inter-governmental arrangements.

Thus, although the Korean bereaved families had initiated the issue of the removal of their relatives from enshrinement at Yasukuni and had held regular meetings among themselves since 1974, civil activists only began to organize in the 1990s after the country became a democracy. The political transition to democracy triggered profound social and demographic changes which led to the questioning of everything, including a reassessment of the country's modern history. This included the examination of not only past dictatorships, but also the lack of attention paid to colonial history.²⁹ History-related topics, such as the forced prostitution of Korean women by the Japanese, forced labor, Korean collaboration with Japanese colonizers, and the history textbook dispute were tackled in rapid succession with the growing participation of civil groups.

The Yasukuni issue was brought to public attention in the mid-1990s by Ms. Lee Heeja (李熙子), a Korean woman who had lost track of her father after he was forcibly drafted into the Japanese army in 1944. Lee only learnt of her father's death and his enshrinement at Yasukuni half a century later; she then demanded that her father's name be removed from Yasukuni, but this was refused by the shrine. The Institute of Research into Collaborationist Activities—an NGO formed in 1991 by a group of history scholars in the wake of South Korea's reassessment of its identity and history, whose aim was to compile an index of Korean collaborators of the colonial era—learnt about Lee and vowed to assist her in taking further action against Yasukuni with the help of its sister NGO, the Korean Council

launched. Overall, the South Koreans did not wish to jeopardize these newly developed relations with Japan for the sake of historical issues.

²⁸Chien-peng Chung, "Democratization in South Korea and Inter-Korean Relations," *Pacific Affairs* 76, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 9-35.

²⁹Interview with Kim Eunsik of the Korean Council for Redress and Reparations for the Victims of World War II Atrocities, May 6, 2007, in Taipei and May 27, 2007, in Seoul. The history of this period became a sensitive political issue in South Korea, where the competing political parties adopted opposite approaches in dealing with it.

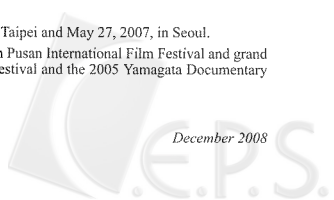
for Redress and Reparations for the Victims of World War II Atrocities (韓國太平洋戰爭被害者補償推進協會, hereafter, the Korean Council).³⁰ The Korean Council, with fewer than ten full-time staff, went on to become one of the initiators of the anti-Yasukuni TAN. The liaison between the Korean Council and certain Japanese of ethnic Korean origin³¹ provided a further link between the NGO and its Japanese counterparts who shared the same beliefs. A Korean-Japanese advocacy network on lawsuits against Yasukuni began to emerge around 2001.

Neither the Korean engagement with the Yasukuni issue nor the transnational Japanese-Korean network would have been possible in earlier decades. Now, instead of suppressing history-related civil organizations, the government of South Korea, in particular, the liberal government of Roh Moohyun (盧武鉉), extends cautious but strong financial and political support to the NGOs; this is despite the fact that the government has continued to adopt a moderate diplomatic approach and has been attempting to initiate a "new era" of bilateral relations with Japan. In addition, Korean society and its political parties also share a high degree of consensus on the issue. Among the anti-Yasukuni activities that were supported by the government was the production of an award-winning, officially-sponsored documentary entitled *Goodbye, Heroes*, based on the story of Lee Heeja and her father. This was one of the Korean Council's best known and most successful propaganda coups.³² Official and public sympathy encouraged the Council and the families of the war dead it represented. Kim Eunsik, director of the Korean Council, commented in one of the interviews conducted for this study that the historical legacy has permitted the anti-Yasukuni issue to grab media, public, and political attention in South Korea and win support from different sectors of society, which has encouraged the

³⁰<http://www.pacificwar.or.kr>.

³¹Interview with Kim Eunsik, May 6, 2007, in Taipei and May 27, 2007, in Seoul.

³²The film won the Woonpa Award at the Tenth Pusan International Film Festival and grand prizes at the 2005 Seoul Independent Film Festival and the 2005 Yamagata Documentary Festival.



Korean Council to continuously and actively engage in the issue.³³

Domestic support for the anti-Yasukuni campaign surged again in 2005—designated "Korea-Japan Friendship Year"—which saw the fortieth anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Japan, the sixtieth anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese rule, and the one hundredth anniversary of the colonization of Korea by Japan. Ironically, this was also described by the media as the "worst year in bilateral relations." The problematic history-related issues that had haunted Korea eventually turned into a full-scale political war that was triggered by Prime Minister Koizumi's tactical visits to Yasukuni and his persistent refusal to apologize for them. Accordingly, a special law that was aimed at resolving these issues once and for all was rushed through the National Parliament of South Korea. Following the enactment of the special law, several semi-official organizations were set up under the office of President Roh Moohyun to take charge of the issues. These ad hoc organizations, such as the Investigative Commission on Pro-Japanese Collaborators' Property or the Presidential Committee for the Inspection of Collaboration with Japanese Imperialism, are headed by ex-NGO activists. For example, a volunteer lawyer with the Korean Council now serves as director of the Investigative Commission on Pro-Japanese Collaborators' Property. The crossover of personnel implies that the actions of the anti-Yasukuni TAN enjoy political support in South Korea.

Despite the public consensus on the anti-Yasukuni issue, growing political concern about history-related issues was the cause of disputes within South Korea. Some were suspicious of the "real" motives behind the government's policy, and some accused Roh Moohyun's government of using these issues to attack its political enemies by digging up their families' records of collaboration with the Japanese. This was at a time when Roh's popularity was rapidly declining as a result of his controversial policy of conciliating North Korea and his clash with the United States. Roh was also facing impeachment for election irregularities and incom-

³³Interview with Kim Eunsik, May 6, 2007, in Taipei and May 27, 2007, in Seoul.

petence. Whether or not these allegations were true is outside the scope of this research, but there is a moral and political argument in favor of anti-Yasukuni sentiment in South Korea. Thus, democratization has provided the Korean anti-Yasukuni activists with a favorable climate, and this in turn has allowed them to play a more active and dedicated role in the TAN. Accordingly, the Korean group is also the one which is most capable of developing a comprehensive, ambitious long-term plan for the Yasukuni issue.

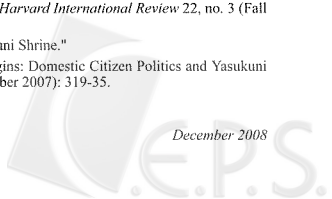
Japan: While South Korea was struggling with history-related issues, the Japanese were also struggling with their past and were rather divided on their perception of the history of World War II. Leftist groups, such as teachers' unions and some grass-roots groups, take a pacifist stance and call for atonement for war crimes and compensation for victims; they are wary of a resurgence of Japanese militarism. In contrast, conservatives assert the importance of pride in one's country and thus would prefer it if Japan's wartime atrocities were not subjected to public scrutiny.³⁴ The Yasukuni issue is also treated differently by the Japanese. The issue of the shrine is even more complex than other history-related topics as it can be framed politically, religiously, or emotionally.³⁵ Despite its sensitivity, the Yasukuni issue is a quiescent topic, triggered occasionally by visible political events—in particular, visits of the prime minister to the shrine, which generate a variety of activities, both in support and in opposition.³⁶ The link with activists in Taiwan and South Korea was brought about by Zasosha (雑草社), a left-wing civil activist group.

Compared to its Korean counterparts, who have enjoyed support within society and are well-organized, Zasosha is a loosely-organized association that does not even warrant the title NGO. It was formed by a group of students from Kyoto University in the 1960s, at a time when the radi-

³⁴Shuko Ogawa, "The Difficulty of Apology," *Harvard International Review* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 42-46.

³⁵Tetsuya, "The National Politics of the Yasukuni Shrine."

³⁶Brian Masshardt, "Mobilizing from the Margins: Domestic Citizen Politics and Yasukuni Shrine," *East Asia Journal* 24, no. 3 (September 2007): 319-35.



calization of organized labor had reached its zenith. These young students, a large number of them influenced by Marxism, believed that poverty and unemployment had been behind the war drive, and that the welfare of labor could only be guaranteed through labor-related social and peace movements. The students, who had dropped out of school, undertook odd jobs and donated their low wages to a scheme to build their own factory, so they could devote themselves to the social and peace movement. They also used the money to buy a house in which they could meet.³⁷ Over the last forty years, *Zasosha* (also the name of the house) has been involved in a wide variety of issues, from worker's and human rights issues in Japan and neighboring countries, to enforced war-time labor, and the Yasukuni Shrine. Even though the dream of owning their own factory is no longer mentioned and the group's founders have left to pursue their careers in other sectors, they return regularly to *Zasosha*, continuing to make donations and to participate in issues that concern them.³⁸ *Zasosha* is a small, rather marginal leftist group that is barely known in Japanese civil society. However, a large number of its members, now in their 60s or 70s, continue to be devoted and enthusiastic, and are capable of mobilizing increasing quantities of social resources through their personal social connections. *Zasosha* is similar to most of the Japanese civil groups which have mobilized around the anti-Yasukuni issue, comprising bereaved families and volunteers. These groups tend to be small, informally organized, and self-financing, the only exceptions being certain large-scale religious organizations.³⁹

Zasosha was particularly drawn to the Yasukuni issue, which had been dormant since 1985 but was triggered again by Koizumi's visit in

³⁷Telephone interview with Chen Mingzhong (陳明忠), Taiwanese anti-Yasukuni activist, October 2, 2007, in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

³⁸Interview with Chang Junjeh (張俊傑), Taiwanese anti-Yasukuni activist, October 14, 2005, in Pingdong (屏東), Taiwan.

³⁹Interview with Hsu Guiguo (徐桂國), anti-Yasukuni Chinese-Japanese, May 3, 2007, in Taipei, Taiwan. In Japan, there are estimated to be hundreds of small civil groups like *Zasosha* working on the Yasukuni issue. With the exception of some which are organized by religious groups, most are small and not very visible.

2001.⁴⁰ While other protest groups joined the political battle against the Yasukuni Shrine bill, Zasosha focused on assisting the bereaved families in their legal actions against Koizumi and Yasukuni. The members, along with their friends with legal expertise and other civil groups sharing the same concern, provided free legal advice to the bereaved families, helped to organize lawsuit groups across Japan, and closely monitored the actions of the rightists on the issue. In addition, they contacted He Seng (許勝), a Korean resident in Japan who was a devoted scholar of this period in history, and attempted to create a Japan-Korea united front for lawsuits on behalf of the bereaved families.

In April 2002, Zasosha learned through the media that controversy over Yasukuni had been ignited in Taiwan after Akebonokai (曙光會), a Japanese radical right-wing group, invited several elders from the Taiwanese aboriginal Atayal (泰雅族) tribe to pay respects to their tribal dead at the shrine. Zasosha considered that using innocent people from former Japanese colonies as a tool in the legal battle over Yasukuni and the prime-ministerial visits was an act of deliberate provocation by the right wing. Zasosha thereupon called on the Taiwanese bereaved families to join in the group action through Chen Mingzhong, a Taiwanese who had been charged with treason under the authoritarian government in Taiwan and who had been rescued with the help of Zasosha in the early 1970s.⁴¹ This was how the Japan-Taiwan linkage was established.

It is fair to say that Zasosha and its associates played key roles in transnationalizing the Yasukuni movement. The anti-Yasukuni TAN may not have been successful without the initiatives taken by Zasosha and its members. However, although the visit by Koizumi made Yasukuni a topic of heated debate in Japan, the divisions on the issue in Japanese society and the characteristics of a civil society comprising small and fragmented

⁴⁰According to research conducted by Masshardt, the Yasukuni issue was not frequently discussed in the media between 1985 and 2001. See note 36 above.

⁴¹Telephone interview with Chen Mingzhong, October 2, 2007, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. While the interviewee could not recall the exact year in which he began corresponding with Zasosha, he remembers that it was in the early 1970s.

groups meant that it was not easy for the members of Zasosha to mobilize more support and launch other protest activities beyond the legal actions. Meanwhile, small and invisible in Japan as it is, Zasosha believed that a lawsuit was the only solution to the issue.⁴² By forming the axis of the TAN during the initial stage, the Japanese thus shaped the TAN into a lawsuit alliance, taking discreet steps in accordance with legal advice and process, and respecting law and order. It was the participation of Taiwanese that gave the TAN new momentum.

Taiwan: In contrast to Japan and South Korea, the enshrinement issue had rarely featured in Taiwanese political discourse, which was preoccupied with the debate over the reunification of China and was divided into pro-independence (Green) and pro-unification (Blue) factions. After forty years of authoritarian rule, political competition is fierce in this newly democratized country; this implies that politicians will employ all means at their disposal to gain publicity and secure the support of the electorate and limited political resources. Most Taiwanese politicians are skilled at voicing their opinions, and political debates that are not reduced to an ideological rift between the Green and Blue coalitions are simply marginalized. Thus, if Zasosha's connections in Taiwan could fit the Yasukuni issue into the Green/Blue framework, and if the Taiwanese contact happened to be a skillful politician, the issue would obviously enjoy more public exposure. As it turned out, the anti-Yasukuni TAN was linked to an active, non-partisan, but pro-Blue Taiwanese legislator, Kaochin Sumei, who chose to work on the Yasukuni problem within the framework of the rights of aboriginals in Taiwan.

Kaochin Sumei, the first female indigenous Taiwanese to be elected to parliament, gave up an acting career for politics in 2001. Inexperienced, yet independent and enthusiastic, Kaochin represented an aboriginal constituency and had vowed to be an advocate for the rights of Taiwan's indigenous people during her election campaign. She had also formed

⁴²Interview with Lin Yijun (林怡君), in charge of the Yasukuni Project in the office of Legislator Kaochin Sumei (高金素梅), November 28, 2006, Taipei, Taiwan.

close working relations with an organization called "Troop for the Tribe" (部落工作隊), a small but independent volunteer group formed by people who had been involved in the aboriginal movement in Taiwan since the 1980s. "Troop for the Tribe" was a founding member of the "Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines" (ATA, 台灣原住民聯盟)—the first aboriginal political NGO in Taiwan—though it subsequently quit the ATA due to internal disagreements.⁴³ Kaochin and the Troop were brought together when Chang Junjieh, the executive director of the Troop, was invited to run for the office of legislator on behalf of Kaochin.

Chang, a Han Chinese who was married to an aboriginal woman, was aware of the assimilation policy adopted by Taiwan's Japanese colonial rulers with regard to the aborigines,⁴⁴ known in Japanese as Takasago-zoku (高砂族). The Japanese regarded the Taiwanese aborigines as an inferior race, who were subject to modified versions of the criminal and civil law and a dual policy of suppression and education in order to assimilate them into Japanese society. Japan also used the aborigines as a source of manpower in World War II. An estimated 27,000 Taiwanese aborigines were conscripted into the Aboriginal Volunteer Army; they were sent to the fiercest battlefields or the remotest jungles and mountains of Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Among the 28,000 Taiwanese enshrined in Yasukuni, there are around ten thousand aboriginal men, most of whom died while serving in the Japanese Imperial Army during the Pacific War. Kaochin decided to work on the shrine problem on the advice of Chang Junjieh, after Chang was informed by Chen Mingzhong, the Taiwanese contact of Zasosha, of the Akebonokai incident mentioned above.

Kaochin, who had been a well-known actress before entering politics, and who was eager and enthusiastic, was the perfect mouthpiece for this

⁴³Interview with Chang Junjieh, October 14, 2005, in Pingdong, Taiwan. The ATA was established in 1984, two years before the first major opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (民主進步黨), was formed in Taiwan. The ATA initiated the earliest organized aboriginal movement, concentrating not only on problems of social justice, such as child labor, adolescent prostitution, and unemployment, but also on the survival of the ethnic identity and particularly the dignity of indigenous peoples.

⁴⁴According to the 1905 census, the number of mountain aborigines was estimated to be over 30,000, or 1.2 percent of the total population.

issue. So the Taiwanese arm of the TAN comprised a high-profile and active legislator and an experienced organization run by people who had an established and extensive network among the aboriginal tribes. This was considered to be the most aggressive and vocal section of the TAN, but the attention it received in Taiwan was limited because the Yasukuni issue was very low on the local political agenda.

The Yasukuni problem has almost been forgotten in Taiwan. Even the aboriginals are either not interested in it, or their attitudes are rather divided. Although certain people, such as the bereaved families who rallied around Kaochin, were scarred by the losses they suffered during the war, others have adopted the Green discourse and praise the Japanese for bringing the tribal people into the modern world. The enshrinement of the Taiwanese dead at Yasukuni, in this context, is a reminder of past linkages to Japan and provides comfort to the bereaved. For instance, the former president of Taiwan, Lee Teng-hui (李登輝), whose elder brother is enshrined at Yasukuni, paid his respects at the shrine during his visit to Japan in June 2007. On the other hand, certain people assert that the souls of the aboriginals and Taiwanese who died during the war have already been removed from the Yasukuni shrine back to Taiwan and have been reenshrined at the Yimin Temple (義民廟) in Hsinchu County (新竹縣), Taiwan. They have criticized Kaochin for deliberately ignoring that fact in order to utilize the Yasukuni issue for her own political advantage.⁴⁵ Moreover, the mainstream political parties in Taiwan have displayed little interest in the colonial era, and have attempted to connect the Yasukuni issue with the Green/Blue dispute. The government's main concern is the possible negative impact of Kaochin's activities on Taiwan-Japan relations.⁴⁶ Even the

⁴⁵ Interview with an anonymous legislator also elected by the aboriginal constituency, October 12, 2005. Kaochin and her followers, however, argued that despite the placing of the ceremonial tablets of the war dead in the Taiwanese temple, the issue of enshrinement at Yasukuni remained unresolved because the names of the Taiwanese victims are still recorded at the Japanese shrine.

⁴⁶ The Foreign Ministry and Taipei Representative Office in Japan stated that no assistance would be extended for the possible visit by Kaochin to Yasukuni, and asked her to keep her visit as quiet as possible. See Press release from the office of Kaochin Sumei, http://www.xiachao.org.tw/i_f_page.asp?repro=703; and *Ziyou shibao* (自由時報, Liberty Times), June 17, 2005, <http://www.libertytimes.com.tw/2005/new/jun/17/today-fo9.htm>.

media have not been keen on covering anti-Yasukuni-related activities.⁴⁷

Therefore, given the way public opinion is fragmented on the Yasukuni issue, the Taiwanese activists have had to learn to survive independently, regardless of which party is in power. They have had to work hard to maintain their momentum in the face of a dearth of public support. Another potential problem is that the development of the Taiwan arm of the TAN depends on the political future of one legislator, the TAN's sole political resource. Although Kaochin survived the election in 2008, questions of domestic support and the uncertain political future of Kaochin will constrain the further participation of Taiwanese activists in the TAN in the long run.

The Network

From the above, it can be seen that the formation of the anti-Yasukuni TAN was triggered by activists brought together as a result of their shared beliefs on the Yasukuni issue. In this section, the further development of the network will be examined by analyzing the "glue" that binds the network together and the organization of the network that has gone through two different stages: the first characterized by a low-profile, legal approach, and the second by a broader, higher-profile, and multi-dimensional approach.

During its first stage of development, the network hardly functioned at all. The immediate problem was how to work together. Despite the activists' sincere support for the anti-Yasukuni TAN, they could not work together in reality during the initial phase in 2002-04. At that stage, the TAN was no more than an information exchange center, with the Japanese activists taking the role of providers of information and backup for the other network members, while seeking legal redress against Yasukuni and Koizumi for violating Article 20 of the Japanese constitution which calls

⁴⁷Interview with Chang Junjieh, October 14, 2005 in Pingdong, Taiwan.

for the separation of religion from the state. Although the activists wanted to cooperate with one another and were in frequent contact, they were not really "glued" together. Thus, rather than being a working unit, the TAN was merely a circle of good friends who respected each other and did not challenge one another. The Japanese activists, for example, were quietly determined to help their Korean and Taiwanese counterparts. The attitude of the Japanese, the initiators of the network, determined the TAN's choice of a low-profile strategy. They did not seek publicity or media exposure, or undertake any political actions that might help them in their lawsuit. Since the Japanese and Korean activists had already set the tone for the TAN, the Taiwanese, who were invited to join the group later, followed the existing strategy, although they did question the appropriateness of such a low-key approach. Hence, it has been difficult to find any material, such as films or literature, related to the first stage of the TAN, with the exception of the evidence contained in the interviews conducted during this research.

The anti-Yasukuni TAN was in name a transnational network based on principled beliefs, but in practice it was a loosely-organized and low-key center for information exchange that was joined by others who adopted the existing culture of the network to improve the friendship and cooperation among its members. The anti-Yasukuni TAN at this stage was a conservative, friendly, cooperative, yet invisible group, tightly bound together, though weakly functioning.

The TAN began to transform when its Taiwanese members decided to move ahead of their network colleagues and attempt a more forceful approach. Although the Taiwanese intended to redefine the TAN's strategy, they did not begin the revolutionizing approach until 2005, when the group led by Kaochin Sumei filed a lawsuit in the Osaka District Court on behalf of 188 plaintiffs, the majority of whom were the families of war dead enshrined against their wishes at Yasukuni. However, after having spent their meager savings to travel to Japan five times in two years, the Taiwanese plaintiffs lost their case in the district court. Although they appealed to the Osaka High Court, they felt compelled to devise a more effective approach. Thus, the concept of joint action emerged in March 2005 when the

Taiwanese group campaigned on behalf of the lawsuit and invited supportive Korean and Japanese parliamentarians to a first-ever joint press conference in Tokyo. This scheme for joint action was aimed at turning the network into an active ally of the Taiwanese.

Three months later, however, problems arose around the proposal for joint action. To the surprise of their Japanese and Korean counterparts, the Taiwanese group organized a protest in front of the Yasukuni Shrine on June 13, 2005, while the high court was hearing their appeal. The fifty Taiwanese, representing nine indigenous tribes, intended to stage a high-profile protest in front of the shrine, dressed in traditional costume. They were closely watched by the Japanese police, who eventually prevented them from marching into the shrine by confining them in their bus for four hours. This highly publicized episode, though successful in capturing media attention, was not initially approved of by the Japanese and South Korean arms of the TAN. In particular, the Japanese group did not want the Yasukuni issue to be dealt with in such a melodramatic manner, and this led to a fierce debate among the three groups on the development of joint action in the future. Although no immediate consensus was reached, the seeds of change were planted in the minds of the activist groups as the Yasukuni issue became one of the most widely discussed topics in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and China.

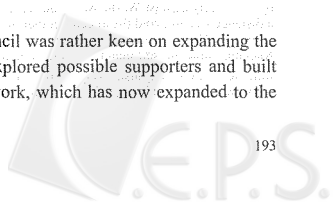
The activist network entered a new phase when the Osaka High Court ruled in favor of the Taiwanese plaintiffs on September 30, 2005. Koizumi's worshipping at the Yasukuni Shrine was judged to be a public act and therefore a violation of the constitution. Although the court rejected the plaintiffs' claim for damages, this was a landmark ruling as it was the first time a court had clearly ruled against Koizumi. The Taiwanese plaintiffs, as well as the Japanese and Korean activists, were enthused. One month later, the three groups met in Taipei, at Kaochin's invitation, and formally announced the formation of an international solidarity group, Joint Action Against Yasukuni (反靖國共同行動). The network was reborn with apparently more aggressive characteristics.

In addition to its legal approach, the network now launched a series of other actions in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea, including a parade in

Kyoto (November 2005), a protest at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Pusan (November 2005), a speech by Kaochin Sumei delivered to the National Assembly of South Korea (November 2005), an academic conference on the Yasukuni issue in Seoul (July 2006), and joint lawsuits in the Okinawa District Court (August 2006). The network action reached its peak in mid-August 2006, when the activists organized a five-day candlelight demonstration in Tokyo. Approximately two thousand people were mobilized by the network and other Japanese anti-Yasukuni civil groups, including fifty individuals from Taiwan, four hundred from South Korea, twenty from Okinawa, and over a thousand from Japan. Apart from this series of joint actions, the activists also began to formalize their communication mechanism by calling for annual meetings to be hosted by each activist group in rotation.

By this stage, the TAN had grown into a more tight-knit and powerful network, instead of functioning merely as an information exchange center and circle of friendship. The reorganization of the network reshaped the roles of its members and contributed to its development. While the Taiwanese group brought a new daring and boldness to the TAN, which was then gradually transformed into a social movement with more public appeal, the TAN also gained new momentum from the Korean group. Inspired by the Taiwanese group, the Korean activists began to sense the potential of the Yasukuni issue in the "marketplace" of international issues. This ambitious group, equipped with domestic political and social support, began to draw up a proper plan for a full-fledged anti-Yasukuni movement, whose aim, in the short term, was to win the lawsuit, and then to internationalize the Yasukuni issue and the issue of Japanese militarism, and in the long term to organize the application of global pressure against any resurgence of Japanese aggression in the cause of sustainable peace in Northeast Asia. For this purpose, the Korean activists not only organized a variety of activities and demonstrations, but also made efforts to mobilize wider global support.

For example, the Korean Council was rather keen on expanding the issue network. It systematically explored possible supporters and built an extensive communication e-network, which has now expanded to the



United States and Canada; it also formed a linkage between anti-Yasukuni activists across the Pacific.⁴⁸ Furthermore, the Korean Council made efforts to bring the Yasukuni issue before the United Nations—something the Taiwanese group had tried but failed to do, partly because of Taiwan's status as a thorny political subject at the United Nations. The Korean Council hoped to frame the Yasukuni issue with UN human rights and peace concerns. South Korea sees bigger and more important international implications in the Yasukuni issue. As one interviewee commented:

A lawsuit is no longer the only aim of our action.... We have the outlook of Korea being the pillar of a human rights campaign and the real peacekeeper in North Asia.... We are not content with the present progress.... We have a more important and leading role to play in international society. At the end, it will be more than No Yasukuni; we are aiming for something with a deeper and broader impact on the world.⁴⁹

The enthusiastic Korean activists organized an international conference in New York in November 2007 as a stepping stone to a larger international stage. Meanwhile, the Korean group also filed another lawsuit in February 2008.

It is important to note that harmonious intra-network relations were also key to the network's successful transformation. Despite the fact that the Taiwanese were late to join the network, they were not excluded or discriminated against by the Korean and Japanese initiators. Instead, although the latter were at one time wary and suspicious of the Taiwanese, they quickly adjusted themselves. Since the activists learnt from and were encouraged by each other, a sense of mutual reliance also developed among the members. The Taiwanese group may have inspired the Korean one, and the ambition and eagerness of the Korean group also provided an important

⁴⁸It should be noted that although the TAN has been expanding its links to other countries, it has not developed a close association with China, despite the fact that the Chinese usually react strongly against World War II atrocities. The reason why the Chinese were kept at a distance was to avoid the allegation that the TAN was manipulated by the Chinese government. This is a particularly important concern for the Taiwanese activists, although Kaochin Sumei herself maintains close contacts with the Chinese authorities.

⁴⁹Interview with Kim Eunsik, May 6, 2007, in Taipei and May 27, 2007, in Seoul. The same views were conveyed by Lin Yijun, November 28, 2006, in Taipei.

stimulus to its Taiwanese counterpart, whose members admitted to "being motivated and touched" by the efforts of the Koreans.⁵⁰ Now that the Taiwanese group has become the inspiration and instigator for change, and the Korean group the dreamer and accelerator, the TAN is no longer the same. Although the Japanese group appears to be the most silent, it may be the key force in sustaining the development of the anti-Yasukuni issue. It appears that noisy, well-publicized campaigns are not to the taste of the Japanese civil activists who worked together with the Taiwanese and Korean groups.⁵¹ Although the Japanese were to a certain extent excited by the drive displayed by their Taiwanese and Korean counterparts, they continue to focus on the needs of the bereaved families, the lawsuit, possible compensation, and ultimately the Japanese government's policy on the Yasukuni Shrine. In particular, since much of Zassha's support comes from religious and academic circles, or simply from those who sympathize with relatives of the war dead, the Japanese side has remained calm, consistent, and concentrated on the progress of the lawsuits. For the Japanese, Yasukuni is a complicated domestic issue that is interwoven with religious, cultural, historical, and constitutional difficulties. While further involvement of the Taiwanese group in the network may be uncertain, depending as it does on Kaochin Sumei's political future,⁵² the Korean group, with its international ambitions, may move far beyond the Yasukuni issue. While both the Korean and Taiwanese groups are reshaping the TAN as well as themselves, the Japanese group may be the real cornerstone of the TAN, adhering to the original anti-Yasukuni principles with the help of contributions from anonymous, supportive individuals.

⁵⁰Interview with Lin Yijun, November 28, 2006, in Taipei.

⁵¹Several interviewees agreed with this statement.

⁵²Kaochin Sumei was reelected as a legislator in January 2008.



Conclusion and Reflections

This study posits an analytical framework for the development of a TAN that is triggered by a shared belief in certain principles. It concludes that the development of the TAN depends on the political environment within which the behaviors and attitudes of the network activists evolve. While generalizations cannot be made on the basis of a single case study, it is evident from the case of the anti-Yasukuni TAN that the formation of a TAN depends, to a great extent, on (1) the political opportunity that catalyzes the emergence of the activists, (2) the network "glue" that facilitates the cohesion and closeness of the TAN, and (3) the network organization that defines participation in the TAN and problems related to role distribution among the activists.

The anti-Yasukuni case provides evidence that the political structure in a particular country provides the opportunity for and shapes the characteristics of the activist group from that country. The emergence of the Korean group was to a considerable degree facilitated by the democratization of Korean politics in the 1990s; the group also gained considerable public support in Korea due to that country's historical relations with Japan. The Taiwanese and Japanese activists did not share such a favorable political climate. The former had to fight for political space in Taiwan's turbulent domestic politics polarized by the Green/Blue debate, and as a result developed into a more militant movement. The latter, surviving in a fragmented civil society divided between right and left, have remained more low-profile yet persistent.

Despite the sincerity and enthusiasm of the activists who were brought together by their shared beliefs with respect to the anti-Yasukuni issue, the function of the network was limited to that of an information exchange center at the initial stage, with each activist group working independently for its own lawsuit program while maintaining friendly but distant intra-network relations. The TAN was transformed when its members reshaped their roles and reorganized their network strategy. The anti-Yasukuni TAN was thus redeveloped and reborn, and new strategies were introduced by the activists at different stages. From the time that the

Japanese initiated a liaison among lawsuit groups, through the Taiwanese proposal for joint action, to the ambitious Korean bid for international attention, the TAN has undergone several stages of development and finally grown into a transnational organization possessing far more complicated characteristics than those initially aimed for.

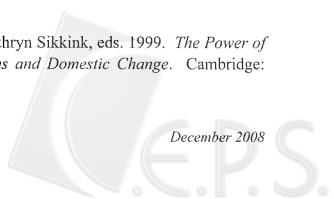
From the evidence presented in this study, it appears that the theory of the TAN proposed by Keck and Sikkink—as a single actor in its own right in the international arena, a tight-knit community not reducible to its component parts, diffusing norms and forwarding policy proposals on international politics—may be too simple. Although the unitary approach does highlight the international role of the TAN, it tends to overlook certain factors and difficulties that may occur within the TAN.

Several questions can also be raised as a result of this research. First, it appears that the TAN activists learn from one another. In the case of the anti-Yasukuni TAN, the activists appeared to learn about the possibility of new and different approaches. However, one question that arises is how is it that certain initiatives have a learning effect, while some are simply rejected by TAN activists? Another question is what type of organizational structure suits a TAN better: a more formalized organization or an informal and private liaison? In the case of the anti-Yasukuni TAN, the activists were brought together by private social connections, but were apparently drawn closer when they organized joint actions. Finally, it is not possible to judge whether such developments initiated by activists are beneficial for a TAN. The TAN may either be rejuvenated or disrupted by these initiatives. Since the anti-Yasukuni TAN is still developing, these questions can only be answered after further observation and more empirical research.

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