Teaching States to Listen:
Environmental Politics in East Asia

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Abstract

This working paper asks: How do citizens in single-party states get them to listen and be responsive? It lays out a research project that focuses on environmental politics in East Asia, which is an area where citizens across the region have successfully diversified policymaking processes to include more citizen voices. The paper lays out the Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy which posits that successful advocacy is a function of (a) activating multiple channels of communication, both formal and informal, with policy makers, and (b) how much threat the advocacy poses to the regime. Advocates that can utilize multiple channels to access policy makers will be able to cultivate elite allies who can make or change policies in their favor. When this process works there is a win-win for the advocates and the regime: the advocates gain their desired policy outcome and greater access to policy makers, and the state gains positive publicity, enhanced legitimacy, and greater access to activists. Implications of the model for studies of civil society, democratization, and enduring authoritarianism are discussed in the conclusion.

East Asia has jumped onto the environmental bandwagon. In January 2009 South Korea announced an economic stimulus package that pledged $38.1 billion dollars (equivalent to 4 percent of total GDP) on a "Green New Deal." Immediately after his election in August 2009, Japanese Prime Minister Hatoyama committed to slashing his country's greenhouse emissions by 25 percent of its 1990 levels by 2020. Taiwan has recently announced plans to upgrade its Environmental Protection Agency to ministry status by 2012 and has begun the process of instituting a carbon-offset scheme to reduce carbon emissions. China has nearly doubled the number of its national parks in the last decade, and this past year it became the largest producer of photovoltaic panels in the world and the second largest producer of wind energy.

These events are particularly remarkable because this region has a long history of exploiting the environment, none of these countries has a large, national, environmental organization that lobbies the government on environmental policies, and their memberships of international environmental organizations remain very small.[1] Indeed, in comparative studies of civil society, the region is generally seen as very weak in nearly all areas of civil society organization.[2]

Why then have East Asian states developed such forward-looking, activist environmental policies? Why has the region, dominated by single-party states generally suspicious of political organizations, seen an explosion of grassroots environmental activity in the last decade?

Contemporary theories of environmental politics have been based on the historical experience of the United States and Western Europe. In general, they argue that large-scale mass political movements are a prerequisite for the development of pro-environmental policies. The dominant political arena occurs in legislative politics where citizen activist organizations foster mass movements and lobby politicians using media campaigns to

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[1] For example, Greenpeace, one of the world's largest international environmental NGO has 20,000 supporters in China Greenpeace China, "2008 Annual Report," (2009). p. 16, and 5,000 members in Japan http://www.greenpeace.or.jp/info/ (accessed 04/07/2010). It does not have an office in Korea and has just begun establishing one in Taiwan. Compared to more than 250,00 members in the U.S (http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/en/about/(accessed 09/20/2010) and more than 500,000 members in Germany http://www.greenpeace.de/ (German, accessed 4/10/2010).

[2] Helmut K. Anheier, Marlies Glasius, and Mary Kaldor, *Global Civil Society 2001* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, "Political Culture and Democracy: Analyzing Cross-Level Linkages," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 1 (2003), James E. Curtis, Edward G. Grabb, and Douglas E. Baer, "Voluntary Association Membership in Fifteen Countries: A Comparative Analysis," *American Sociological Review* 57, no. April (1992).

combat industrial interests and develop more progressive environmental policies. In the most successful cases, this advocacy occurs though Green Party influence on coalition politics.[3]

This context is very far removed from the experience of any state in East Asia, and its assumptions suggest that no progressive environmental policies would be possible in most places outside of Western Europe. This paper is a preliminary effort to use the experience of East Asian states, which have been able to develop impressive environmental policies in a context very different from one where such initiatives would be expected, to develop a new model of political advocacy.

This paper argues that there are many ways to get citizens heard by the state, and finding avenues for advocacy that are less threatening to the regime and building elite political allies will be the most successful. This will usually be done by targeting the "less political" branches of government—the executive and judicial branches as opposed to legislative bodies—and by building and utilizing multiple informal channels of influence—"old boy" networks, family ties, local community-based connections, business networks, etc. The successful advocacy efforts will find or create supporters within elite politics, who will then help to teach other elite actors about the benefits of listening to citizens. The end result will be policies that reflect the interests of the citizens and a political process that is more open to citizen participation.

This working paper offers an intellectual foray into this topic. It begins with a brief review of relevant literature. The second section lays out the Multi-Channel to Model of Political Advocacy.[4] The third section sketches the research design and method that will be used in the study. A fourth section presents some preliminary supporting evidence, and the paper concludes with a few reflections on the implications of the model for our understanding of politics and East Asia.

Civic Participation in East Asia

A decade ago there was nearly universal agreement that East Asia had little to no civic participation. Comparative studies all indicated that citizens in East Asia did not join civic organizations, rarely volunteered, and were generally uninvolved politically. Research that relied on statistical surveys found that East Asian states trailed other advanced countries in values and activities associated with political activism. Their citizens have a set of values that are often characterized as "illiberal" and "undemocratic": they remain skeptical of individual

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[3] For example, Norman Miller, *Environmental Politics: Interest Group, the Media, and the Making of Policy* (New York, NY: Taylor & Francis, Inc., 2002), Michael O'Neill, *Green Parties and Political Change in Contemproary Europe: New Politics, Old Predicaments* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1997).

[4] This is a terrible name. Any suggestions?

freedom, have a strong preference for social order, favor an interventionist rather than a limited government, show a reluctance to engage in public protest, etc.[5] Supporting this perspective, academic work focused on the ways that the heavy hand of the state in regional countries acted to constrain and control civil society.[6]

Recently, this perspective has begun to change. Beginning with the "third wave" democracies of Korea and Taiwan, East Asian scholars began to demonstrate that while civil societies in East Asia may not look exactly like their counterparts in Europe and North America, they were still playing increasingly important roles in their country's politics. Robert Wellar's Alternate Civilities (1999) documents civil society's role in Taiwanese democratization and argues that its success and the expansion of civic, if not necessarily democratic, activity on the mainland suggests that vibrant civic cultures can form in ways that are coherent with non-Western societies. A bit more critically, Sunhyuk Kim's Politics of Democratization in Korea (2000) and Charles Armstrong's Korean Society (2002) both offer detailed accounts of the mixed and varied roles that a wide range of citizen groups have played in Korea's disjointed and lengthy democratization processes.

In Japan, after a brief wave of interest in the movements in the 1960s and 1970s,[7] academic interest shifted to economic development away from citizen activism. The most recent reexamination of civic activity in Japan may have begun with Jeffrey Broadbent's Environmental

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[5] Inglehart and Welzel, "Political Culture and Democracy: Analyzing Cross-Level Linkages.";

[6] See for example Tadashi Yamamoto, ed., *The Nonprofit Sector in Japan* (New York, NY: Manchester University Press, 1998), Frank Schwartz and Susan Pharr, eds., *The State of Civil Society in Japan* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003), Robert Pekkanen, *Japan's Dual Civil Society: Members without Advocates* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).} about Japan, andB. Michael Frolic, "State-Led Civil Society," in *Civil Society in China*, ed. Timothy Brook and B. Michael Frolic (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). for a similar perspective on China.

[7] Studies such as Ellis Krauss, *Japanese Radicals Revisited: Student Protest in Postwar Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), Ellis Krauss and Bradford Simcock, "Citizens' Movements: The Growth and Impact of Environmental Protes in Japan," in *Political Opposition and Local Politics in Japan*, ed. Kurt Steiner, Ellis Krauss, and Scott Flanagan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), Jack Lewis, "Civic Protest in Mishima: Citizens' Movement and the Politics of the Enviironment in Contemporary Japan," in *Political Opposition and Local Politics in Japan*, ed. Kurt Steiner, Ellis Krauss, and Scott Flanagan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), Margaret McKean, "Political Socialization through Citizens' Movements," in *Political Opposition and Local Politics in Japan*, ed. Kurt Steiner, Ellis Krauss, and Scott Flanagan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), ———, *Environmental Protest and Citizen Politics in Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Berkeley, 1981), Kurt Steiner, Ellis Krauss, and Scott Flanagan, eds., *Political Opposition and Local Politics in Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), Frank Upham, "Litigation and Moral Consciousness in Japan: An Interpretive Analysis of Four Japanese Pollution Suits," *Law and Society Review* 10, no. 4 (1976), Patricia Steinhoff, "Protest in Japan," in *Democracy in Japan*, ed. Ishida Takeshi and Ellis S. Krauss (Pittsburg, PA: University of Pittsburg Press, 1989).

Politics in Japan (1998) to be followed closely by Robin LeBlanc's Bicycle Citizens (1999) and Patricia Maclachlan's Consumer Politics in Postwar Japan (2002), which both document the rise of women's participation in consumer groups. Those works examined particular groups or causes. They were soon augmented by examinations of civil society more broadly in Jeff Kingston's Japan's Quiet Transformation (2003), my Politics and Volunteering in Japan (2007), Yasuo Takao's Reinventing Japan (2007), and Kim Reimann's The Rise of Japanese NGOs (2009). Now academics are discussing civic activity in Japan as vibrant rather than dormant, and beginning to study the rise of so-called "new style" citizen groups that tend to be organized around individual identities and interests rather than local community locations.[8]

Concerning China as well, there has been an explosion of interest in grassroots political activity aimed at gaining concessions from the state. Kevin O'Brien and Lianjiang Li's Rightful Resistance in Rural China (2006) and Elizabeth Perry and Merle Goldman's edited volume Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China (2007) both show ways that rural protesters have increasingly been able to use divisions within the Chinese state to gain concessions. Peter Ho and Richard Edmonds' China's Embedded Activism (2007) discuss not just the constraints but also the expanding opportunities for activists in China. In her innovative book Accountability without Democracy (2007) Lily Tsai has demonstrated the positive role that local temple associations have played in improving rural development outcomes, and Andrew Mertha's path breaking China's Water Warriors (2008) uses case studies of anti-dam protest across China to show the ways that civic groups have been able to mobilize successfully and delay and even cancel state-authorized dam construction projects.

These four countries represent a very wide range of political systems from Japan, which has been democratic for more than sixty years, to Korea and Taiwan, which have democratized more recently, to China, which has significantly modified but retained a single-party authoritarian political system. As one would expect from these different political contexts their civil societies are also quite different, yet research on civil society in East Asia has been remarkably consistent in arguing that Western definitions of civil society that require that it be "separate" and "autonomous" from the state and contain implicit assumptions that it have a confrontational political approach to government do not fit the vast majority of civil society activity in East Asia.

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[8] See Mary Alice Haddad, "Civic Responsibility and Patterns of Voluntary Participation around the World," *Comparative Political Studies* 39, no. 10 (2006), ———, *Politics and Volunteering in Japan: A Global Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), ———, "Transformation of Japan's Civil Society Landscape," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 7, no. 3 (2007). for more discussion of the difference between "new style" and "traditional" volunteer groups.

Using words such as "embedded,"[9] "state-led,"[10] and "state-linked,"[11] to describe the relationship between civil society organizations and their governments, scholars have been struggling to refine definitions of civil society that had their origins in the European Enlightenment[12] for use in East Asian contexts. Although scholars have not settled on an appropriate and accurate definition of the relationship between these groups and their governments, there does seem to be general agreement that refining definitions is much less interesting than discovering the multiple ways that these groups are transforming the political processes in their countries.

This paper aims to draw on the experience of East Asian countries to develop a more general theory of political advocacy in single-party states. There will be some reference to theories that have emerged out of American and European politics, but they will be scarce. Mine is a self-conscious effort to use the experience of East Asia to generate new theory that may then be applied to understanding politics in other parts of the world rather than take theory generated out of American or European experiences and apply it to East Asia.[13]

Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy

The driving question of this paper is how citizens, especially citizens in single-party states, get their states to listen and respond to them. This is not a question directed toward regime change, but rather one of regime response, adaptation, and transformation.[14] I use the state-in-society approach as my theoretical framework. This approach was first developed by Joel Migdal (1994, 2001) to explain politics in the developing world and then refined by me (Haddad 2010) for use in studying democratization. The key assumption of this approach is that states emerge from and are part of the societies in which they are situated. Thus, while

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[9] Haddad, *Politics and Volunteering in Japan: A Global Perspective.*, and in a Chinese context Lily Tsai, *Accountability without Democracy: How Solidary Groups Provide Public Goods in Rural China* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007). and Peter Ho and Richard Edmonds, eds., *China's Embedded Activism: Opportunities and Constraints of a Social Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

[10] Frolic, "State-Led Civil Society."

[11] Benjamin Read and Robert Pekkanen, eds., *Local Organizations and Urban Governance in East and Southeast Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

[12] See John Keane, ed., *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives* (New York, NY: Verso, 1988).for an excellent overview of the intellectual development of the term "civil society."

[13] This stands in contrast to Andrew Mertha's excellent research, which takes theories generated out of American political experience (especially John Kindgon's theories about policy streams) and applies them to China.

[14] See T.J. Pempel, "Regime Shift: Japanese Politics in a Changing World Economy," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 23, no. 2 (1997). for an articulation of the differences between regime adaptation and change.

states include "the image of a coherent, controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory," the "actual practice of its multiple parts," may or may not be consistent with that image.[15]

The state-in-society approach conceptualizes the state as embedded in rather than independent from its society. It is a process-oriented approach to the study of politics that explicitly examines the practices of a state in addition to the image it portrays. From this perspective practices—what people are actually doing on the ground level—offer a critical link between political values and institutions. Through their every day practices in civic organizations and interaction with the state, citizens contest, develop, and transmit new political values. As those values spread to elite leaders, those leaders take actions to change the configuration of political institutions.[16]

Using the state-in-society approach as my general theoretical framework, this paper develops a model to explain how citizens, especially those in single-party states, get states to listen and respond to their demands. In a nutshell, the Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy posits that advocacy will be most successful when it is (a) non-threatening to the regime, (b) accesses elite political actors at the center of decision-making, and (c) links the advocacy issue to an existing policy goal.

There are three ways that advocacy can be perceived as threatening to a regime: the issue itself can be threatening, the position of the advocate can be seen as threatening, and the channel through which advocacy is pursued can be seen as threatening. My idea of "threat" here is consistent with that found in Kevin O'Brien's concept of "rightful resistance," which posits that resistance will be more successful if it takes a form that supports the "rightness" of some aspect state authority and policy such that the process through which the resistance occurs helps enhance rather than distract from state legitimacy. The language of "threat" that I use here tries to capture that idea: threatening advocacy detracts from state authority and legitimacy; nonthreatening advocacy helps reinforce state authority and legitimacy (or at least the authority and legitimacy of some part of the state).

A second area where my model draws on O'Brien's work is the idea that symbolic politics will play an important role in advocacy. This point emerges directly from the state-in-society theoretical framework that asserts that political practices are as important, and sometimes more so, than political institutions. Symbolic practices will be an important method for advocates to persuade both elite decision makers as well as other political actors to support their policy goals.

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[15] Joel Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 16.

[16] See Mary Alice Haddad, "The State-in-Society Approach to the Study of Democratization with Examples from Japan," *Democratization* (forthcoming). for a more detailed discussion of this process in Japan.

The main difference between my intellectual effort and O'Brien's scholarship is that I am interested in developing a model that can help explain not only reactive civic engagement that protests and resists particular policies or practices of the state but also proactive civic engagement that seeks to direct state policies into new areas, to shape agendas and policy making, not just adjust policy implementation. Therefore, the analytic frame is not one of citizen resisters protesting state policy but rather one of activists—who may be found inside, outside, or in between state and society—seeking to develop and change state policy. Their goals may be reactive, such as when environmentalists seek to halt the construction of a dam, or they may be more proactive, such as when forward looking businesses seek to gain state policies to support the development of a renewable energy industry.

From a broad perspective the issue area of the environment writ large is a relatively nonthreatening issue area for the regime, when compared to issues such as human rights, where state legitimacy and authority are often directly challenged. Within the general issue area of the environment, however, there are more and less threatening components. For example, activism around dam and power plant construction, which must be accomplished under the authority of the state, are issues that can be very threatening for the regime because they have strong, active pro-construction political constituencies and failure to follow through with a scheduled project may call into question the legitimacy of the regime, its efficacy, and/or its capacity.[17] In contrast, other environmental efforts, such as preservation of "wild" space and animal species are relatively nonthreatening issues. For these issues there are relatively few anti-environmental policy constituencies, so the government faces relatively low costs associated with no action, and few costs and a number of potential benefits associated with pro-environmental policy choices.

It should be recognized that the level of perceived "threat" of a particular issue is subject to framing and can often be manipulated. For example, in Japan while whaling was an issue area where there were few pro-whaling supporters, those supporters were politically well connected and were able for many years to frame the issue as a core national interest, making it difficult

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[17] See Andrew Mertha, *China's Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Change* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008). chapter 1 for a discussion of why advocacy around dam construction can be so politicized and threatening. See also Paul Waley's discussion of the conflict between what he calls these political constituencies in favor of construction and other pro-development, anti-environmental policies "hard elites."Paul Waley, "Ruining and Restoring Rivers: The State and Civil Society in Japan," *Pacific Affairs* 78, no. 2 (2005). while the academics, NGOs, local communities and others in favor of river restoration and preservation are "soft elites." See **George A. Quattrone** and **Amos Tversky**, "Contrasting Rational and Psychological Analyses of Political Choice," *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 3 (1988). for discussion about how the psychological desire to reduce uncertainty affects political choices.

for the government to change its policy in response to rising anti-whaling advocacy. Therefore, issue threat can be manipulated and dynamic and is not necessarily fixed.[18]

A second way that advocacy can be perceived as threatening is if the actors themselves are perceived as threatening. In general, the farther one is from the center of power, the less threatening one is. The chart below offers examples of categories of actors and their general location within this power dynamic. In general, local actors are less threatening than national actors, informally organized groups less threatening than formalized groups. Of course, any particular actor may be located differently by virtue of his or her access to channels listed in the next section. For example, while most local volunteers may be very far distant from the center of policy making, any given local volunteer may find that he or she can be very close to power by virtue of access to a direct channel (e.g., she is married to a key policy maker). Thus, on the one hand, the table below offers a heuristic device for locating different kinds of actors. On the other hand, it simultaneously illustrates how artificial these relative power distinctions are and how easily they can be modified once different channels are activated.

A third way that advocacy can be threatening to the regime has to do with the channel through which advocacy is pursued. This model divides the kinds of channels that citizens and their groups can use to access decision making into four groups according to two dimensions. Direct channels give citizens (both inside and outside the state) direct access— they can talk one-on-one with decision makers. Indirect channels offer opportunities for citizens (both inside and outside the state) to influence the decision-making environment but not necessarily a particular decision maker. The distinction between direct and indirect channel can sometimes be blurred, and some channels can operate both directly and indirectly. For example, a direct connection made through an old-boy network would be when an activist calls a college roommate, the Minister of XYZ, to try to influence his decision on a policy of concern to the activist. An indirect connection made through an old-boy network might be when an activist calls all of his college buddies to spread his ideas, and, since Minister XYZ went to the same university as the activist, he ends up hearing about the policy idea through mutual friends.

Channels can also be formal or informal. These channels and their distinction are analogous to formal and informal institutions found in international relations literature.[19]

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[18] For more on whaling politics in Japan seeJun Morikawa, *Whaling in Japan: Power, Politics, and Diplomacy* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), Hiroyuki Watanabe, *Japan's Whaling: The Politics of Culture in Historical Perspective* (Victoria, Australia: Trans Pacific Press, 2008).; for more on the manipulation of threat perception see Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998)..

[19] See Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998). for an excellent discussion of the role of formal and informal institutions in spreading particular norms in international relations. See Peter Hall, "Policy Paradigms,

Formal channels have an institutionalized process through which they are accessed. There are formal (and informal) rules that govern the use of formal channels. In many cases, formal channels are highly public, and communication using those channels is visible to many people. Informal channels are not governed by formal rules, only informal ones. For example, while there are no laws about the content of a conversation with a friend, there are laws governing what can and cannot be said in a TV broadcast. Informal channels usually looser, more irregular, and much less public than formal channels. The following is necessarily an incomplete list, but it conveys the general idea of the kinds of channels found in each category.

Table 1: Power Distribution of Political Actors[20]

	State	**Society**
Center **Involved with policy making on issue**	Top political leadership Top bureaucratic officials Mid- and low-level bureaucrats in charge of issue Judges deciding issue-related case	Invited advisors Top business leadership
Near center **Regular contact with policy makers**	National politicians in districts removed from the issue Local politicians in districts directly involved with issue High-level bureaucrats removed from issue Mid-level bureaucrats near to issue Judges in districts related to the issue	Public intellectuals Business associations Labor unions International organizations Elite legal community Elite scientific community
Periphery **Occasional direct and indirect access to policy makers**	Mid-level bureaucrats unrelated to issue Local politicians not directly connected to issues	Incorporated NPOs Businesses Scientists Local unions Local legal community
Far distant **No direct access to policy makers**	Local government officials removed from direct relationship with issue	Artists Local volunteer groups Individual citizens

A key characteristic of a "channel" as opposed to just a "tie" or "connection" is that they are open to multiple actors and that they offer a two-way communication pipeline. If the connection between the advocate and the target policy maker is merely personalistic and not related to any groups of people, it cannot be referred to as a "channel" because it is only a

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Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain," *Comparative Politics* 25, no. 3 (1993). for a discussion of socialization in the policy making process.

[20] This table has been generated from impressions and some preliminary interviews. It will be refined with further interviews and surveys.

single connection easily closed by either side. In the case of informal channels especially, the distinction between a personal connection and a channel may be a fuzzy one. For example, a one-time phone call to a former college roommate who happens to be Minister XYZ in charge of a particular policy area would not constitute a channel because it can be reduced to a specific relationship, is not accessible to anyone else, and does not offer a two-way flow of information. However, if the advocate is also the director of an NGO related to the policy area (or some other person related to the policy area), then the one-time phone call could turn into a channel. If the two men begin a regular informal lunch meeting that includes other NGO activists in the issue area and perhaps some other members of the government such that the Minister (and/or other interested civil servants) is able to vet ideas in an off-the-record manner and the NGO activists are able to try to influence policies and offer feedback about how policies are working, then the informal lunch meeting becomes an informal channel of influence. It is no longer reducible to a single connection between two people, and it operates in a two-way fashion.

Table 2: Channels of Access to Political Decision Making

	Formal	Informal
Direct	Political parties (including voting)	Personal visits
	E-Government channels	Old-boy networks
	Public forums	Family connections
	Policy-related committee meetings	Business networks
		Associational networks
Indirect	Media	Old-boy networks
	• Newspapers	Family connections
	• Magazines	Business networks
	• TV	Associational networks
	• Movies	Online chat rooms
	• Blogs	Artistic work
	• Listerves, and other forums	"Weapons of the weak"-type
	Public protests	protest
	Conferences (academic, business, etc.)	
	Themed art exhibits	

Different channels represent different levels of threat for policymakers. Informal channels are less threatening than formal channels because they are less public, and indirect channels are less threatening because while they may be public, direct accountability is avoided. Channels that target "low power" elements of the state and society (listed in Table 1) are less threatening than channels attempting to reach "high power" elements. In general, this will mean that the

least threatening form of advocacy will come from individuals or local groups using indirect channels aimed at non-political groups. For example, a local group's public awareness campaign to pick up trash in their neighborhood.[21] For advocacy aimed at the state, those using informal channels aimed at lower-level bureaucrats will be the least threatening.

Please note that the language I utilize here of "channels" comes directly from the language used by civic leaders in Japan working in leadership positions in traditional associations who referred to themselves as providing "channels" and "pipelines" from the people to the government.[22] The conceptual framework is not inconsistent with John Kingdon's (1984) ideas of "policy streams" and "policy entrepreneurs," but it does have a different orientation. My Model is more concerned with the mechanics of the process—the methods that "policy entrepreneurs" use to access policy makers—rather than specifying the timing of when long-standing issues become resolved in particular ways. It explicitly recognizes that the very concept of "policy entrepreneurs" is often blurred since the bureaucrat or politician who is a "target" of advocacy at one moment can become, once convinced about the problem and/or the policy solution, a "policy entrepreneur" himself, dedicated to convincing other decision makers about the significance of a particular policy problem or the benefits of a particular solution. Similarly, it makes no distinction between setting policy "agendas" and specifying policy "alternatives" since, while it recognizes that intellectually these are distinct practices, and in some political systems one may be able to identify specific actors and assign them particular roles as agenda setters or alternative specifiers, such specialization is not present in many political systems where the process of setting agendas and specifying alternatives are often highly intertwined.

Finally, and perhaps most distinctively, this Model posits that the position or action of a particular "policy entrepreneur" is much less important than networking of many actors together by utilizing multiple channels of access. Who becomes the most influential "policy entrepreneur" shifts frequently, often based on seemingly capricious events such as who an influential policy maker happened to share drinks with during an informal cocktail hour. Similarly, as Kingdon acknowledges, savvy "policy entrepreneurs" will change the ways that they frame problems and solutions to suit their audience and seize (and create) expedient opportunities. Therefore, for this Model, the particular actions of "policy entrepreneurs," the "frames" that they use to pitch their policies, or the timing of their actions are much less important than the number of channels to power that have been activated with respect to a

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[22] See Haddad, *Politics and Volunteering in Japan: A Global Perspective*, Mary Alice Haddad, "Community Determinants of Volunteer Participation and the Promotion of Civic Health: The Case of Japan," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* Supplement to 33, no. 3 (2004). for more details about how traditional associations are used as channels of communication between the state and local citizens.

particular cause and the number and power location of the actors who have been networked together as a result of using multiple channels.

Of course, timing and framing can always help to get an issue onto the political agenda and passed into policy. If you are a local volunteer group advocating for better air quality, you will certainly be much more likely to be heard by policy makers and perhaps even brought into the policy making process if you are based in Beijing on the eve of the 2008 Olympics than if you are located in Inner Mongolia fighting perennial air quality battles against an ever-expanding Gobi Desert.

This brings us to the third necessary component for policy advocacy success: persuading policy makers. The process of persuasion is multifacitated and impossible to predict completely. However, in line with Kingdon's model, policies will be more likely to be placed on the agenda and implemented to the extent that they further policies already in place. Therefore, if a new policy agenda or alternative can be shown to be supportive of an existing policy priority, it will be easier to mobilize allies among elite policy makers. This aspect will be particularly important for "unthreatening" issues that are not seen as part of the government's responsibility and therefore would have trouble getting onto the policy making agenda.

For any issue the chances of mobilizing policy makers in favor of a particular solution increases as the numbers of channels utilized and the number of political actors inside and outside the state have been networked together around a particular policy issue. My use of the term network here is similar to Apachi Shipper's "associative activism," although the network need not be only among society actors (indeed, usually would not be exclusively society actors), and it is not limited to activism at the local level. Additionally, while the base assumption of Shipper's model is that political institutions are relatively inflexible and unresponsive, the basic assumption of my model is that even seemingly inflexible institutions can be made flexible and responsive by altering the practices and values of political actors within the institution.

Networks among political actors inside and outside the state may form what is often referred to as a "policy network," "epistemic community," or "advocacy coalition."[23] In the conceptualization here, however, it is not the belief set of a strong network of specific people organized around a particular policy issue or goal that is critical for the outcome but rather the use of multiple channels to access power—channels that may themselves be networks, such as an old-boy network—that is important. The creation of a policy network may be a useful byproduct of the process of engaging multiple channels, but the network itself does not

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[23] See Keith Dowding, "Model or Metaphor? A Critical Review of the Policy Network Approach," *Political Studies* 43, no. 1 (1995). for an excellent review of these terms and the "policy network approach" in political science, and Paul Sabatier, "An Advocacy Coalition Framework of Policy Change and the Role of Policy-Oriented Learning Therein," *Policy Sciences* 21, no. 2/3 (1988). for an articulation of "advocacy coalitions".

play a causal role in the Model. The one way that newly created policy networks or advocacy coalitions play an important role is this Model is that those kinds of networks can open new channels through which a wider diversity of actors may access policy makers.

Thus, while the theoretical frameworks of "advocacy coalitions" and "policy networks" models assume that policy sub-systems exist and that they include and are open to non-state actors (this assumption is quite reasonable since these models are based on and used for explaining policymaking in liberal democratic political systems), my Model helps us understand how non-state actors gain access to policy sub-systems within government and, by extension, how "advocacy coalitions" can be formed. Furthermore, contributing to our understanding of the other end of the political spectrum, this Model also helps explain the process through which "fragmented authoritarian" political systems, to use the well accepted conceptualization developed by Kenneth Lieberthal and Michel Oksenberg (1988), can become more pluralized.[24]

Research Design

If my main interest is how citizens teach states to listen, why focus on the environment? There are two main reasons for this choice. First, based on measurable outcomes, such as those discussed at the beginning of the paper, the environment is an issue area where there has been significant policy change in favor of an agenda advocated by groups in society in the absence of a large mass mobilization effort or strong, national political organization and in the presence of powerful vested interests with anti-environmental preferences and agendas. Therefore, this is an area where I suspect the process articulated by the Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy has taken place. Second, there is sufficient variation on the key independent variables—relative "threat" of the advocacy, utilization of channels of influence, and connection to existing policy goal—within environmental politics that testing the Model becomes possible. Below is a table listing issues that can be found in the different quadrants with the hypothesized outcomes in brackets.

I will test this model in several ways. First, I will attempt to create a dataset of environmental issues in East Asia and determine to what extent the three independent variables affected the outcomes. I have not yet found a good way to develop such a dataset and am still looking for information that would enable me to compile one.

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[24] See Andrew Mertha, ""Fragmented Authoritarianism 2.0": Politial Pluralization in the Chinese Policy Process," *The China Quarterly* 200, no. 1 (2009). and Mertha, *China's Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Change.* for examples demonstrating the pluralization of the fragmented authoritarianism political process.

Table 3: Hypotheses for Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy

	Threatening Issue	Nonthreatening Issue
Few channels	Dams Power plants Pollution Land Use (e.g., deforestation, farming, coastal reclamation) [Negative]	National parks Endangered animals [Mixed: + linked to preexisting policy goal - not linked to preexisting policy goal]
Multiple channels	Dams Power plants Pollution Land Use (e.g., deforestation, farming, coastal reclamation) [Mixed: + linked to preexisting policy goal - not linked to preexisting policy goal]	Renewable energy Eco-Mark (and similar programs) [Positive]

Second, focusing on Japan and China, I will pick matched case studies in each country that fall into each of the four quadrants above. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know prior to picking the case studies whether they vary on my independent variables, so I will be selecting to ensure variation on the dependent variable—successful advocacy—and then investigate to discover if my Model can help explain the variation in outcomes. Success will be measured along two dimensions: (a) whether the activists were able to gain concessions on their policy issue such that they perceived their effort to be successful, and (b) whether the process of advocacy on the issue resulted in opening up additional channels to policy makers that remained open after the resolution of the particular issue.

I will pick one "threatening" issue area and seek out four matched case studies (one success and one failure in both Japan and China) related to either pollution or land use. My original findings on this issue area will then be supplemented using the significant secondary literature that has emerged concerning the politics related to dam construction in both countries.[25] I will pick three different "nonthreatening" cases—national parks (success), endangered species

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[25] See as examples Daniel P. Aldrich, *Site Fights: Divisive Facilities and Civil Society in Japan and the West* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008).and Waley, "Ruining and Restoring Rivers: The State and Civil Society in Japan." for Japan and Mertha, *China's Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Change*, Gørild Heggelund, *Environment and Resettlement Politics in China: The Three Gorges Project* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004). Elizabeth Economy, *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004). for China.

(failure), and eco-mark (success) and use a combination of primary research and secondary source materials to test the Model in those cases. If possible, the in-depth case studies in Japan and China will be supplemented with matched cases in other East Asian political systems where political processes are likely to be similar: Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore.

Throughout the research process, especially during preliminary interviews prior to conducting the in-depth case studies, I will be asking questions and distributing brief surveys to test the Model's validity. In particular, I will give political actors at all levels brief surveys that are essentially blank versions of Table 1 and 2, with a list of suggested political actors and channels listed beside the empty tables. I will ask survey recipients to place the actors (and channels) in the boxes that they think are the most appropriate as well as to add actors/channels that they think are relevant but that I may have overlooked. I will be asking respondents to disclose which channels they use and which channels they think are the most important as well as which political actors they think are the most influential. These data will not only give me a good idea of whether my Model and the hypothesized power relationships and channels of influence are perceived to be accurate by those involved in the policy process, but it will also help me to refine the Model to make it more accurately reflect the actual policy process.

Finally, I will actively seek to find cases that disprove my Model or cases that might serve to be "the exception that proves the rule." These would be cases of failure where advocacy was not threatening, multiple channels were utilized, and the issue was consistent with preexisting government policies. Alternatively, and perhaps most interestingly would be a case of success where an issue was highly threatening, few channels were utilized, and the issue was not in line with government policies. Since no Model can be perfectly predictive, I expect that cases that do not fit exist, and discovering why the Model does not work in those cases will help me to refine the Model further.

Preliminary Evidence

Evidence gathered from secondary sources offers a bit of preliminary support for the Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy. In looking at the "threatening" case of dam construction and the "nonthreatening" case of renewable energy, a reading of the secondary literature reveals patterns that are consistent with the Model.

In Japan (and France) Daniel Aldrich (2008) has found that communities with strong civil society networks were able to delay and halt dam projects (and other unwanted projects such as airports and nuclear power plants) at much higher rates then communities with few civil society organizations. The reasons he gives for this finding are two-fold. First, governments avoided trying to site unwanted facilities in areas where citizens were well

organized. Second, if the government made the unfortunate choice of selecting a site where citizens were or became well organized, organized citizens were able to pressure the state to come up with concessions to compensate the communities or, in some cases, abandon plans for the site.

In the case study information Aldrich talks about the multiple channels of communication that the civil society organizations used to access local, and, sometimes, national policy makers. Most of the civic organizations that played important roles were informal and local ones that targeted local bureaucratic officials using multiple channels for their advocacy. In the cases where citizens didn't organized, not surprisingly, the state was able to go ahead with its plans. In cases where citizens did organize but the state went ahead with its plans and often used coercion Aldrich argues that the result was a function of weak civil society. A re-reading of the evidence suggests that the variation he found is also consistent with my Model: failure to resist the unwanted government project was either (a) the use of few channels, and/or (b) allowing the advocacy to become a threatening one for the regime.

In the case of dam construction in China, evidence from the secondary literature is also consistent with my Model.[26] The high profile Three Gorges Dam project became so threatening for the state that it was politically difficult for the state to halt construction without looking like it had made poor policy choices and was weak in response to citizen protests. Similarly in Pubuguo, few channels of communication with state officials led to pent-up rage among citizens, culminating in public riots that threatened the state, once again making it very difficult for the government to give advocates what they wanted without losing credibility and legitimacy.

From the more positive side, cases such as the delayed projects along the Nu River and the turnaround in Dujiangyan show that when citizens use multiple channels to access the state, they can win allies on the inside who can help them re-frame debates such that halting a project becomes consistent with an equally important state goal (e.g., cultural heritage) and policy makers stop or delay construction. In those cases it becomes possible for policy outcomes to be a win-win for advocates and state officials—halting construction gains the state credibility and wins public respect and support.

A cursory review of the "nonthreatening" case of renewable energy development also lends support for my Model. Japan was one of the world's first governments to promote

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[26] See especially Mertha, *China's Water Warriors: Citizen Action and Policy Change*, Ralph Litzinger, " In Search of the Grassroots: Hydroelectric Politics in Northwest Yunnan," in *Grassroots Political Reform in Contemporary China*, ed. Elizabeth Perry and Merle Goldman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), Kristen Nicole McDonald, "Damming China's Grand Canyon: Pluralization without Democratization in the Nu River Valley," (Berkeley, CA: 2007), Economy, *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, Heggelund, *Environment and Resettlement Politics in China: The Three Gorges Project*.

renewable energy industries as a national strategy of what is now often called "green development." While the energy industry is a powerful one, promoting renewables did not represent much of a threat to the vested energy companies since, even now, renewables represent a only a small proportion of total energy production and consumption. Furthermore, a number of large manufacturing interests saw renewable energy as a large business opportunity, so the business community helped frame the issue in line with the preexisting government goal of economic development. These businesses were supported by civil society groups who worked especially at local levels but also national levels to advocate for pro-environmental policies. These multiple actors utilized multiple channels to access policy makers at local and national levels to encourage aggressive policies to promote renewable energy use and production. The result was a win-win for advocates and the government—all sides got to claim positive credit for the outcome.[27]

Similarly in China, renewable energy offered a policy "solution" to several policy "problems" (to use Kingdon's terminology). It could promote economic growth, rural development, and national energy security. Furthermore, just as in the Japanese case, while vested energy companies are powerful interests who might have been opposed to massive government investment in renewables, in the Chinese case they have been co-opted, since it is often the state-owned power companies who are receiving government grants (from national and international sources) to diversify their sources to include renewable energy. These corporate interests were supported by civil society activists promoting environmentally friendly development strategies. While particular "policy entrepreneurs" may have been important, the policy outcomes are not credited to specific individuals. It is likely that it was multiple channels utilized by activists that enabled them to cultivate elite allies who then crafted policies that worked as win-win outcomes for activists and the state.[28]

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[27] See Koichi Hasegawa, *Constructing Civil Society in Japan: Voices of Environmental Movements* (Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press, 2004), McKean, *Environmental Protest and Citizen Politics in Japan*, Hidefumi Imura and Miranda Schreurs, eds., *Environmental Policy in Japan* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2005).

[28] Neil Carter and Arthur Mol, *Environmental Governance in China* (New York: Routledge, 2008), Economy, *The River Runs Black: The Environmental Challenge to China's Future*, Matthew Givner, "The Story Behind the Boom: International and Domestic Sources of Influence on Chinese Renewable Energy Policy-Making.," in *Undergraduate Honors Thesis* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University, 2010).

Implications

The Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy makes several contributions to our understanding of politics and has a number of implications for studies of comparative politics, advocacy, civil society, and public participation. The Model offers new analytic tools to understand advocacy and policy making. Since this Model has taken East Asian single-party states as its starting place, it offers a robust model of political advocacy that is applicable to a diverse array of political systems. As a result, it can offer insight into policy making and political advocacy in both democratic and nondemocratic systems.

For politics in democratic systems, the Model pushes scholars to investigate the multiple ways that citizens can access and influence policy makers outside formally institutionalized forums. It also encourages scholars to investigate how citizens and interest groups are targeting the "less political" elements of the state in order to influence policy. Identifying the relative importance of the different channels—formal, informal, direct, and indirect—on government policy making would be a fruitful new avenue for research on politics in democratic countries.

For those interested in politics in democratizing and nondemocratic political systems, this Model opens up new possibilities for investigating citizen involvement in policy making that may not have been apparent before. The Model creates a clear analytic framework that helps reveal processes that had earlier been put into the black box of "backroom politics." For activists and policy makers interested in improving governance in developing countries, this Model suggests new ways that civic participation can be increased in ways that improve governance.

For scholars studying "enduring authoritarianism" this Model offers some insights into ways that authorities systems have been able to become more open and responsive to citizens even while retaining complete political control. This will be a hopeful finding for some and a sobering one for others. On the one hand, this Model offers those seeking to increase civic participation and government responsiveness in a context of political repression some clear strategies that can help them achieve those goals. On the other hand, those seeking to democratize undemocratic states may be disheartened that pluralization of politics and increased civic participation need not contribute to political democratization. Indeed, this Model contributes to the understanding of the mechanisms through which successful political advocacy reinforces state legitimacy, so increased levels of civic participation leads to greater rather than lesser power for the regime.[29]

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[29] For example, Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "Enduring Authoritarianism: Middle East Lessons for Comparative Theory," *Comparative Politics* 36, no. 2 (2004), Robert Paul Weller, *Alternate Civilities: Democracy and Culture in China and Taiwan* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan," *Comparative Politics* 33, no. 1

Readers belonging to this latter group may criticize the Multi-Channel Model of Political Advocacy as merely a step-by-step guide on how to corrupt public officials. Indeed, if private channels of political influence are not accompanied by some measure of transparency and political accountability, they will certainly be prone to utilization for corrupt purposes. There must be mechanisms in place, whether formal or informal, to keep the channels open to a variety of actors so one type or one group does not dominate a particular channel. When this happens the channel ceases to be a channel that is open to multiple actors acting as a two-way communication pipeline to state policy makers and turns into merely a specific personal or organizational connection. Furthermore, if one particular channel, even if it is utilized by a diverse set of actors, comes to dominate others, it will reduce the likelihood that crosschecking information across channels will be possible, enhancing the possibility of corruption.

The chief benefit to advocates and policymakers of utilization multiple channels—direct, indirect, formal, and informal—is that multiple channels of citizen access to the state diversifies the voices heard by policy makers, which enables them to make better policy decisions. Furthermore, if the channels remain open, then they can also function to provide valuable feedback to policy makers about the effectiveness of policy. Thus, the existence of multiple channels serves not only to influence the creation of policy, but also help to evaluate and refine policy. Multiple channels therefore can lead to better—more efficient, more effective, more appropriate—policy.

East Asian citizens inside and outside of government have made extraordinary strides in finding creative ways to access and influence their political leaders. The results, at least in the area of the environment, have been impressive policy accomplishments and political processes that have been diversified to include a wider array of citizen voices. Scholars, policymakers, and activists from around the world can learn from their strategies as they seek to improve public policy and political participation in their own societies. ■

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