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Transnational Relations and Activism in International Relations: Debates and Consensus in Literature

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**TRANSNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ACTIVISM IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:
DEBATES AND CONSENSUS IN LITERATURE**

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Abstrak

*Tulisan ini membahas tentang peran aktivisme transnasional dalam ilmu Hubungan Internasional utamanya bagaimana peran masyarakat sipil dalam advokasi transnasional. Menjadi menarik membahas peran masyarakat sipil dalam politik internasional mengingat negara bukan lagi satu satunya aktor yang utama dalam ilmu Hubungan Internasional di era globalisasi. Tulisan tentang Hubungan Transnasional antara lain sudah dibahas oleh teoritis ilmu Hubungan Internasional seperti Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995), namun gagasan atau teori tentang aktivisme transnasional yang paling komprehensif dibahas oleh Margaret Keck dan Kathryn Sikkink (1998) dalam bukunya *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Terdapat beberapa perspektif yang dapat digunakan untuk membahas aktivisme transnasional dalam kajian ilmu Hubungan Internasional. Dalam tulisan ini penulis menggunakan lensa konstruktivisme dan lensa kritis untuk membahas perdebatan dan pergulatannya dalam ilmu Hubungan Internasional. Metode penulisan menggunakan studi literatur yang intensif. Bagian pertama dari tulisan ini berisi kajian literatur tentang transnationalisme dan aktivisme transnational dalam ilmu Hubungan Internasional (state of the art). Bagian kedua adalah diskusi dalam literatur tentang transnasionalisme dan aktivisme transnational yang meliputi tema tentang difusi norma, pola bumerang, struktur kesempatan politik dan efektivitas dan akuntabilitas serta konsensus dalam perdebatan tersebut. Bagian ketiga adalah kesimpulan yang bisa ditarik dari perdebatan ini.*

Kata kunci:

Transnasionalisme, Aktivisme Transnasional, Jejaring Advokasi Transnasional

Abstract

*This article explores the concepts of transnational relations and activism in the study of International Relations, specifically the role of civil society in transnational advocacy. It is fascinating to discuss the role of civil society when state actors are no longer the most prominent actors in International Relations studies in the midst of globalisation. Some articles related to transnational relations have been written by the scholars of International Relations such as Thomas Risse-Kappen (1995). Even so, one of the most sophisticated concepts of transnational activism was introduced by Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998), in *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. In order to fully understand transnational activism in the study of International Relations, a divergent perspective can be applied. In this article, the authors aim to examine the recent debates and its counternarratives in International Relations through critical and constructivism lenses. Firstly, this article would describe the concepts of transnationalism and transnational activism in the study of International Relations (state of the art). Secondly, it would be a discussion in the literature on transnationalism and transnational activism which cover themes about norm diffusion, the 'boomerang pattern', political opportunity structures and accountability and effectiveness. The last part is conclusion that can be drawn from this consensus and debates in the concept of transnational activism.*

Keywords:

Transnationalism, Transnational Activism, Transnational Advocacy Networks

INTRODUCTION

Transnational Relations and Activism in International Relations

Since the end of the Cold War, many International Relations scholars have focused on redefining and understanding international politics. Dominated and led by states as a 'unitary actor', this state-centered approach leads up to the question of whether it is still relevant or not in the midst of globalisation. Responding to the ongoing debates, as stated by Risse-Kappen (1995), with looking at the emergence of network among non-state actors and their impact on world politics, we have to put 'transnational relations' on the map.

The question that pop up is what is the meaning of transnational relations? The concept of transnational relations itself has been disputed throughout history. During the early 1970s, Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane offered the definition of transnational relations as "interactions across state boundaries that are not controlled by the central foreign policy organs of governments" (Nye and Keohane, 1971, p. 331). Despite acknowledging that states are no longer the only prominent actors in world politics, Nye and Keohane pointed out that transnational relations are reliant on the political relations between states and international organizations as well as *vice versa*, meaning that transnational actors work on the same structures under the diffusion of ideas and attitudes (Nye and Keohane, 1971, p. 748).

The next phase of understanding transnational relations is related to international political economy. By utilising free trade agreements and advanced transportations, it is without a doubt multinational corporations (MNCs) have had a strong influence on transnational activities to challenge state sovereignty (Wilkins, 1971). However, since the mid of 1990s, the theoretical debates surrounding globalisation have been very dynamic due to the 'unfulfilled' futures of neoliberalism that is leading to the emergence of anti-globalisation movements (Falk, 1997; Gills, 2000; O'Brien et al, 2000; Slaughter 2008). As a result, this second stage of knowing and understanding transnational relations and activism in an attempt to fight injustice in domestic politics is usually structured, in particular by international regimes or institutions.

Even so, the second stage of the concept of transnational relations is unable to capture the intersections between transnational relations and domestic structures. In this latest stage of the concept of transnational relations, Risse-Kappen argued that the works of transnational actors are dependent on differences in domestic structures and degrees of international institutionalisation to bring about policy changes (1995, pp. 6-7). Although

Risse-Kappen has strongly attempted to refine the concept of transnational relations, he never explicitly mentioned who transnational actors are. Until Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink subsequently came up with the new category of transnational actors in *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*.

Different from Nye and Keohane who attempted to distinguish transnational actors and their units of activities (1971, p.732), transnational advocacy networks may include many of the following actors, such as; (1) international and national non-governmental organisations (NGOs), (2) local social movements, (3) foundations, (4) the media, (5) parts of regional and international intergovernmental organisations, (7) state officials or branches (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Tarrow, 2001). Moreover, since the post-9/11 era, the idea of ‘secularisation’ in the International Relations studies has faded (Kubálková, 2009). Religious actors nowadays have a significant role to take a part in influencing world politics and global discourse through transnational religious actors which have similarity with the work of NGOs (Haynes, 2001; Kristiono, 2017).

Keck and Sikkink themselves defined that a transnational advocacy network includes those relevant actors working internationally on an issue, who are bound together by shared values, a common discourse, and dense exchanges of information and services (1998, p. 2). Activists in networks may have ‘compulsory power’ to persuade or even to pressure their target actors. By exercising compulsory power, they not only work to influence policy outcomes, but also to transform and participate in policy debates through immaterial resources (Barnett and Duvall, 2005; Baldwin, 2002). With that spirit, transnational advocacy networks aim to work toward global justice which strategically aligned with cosmopolitan values and universal norms (Buzan, 2004). Furthermore, it legitimates that the emergence of transnational advocacy networks or transnational societies has a significant role and impact on international politics.

To fully understand the concept of transnational relations and activism over historical conjunctures, Engin Erdem (2015) examined International Relations theories in regard to transnational activism. With a number of arguments, Erdem found that realist theories seem to look down on them, whereas neo-liberal institutionalism gives them a turning point in world politics. Nonetheless, constructivism provides a better theoretical framework regarding the importance of re-defining world politics “as carries of norms and challengers of modern nation-state system; sovereignty (Erdem, 2015, p. 314)”. From that background, it shows us that the concepts of transnational relations and activism are imperative in the study of International Relations. Furthermore, the growing academic

literature in recent years drives more opportunities to broaden understanding of transnational activism in world politics.

Referring to that, the need to further research and deepen analytical views is indispensable. Therefore, this article provides literature review on transnational activism topics by using intensive literature review methods (Adonis, 2019). As a guideline for mapping literature, the authors come up with the main questions related to the topics reviewed; how is the development of concept of transnational activism? And what kind of significant issue(s) usually emerge when discussing transnational activism? By selecting and mapping more than thirty-five articles, the authors found several major categories according to the guideline questions. The main categories are; 1) norms diffusion, 2) the boomerang pattern, 3) political opportunity structure, 4) accountability and effectiveness.

Table 1. The Literature Mapping

No.	Taxonomy or Classification	Literature
1.	Norm Diffusion	Klotz (1995); Risse (2000); Katzenstein (1996); Finnemore & Sikkink (1998); Brysk (1993); Keck & Sikkink (1998); Risse, Ropp & Sikkink (1999), (2015); de Almagro (2018); Bucher (2014); Acharya (2004); Cortell & Davis (1996), (2005); Pastor (1980); Zwingle (2012); Huikuri (2018); Betts & Orchard (2014).
2.	The Boomerang Pattern	Keck & Sikkink (1998); Pallas (2016); Waites (2019); Gombosuren & Hellema (2018); Bassano (2014); Rodríguez-Garavito & Gomez (2018); Alston (2017); Rodríguez-Garavito (2015).
3.	Political Opportunity Structures	Tarrow (2001), (2005); Soetjipto (2018); Keck & Sikkink (1998); Yuliestiana (2018); Gunderson (2008), (2015); Ramadhan (2018); Cammaerts (2012); Moor & Wahlström (2019).

4.	Accountability and Effectiveness	Shawki (2011); Keck & Sikkink (1998); Arensman, van Wessel & Hilhorst (2017); Pacheco-Vega (2015); Andia & Chorev (2017); Steffek & Hahn (2010); Tamzil (2016).
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In addition, there is another guideline for literature review and the type that would be conducted for this research is integrative review or critical review approach. This approach aims to “synthesise the literature on a research topic in a way that enables new theoretical frameworks and perspectives to emerge (Torraco 2005; Snyder, 2019).” Building on that, this article utilises liberal constructivism theories to examine and point out the ongoing debate of the specific themes that are already mentioned above as well as get consensus about the main arguments regarding the concept of transnational activism. Finally, it ends with a conclusion.

DISCUSSION

Norm Diffusion

Many established literatures review how norms are diffused and internalised. The discourse on norms in the conceptual development of transnational relations and activism can be tracked by the general discovery of the constructivist approach (Klotz 1995; Risse, 2000; Katzenstein, 1996). One of the foremost literatures was written by Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink in “International Norm Dynamic and Political Change”. Finnemore and Sikkink offered a terminology, namely the norm “life cycle” and it may be understood as a three-stage process; norm emergence, norm cascade, and the last stage is internalisation (1998, p. 895).

On the other hand, the diffusion of international norms in human rights is supposed to have a simultaneous mechanism between domestic and transnational actors. This role among networks is to impose international norms and regimes on domestic politics and structures by using a typology of tactics “from above” and “from below” (Brysk, 1993; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Risse et al. (1999) stated that there are three types of concepts of the socialisation process that may be used for practical purpose in enduring normative change; from the process of adaptation, persuasion to internalisation and habitualisation. With this regard, there is no way to implement international norms without understanding the whole process of norms socialisation.

Despite offering significant approaches, many social constructivists are absent to figure out when norms clash and shift during the process of norm diffusion. They assumed that international norms can be solely accepted through socialisation mechanisms. By doing research in the field of transnational activism with a case study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in Burundi and Liberia, Maria Martin de Almagro (2018) argued that the degree of internal dynamics of discourse negotiations between local and transnational actors play a key role to build a consensus and influence the diffusion of the implementation of international norms. This negotiation, whether it will reach a general consensus or not is highly determined by the underlying power relations among networks. Therefore, instead of demonstrating norm diffusion, it is way better to transform it into norms politics (Bucher, 2014).

Another scholar, namely Amitav Acharya has sought to draw attention related to norm diffusion. According to Acharya, constructivist scholars tend to insist on delivering global norms over local beliefs and practices. In other words, global norms are considered more valuable than local norms. Furthermore, that thought seems to undermine the role of local actors in the process of socialisation (Acharya, 2004, p. 242). To defuse tension between transnational goals and domestic norms, Acharya provided a scheme, called localisation to mainstream global norms into domestic politics. This process of localisation was described as a process that local agents reconstruct foreign norms to ensure the norms fit with the agents's cognitive priors and identities (Acharya, 2004, p. 239).

Responding to those debates, the next question is under what conditions this process of norm diffusion, in the end, can affect actual behaviour of states? In order to better understand the outcomes of norm diffusion, Andrew Cortell and James Davis were conscious of the need to emphasise their points that international norms are not only able to affect states and state behaviour, but also country's policy choice. It means that when discussing the discursive approach to norm diffusion at the level of domestic structures, states are no longer seen as a unitary actor but a component of domestic political actors that refer to state or government officials, legislative bodies and societal actors (Cortell and Davis, 1996). As a consequence, this political process among actors will lead to "favor different foreign policy priorities on any given issue" or even worse "norms clash" due to obfuscations and institutional biases (Pastor 1980; Cortell and Davis, 2005; Zwingle, 2012).

Salla Huikuri has tried to give empirical research on Indonesia with the question of the non-ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The continued failure to ratify these global norms toward a more just world is because there is no common understanding among domestic political actors that meet with strong obstructions and obfuscations (Huikuri, 2018). Furthermore, the notions of sovereignty and non-interference remain a challenge for state actors to comply with international human rights norms and standards. In brief, further debate on norm diffusion in the study of transnational activism is to ensure that the process of socialisation is revolutionised to face the challenges in an uncertain world, including the world of activism itself (Betts and Orchard, 2014; Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, 2015).

The Boomerang Pattern

When talking about transnational activism, the boomerang pattern is by far the most well-known configuration. The boomerang pattern provides an opportunity for local or domestic actors to gain leverage by seeking international allies, especially with northern activists and major powers to work on pressuring their states from different sides. It usually occurs when states seem remarkably phlegmatic to address, in particular, human rights issues in domestic politics as well as the diminishing of activism within domestic actors. Even, it has often been conducted by unnecessary and excessive use of force which constitutes human rights violations. With these interrelated activities, transnational advocacy networks may appear. Transnational networks work to set up political opportunity structures at international level by implementing some tactics and strategies, such as information politics, symbolic politics, leverage politics, and accountability politics (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

A point to note, this traditional ‘boomerang’ effect is not the only possible configuration. Cristopher Pallas then demonstrated another mechanism, called inverse boomerang. Unlike conventional boomerang pattern which responds to local needs, this new pattern is not necessarily representative of local agendas. In this case, transnational actors try to recruit domestic actors, whose needs and purposes meet with global norms, for supporting their international campaigns as well as persuading major powers and other international policymakers (Pallas, 2016, p. 9). Moreover, with the inverse boomerang, the role of transnational actors is not ‘simply’ to solve a specific local issue. In fact, it enhances the legitimacy of transnational actors to encounter international blockages and pursue global advocacy (Pallas, 2016).

However, bringing broader ideas about ‘global advocacy’ is too vague, and in the end, it leads to critics and paradoxes. Relating to its theoretical foundation, the boomerang pattern is such a masterpiece, an intriguing and enchanting mechanism, following decades of effort to ensure justice for all, but it seems to ‘preserve’ power relations between activists in the ‘North’ and the ‘South’. Even, when the boomerang pattern/‘inverse’ occurs, it tends to focus on international discourse rather than local values (Pallas, 2016). By pointing out that argumentation, this model of boomerang pattern could possibly dismiss the role of Southern activists over international campaigns. To make it matters, ‘the boomerang pattern model should be engaged, decolonised, and rethought (Waites 2019, pp. 387).’ It means that it should bring about activism which is locally relevant and globally impactful (Gombosuren and Hellema, 2018).

On the other hand, transnational activism scholars have found that this boomerang advocacy is still the existence of gaps between theory and practice. David Bassano argued that the boomerang pattern is designed to work and succeed, “but are not very detailed about how it actually does work (Bassano 2014, p. 27)”. For instance, in the case of the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran human rights movements, the domestic actors worked with transnational actors to bypass the blockage in domestic politics. However, these transnational networks which led by Amnesty International USA had to face obstacles during their advocacy to influence U.S. foreign policy toward human rights violations in El Salvador (Bassano, 2014). According to that case, the boomerang pattern is considered inadequate for describing the limitations of transnational advocacy networks (Bassano, 2014).

Furthermore, reflecting on the current situations in world politics where the populist leaders are rising all over the world and echoing the ‘pretentious’ jargon of ultra-nationalism (Norris and Inglehart, 2019) and populism becomes a new threat to liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 2018; Roger and Goodwin, 2018), is the boomerang approach still relevant? To answer that question, instead of thinking as a new threat, this should be a wake-up call for all activists both in the North and the South (Rodríguez-Garavito and Gomez, 2018). For that reason, a catalyst for fundamental change is needed to overcome the challenges. It is also to strengthen the work among activists in their efforts to advocate global justice without dividing rights regarding the rise of the populist challenge (Alston, 2017).

With the rise of the populist leaders within major powers in the Global North, activists should think ‘beyond borders’. To acknowledge that every activism has different

sorts of issues, Rodríguez-Garavito (2015) demonstrated wider ideas about adjusting the models of boomerang pattern, called ‘the multiple boomerangs’. This model rises in order to advance the impact on pressuring target states toward multiple and divergent channels. In this case, the multiple boomerangs established networks among Southern activists or ‘a South-South boomerang’ of Latin American NGOs is an example. Besides the multiple boomerangs, there is another approach, namely ‘the internal boomerang’ that allows transnational actors, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, to signify their presence in the Global South and work directly with domestic actors. These new versions are possible ways to make up for the classical boomerang pattern in the age of the populist challenge (Rodríguez-Garavito and Gomez, 2018).

Political Opportunity Structures

The key concept of political opportunity structures has been mainly developed and constructed by the scholar of contentious politics. When referring to the era of globalisation, this concept leads to a new paradigm shift ‘from the old to the new transnationalism’ and also to understand the intersections between the study of contentious politics and IR (Tarrow, 2001; Soetjipto, 2018). Sidney Tarrow (2005, p. 8) argues that globalisation provides “an opportunity structure within which transnational activism can emerge”. The effect of globalisation on transnational activism briefly defines how political opportunity structures can be ‘enforced’ within the international sphere. This new nuance that goes beyond local activism reveals the influence of transnational networks on world politics as stated by Keck and Sikkink (1998).

However, from the critical point of view, the ‘existing’ international law could be an obstruction for activists to acquire political opportunity structures. With this regard, by drawing an example; “Discourse on Transnational Advocacy Networks: a case study on East Timorese self-Determination”, Yuliestiana (2018) argued that the work of transnational networks in the process of norms socialisation may eventually fail to reach because of norms clash. This occurs when the inalienable right of the people to self-determination is challenged by the norm of state sovereignty. Hence, activism deploys to create or even abrogate existing categories of international law and standards when the work of international actors coincides with domestic actors in an attempt to create rather than to seek political opportunity structures (Yuliestiana 2018, pp. 68, 76).

Moreover, when talking about activism, there is dissent from this view that the activists themselves do not always considered as important in creating momentum for

social change. Shane Gunderson (2008) stated that at least two factors are missing from the process of framing; the first is ‘the momentum of oppositional argument’ and the second is ‘goal attainment’. This momentum itself is described as “a driving social force furthered by an emerging feeling of inevitability harnessed to achieve goals in such a way that it attracts broader public support (Gunderson 2015, p. 1)”. From this perspective, the theoretical approach highlights the need for improved activism. It means that the openness of political opportunity structures even at the international stage does not occur by itself, but it comes about when “collective actors feel a turning point (Gunderson 2015, p. 4)”.

Others argued that it is indispensable to create a momentum for political opportunity and it is a thing, but to keep it in existence is another thing. To advance this notion, there is an urgent need to lift the concept of political opportunity structures into another level of activism. With the more advanced technology nowadays, opportunity structures are supposed to go beyond physical space or ‘deterritorialisation’ (Ramadhan, 2018). Following on from this, Bart Cammaerts (2012) has devoted himself to offer a conceptual framework to fill a lacuna between movement studies and media and communication. He stressed that the patterns of ‘the mediation opportunity structure’, as a new scheme, is distinct from political opportunity structure. It consists of three mutual immaterial strategies of activists; media, networked, and discursive which are more inclusive (Cammaerts 2012, p. 120). Moreover, constructing a discursive approach is considered to be necessary and more powerful compared to the framing process (Moor and Wahlström, 2019).

Accountability and Effectiveness

Exploring the conditions necessary for successful advocacy efforts is an enduring topic in transnational advocacy networks literature. Shawki (2011) expanded Keck and Sikkink’s (1998) suggestion that how transnational advocacy networks are organised may influence their political impact. Shawki found that organisational characteristics, such as membership diversity and inter-network density, affect the campaign outcomes of transnational advocacy networks in peacebuilding. Arensman, van Wessel and Hilhorst (2017) investigated the case of a transnational advocacy networks called the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict to test the belief in international development policy that shared ownership enhances effectiveness. They found that the concepts of effectiveness and ownership are too multidimensional, with the relationship between them also depending on how each concept is defined.

Other scholars turned to the concept of knowledge as a factor that affects successful advocacy. Compared to the importance of network members sharing values and beliefs, the function of knowledge as an additional tie has been less explored. Pacheco-Vega (2015) demonstrated that the process of exchanging knowledge serves to further strengthen network cohesion, thus having a positive effect on transnational advocacy networks effectiveness. In fact, omitting consideration of knowledge may result in a failure to explain certain advocacy campaign outcomes. Andia and Chorev (2017) argued that differing levels of effectiveness amongst transnational advocacy networks in influencing WHO health policies are more easily explained by considering the knowledge factor. Specifically, transnational advocacy networks can be more effective if the data employed by activists are perceived as more legitimate and are delivered by credible experts (Andia and Chorev, 2017, pp. 261–262).

Another discussion that can be highlighted is the notion of legitimacy of transnational advocacy networks. The meaning of legitimacy itself is related to a devoted representation of beneficiaries' interests and being accountable to them (Steffek and Hahn, 2010). Nevertheless, bearing in mind the above mentioned, the claims of legitimacy of transnational advocacy networks may highly constitute hierarchy which seems to look down on the role of Southern activists in regard to 'paternalistic advocacy'. In addition, the failure of demonstrating greater accountability to put beneficiaries over donors still remains an obstacle. Without a critical approach, the legitimacy of transnational advocacy networks is likely to end up massively. Therefore, the need to stop projecting and perceiving beneficiaries as lower, passive and political vacuum is essential toward global justice and solidarity (Tamzil, 2016).

CONSENSUS

The discussion on transnationalism and transnational activities in this paper focuses on the role and leverage of civil society vis-a-vis contemporary state in the era of globalisation. The literature research concerns more on transnational advocacy that moves beyond the traditional approach of agents and structures as the central idea of the neoliberal theory of international relations. This article uses the perspective of liberal constructivism that highlights the more flexible structure of actors' preferences and the change of actors' capacities within the structure. This results from, not only material factors, but also non-material such as ideas, cultures, norms, and identities.

The terms of non-state actors, non-governmental organisations, transnational advocacy networks and transnational global civil society are distinguished from transnational network, coalition, and advocacy campaign and social movement since they involve coordinated tactics and mobilisation of people in protests (Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, 2002). In this paper, the concept of transnational civil society means self-organised advocacy groups that undertake voluntary collective actions across state borders in pursuit of what they deem as wider public interests (Ikenberry and Florini, 1999).

The intensive survey literature has shown the impacts and constraints of transnational activism. In the case of development and implementation of new norms, the consensus is that such effort is more likely to be successful to the extent if the norm can be grafted on to previously accepted norms. On the debate about the value of producing international treaties that are initially very weak, the argument for such treaties is that they create new norms that over time may become stronger even on the situations that states do not take seriously. This tactic is useful for creating a weak framework for later campaigns. New norms that are weak are better than no new norms at all.

Key sources of the influence of transnational activism, according to the literature, mostly focus on authority. Authorities of transnational activism derive from three principal sources, namely expertise, moral influence, and a claim to political legitimacy. The influence of activists often appears in the pre-negotiation phase of an emergence norm on the initial drafting and more often revolves around the circulation of new ideas that later become embodied in policies or institutional changes. As found in the literature review, human rights activists as the provider of objective expertise, are regarded as neutral third parties whose information and claims can be trusted. The reputation of activists as a third actor that has no political interests and refuses to be politically active become the moral authority (Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, 2002, pp. 312-313). This is the primary factor in the influence of transnational activists, not only they can objectively provide accurate information, but they can also be 'morally right' in terms of the choice of knowledge.

Issues of representation and moral authority of transnational civil society claim that they somehow represent the public interest or common good (Risse in Florini, p. 186) are the source of criticism especially from those that are unquestionably representative. In the situation that activists are very unresponsive of such institutions, such as the government or international institution bigger and more powerful, when private citizens

feel the need to respond promptly from the political process. Facing this kind of criticism, Risse and Florini clarified that the transnational activists should not be seen as rivals to the power and processes of the state.

In a democracy, there are principles and credentials that every political actor must agree on not using the undemocratic means to replace government or usurp their decision-making authority. None of the literature under review suggests that the state is about to disappear. None of the research on transnational civil society activities sees that the transnational civil society will replace the state. Most of the studies demonstrate reconfiguration of state-society relations that some authors note of the role of transnational civil society to empower the state while others argue that transnational civil society aims to empower civil society.

The research on the success or failure of transnational activism often turns to domestic structure and culture to explain variations in success when the target are states. Political opportunity structure is a key concept to explain the success or failure in the social movement literature (Tarrow, 1998). Susan Burgerman (2001), for example, stated that a violator state will comply with human rights norms only if key elements of its domestic political elites are capable of exerting its authority or has concerns for the state's international reputation as a violator state. This is the same as claims of corporations campaigns which are more likely to succeed against firms with products vulnerable to the cost of a damaged reputation (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Following the important work of Risse-Kappen, drawing upon the domestic structural analysis of Katzenstein, Evangelista found that activists' influence in a strong state with powerful centralized political institution is unlikely, but can be very powerful once they can gain access (Evangelista, 1999, p.8). The main conclusion is that transnational civil society is much more likely to be effective where there are organized domestic groups in the target states that can "keep their issues on the international agenda and to provide information to international allies." In other words, domestic structural analysis is crucial in accounting for different experiences in the reception of transnational activism. Domestic civil society allies are crucial for the success of transnational activist campaigns.

Critical studies of International Relations underline the employing such structural account to much, instead, they often show how civil society groups not only depend upon but also foster the growth of participatory politics upon which the success often depends. As already mentioned in earlier pages, the reception of norms pushed by transnational

civil society is more likely to be successful to the extent they fit with the cultural context of the target. The importance of “fit, issue resonance, framing or cultural match” has strong support in the literature on the success or failure of advocacy works. Khagram, Riker and Sikkink (2002) found that political opportunity structure should be thought of not just in the domestic term but also in international term and taking seriously factors such as international norms, institution and organisation as important variable affecting the chance of success or failure. In this globalisation era, we should also take into account technological development and the role of information and communications technology that have significant impact on the work of transnational civil society.

CONCLUSION

While there are many perspectives within the literature on transnational civil society, the dominant one is still the liberal theoretical statement of world politics that establishes a theory transnational civil society. It would have a positive effect or progressive moral change. This bunch of research privileges the role of agency namely, transnational civil society activists. The liberal perspective is challenged by other theoretical approaches of the agents and structure model such as realism, neoliberalism, Wendtian constructivism, rationalist version of liberal theory with privilege analysis on domestic preferences, neo-Marxist approach with their focus on the structure and agent of capitalism and even the more state-centered version of English school which insist on the uniqueness and dominance of an international society of states.

Other criticism of liberal cast of much transnational civil society research has drawn the frequent complaint that it analyses “good campaign, but not bad campaign or failed campaigns.” The analysis of the role of transnational activists in the hardest contemporary case particularly in China has closed the gap and add a significant contribution in the research on transnational civil society. Scholars working on the issues of transnational civil society also face criticism of normative bias, “they must take seriously the need to match the rigor of their empirical analysis of normative politics with an equally vigorous defense of their implicit normative agenda for ultimately only such defense can legitimate the politics they observe and wish to encourage (Cooley and Ron, 2002, p.27).” On the ethical questions, scholars could respond with the division of labor argument that empirical researchers are not ethical theorists, and such work better left to philosophers. Empirical scholars could also agree and give footnotes the relevant corpus

of normative theory since there is a mutual interdependence of empirical and normative scholarly work in the field.

Transnational civil society literature provides a powerful collective moral challenge to alternative theories and demonstrates important synergies between empirical research and normative and positive theory. Transnational civil society puts importance in educating the public and providing information and showing that civil society is important participants in the transnational civil society network. The impact of their work, the issues they care and the strategy and tactic of the campaign they use to get what they want is a really important contribution of the scholarship in the study of international relations.

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