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People's Reaction to Media Framing of the Anti-G8 Movement in Japan: A Case Study of the Lake Toya Summit

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1. Research interest and the aims of this article

This short article aims to analyze how the anti-G8 protest staged at the time of the Toyako Summit held in July 2008 was evaluated and received by local residents, thereby clarifying the characteristics of the global social movement staged in the area. It aims also to examine whether the anti-G8 protest, a global social movement, is accepted by Japanese society by considering the significance of the protest to local residents and their acceptance of it.

With the emergence of transnational social movements (Smith *et al.*, 1997) and global social movements, interest in these movements has been increasing. As in studies of traditional social movements, the core issue in global social movement is in an explanation and detailed description of the process of mobilization in the movements. Earlier studies of global social movements, for example, were limited to the analysis of networks of media and groups (Della Porta, 2007; Rucht and Teune, 2008, etc.), and the research on the internet used by global movements (Donk *et al.*, 1993). This suggests that the investigation of global social movements is relatively difficult. Therefore, discussions concerning global social movements often merely present an inner narrative by

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an activist or someone active in the movement (Kurihara, 2008; Tiller, 2009; Graeber and Kohso, 2009, etc.). Thus, there has been little research involving analysis of how a movement is evaluated by people other than the participants involved in the movement. In this report, responses by ordinary citizens toward the anti-G8 movement are analyzed using data obtained from a questionnaire survey of citizens of Sapporo, where there was a massive demonstration against the Toyako Summit (participated in by 3,500 people) and of residents of local municipalities in the area where the Toyako Summit was held, as well as the coverage by the Japanese mass media, to discuss whether the anti-G8 movement is accepted by Japanese society.

2. Global movements protesting the Toyako Summit and response by the mass media

2-1. Global movements protesting the Toyako Summit

A global movement here is defined as “a movement promoted globally to mobilize a world that is being globalized.” Therefore, these global movements include a global justice movement, an alter-globalization movement, and an anti-globalization movement, as well as the existing labor movement, farmer movement, environmental movement, and student movement.

There are three main groups involved in the global movements concerning the Toyako Summit.

First, there is the “2008 Japan G8 Summit NGO Forum” (<http://www.g8ngoforum.org/>). This non-governmental organization (NGO) network, consisting of 100-150 organizations and groups, was started in January 2007, and has three areas of interest—Environment, Human Rights/Peace, and Poverty/Development—and makes policy recommendations to each member nation of the G8.

Second, there is the “G8 Action Network” (<http://www.jca.apc.org/alt-g8/>). This is an anti-neoliberal globalization network of various Japanese organizations and movements (about 50 groups comprised of a total of 200 people), and invited organizations of needy people, women, immigrants,

poor fishermen in cities and rural areas, and civil society to participate in all social movements against the dominance of various forms of free trade, war, militarism, privatization of services/resources, unfair taxes, and global finance.

The difference between the 2008 Japan G8 Summit NGO Forum and the G8 Action Network is often said to be in their views of the G8, whether or not they question the orthodoxy of the G8, strategic differences—policy recommendations or demonstrations, and ideological differences.

Third, there is the “Hokkaido Peoples’ Forum on the G8 Summit,” a network of citizens’ groups from Hokkaido where the summit was held. This is a network of non-profit organizations (NPOs), NGOs, and various civil society organizations and individuals, who wish to work together and demonstrate their ability to shape the future of society both globally and in Hokkaido (Ainu Moshir).

The following demonstrations were carried out before and during the Toyako Summit.

First, the “Challenge the G8 Summit Peace Walk for 10000 (Sapporo)” was held in the center of Sapporo, the prefectural capital of Hokkaido, in the afternoon of July 5, 2008. The number of participants was 3,500 according to the police. The Peace Walk array was formed with domestic citizen groups at the front, then anti-G8/foreign activists, and finally labor unions, which reflected the organizer’s desire to keep the demonstration under control. In reality, however, the demonstration array was widened by the participation of foreign activists, and four participants who conducted sound demonstrations were arrested by the police.

Second, a demonstration was held near Lake Toya. People who met at a camp near the lake participated in the demonstration. There were two demonstrations (July 7 and 8) with about 170 participants on each day in Toyoura-cho, and two demonstrations (July 8 and 9) with about 60 participants on each day in Sobetsu-cho.

There were was a massive police response to these demonstrations. According to one source, a total of 21,000 police officers were mobilized from all over Japan and the total security cost during the entire summit period was

approximately three billion yen.

2-2. Mass media response and the framework for analysis in this report

Next, we analyzed how the Lake Toya summit was reported by using a local newspaper, the Hokkaido Shimbun as the data source. Coverage by the Japanese mass media in the lead-up to the Toyako Summit can be divided into three types:

- 1) Warnings that the anti-G8 movement may turn into a riot, pointing to the protest against the Heiligendamm Summit in 2007. This included reports on how the police prepared for possible terrorist attacks on the summit.
- 2) Details of specific examples of “hospitality” provided by the administration and citizens during the summit.
- 3) Estimates of the economic effect from hosting the summit and the burden placed on local municipalities.

In fact, there was tight security by police during the anti-G8 movement demonstration held to protest the Toyako Summit, and arrests were made during the demonstration held in Sapporo immediately before the start of the summit. While the mass media’s evaluation of the summit was on the negative side as mentioned in 1) above, how did general citizens evaluate the anti-G8 movement? Put it in theoretical terms, while there was a master framework for global social movements, we want to think about how general citizens received that framework.

3. Data

This report uses the following two sets of survey data. First, a survey was conducted with citizens of Sapporo as shown Table 1. Second, a questionnaire survey was conducted with municipalities around the Toyako Summit as shown Table 2.

Table 1. Outline of the survey of the citizens of Sapporo

Date of survey	November 1-3, 2008
Targets of survey	Citizens of Sapporo registered as monitors with a portal site on the Internet (Yahoo!) (2,400 people)
Survey method	Web survey
Valid responses	1091
Response rate	45.46%

Table 2. Outline of the survey of the citizens of municipalities around Toyako Summit

Date of survey	December, 2008
Targets of survey	1,000 people from Toyako-cho, 500 people from Sobetsu-cho, 500 people from Toyoura-cho
Survey method	Distribution and collection through mail
Sampling	Random sampling from voter registration lists
Number of questionnaires collected	837 (Toyako-cho 426, Sobetsu-cho 218, Toyoura-cho 187, unknown 6).
Collection rate	41.8%

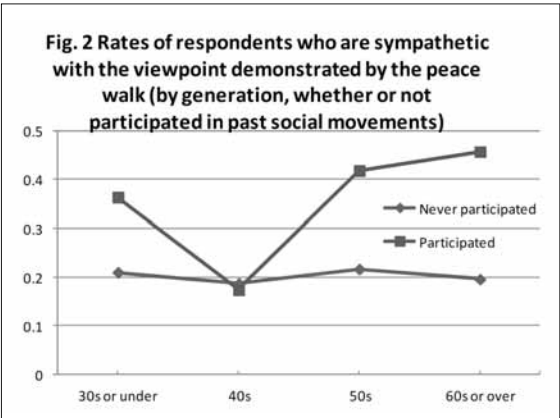
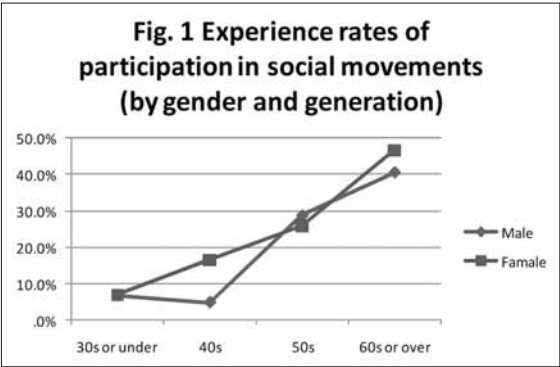
Furthermore, we held an interview to the local governments located around Lake Toya and also performed participant observation to anti-G8 movement. From the above data, we will analyze what kind of evaluation Sapporo residents and the residents of the local government around Lake Toya gave of the anti-G8 movement.

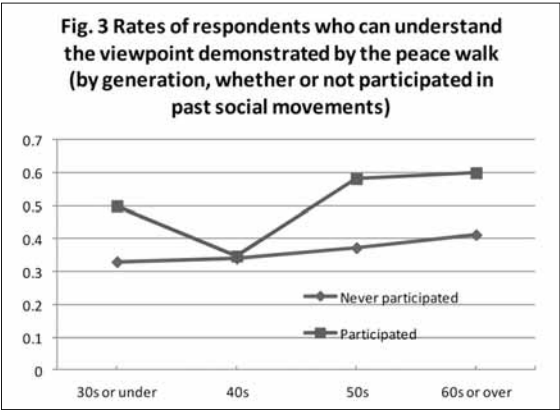
4. Data analysis and discussion

4-1. Response of Sapporo citizens

Regarding the response of Sapporo citizens to the peace walk, we established a hypothesis that people would evaluate the anti-G8 movement differently depending on their age group and whether they themselves had participated in a movement in the past, and we used these factors as analysis variables. Generally speaking, people in older generations have had more experience of participating in social movements. Figure 1 shows the rates of experience in participation in social movements by gender and generation.

Figure 2 shows the rates of respondents who are sympathetic with the viewpoint of the peace walk by generation, and whether they have had experience of participating in social movements. Figure 3 shows the rates of respondents who understood the viewpoint of the peace walk by generation and whether they have had experience of participating in social movements. Compared with those who had not participated in social movements, people who had such experience are more sympathetic with the peace walk and understand the viewpoint of the movement better. People in their forties who had participated in social movements, however, responded negatively to the peace walk.





In order to compare the evaluation of social movements in general with the evaluation of the current movement (peace walk), the movement was evaluated using the following four indexes: 1) the movement raises awareness of a social issue, 2) the movement is not a reflection of a selfish viewpoint of a small minority, 3) the movement is an effective means of presenting a viewpoint, and 4) the movement does not provoke any anxiety with respect to peace and public order.

Next, we analyzed the evaluation by those who have participated in a movement and those who have not, of the current peace walk and general movements for each of the four indexes (Figs. 4-7).

The overall tendency shows that the older the generation, the higher the evaluation is of general social movements, and people in their fifties or over who have taken part in social movements positively evaluate the effect of the current peace walk. However, their evaluation of general social movements is higher compared with the peace walk. This means that even those in their fifties who have participated in social movements and are in favor of social movements view the current anti-G8 movement negatively compared with past social movements in Japan.

Fig. 4 The peace walk or other social movements in Japan raise public awareness of social issues (by generation, whether or not participated in past social movements)

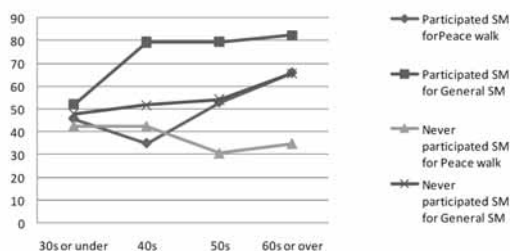


Fig. 5 The peace walk or other social movements in Japan are not a selfish viewpoint a small minority (by generation, whether or not participated in past social movements)

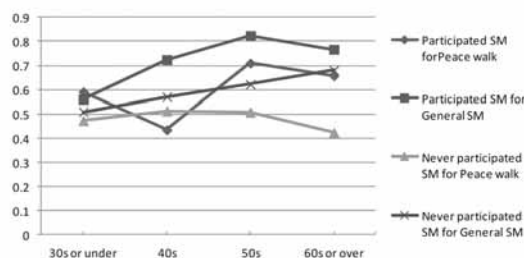
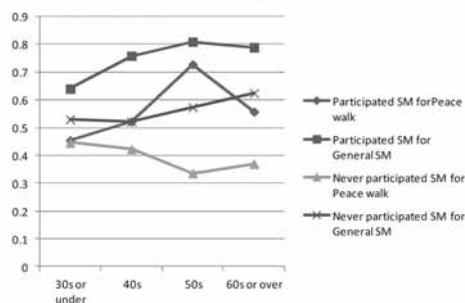
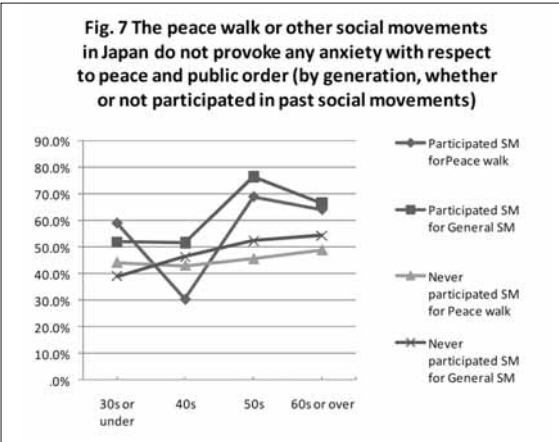


Fig. 6 The peace walk or other social movements in Japan are an effective way to present a viewpoint (by generation, whether or not participated in past social movements)





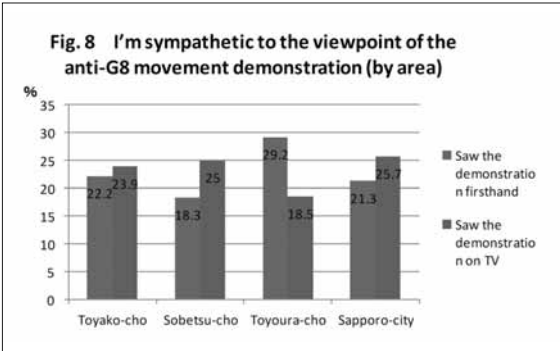
4-2. Response of residents in municipalities around the Toyako Summit

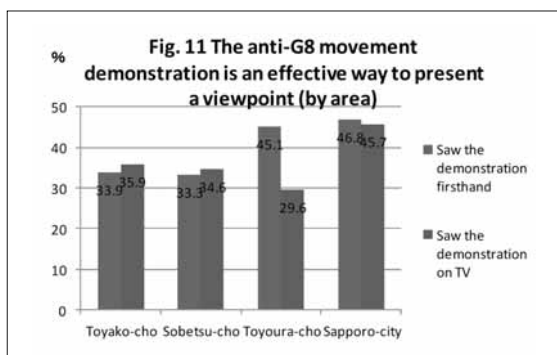
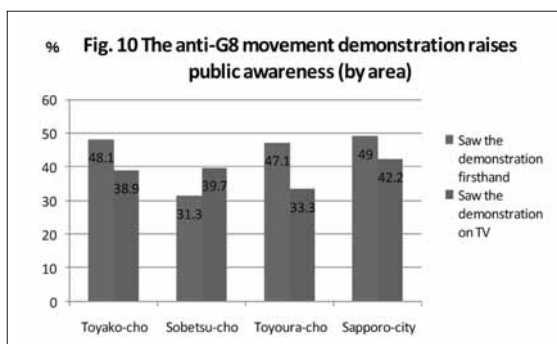
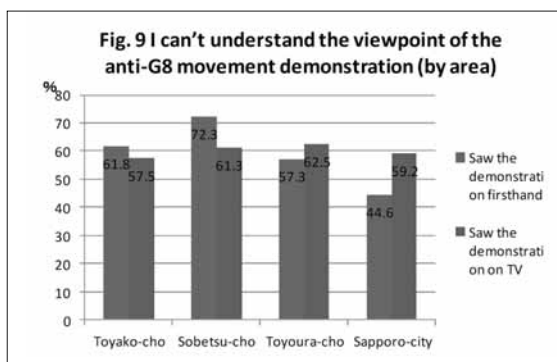
How, then, did the residents in Toyako-cho, where the summit was held, and other neighboring municipalities evaluate the anti-G8 movement demonstrations? Here, we want to make an analysis by dividing people into two groups: those who directly saw an anti-G8 movement demonstration and those who indirectly saw one on TV or other forms of mass media.

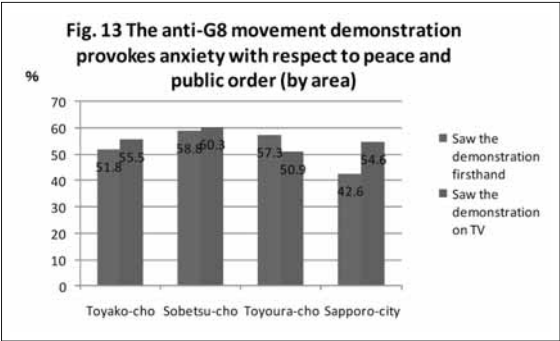
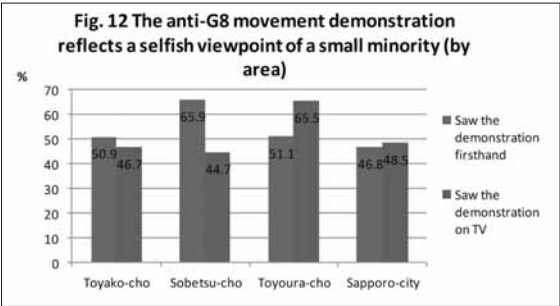
Table 3 shows the number of people living in Toyako-cho, Sobetsu-cho, or Toyoura-cho who saw the anti-G8 movement demonstration firsthand and the number of people who saw the demonstration on TV. There are only a small number of people from Toyako-cho who directly saw a demonstration because no demonstrations were held in Toyako-cho itself. On the other hand, a relatively large number of people from Toyoura-cho, where a demonstration was held for many hours, answered that they directly saw the demonstration. How did they evaluate the movement?

Table 3. Number of people who saw the anti-G8 demonstration firsthand or on TV				
	Toyako-cho	Sobetsu-cho	Toyouura-cho	(Sapporo-city)
Saw the demonstration firsthand	58	90	94	47
Saw the demonstration on TV	286	91	62	588
Number of respondents	426	218	187	1091

People who saw the largest demonstration in Toyoura-cho firsthand had a positive evaluation of the anti-G8 movement on the whole, saying “I can fully understand the viewpoint of the protest” (Fig. 8), “The protest raised public awareness” (Fig. 9), “I am very sympathetic to the viewpoint of the protest” (Fig. 10), and “Demonstration is an effective means of presenting a viewpoint” (Fig. 11). The rate of respondents who are residents of Toyoura-cho, saw the demonstration firsthand, and answered “The anti-G8 movement only reflects a selfish viewpoint (Fig. 12) is relatively low. On the other hand, due to the high rate of respondents who are residents of Toyoura-cho and who saw the demonstration firsthand and answered “Anti-G8 movement demonstrations provoke anxiety with respect to peace and public order” (Fig. 13), it may be considered that they negatively evaluated the anti-G8 movement. However, it is clear that residents who saw the action of the anti-G8 movement for many hours firsthand evaluated the anti-G8 movement positively as compared with those who indirectly saw or read about the anti-G8 movement.







5. Conclusion

Examining the responses of Sapporo citizens to the peace walk, it becomes evident that they evaluate the anti-G8 movement slightly negatively. Even those in their fifties who had participated in and are in favor of social movements viewed the current anti-G8 movement negatively as compared with their evaluation of past social movements in Japan.

It is possible to discuss the reasons from the viewpoint of “experience movement.” Experience movement is defined as “an attempt made by individuals who ‘struggle’ over their own experience and independence to

reconstruct movement as a place for coexisting, while concurrently accepting each other at the same place, and an experiment to performatively present a model of society in which people with diversified backgrounds can accept each other's differences and live with each other" (Hamanishi, 2005; McDonald, 2004). The reason the performances (sound demonstrations, video action, eccentric costumes, etc.) in the anti-G8 movement demonstrations received a cold response may be because people who had experienced conventional types of social movement, considered social movements solely as means of accomplishing a purpose, and could neither understand the meaning of the various "performances" in the demonstrations nor the meaning-giving by the actors of the movement (for example, the meaning-giving of "obscurity" by Black Bloc that "an action by a certain person can be performed by anybody else," the enhancement of creativity by constructing a place where "nothing is eliminated," or showing play-like performances as a movement strategy). Therefore, people who experienced the social movement were not able to share the element of experience movement in the anti-G8 movement either.

Considering the argument in the context of Hokkaido, while labor movements declined after the 1970s, social movements by women in urban areas have become more active. Women joined the co-op, came to be concerned with environmental problems of the area, and participated in antinuclear power movements and so forth in the 1980s. In Japan, this women's movement was regarded as a "new social movement," however their style of social movements is more moderate and institutionalized than the anti-G8 movement. As a result, their movements are not suitable for experience movements. Therefore, women in their forties who have experience with social movements are likely to give a more negative reaction to anti-G8 movements.

On the other hand, in Toyoura-cho where a demonstration was staged for a long period by the anti-G8 movement, the residents who actually saw the demonstration were relatively in favor of the anti-G8 movement demonstration. The fact that local residents changed their image of the anti-G8 movement by actually seeing the demonstration suggests a possible expansion of sympathy with the anti-G8 movement.

All in all, however, the anti-G8 movement during the Toyako Summit period presumably did not find favor among general citizens. The issue of global movement in Japan that remains to be solved in the future is not only to promote movements more globally, but also to receive wider support from local residents.

It is well-known that a massive earthquake occurred in north-east Japan on March 11, 2011. A result of this earthquake was the accident which occurred in Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Unfortunately, this nuclear power plant disaster has not yet been solved. The Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), which manages the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, has been criticized from various viewpoints. While the problem of global warming has attracted attention, anti-nuclear power movements stagnated due to the fact that nuclear power generation does not emit carbon dioxide. After the serious accident occurred in the nuclear power plants in Fukushima, however, the anti-nuclear power movements have seen a renewed interest in Japan. Although there have been various anti-nuclear power movements, many of the persons who participated in the demonstration of the anti-nuclear power plant were in their fifties or older, and many were those who have previously taken part in antinuclear power movements.

Demonstrations against anti-nuclear power plants and TEPCO by the younger generation have also taken place, and the main members of the demonstration were those who had participated in the anti-G8 movement in the Lake Toya summit. The protest movement had elements of the “experience movement” mentioned above, so the evaluation of demonstrations against TEPCO which had play-like performances in the anti-G8 movements shows that there were both pros and cons, and in many ways was similar to the time of the Lake Toya summit.

In this way, it is not certain whether solidarity with a social movement with a global social movement of Japan is possible. However it is necessary to make an environment where people mutually accept various social movements for that purpose.

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