

RESTORATION OF THE SEAPORT CITIES NETWORK FOR THE NEW MARITIME ERA

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Before making of the nation state, it is apparent that there were seaport cities and networks between them which had more autonomy than in modern times. As a result of the crises of modernity, the advent of so called 'New Maritime Era' is asked for 'the seaport city' and 'the network between seaport cities' as the key unit for analysis rather than the nation state. Regarding to this paradigm shift, we are now having one of the important task to bring to light how to construct a gentle public sphere, going beyond the divisive national consciousness and border.

The network between seaport cities implies harmonious coexistence between human and human, society and society, man and nature as well as between seaport city and city. Being different from Europe, in Asia there still exist strongly the divisive nationalism and the national border. In order to revive or create network between seaport cities in Asia, I think the concept of the governance and subsidiarity principle are very useful, which meet the new maritime era.

Recently the mutual efforts both Korea and Japan to make cross border region between Busan and Fukuoka, which cooperates several fields including economy, education etc. is the model case. With the background of the crises of modernity, the return of ocean means that the ontology is substituted for the theory of relation.

The discourse on the ocean or sea in the classics such as Lao-tzu and Zizhi Tongjian tell us the new ideals of 'seatizen' and 'seavilization' as well as a vision for cooperation and coexistence.

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The Return to the Sea

Born out of its matrix, sea, European civilization has valued much sea power above from early on. Recognizing the fact that the Roman Empire was nothing else but a maritime empire, Marcus Tullius Cicero

affirmed «the one who subdues the sea, someday dominates the empire itself.» Having heralded of the Pax Britannica period, Walter Raleigh, a British in the 17th century left a famous saying, «whosoever commands the sea commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself.» Alfred T. Mahan, an American, stressed in the late 19th century the importance of sea power by saying «those who have command of the seas have control of the world.» We can notice the similar way of thinking succeeds to these days, especially in a message of Paul Kennedy. He states that knowledge of the oceans is more than a matter of curiosity, in fact our very survival may hinge upon it.

Repudiating the historic mistreatment and disregard of the ocean, recently China and Korea in Asia are beginning to emphasize the importance of the sea. China seems to find every reason to rediscover the sea in order to be a world power. It appears that two programs and a project are instrumental in redirecting the Chinese continent into the coastal state: a documentary for TV in 1988 “He Shang(河傷, Wounded River)”; a national project for the 600th anniversary of Cheng Ho’s expedition; another TV documentary, “Da Guo Jue Qi(大國崛起, Rising of Great Powers).” The main theme of all these endeavour can be summed up as follows: China left behind in modernization due to the lack of openness (into the ocean) whereas modern European nations have stood as the world powers owing to maritime-centric thinking. As a natural consequence, the right solution for China to be a super-power in the 21st century is diagnosed to recover its maritime-ness which would provide a promising paradigm beyond ethnicity, religion, nation-state, locality in the new millennium.

Korea also presents an ambitious blueprint with the aim of entering the world top 5 maritime powers by holding the World Expo 2012 Yeosu with the theme of ‘the living ocean and coast’ and by putting the developing project of the Southern Coast embracing Busan, Gyeongsangnam-do and Jeollanam-do into practice. In the 21st century, there seems no difference between the East and the West in emphasizing the significance of the ocean. The reason is that the sea is an essential and reliable source to resolve most of the current issues such as natural resources, energy, space and environment.

The new maritime era appears to be represented by big maritime-related projects on a national level, under the slogan of «the world in the midst of maritime territorial conflicts», «the world engaging in maritime resources war», and «the nation state that commands the seas controls the world.» But this new version of the Wealth of Nations exploiting the ocean can never be compatible with our vision on the ocean and coast of Asia in the 21st century. ‘Return to the Sea’ is a necessary idea to deal with the very modern crisis of the humanities.

What lies at the root of modernity is unbounded desires for enviable improvement of human’s life as well as for genuine knowledge about man and nature. Modernity is the fruit of an adventurous sailing for the New World. It has been the cradle of the border, boundary and perception of modern nation state along with progressive and evolutionary theory. A modern nation state was cast from the very idea of national history, national symbol, national border, and the invention of imaginary Other (nation).

In fact, the modern nation state has been providing an illusion of a single culture and, an equal and homogeneous nation. It is wholly delusion because the modern nation state was molded in the process of mobilizing every possible differences in terms of ethnicity, race, culture, language, religion, class, locality and gender, with intent to promote national integration toward one nation and one culture. The modern world system and globalization are nothing but the expanded version of the nation state, in that they indwell the wide disparity between the center and periphery, homogenization of value, and the axis of dominance-subordination. Under these circumstances, the ocean in the modern times is considered as the extension of the land, which provides convenient passage to the inland and abroad and contributes to the world system and globalization. The sea has been rounded up by the nation. As a consequence, it has been treated as a part of the nation state.

Modernization has coincided with the process of brutal repression and oppression. The contrast of the good and the bad has become obvious as the project of modernity has rapidly deteriorated into absolute power. That is, the enlightened has positioned itself as the superior subject of having commanding power while the unenlightened has fallen into the inferior object of having obedient to-be-enlightened obligation. Since the era of Great Voyages, the contact between

European society and the other, i.e. non-Europe society had been made with each other passing through distant sea route between two ports and after long days of journey. A vessel ship represented a kind of ‘a complete society in itself’. It meant that the contact with the other was not a meeting between two individuals but an encounter between one society possessing this vessel ship and the other society. The age of maritime started by the initiative of Portugal and Spain has prepared the takeoff of an adventurous society, the modern Europe.

The besieged sea by the nation-state in the age of maritime was equal to the sea for progress and evolution as well as for the uniformity of value and the dominant-subordinate relationships. For example, the modern nation state has adopted the global strategy that has degenerated international politics into the confrontation between the maritime-oriented state and the inland-oriented nation. Alfred T. Mahan, an influential advocate of the global maritime strategy, has defined the ocean as ‘grand lines of communication.’ He argued that the primary mission of a navy was to secure the security of its own shipping vessels on the grand lines of communication, the ocean. In other words, the navy should get control of the seas for the protection of thriving production and flourishing trade, which would lead a nation-state to be sea power. Therefore, Mahan’s concept of sea power has extended beyond naval superiority. He has contended that a nation should increase production and shipping capacities, and acquire overseas possessions - either colonies or privileged access to foreign markets. According to him, it was eventually the maritime security capability that could bring together the above three essential elements of sea power.

However, the concept of progress in the West was being called into question from the moment when people began to realize to pay all costs associated with experiences, such as Chernobyl disaster, environmental destruction, climatic change and so forth. By the middle of the 1980s, it seems the project of modernity has been facing a crisis. ‘The recycling theory in a broad sense’ is suggested as the only solution to the crisis. It includes resources recycling in manufacturing process, and the recycling of ideas in art style and in philosophy and the humanities.

When we say ‘return to the sea’ in the 21st century, the sea is not the besieged ocean by the nation but the ocean to offer the prospects

for post-modernism. A new maritime era should be based on critical examination of progress, evolution and nation-state which has been the norm on land. The new maritime era should not transfer the contradiction from land to the sea. Instead, it has to have the alternative vision for the future. Let me explain more the meaning of 'return to the sea' in detail.

Ocean is where life itself began. An American marine biologist, Rachel Carson, names the ocean as 'mother sea'. Approximately 70% of the Earth's surface is covered by ocean, about 90% of the living beings of the Earth exists in the sea.

The sea has its own structure and way of doing things. Land is rather continuously influenced by the sea, not the other way around. Water has great abundance on the Earth, and of that abundance about 97%(1.35 billion km²) is sea water. The sea serves to control climate by affecting the demand-supply of heat and its movement on the surface of the Earth. The sea not only generates 75% of oxygen and 35% of fresh water on the Earth but also dissolves 50% of carbon dioxide on the ground.

Moreover, the sea represents a new prospect to replace the project of modernity. An ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao-zi says, «The highest goodness is like water.(上善若水)» because «water benefits all things and does not compete. It stays in the lowly places which others despise. Therefore, it is near Tao(道, the Way).» The similar phrases frequently appears in Tong Jian Jie Yao(通鑑節要, The Summary of Comprehensive Mirror to Aid in Government). A 'border rider' in Qin (秦) China, Li si (李斯) is known to cherish a phrase in Tong Jian Jie Yao: «River and Sea can reach such a depth and length by embracing all the streams and brooks.(河海不擇細流 故能就其深)» Generation after generation, Chinese intellectuals had been never tired of citing such kind of words from Tong Jian Jie Yao as "the generosity of the sea is enormous due to its acceptance of all the water(海納百川 有容乃大)."

In Greek mythology, the sea is also identified as the lowest water at the same time the largest water. English word, Ocean, stemmed from Oceanus in Greek mythology. Oceanus, a son of Uranus and Gaia, married his sister, Thetis. From their union came a the 3,000 river-gods. It means that Ocean is the root of all rivers. The ancient Greeks considered that all rivers found their way to the sea and the sea was the largest river encircling the land.

Korean equivalent to sea, Bada has a simple and profound meaning. Bada in Korean is known to have its name because Bada is a thing to 'bad a-dle-i- da' (Korean word for accommodation or acceptance). Then the sea in the 21st century must be understood as the root of everything. It also should be a metaphoric space of the new order for coexistence and communication. Furthermore, the sea in the new maritime era should pursue the highest goodness. From this point of vision, we can have a harmonious and desirable understanding of the relationship between human and human, between society and society, and between human and nature by overcoming the gravity of progress and evolution in the modern times.

The Seaport City and Its Networks

The ongoing project of our Institute (Institute of International Maritime Affairs, Korea Maritime University), 'Cultural Interaction Studies of Seaport Cities', is closely interlinked with the 'return to the sea'. Its main research field is seaport cities facing the sea. We can pictorialize the project by marking each seaport city as a dot, each sea route between seaports as a line, and the connection of sea routes as a face which is so called a sea area(海域). A sea area links with another sea area to form a chain of sea areas. 'Cultural Interaction Studies of Seaport Cities' postulates a certain zone, i.e. sea area as an analytic unit in order to look beyond nation-state. It focuses on three main aspects of culture, that is, cultural formation, cultural contact and cultural transformation in a sea area. It is an endeavor to comprehend the wholeness of cultural interaction from the multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary point of view.

Before the birth of modern nation state, seaport city as a node of sea area had been open to the outside world. In this seaport city, many people having different backgrounds had flocked together and lived together to create plural and multi-layered cultures. Also, the seaport city had built up a widespread network which had connected other seaport cities far outside the area as well as within the area. That is to say, the seaport city had functioned not only as a gathering spot but also a dispersal venue.

The formation of the modern nation state has imposed more or less restrictions on the function of the seaport city as a node. Because the modern nation state had been concentrated power at the capital city at the

cost of the seaport city. Following the development of glocalization, the seaport city is reemerging as the leading actor from the supporting actor before. Glocalization pursues activation of the larger unit than nation state and the smaller unit than nation. The implication of the seaport city is obvious both from the above-mentioned glocal perspective and the following characteristics of the seaport city:

First, the historicity of interactions between the seaport cities: The seaport city has functioned as a place of exchanges of humans and information as well as culture and commodities for a long time before the globalization of today.

Second, the transnational territoriality of the seaport cities: Absolutely, the seaport city has the openness toward the ocean crossing the territory of a nation state.

Third, the seaport city's quality as a contact zone where the cross-cultural hybrid activities have been developed at all times. In the seaport city, there has been accumulated the experiences of conquest over the experiences of discrimination and conflict, though it has suffered from the latter experiences.

Based on its 'connectedness' or 'relativity', the seaport city network has various connecting functions of elasticity, diffusion, expansion, reorganization, and mutual supplementation. The quality of this network is to share connection and utilize relationship mutually. Because this network do not stand on the monopolistic or exclusive relationship, no seaport city wields repressive or despotic power.

A new community in the new maritime era should be in line with the seaport city network. Because a desirable alternative for the new world order is to restore the smaller unit than nation state and activate the seaport city network. Glocalization makes us to find a new sea area and share the vision of self-reliance and coexistence that the sea represents.

For the formation of the new region(area) in the new maritime era, the better example would be drawn from the cases of the Baltic Sea Region and the New Hanse rather than the Union for the Mediterranean or the European Union which has been initiated by the nation state.

Restored in 1980, the New Hanse is headquartered in a seaport city Lübeck, and has 174 membership cities. Making use of historical heritage of the Hanse from 12th century to the 17th century, the New

Hanse not only develops tourism and cultural exchange but also fosters political and economic links between the membership cities. For instance, the New Hanse celebrates annually ‘Hanseatic Day’ in turn among the membership cities and ‘International Day of the Hanse’ which is observed simultaneously across all membership cities. These events eventually would contribute to put its identity into shape. The Baltic sea is an inland sea in northern Europe, and 10 nations adjoin the Baltic sea. The initiative of the seaport cities located within a 10 km radius in Baltic is transforming the Baltic into a new community of politics, economy and culture, that is to be called the Baltic Sea Region.

Towards the Seaport City Network

Are we discussing a seemingly impossible utopia? This is a haunting question because we are engaged in creating a totally new community for self-reliance and coexistence of seaport cities, at the time when the boundaries of nation-state and segmental perception of the nation are still wielding mighty power in Asia.

I support the proposal of Prof. Yang guo-jhen in Xiamen University, that we might pool our effort to excavate the ‘common Maritime Asia Heritage’ and designate a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I have an interest on how the effort will develop.

The ‘super-metropolitan economic zone between Busan-Fukuoka’ currently being discussed is remarkable in the sense that the possibility of a network between seaport cities by seaport city’s own initiative. The both municipal authorities has made a formal statement that Busan and Fukuoka would cooperate to establish a super-metropolitan economic zone encompassing Dongnam(south-east) region of Korea and the Kyushu region of Japan. The current plan envisages implementing the feasible matters in the several fields like economy, culture, tourism and transportation, which would contribute the formation of the super-metropolitan economic zone between Busan-Fukuoka. I have never thought the economically oriented the super-metropolitan economic zone between Busan-Fukuoka to go without difficulties.

Despite such concern, certain expectation and interest stem from the fact that the network between seaport cities transcending national

boundaries is the only alternative for the 21st century. The southern coast of modern Korea had functioned as a bridge-head for the invasion of Japan and Western powers. I believe now is the time to hope that this area is born again as a creation base for the new future of Asia.

The concept of subsidiarity and governance provides two crucial guide lines in establishing a new community. Subsidiarity is the term designed by European Union to arbitrate conflicting jurisdictions between European Union and nation-states and local self-governing bodies. According to the Treaty of European Union, the principle of subsidiarity, in areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at central level or at regional and local level, but can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved at Union level. The community should not act beyond the necessary levels for the achievement of the aims of the treaty.

The principle of subsidiarity is also working between the central state and local governments in a nation-state. The basic spirit of the constitution should apply the principle of subsidiarity by emphasizing that the central government's authority should be excised only in case the lower level's jurisdiction can't adequately deal with certain issues.

At the same time, the concept of government should be replaced by 'governance'. Because it seems clear that government has failed to deal with multi-leveled local apparatus, whereas governance underscores the importance of mutual interaction among the multi-leveled administration system. Public governance as a complementary notion to subsidiarity is espoused in the process of policy implementation by European Union, which evinces a strong desire to link up and cooperate with multi-leveled local governments as well as the central bodies. The governance here put its center residents' participation in the decision-making process. That is to say, it guarantees that the direct involvement of residents in the public functions of government rather through the feedback of information and communication policy than by top-down method. The active participation of residents has an effect of transferring broader authority and responsibilities to local

governments located close to the ultimate beneficiaries, residents.

Decentralization may lead a local government to direct competition with others, and local self-government would expose the gap of resources, gap of economic development and social services and even gap of developmental prospect. That is the reason the central government should monopolize a mission for balanced national development lest regional inequality progress perilously. In the same manner, the central government plays an important role in resolving differences among the seaport cities.

The vision of the new community involves a complete change in the mindset from land to the sea. That is why I start this presentation with a phrase 'return to the sea'. The sea is not simply space for water, it has its own structure and way of doing things. It commands environment, resources, energy and so forth, which currently affects and will determine the path of future. There is a need to approach the sea from the viewpoint of organicism and theory of relation: human proposes, nature(god) disposes. Then a newly-coined word, 'Seavilization' can send totally new message for 'Seatizen' free from progressive and evolutionary doctrine. The new message contains self-reliance and coexistence between seaport cities, and harmony of human and nature.

The formation of the new region(area) in the new maritime era had nothing to do with an extension of modern project. It can be compared to a laboratory to experiment a vision of post-modern space. As mentioned earlier, the sea should be viewed not as the extension of land but as the connected space of independent sea area. The role of seaport cities and the restoration of their networks is a necessity in terms of reorganizing area. Theoretically and practically, now we are faced with two tasks. First of all we have to challenge the boundaries of nation-state and segmented perception of nation. Also we should clarify necessary condition for and process of an amicable public space.

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