

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Purpose of this study is to elucidate characteristics and factors on hinterland, and relations between hinterland and port space through the process of the formation of port hinterland. In this study, the followings are clarified.

(1) The Era before World War II

Penetration lines from the Kushiro port to the interior did not appear before the Meiji era and hinterland was extremely limited to around the port. According to the extension of the penetration line from the Kushiro port, this port made the area along this line hinterland and came to play the role of the gateway to the interior. This penetration line linked with a sulfur mine, but declined and disappeared with the close of the mine. At that time, the hinterland was limited to around the mine or transfer point of the carrier and did not have a spatial extension. On the other hand, penetration lines which made the agricultural zone hinterland had developed some feeder lines and had grown up to trunk lines. The hinterland had expanded with the growth of penetration lines and had a spatial extension with the development of feeder lines. As such a penetration line brought the port a large amount of cargoes, port space

was demanded to correspond to it. For example, instead of the past trade beach, a quay where barges were able to come alongside was constructed beside the freight terminal of the railway. Specialization of this kind of quay had progressed along both sides of the old Kushiro River because of the increase of the volume of wood and coal. This produced industrial spaces relating to these cargoes behind the quays. As the quays were constructed on the assumption of the railway transportation, integration of the railway and the port was brought about and the town was separated from the port by the railway.

The transportation network from the Kushiro port extended to the Karikachi Pass, which was the crossing point of the Hidaka mountains, at the end of the Meiji era and was included into the transportation network of the whole of Hokkaido. However, because of the traffic bottleneck in the Karikachi Pass, the area east of this pass was within the hinterland of the Kushiro port and the area west of this pass was within the hinterland of the Otaru port or the Muroran port. The result was no competition between ports. Though the Kushiro port made the whole area of the eastern part of Hokkaido hinterland and became a base port, the maintenance of the port was delayed. This restricted the growth of industry in the hinterland. At the beginning of the Showa era, as the railway network was maintained both in quality and in quantity, the Kushiro port came to compete with the Otaru port and the Muroran port.

(2) The Era of Railway Dominance

After World War II, urgent reclamation and economic growth

brought the rapid development of agriculture, coal industry, and forestry in the eastern part of Hokkaido and the exports had increased. The transportation network in 1961 succeeded the transportation network in prewar days and railway was dominant. That is, linkages connecting with cities were by trunk railway and linkages connecting nodes on the trunk railways with distributing centers of agricultural or forestry products and coal mines were by local railway. And linkages connecting distribution centers of agricultural products with agricultural reclaimed lands were by truck and linkages connecting distributing centers of forestry products with logging lands were by truck or river transport. Thus, each linkage had a means of transport corresponding to the volume or articles of freight.

The Kushiro port coped with the increasing cargoes by constructing a pier along the coast in front of the town where mother ships could come alongside. As this quay was constructed on the assumption of mass railway transportation, a vast site for railway transportation was prepared in and behind the wharf. This divided the port from the town. On the other hand, the former quays along the old Kushiro River were deprived of the loading function and had declined gradually. The improvement in loading enabled the export of a large amount of coal and promoted the growth of the coal industry in the hinterland. This also produced the vast facilities related to coal in port space.

In spite of such port maintenance, the Kushiro port could not cope with the increasing cargoes in the hinterland and a part of the cargo came to be handled in the Otaru port or the Muroran port. As a result, layered

hinterlands of ports came to be seen between the Kushiro port, the Muroran port, and the Otaru port in Tokachi and Abashiri districts where the influence of the Kushiro port was dominant in the past.

(3) The Era of Truck Dominance

The motorization which started from about the middle of the 1960's brought the development of the road network and the decline of the railway network. And a transportation network dominant in trucks was formed. In this network, most of the terminal transportation and trunk transportation connecting ports with distribution centers of agricultural products or forestry products are by truck. And these products are transported from departure points to arrival points by truck and cooperation with railway or other transportation means is not seen. And railway transportation is limited to feeder lines connecting the port with the coal mines or plants. The transportation network of trucks in the era of truck dominance is more specialized than that of railway in the era of railway dominance.

Rapid economic growth changed an industrial structure in the hinterland like the decline of the coal industry and the growth of the oil industry, the growth of dairy farming, and structural changes in the paper industry. For the changes of the industrial structure and the development of motorization in the hinterland, the Kushiro port coped with them by constructing a new port adjacent to the former port. This port has the following three characteristics: wharves are specialized to the oil industry, paper industry, and dairy farming. Vast transportation spaces,

corresponding to truck, are prepared behind the wharves. Large-scale storage facilities and production facilities are constructed in and behind the port. The port functions had moved from the old port to the new port one by one with the construction of the new port and port space of the old port came to be reorganized. For example, port space near CBD became the target of waterfront development. Commerce, culture, and sightseeing facilities were newly constructed and transportation space of the past has been reorganized into amusement space. It is thought that port space as amusement space, which does not have a transportation function connected with the town space and the new type of port city has been formed. But in the greater part of the port space, sheds and warehouses become obsolete. Open space and parking space, which are extensive uses of the land, extends to the area behind the sheds and warehouses.

The hinterland of the Kushiro port in 1993, in the era of truck dominance, extends to the eastern part of Hokkaido. Compared with 1966, in the era railway dominance, the hinterlands of various ports in the central part of Hokkaido become narrow. As a result, east of the Hidaka mountains is within the hinterland of the Kushiro port and west of it is within the hinterland of the Tomakomai port. Layered hinterlands are not seen between both ports. This is because, it is thought, as a result of the dominance of truck transportation, area within about 120 km in a radius that a truck is able to shuttle in a day trip decides a port hinterland. Layered port hinterlands with the Kushiro port came to be seen between the Tokachi port and the Abashiri port which are in a subordinate

position. So medium-scale ports, which have a district scale hinterland, are growing. As for the ferry cargo with high fare-bearing capacity, ports in the central part of Hokkaido where a lot of ferry operations exist make the whole area of Hokkaido hinterland. So area within about 120 km in a radius is not a factor to decide the size of the hinterland.

International relations with Russia and the influence of drift ice in the Sea of Okhotsk are other factors in deciding the size of the hinterland. Both factors obstruct the development of ports along the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk and make the hinterland of the Kushiro port widen into Abashiri district.