No.219. Full paper for New Topics: Whole System Reconfigurations in the largest coal mining regions in Netherlands, Germany and Japan from 1950s to the present: Introductory Comparative Transitions Case Study

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Abstract

Energy transitions tend to bring wide range of whole system reconfigurations in energy, mobility, manufacturing and everyday life. The energy transitions in coal mining regions of Netherland, Germany and Japan from 1950s to the present are not exceptions. From the production peak to near termination, they experienced whole system transformations. The observation could give us the clues for frictionless transitions from fossil fuel dependent economy to fossil fuel free economy.

This introductory comparative paper is composed by transition case analysis of the largest coal mining regions in three countries, Limburg of Netherlands, the Ruhr of Germany and Chikuho/Miike of Japan. The paper describes the interdependencies and the multiplicity of processes among changes in technology, business, politics, and everyday life.

The research question is what made big differences of whole system reconfigurations among them although the dimensions of 'energy revolutions' around 1960s, the frequency, the amplitude, the speed, and the scope may looks similar among the three cases?

Applying transition concepts, the multi-level, the multi-phase, the multi-pattern, and lock-in, the method comprises dozens of interviews of key persons involved in transitions in the regions along with desk research.

Keywords: whole system reconfigurations; former coal mining regions; 'energy revolutions'; structural change

Introduction: similar role, administrative status, 'landscape', but different outcomes

When Germany was the largest coal producer in Europe, the Ruhr was the 'capital' of coal and

steel complex. The region was power house of 20th century's two World Wars and 'miracle of economic recovery' after World War II.

The Ruhr area, not constituting an independent administrative entity, is Germany's largest urban conglomerate of the federal states of North Rhine Westphalia (NRW), comprising 11 cities and 4 districts. Almost two generations after the age of King Coal was gone, the region has transformed into showcase as well as real-world experiments



stage, where new urban development with advanced clusters of renewable energy and environmental industry serving for regional quality of lives(QOL).



The sky above the Ruhr retuned to blue from black as Willy Brant, chancellor from late 1960s to 1970s had promised. The Emsher, once the most polluted river in Germany, flows from east to west in the region, also returned to blue.

City of Essen, home of "Zollverein Coal Mine Industrial Complex", UNESCO World Heritage(photo, right), is European Green Capital of 2017. City of Dortmund, once "the capital of coal, steel, beer", turned to home of thousands of innovative small and median enterprise(SMEs) including IT, lighting, sensor, consulting, housing along with European distribution centers of Amazon and Ikea(Mask A, 2017, Mask B 2018,). Newly formed universities from the 1960s have made the basis for new industries as well as inviting foreign companies.

Between Essen and Dortmund located TyssenKrupp, the steel Giants, once referred as armor provider for Hitler (Gotting A,2014) now experimenting, a carbon capture and usage (CCU), producing chemical products from metallurgical gases. (photo,left, Mask C, 2017). InnovationCity Bottrop, project as well as public-private-partnership company, has been organizing more than 70 members of high-profile business and research institute for developing climate protection estates of



enhancing Quality of Living (InnovationCity Bottrop, 2105). Housing corporations in the region have entered the market. RAG, the coal mining company's foundation has been preparing for the closure of the last mine(RAG,2018 and Ishii, 2017)

The Ruhr's neighbor, Saerbeck and Villamedia, small municipalities, are on the pathway to 100% renewable communities (Mask D, 2017). The Ruhr's population decline from the 1960s has stopped and beginning to grow (Mask E, 2017). Through coping with coal and steel crisis in the past, they have managed transition and achieved tangible structural results(Schpelmann et al., 2013). Whole systems, from energy to everyday lives are being reconfigured in the regions.

Southern part of Netherlands had big coal area too. Limburg(Figure 1) is also composed by several municipalities without constituting an independent administrative entity. Now she also takes similar steps like the Ruhr even though smaller scales. Like the German, the Dutch applied

'transition management' to cope with structuctual change. Now local entreprenour organized energy start-up to tap heat from wasted mine water, creating districting heat and cold network. Residential development is also underway.

Japan had also "the Ruhr". Chikuho-Miike, located in northern part of the southern main island of Kyushu (Figure 2), played similar role, serving



as armor factory since Japan-Russian war of 1905, and also for 'economic miracle' after World War II. Like the Ruhr, Chikuho-Miike is composed by several cities and towns without constituting an independent administrative entity. Kitakyushu, the largest city in the region, home of Big Steel, became the birth place of environmental



industry like the Ruhr. Like the Ruhr, she established University and research institute for creating new industry. And she was selected as Eco-Model City by Japanese government, as City of Essen was chosen as European Green Capital. City of Omuta, where the largest coal mines located, also have "Coal Mine Industrial Complex", UNESCO World Heritage (photo, right) and excellent coal museum, like Essen. The coal chemical companies in Omuta are still operating and producing highly valued products. However, the population is declining while the Ruhr turns to increase.

From the multi-level perspective point of view, the elements of 'landscape' (exogenous context) from the end of WWII to early 1950s of three regions seem to be similar. Cheap coal and oil from overseas, hyper-inflation, the scarcity of any kinds of goods constituted the landscape.

The difference is Netherlands had less American pressure and she discovered domestic gas later



while Japan had much American pressure politically, economically and culturally.

post-war Japan, In organizing labor unions was encouraged by U.S government (occupied force), as democratization policy (Hein LE 1990). Coal miner's union and electricity union in particular ascended to meso-'regime' for the first time in their history (Figure 3).

The priority production policy from the late 1946 to 1949 favored the industries. Lion's share of government subsidies had flowed to coal and steel industries. Coal make steel, and coal was only energy source for Japan. Bare mountain produced almost no woods. And Japan has no big domestic oil field. Iron and steel were basis for basic infrastructure, which were destroyed by air raid of U.S force. Under the hyper-inflation and higher unemployment rate, the unions took series of general strikes for wage hike as well as against layoff, which lead to series of fierce confrontations with government and big coal companies from 1946 to 1960. Socialist party and communist party were competing to support unions, which made American government nervous about labor movement. Strikes and confrontation deteriorated stable production of coal, making big coal users including electric power, national railway, and chemical companies look for alternative fuels, which fastened decline of coal industry (Hein LE, 1990, Shimanishi T, 2011).

However, Tuchiya K(1975), an authority of coal mining industry analysed Japan's coal policy is not much different from Germany until 1960s, which comprised of social welfare & public works to absorb the unemployed, vocational training for young miners along with re-industrization approach through "modernization" policy to make coal production more efficient. The difference of national and regional policy after 1970s made Chikuho-Miike different from the Ruhr.

Structural transformation: the Road Taken and the Road not Taken

The Ruhr's experience from 1950s has been analyzed as "industrial restructuring and local development responses by innovative approaches" (Hennings G et al., 1990), "regional innovation" (Hassink, 1993), "promoting innovation through technology networks" (Huggins R, 1995), "transition process from structural crisis to emerging of new clusters" (Bross U, 2000), "brownfield redevelopment" (Kunzmann KR, 2001), "promoting industrial change in structurally disfavored regions" (Iking B,2004), inspiration source for restructuring Europe's rustbelt" (Hospers GJ, 2004), "eco-restructuring process as managed sustainable transitions" (Schpelmann et al., 2013), "paradigm shift from Grey to Green" (Gruehn D, 2013), "structural change" (Gotting A, 2010), "dramatic restructuring, away from its original coal and steel-based economy to a more diversified service economy" (Taylor RP, 2015), "managed coal phase-out" (Schulz S. et al., 2016), "Germany's Just

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approach	centralized re-industrization	>	dialogue-oriented bottom-up, informal negionalization neb-industrization		bottom-up proje cluster	cooperation network
key events	investments in infrastrocture, universities	"Conference of the Ruhr Plegion"	IBA initiative "		Climate	Expo InnovationCity
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Transition from Coal" (Winland C, 2017).

Bross U (2000) provides detailed chronology in the 1980s and 90s along with the brief overview of the historic development before 1980s. He describes relevant policies, strategies in national and regional governments for industrial, regional, technology infrastructure/transfer, basic/innovation infrastructure, education, labor/vocational training, R&D. As described in Figure 4, centralized re-industrialization policies were applied on the federal state and national levels until 1970s. In the Ruhr, government invested in infrastructure, formed universities for the first time in the region, which later providing the basis for new industries.

Japanese government provided large subsidies for coal mining companies to "rationalize" mines from 1946 to 1980s while searching for 'natural termination of coal industry" from 1960s (Yoda T, 1975, Mizusawa S 1980). In Netherlands, modernization and termination policies were pursued (Gales B, et., 2017). The big difference was Germany applied structural change management intentionally (Schpelmann et al., 2013). Japan did not have such clear policy (Yoda T, 1975). Netherlands introduced transition management between 2001 and 2004 (Rotman J and Loorbach D, 2010).

Any intentional transition tends to encounter "lock-in". Hospers GJ(2004) describes three "lock-in" hampered structural change in the Ruhr. First was "economic lock-in", resulted from Ruhr's mono-structure. Second was "institutional lock-in" from the dense regional institutional tissue, a self-sustaining coalition of local business, politicians, labor unions and workers, whose only shared interest was the preservation of the existing structure, dubbed as "the weakness of strong ties". Third was "cognitive lock-in", the local parties' over-optimistic view of the region's potential, and the outsider's one-dimensional, negative view of the Ruhrgebiet as an unattractive, polluted industrial region.

It (structural change) was not managed on the basis of a single masterplan, but the result of a multitude of plans and sustained efforts of numerous institutional and individual actors (Scheplemann.et al., 2013). However, several papers point out International Building Exhibition

(IBA) played a key role to overcome the "lock-ins" above. Kunzmann KR(2001) describes '5W1H' of IBA Emscher Park Initiative as follows.

As late as the early 1980s, when brownfields started to become a public issue, the State Government of NRW established a rotating super fund for brownfields (\$ 250 million) to which local government were offered access, asked the State's development Corporation to manage the



fund. It turned out, however, that the availability of financial sources was not the key constraint for successful brownfield redevelopment. Rather, it was the lack of ideas about what to do with the sites, which prevented its intended use. This is exactly what the ambitious IBA Emscher Park Initiative aim to do. It followed long-standing traditions of Building



exhibitions in Germany which were initiated to demonstrate state-of-the art approaches to urban development.

The Initiative was a 10 year (1989 to 1999) undertaking which has been planned and programmed by the state Government of NRW to revitalize a 20 by 50 miles industrial rustbelt in the heart of the still heavily industrialized region with more than 5,000 acres of brownfields. In the late 1980s, the Ministry of Urban Planning and Transport of the State of NRW, inspired by its young and ambitious state minister Chirstoph Zopel and his creative advisors Karl Ganser and Wolfgang Roters, launched the regional development initiative for a 15 mile deep rustbelt corridor stretching 50 miles east from the river Rhine. In contrast to previous regional development programs, the initiative aimed primarily at changing the physical appearance of the Ruhr and the negative image of the region. Designed as a state initiative, the ambitious project was labled:"A Workshop for the Future of Industrial Regions" (IBA 1988).

By-passing the established institutional setting of the region, a small development agency, rather a think tank, was established to do the work. It was led by a manager, who, again quite the exception in the region, came from outside the regional political milieu. He was appointed by the Government of the State of NRW and was given easy access to all state ministries and their budget lines for regional and urban policy matters. The lean agency (with less than 30 staff under an energetic manager recruited from outside the region) was supported by four types of hierarchical boards with members of the relevant state's ministries, as well as from regional institutions and local governments, local representatives and experts.

Along with harvesting state-of-the art approaches to urban development from IBA, combination of outsider and hierarchical boards might break "institutional lock-in" at least partially. Changing physical appearance of the Ruhr and the negative image of the region should have cracked "cognitive lock-in". The flagship project of the initiative is revitalization of the Emscher river system, which had been degraded to an open sewer as Germany's most polluted river. Summing up the following process, the initiative was success. The Emscher river turned blue (photo above). The previous physical landscape of the river basin had been characterized by vacant factories, closed mines, closed docks. Now they were turned into historical industrial monuments. Abandoned mining rail tracks made bicycle routes. Natural forest grew by itselves (2015) and covered industrial heritage site.

The area became very attractive place to live, work and visit. In other words, the initiative made new urban development market for real-estate industry (photo, right). And it also created opportunity for municipalities to invite highly-paid companies (Dortmund, 2015). Indeed, Amazon and Ikea, their



European distribution center moved to Dortmund soon, they were assisted by logistic institute of Technical University of Dortmund, which had newly established in 1960s.

The successor of IBA is Climate Expo. Its flagship project is InnovationCity Bottrop from 2010. Schepelmann, et., 2015 summarizes as follows.

"The goal of Innovation City Ruhr, is to reshape an existing city- with all its industrial facilities, green spaces, and neighborhoods-old and new- along more sustainable lines (Reicher 2011). 16 cities participated in the competition for energy efficiency, an initiative of the Initiativkreis Ruhr, a group of private companies. Bottrop succeeded with a large participatory blue print for a low-carbon transition process in 2010. The rest 15 municipalities have now created a network to learn from the experiments and solutions developed in Bottrop.

The stated goal of Innovation City Bottrop is to halve CO2 emissions by 2020 in an area of 25 square kilometers and 14.500 buildings. The targeted area includes several neighborhoods in the urban



south of Bottrop and represents the rich cultural and social diversity of the Ruhr district. Housing, employment, trade and commerce are intertwined in a small area.

By 2020 the city plans an exemplary application of a number of innovations in energy efficiency, decentralized power generation and electric transport. Bottrop developed solutions in a bottom-up way, through collaboration between scientific institution, business, politics and civil society.

IBA and the Innovation City Bottrop can be interpreted as not only show case projects but also as real-world experiments, and both projects relied on positive visions with clearly defined outcomes."

Schepelman,et.,(2013) also suggested several environment and climate policy in national and federal levels enabled such projects. The author visited the restored Emscher river, headquarter of InnovationCity Bottrop, several city government offices and several energy-self-sufficient districts. Key component of the districts is the highly insulated residential buildings with energy producing



capacity, solar installation on the rooftop and CHP (Combined Heat and Power Generation fueled by biomass) at the basement. The former produces electricity during day while the latter produces during night. Landlord-to-tenant electricity act promoted that kind of building. The biomass, wood chip is harvested regularly in nearby parks and forest. Very often, the districts were former industrial sites, and environmental company not only cleaned the land but

also transformed it into bio-diverse ones.

The electric vehicle is available for the residents. Even climate-neutral kinder garden was built in Dortmund. Betting space was transformed into café with community center in Essen. In these districts, housing companies seems to have been playing cross boundary role, connecting such

sectors as energy, mobility, housing, manufacturing and environmental industry, public institutions and everyday life, reconfiguring these systems. The real estate money connects whole systems.

What made big differences of whole system reconfigurations among three regions?

Inspired by Grin J (2010) of Figure 9, the institutional



rectangle of state, market, science and civil society, the author summizes the Ruhr's structural transformation in Figure 10.

"State" comprised enegy policy and governance. As governance factors, federal state government had applied centralized approach until 1970s, however, they also introduced dialogue-oriented,



bottom-up and informal ones (Figure4,p4). Through doing IBA initiative, they even established a small development agency to by-passing the establised institutional setting of the region (p6). The success of the agency lead to unique organization of InnovationCity Bottrop.

Both small organizations played as 'boundary spanner', not only breaking institutional silos but also exploring new forms of governance, which turned out to be effective for new urban development, reconfiguring such systems as energy, mobility, housing, food, commerce, manufacuring, environmental industry by qurter by qurter.

Second element of "state" should be energy policies in national, federal level and EU (Figure 6, p7). Phase-out law for nucler power and hard coal, acts for climate protection as well as promoting renewable energy were passed, which provided foundation for urban development of climate-neutoral. These elements of "state" did not existed in Netherlands and Japan except EU element for Netherlands. Especially, organizational silos is very rigid in Japan and method of cross-boundary is almost limited to organizing forum-style meetings.

"Market" is composed by three markets. First is energy market encouraged by policies mentioned above. Second is money market. European Development Bank(EDB) supplied structural fund to IBA and InnovationCity. European Community thought structural transformation of coal-based Ruhr into fossill fuel free Ruhr would make excellent showcase(Schpelmann et al.,2013). Green bond market also responded positively to energy transition in the Ruhr.

Third is real-estate market. Blue sky and blue river, bio-diversity richness, culturally rich environment are the favorable conditions for highly valued real-estate. And energy efficient housing

in the area has positive image along with financial advantage. Limburg in Netherlands shares similar "market" while Chikuho/Miike don't. Japan has national development bank, but less enthutiastic on climate issues partly because of the "backwardness" of its real estate market as well as less ambitious national energy policy.



Green bond market is just taking off. The "Backwardness" of Japan's real estate market lies in its small share of secondhand housing. The housing value as asset is the highest when it newly built, but it soon continues to decline to zero after 30 years. This situation has been stagnating investment for renovation for energy efficiency because it has been nearly impossible to get return within 30 years. Since introducing the law for "promoting longer life housing" in 2007, the market is changing, but very slowly. The reason is complex. Along with ancient tax-system, Old habit and routines die hard.

"Civil society" is composed by strong municipality and daily democracy. Netherlands and Japan have rather strong central government and weak municipality although Netherland experiments variety of measures including citizen's initiatives and urban labs.

"Science" comprised hard science like engineering, electronics for achieving carbon neutral as well as soft science like transition management. Netherlands have both. Japan used to be strong in hard science in the age of mass production, but is beginning to be behind in the age of IT/Data revolutions where the degree of interface with real market decides the technological progress. And stronger currency has been depriving manufacturors' stamina since the Nixon Shock of 1973 to the present through Plaza Accord of 1985(Okamoto T, 2018) as "landscape". Transition management is practiced tentatively in a smaller scale, so it is less visible among policy makers. Additionally, Netherlands and Japan were less enthusiastic to establish University and research institute for preparing for the knowledge society.

These state of four rectangles formation cleary make differences of scale, speed of transformation among three regions.

Some possible topics for research frontiers

As Cooke P(1995) has done, comparative study of structural change in post-coal mining regions were mainly conducted within the frame of advanced Western countries of similar political economy. Stohr WB(1990) as well as Szpor A and Ziolkwska K(2018) constitute exceptions. Hassink R(1993) and Taylor RP(2015) tried to learn from the Ruhr's experience for Korea and China respectively, however, they did not have enough case studies of Korea and China.

From the climate change point of view, non-Western economies including China, India, South Africa, the gulf states and former communist countries are forcasted to be major greenhouse gas emitters in the coming decades. Their institutional rectangles could probably be more similar to

Japan than the West. Because these countries share the history of "enforced" modernization by the West. They were not afford to have enough time to grow modern democracy and market economy from the bottom-up. So the German solution may not fit them without comparative studies.



Secondly, real estate business has been playing major role

as boundary spanner as well as "system integrator" in the Ruhr's urban development. Even in the Chikuho/Miike of Japan, where real-estate market is not comparable with the Ruhr, the local real-estate business are doing good work to revitalize vacant shopping streets(photo, previous page). Manufacturing companies are able to exit from the area when economic conditions change while local real-estate business normally won't. However, few research seems to be conducted as to the inspiraritonal and inovative role of local real-estate business in the post-coal area.

Role of community festival in post-coal area may also constitute research frontier. In Essen, they hold summer festival in the industrial heritage site. So do Chikuho/Miike region. On this April, the author was walking in the downtown at Omuta city, home of Coal Mine Industrial Complex of UNESCO World Heritage. Facing the main street, several men were busily reparing festive float with dragon for summer festival. The festival in Omuta is famous for eight "roaring dragon with firework from the mouth" fight each other on the main street. One of them told me " making preparation for the festival visible on the street is important to encourage local people. Summer festival attracts huge number of tourist. And the locals working outside Omuta returned home during the festival. Community festival has power to mediate citizen's emotional depression since the last mine was closed".

Japan has been sufferring from rapid aging and low birth rate. However, population and birth rate is rising in the community keep organizing community festivals even under super-aging population. On the contrary, population is deceasing in the neighbor district where they gave up community festival. Through outsiders eyes, the physical appearance of the two neibouring quaters is similar. Community festival seems to grow "responsible citizenship" for community, the foundation of civil society for coping with structural change. This could also make research frontiers.

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