

Local Government Cooperation and Peace-Making in Northeast Asia: A "Sub-Regionalism" Perspective

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Introduction

International relations in Northeast Asia (NEA) have been deeply influenced by the lingering effects of the Cold War, including the division between north and south on the Korean peninsula, and between China and Taiwan, as well as North Korea's development of nuclear power and missiles. The resulting tensions among nations continue to this day, and therefore the prospects for the implementation of concepts or projects promoting regional peace and prosperity, including the "Northeast Asian Community" (Morishima 2000; Matuno et al. 2006), "A Common House in Northeast Asia" (Kan 2001; Wada 2003), and "Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea 2014), appear uncertain.

National cooperation in NEA is certainly progressing to some extent on a working-level. While tensions between nations remain high, there is still an important degree of mutual economic dependence. However, if one assumes that national cooperation will simply proceed linearly toward regional integration, then one inevitably confronts the issue of having to solve problems associated with establishing cooperative relations within often extremely tense circumstances. Furthermore, the process of establishing peaceful relations through efforts made at the individual and local level tends not to be given due weight. Yet without support from citizens at the local level, the promotion of regionalism for establishing peaceful relations will not succeed. However, many regionalism studies on NEA are hampered due to "methodological

nationalism,” based on concepts like “the nation” and “national borders.”¹ I consider that methods to advance peaceful relations in NEA can no longer rely on analytical frameworks that assume “national cooperation” to be the standard vehicle.

Taking a different view point, this paper draws on a methodology that approaches international relations from the perspective of the lived experiences of daily life. Specifically, I define local governments, the most familiar form of government for citizens, as international actors and examine their efforts at forming peaceful spheres of activity through interaction, cooperation, and networking that supersedes national boundaries. I then consider the possibility of creating spontaneous regional order and the significance of such behavior, as such efforts have already led to the creation of inter-local regional structures in which local governments participate. Examples include the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) and the Organization for the East Asia Economic Development (OEAED). I consider that shedding light on regional cooperation based on these local efforts offers a specific framework for a sustainable peace-making process in NEA.

In the first section, I provide a historical overview of research on the issue of local government as an international actor. In the second section, I compare, classify, and extract the defining features of cases of local government cooperation networks across NEA. Finally, in the third section, I examine whether intensifying and expanding local government networks can create the dynamism required to affect change in NEA, where “the nation” and “borders” remain fundamental concepts.

1. Local Government as an International Actor

Previously, local government has not been thought of as an international actor. According to Scott (1967, 37-38), an “international actor” is an entity possessing the following four characteristics, namely: “ (A) *Be clearly identifiable*, (B) *Have the capacity for a degree of freedom of decision and action on the international scene*, (C) *Interact with other actors and have a verifiable impact upon their calculations*, and (D) *Persist over a period of time*.” In light of this definition, local government lacks the legally-authorized capacity to make decisions or act on the international scene. In the early 1970s, as the movement of people, goods, and money across borders began to increase, approaches such as “transnational relations” and “interdependence” began to appear, and “non-state actors” began to attract increasing amounts of attention (Keohane and Nye 1971, 1977). However, local governments were still not considered international actors.

A clear recognition of local government as capable of being an international actor occurred chiefly through groundbreaking work, such as in “Complex Conglomerate System” theory (Mansbach et al. 1976, 32-45). This theory identified “Governmental Non-central,” that is, forms

¹ This approach placed a priority on the fact that many countries in the region did not have long histories as sovereign nations and, as a result, needed to preserve or reinforce their national territoriality (Taga 2005a, 83).

of regional, provincial, or municipal authorities, as international actors (see Figure 1). In Japan, not long after the publication of this work, Banba (1978, 1980) defined local governments as "trans-national actors" and, in the context of identity politics, conducted a careful analysis of regional international relations using examples such as Quebec, Hokkaido, and Hiroshima.

Figure 1 Alignments in a Complex Conglomerate System

	INTERSTATE GOVERNMENTAL	INTERSTATE NON- GOVERNMENTAL	NATION-STATE	GOVERNMENTAL NONCENTRAL	INTRASTATE NON- GOVERNMENTAL	INDIVIDUAL
INTERSTATE GOVERNMENTAL	UN-NATO (1950)	UN-International Red Cross (Palestine)	EEC-Franco- phone African states	OAU- Biafra	Arab League- Al Fatah	Grand Mufti of Jerusalem- Arab League
INTERSTATE NONGOVERNMENTAL	UN-International Red Cross (Palestine)	Shell Oil- ESSO (1972)	USSR- Comintern (1920's)	IBM- Scotland	ITT-Allende opposition (Chile)	Sun-Yat-sen- Comintern
NATION-STATE	EEC-Franco- phone African states	USSR- Comintern (1920's)	"traditional alliances" (NATO)	Belgium- Katanga (1960)	North Vietnam- Viet Cong	U. S. - James Donovan
GOVERNMENTAL NONCENTRAL	OAU- Biafra	IBM- Scotland	Belgium- Katanga (1960)	N. Y. Mayor- Moscow Mayor (1973)	Algerian rebels- French Socialists (1954)	South African mercenaries- Katanga
INTRASTATE NONGOVERNMENTAL	Arab League- Al Fatah	ITT-Allende Opposition (Chile)	North Vietnam- Viet Cong	Ulster- Protestant Vanguard (1970)	Communist Party-USSR- Communist Party-German Democratic Republic	George Grivas- Greek Cypriots
INDIVIDUAL	Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Arab League	Sun-Yat-sen- Comintern	U. S. - James Donovan	South African mercenaries- Katanga (1960)	George Grivas- Greek Cypriots	Louis of Conde- Gaspard de Coligny (1562)

Source: Mansbach, Ferguson and Lampert (1976, 40).

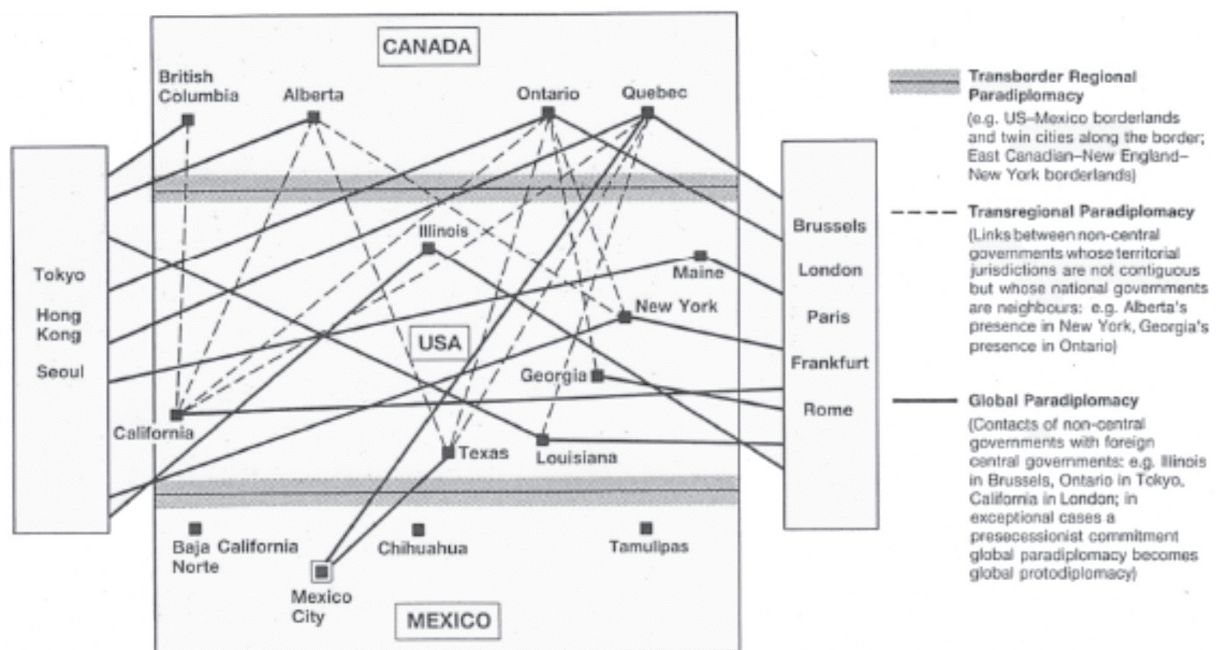
From the late 1980s, international activity due to local governments has become increasingly dynamic around the world. In this situation, the concept of "para-diplomacy" has become widely known. It can be classified into the following three types based on geographical range: (1) "Trans-border Regional Para-diplomacy," involving twin cities along the border; (2) "Trans-regional Para-diplomacy," involving links between non-central governments whose territorial jurisdictions are not contiguous but whose national governments are neighbors; and (3) "Global Para-diplomacy," involving contacts between non-central governments and foreign central governments (Duchacek 1990, 15-16, see Figure 2). Following this work, interest in "para-diplomacy" has spread (for example, Aldecoa and Keating 1999; Lachapelle and Paquin 2005; Tavares 2016).

As the concept of local government as an international actor gained greater attention, the focus on the international activities of local governments shifted from exchange to cooperation (CDI-JAPAN and Shuman 2001). This was evidenced with, the theme of the 1995 General

Conference of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) being “Municipal International Cooperation (MIC).” In Europe, progress was made in systematizing the EU trans-border regional cooperation program known as INTERREG, and cross-border cooperation in the so-called “Euroregion” significantly improved.²

Through these means, local governments have already secured positions as international actors. Nevertheless, in NEA, relatively few studies have been conducted on the concept of local government as an international actor,³ and understanding of the current state and formation mechanisms of transnational relations is limited. Given the limited number of studies on the robust regionalism of nations in NEA and the methodological problems present in existing studies, further research is necessary. Despite these challenges, in the next section, I identify as clearly as possible the current state of local government cooperation networks across NEA and explore their defining features.

Figure 2 Case of “Para-diplomacy” on North America



Source: Duchacek (1990, 19).

2. Increasingly Pluralistic Local Government Cooperation Networks across NEA

How have local government cooperation networks across NEA formed and developed? Table 1 shows the networks in terms of their founding years. A pioneering network was launched in 1970, the Japan-Soviet (now Japan-Russia) Coastal Mayors' Association (JRCMA), initiated through Niigata City in Japan. For more than 40 years, it has encouraged youth and community

² See the Interreg Europe website (<https://www.interregeurope.eu/>, accessed December 15, 2017).

³ These studies have included the following: Yabuno (1995), Postel-Vinay (1996), Hook (1999), Arase (2002), Iwashita (2007), Jain (2007), and Yamashita (2008).

members to send individuals to conduct practical work and to present petitions to governments to promote friendship and economic cooperation among municipalities (Ichioka 2000).⁴

The major surge in the creation of networks within NEA took place in the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War. In 1991, on the initiative of the City of Kitakyushu, which advocated the Yellow Sea Rim Economic Zone concept, the Pan Yellow Sea City Conference (PYSCC) was launched. Participants initially totaled six cities in three countries.⁵ Although China and South Korea had not yet established diplomatic relations, PYSCC involved meetings among academics as well as business people from these countries. In 1993, the PYSCC organized a Conference of Mayors to mark the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and South Korea. Also, the Permanent Joint Committee on Economic Cooperation between Hokkaido and the Russian Far East (PJCECHRFE)⁶ was launched in 1992, as was the Japan-Korea Strait Governor Meeting (JKSGM).⁷

Thereafter, networks continued to be created and, as a result, relations improved. In 1994, on the initiative of Tottori Prefecture, the Summit for International Exchange and Cooperation of Regional Governments around the Sea of Japan (SIECRGSJ, later SIECRGNEA), involving a framework for dialogue among five national and regional governments in NEA, was launched.⁸ That same year, a network of 12 municipalities in Japan, China, South Korea, and Russia, known as the Conference of Major Cities in the Japan (East) Sea Rim Region (CMCJSRR),⁹ was also founded. In 1996, the NEAR was launched at North Gyeongsang in South Korea. The NEAR has attracted a great deal of attention, as its membership in 2017 comprised 77 regional governments from six countries, including Mongolia and North Korea.¹⁰ In 1999, the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Local Government Exchange Conference began in an attempt to support international cooperation at various administrative levels.

Other recent developments in local government networks include the Golden Triangle of Busan, Shanghai, and Osaka (GTBSO), launched in 2007, for the purpose of promoting tourism

4 See the JRCMA website (<http://www.nichienkai.jp/index.html>, accessed December 15, 2017).

5 The participants included Kitakyushu & Shimonoseki (Japan), Dailan & Qingdao (China), and Incheon & Busan (S. Korea).

6 See the Hokkaido government website (<http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/ss/tsk/russia/russia/r-keizai/jousetugoudouinkai/index-ke.htm>, accessed December 15, 2017).

7 The participants totaled eight municipalities in two countries: Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki, & Yamaguchi Prefectures (Japan), Busan, South Jeolla Province, South Gyeongsang Province, & Jeju Province (S. Korea). See website of JKSGM (<http://www.japan-korea-strait8.org/>, accessed December 15, 2017).

8 The participants totaled five regional governments in five countries: Tottori Prefecture (Japan), Jilin Province (China), Gangwon Province (S. Korea), Russian Maritime Provinces, & Tov Province of Mongolia. See website of Tottori prefecture (<http://www.pref.tottori.lg.jp/dd.aspx?menuid=37627>, accessed December 15, 2017).

9 The participating cities were: Yonago, Sakaiminato, & Tottori (Japan), Sokcho, Donghae, & Pohang (S. Korea), Hunchun, Yanji, & Tumen (China), Vladivostok, Nakhodka, & Khasan (Russia). See website of CMCJSRR (<http://www.city.tottori.lg.jp/kannihonkai/top.html>, accessed December 15, 2017).

10 See website of NEAR (<http://www.neargov.org/jp/>, accessed December 15, 2017).

Table 1 Local Government Networks in NEA (in chronological order by year of start)

start	Framework	Japan	China	S.Korea	Russia	N.Korea	Mongolia
1970	a. The Japan-Soviet Coastal Mayors' Association (JSCMA)* ¹	◎			◎		
1972	b. The Conference of Japan Sea Coastal Cities for Japan-North Korea Friendship and Trade Promotion* ²	◎				△	
1991	c. The Pan Yellow Sea City Conference (PYSCC)	◎	◎	◎			
1992	d. Permanent Joint Committee on Economic Cooperation between Hokkaido and the Russian Far East (PJCECHRFE)	◎			◎		
	e. The Japan-Korea Strait Governor Meeting (JKSGM)	◎		◎			
1993	f. The Conference of North East Asia Regional Governments	◎	◎	◎			
	g. Three-Municipality Interaction between Japan, China, and South Korea (e.g., Karatsu – Yangzhou – Yeosu)	◎	◎	◎			
1994	h. The Summit for International Exchange and Cooperation of Regional Governments around the Sea of Japan (SIECRGSJ)* ³	◎	◎	◎	◎	▲	◎
	i. The Conference of Major Cities in the Japan (East) Sea Rim Region (CMCJRR)	◎	◎	◎		▲	
1996	f*. The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR)	◎	◎	◎	◎	○	○
	j. Friendship Province Interaction Conference (Kanagawa – Liaoning – Gyeonggi)	◎	◎	◎			
1997	k. Three Province Triangle Interaction (Yamaguchi – Shandong - Gyeongsangnam)	◎	◎	◎			
1999	l. The Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Local Government Exchange Conference	◎	◎	◎			
	m. Japan-S. Korea Governors' Conference	◎		◎			
2004	c*. The Organization for the East Asia Economic Development (OEAED)	◎	◎	◎			
2007	n. The Golden Triangle of Busan, Shanghai, and Osaka(GTBSO)	◎	◎	◎			
2010	o. Japan-Russia Governors' Conference (re-start)	◎			◎		
2012	p. Japan-China Governors' Provincial Forum	◎	◎				
2014	q. Northeast Asian Mayors' Forum (NAMF)	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎	◎

1 : In 1993, this was renamed as “the Japan-Russia Coastal Mayors' Association (JRCMA).”

2 : It was initiated through Niigata City in Japan and provided an opportunity to engage with North Korea, a country that severely restricts interaction with outsiders. However, at the 2002 Japan-North Korea Summit, North Korea admitted to having kidnapped Japanese citizens in the past and, as a result, activities were suspended in 2003.

3 : In 2002, this was renamed as “The Summit for International Exchange and Cooperation of Regional Governments in Northeast Asia (SIECRGNEA).”

4 : The underlined networks are of the “Japan-China-S. Korea trans-border” type; the double underlined networks are of the “regional trans-border” type, as discussed below.

5 : ◎ indicates that at the launch time the country was a member nation. ○ indicates that the country became a member government after the launch. △ indicates that the organizational structure of the country in question (North Korea) could not be confirmed. ▲ indicates that the country is preparing to participate.

Source: A variety of reference materials. Mainly website-based.

and interaction.¹¹ Projects initiated by the National Governors' Association of Japan (NGAJ) include the 2010 restoration of the Japan-Russia Governors' Conference, originally founded in 1968, and discontinued in 1997, as well as the 2012 inauguration of the Japan-China Governors' Forum.¹² More recently, the Northeast Asian Mayors' Forum (NAMF) was newly launched in 2014, on the initiative of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.¹³

11 See website of Osaka Prefectural Government (<http://www.osaka-info.jp/gt/>, accessed December 15, 2017).


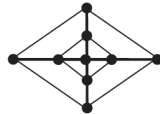

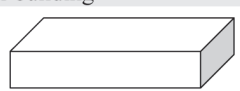
12 See website of NGAJ (<http://www.nga.gr.jp/data/activity/international/index.html>, accessed December 15, 2017).

13 See website of NAMF (<http://neamf.ulaanbaatar.mn/>, accessed December 15, 2017).

It is clear that local government networks have increased in number throughout NEA, and some distinctive features of these networks can be highlighted. First, the membership, according to affiliated country, indicates the wide variety of networks in existence. Countries are involved in two-nation trans-border type networks (a, b, d, e, m, o, p), Japan-China-S. Korea trans-border type networks (c, g, j, k, l, n), and regional trans-border type networks (f, h, i, q). When the focus is shifted to the initiative that led to the launch of the network, it can be seen that in many cases municipalities took the lead in establishing networks as a method of revitalizing their local communities. However, in recent years, there have been more frequent examples of greater coordination with national strategies (e.g., the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Local Government Exchange Conference, the Japan-South Korea Governors' Conference, the Japan-Russia Governors' Conference, and the Japan-China Governors' Conference).

Next, turning to the organizational structure of the networks, Table 2 shows network classifications according to Taga (2005b, 291-304, 331). "Network types" are designed mainly to function for specific purposes, and "region-building types" are designed to integrate an entire region. Region-building type networks have gradually become more organized since the mid-2000s. For example, in 2004, PYSCC founded the OEAED to reinforce the connections between the Mayors' Conference and the Business Meeting. The OEAED was then further sub-divided into four sub-committees (international business, environment, logistics, and tourism) (OECD 2009).¹⁴ In 2005, after approximately 10 years of discussions, the NEAR established a permanent office in Pohang, South Korea, to support 14 sub-committees in promoting exchange and cooperation among local governments (Nakayama 2015).

Table 2 Comparison of Organizational Structure Classifications

Structure	Classification and illustration	Cases in NEA
Network	3-4 linear interaction 	g. Japan-China-S. Korea 3-City Interaction j. Friendship Province Interaction Conference k. Three Province Triangle Interaction n. GTBSO
	Spider-web (equal city links) 	a. JRCMA, d. PJCECHRFE h. CMCJRR, i. SIECRGNEA m. Japan-S. Korea Governors' Conference o. Japan-Russia Governors' Conference p. Japan-China Governors' Forum
	Hub & spokes (cities linked to a central city) 	q. NAMF
Region-building	Region-building 	c. PYSCC • OEAED e. JKSGM f. NEAR

Source: Added to and revised based on Taga (2005, 291-304, 331). However, the "functional aspect" component has been omitted.

¹⁴ See website of OEAED (<http://www.oeaed.com/jp/>, accessed December 15, 2017).

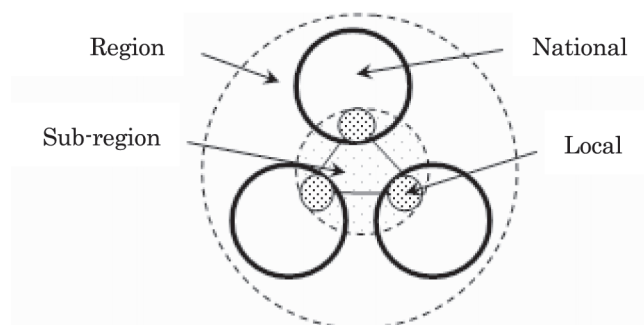
These gradually emerging organizations have been run strictly to reinforce political problem-solving measures. That is, local governments have begun to expand political expectations, formerly restricted to a single geographical sphere, into different spheres. This can be interpreted as a sign of future changes that will occur within the regional space of NEA, where international order has been based on nations and borders. In the following section, I examine whether local government cooperation can create the dynamism required to affect change in NEA.

3. Sub-Regionalism and Restructuring “Territoriality”

As mentioned, since the end of the Cold War, trans-border local government cooperation has emerged around the world. In Europe, trans-border inter-regional cooperative programs, such as INTERREG, have been established and, for 20 years, have actively carried out a variety of trans-border cooperative activities. Local governments, previously termed “sub-state units” and subsumed under national governments, have begun to utilize the financial and legal systems of the EU, a supranational entity, to participate directly in the governance of a new type of trans-national space (Kojimoto 2014). Even in East Asia, although the objectives, formation processes, and administrative structures all differ among countries, local trans-border cooperation in the Greater Tumen Sub-region (GTS), in the Bohai/Yellow Sea Sub-region (BYSS), in the Greater Southeast China Sub-region (GSCS), in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), and in the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand (IMT) Growth Triangle has increased (Chen 2005; OECD 2009; Kim et al. 2011).

The formation of “regional aggregates among local entities” within multiple sovereign nations is commonly referred to as “sub-regionalism.” Figure 3 shows a conceptual diagram of “sub-regionalism.” Solid lines indicate that the territory is national (a sovereign nation). “Local” is shown in the diagram as existing institutionally within the sovereign nation. “Region” and “sub-region” territories are in the process of being formed; thus, given that they are currently incomplete, they are shown with dotted lines. Sub-regions are attracting attention as new social units of international society never before observed, in the hope that: 1) they will function as

Figure 3 Sub-region and Restructuring “Territoriality”



Source: Author

buffer zones within often tense international relations; 2) they will eliminate dependency structures such as “central nations”/“central regions” vs. “peripheral nations”/“peripheral regions;” and 3) they will contribute to the realization of “active peace” based at a local level (Igarashi 2016). Consequently, trans-border cooperation by non-nation actors at the local level is likely to result in more contestation within a global system based on the nation-state, in a process characterized as “de- and re-territorialization” (Sum 2002, 55).

Nevertheless, it cannot be assumed that local government cooperation automatically has a

Table 3 Comparison of Types of Memberships

Framework		JRCMA (1970)	PYSCC/OEAED (1991)	PJCECHRFE (1992)	JKSGM (1992)	SIECRGSJ (1994)	CMCJRR (1994)	NEAR (1996)	Province Friendship Interaction Conference (1996)	Three Province Triangle Interaction (1997)	Japan-S. Korea Governors' Conference (2007)	Japan-Russia Governors' Conference (2010)	Japan-China Governors' Provincial Forum (2012)	NAMF (2014)	
		Local government													
China	Shandong							✓		✓					
	Ningxia							✓					✓		
	Tianjin		✓											✓	
Japan	Hokkaido			✓											
	Yamagata							✓							
	Niigata							✓							
	Toyama							✓							
	Kyoto							✓							
	Tottori					✓		✓							
	Shimane							✓							
	Fukuoka					✓						✓			
	Saga					✓									
	Niigata City	✓													
	S.Korea	Busan		✓		✓			✓						
		Incheon		✓					✓						
Daejeon								✓							
Ulsan			✓					✓							
Sejong City								✓							
Gyeonggi								✓	✓						
Gangwon							✓	✓							
North Chungcheong								✓							
South Jeolla						✓		✓							
South Gyeongsang						✓		✓		✓					
Mongolia	Ulaanbaatar							✓						✓	
	Tov Province					✓		✓							
Russia	Khabarovsk			✓				✓				✓			
	OblastMaritime			✓		✓		✓							
	Sakhalin			✓				✓				✓			
	Kamchatka Peninsula							✓				✓			
	Vladivostok	✓					✓							✓	
	Irkutsk	✓												✓	
	Yakutsk	✓												✓	

Note: ✓ indicates membership in the framework.

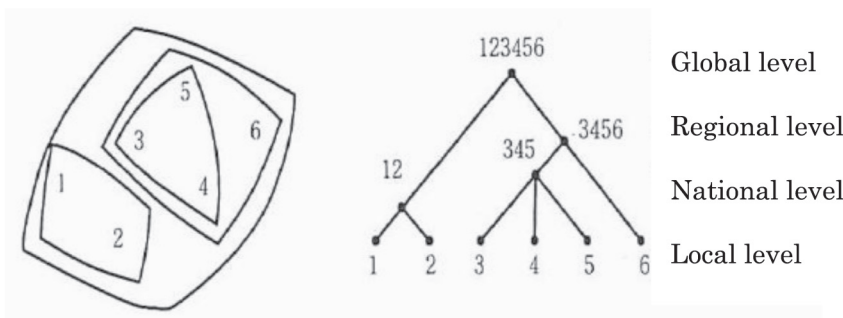
Source: Author, based on the websites of each local government cooperation networks.

non-territorial or trans-territorial character in NEA, as local governments have hybrid characteristics exhibiting trans-national behavior while simultaneously existing legally as sub-state organizations subsumed by their respective nations.¹⁵ Especially in NEA, local government cooperation is often related to national strategies of leading and surrounding nations, so may rather be better understood as a political phenomenon based on national territoriality. Accordingly, I identify some characteristic aspects of local government cooperation in NEA.

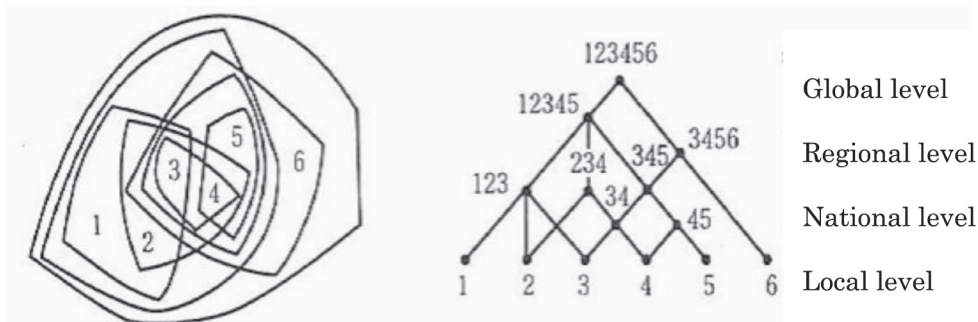
It is noteworthy that membership in two or more networks in NEA is on the rise. Table 3 shows the membership overlaps across the networks, indicating there are no mutually-exclusive relationships. Such arrangements, in which local government identities are mixed, indicate intrinsic developments specific to local governments and differ from national government strategies. An intensification and expansion of local government cooperation in NEA is likely to break down established spaces characterized as “the nation” and “national borders,” nurturing multiple identities beyond national borders among all actors. Figure 4 depicts multiple identities beyond borders, that is, identities involving local level actors affiliated not only within a national territoriality divided through borders, but belonging rather to various frameworks. I consider that

Figure 4 Depiction of Multiple Identities beyond National Border

(Identities within national borders)



(Multiple identities beyond national borders)



Source: Tosa (2014, 13), modified by the author.

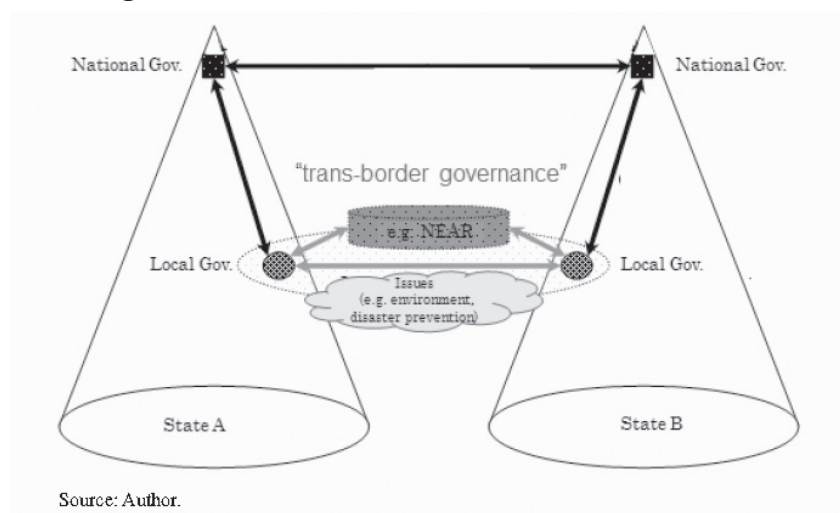
¹⁵ Given that local governments are typically undeveloped, even local autonomy is regarded with skepticism (Rozman 1999).

fostering multiple identities is a key factor in promoting regional peace-making in NEA.

Next, I focus on the diversity of the factors involved. The local government cooperation in NEA discussed in this paper has also become more focused on intercity cooperation concerning the environment, disaster prevention, education/culture, and other non-economic areas. This demonstrates that, unlike in the past, when these networks were limited to forming local economic spheres, these networks are engaged in an array of issues. The local governments in NEA focus on issues relevant to the new relationships they have developed within the framework of regional inter-governmental networks. For example, environmental cooperation amongst the NEAR members can be identified as an "issue-oriented goal" that attempts to resolve growing regional environmental problems, including the presence of waste in the sea and "yellow dust," referring to particle pollutants that cover and pollute parts of East Asia (Nakayama 2015). Such efforts suggest that local actors are working toward trans-border governance in NEA and have begun using novel problem-solving styles in newly identified "places"(see Figure 5).

From this perspective, local government cooperation networks across NEA have taken on non-territorial or trans-territorial characteristics, and are no longer restricted to a subordinate role in spaces dominated by nations. In this regard, local government cooperation in NEA, especially the region-building initiatives, illustrates how sub-regionalism may be providing an alternative to the less flexible nature of engagement undertaken through nation-states.

Figure 5 Toward Trans-border Governance in NEA



Conclusion

This paper demonstrated the following major points. First, local government cooperation networks across NEA, involving "para-diplomacy," have increased in number. Second, the region-building network type has gradually become more organized. Third, the intensifying and expanding nature of local government cooperation networks has brought about multiple identities beyond national borders for citizens at the local level, and thus helped to build trans-border

governance in NEA. In this way, local government cooperation across NEA illustrates how sub-regionalism may be altering, on multiple levels, the less flexible nature of the territorially-defined state.

Finally, several further aspects merit emphasis. While emerging concepts of regionalism may appear as attempts to confront nationalistic tendencies to help establish peaceful relations, they are really intended to encourage re-examining an overemphasis on nation-centered thinking which could otherwise undermine regionalism. In general, nationalistic policies tend to marginalize local regions as the relationships between nations and markets receive more attention and local regions receive less. Therefore, without support from citizens at the local level, regionalism will not succeed. It is through strengthening trans-border relationships that bind local actors to one another irrespective of national borders, that individuals, communities, and regions can work toward peaceful relations and development in NEA.

This paper did not include an analysis of specific allocations of power, such as financial power and authority, in relation to local government cooperation across NEA. In that respect, the study of local government cooperation in NEA is hampered by analytical limitations as NEA lacks both supranational organizations, similar to the EU in Europe, and developed systems for new trans-border units. Thus, in order to further investigate the potential for new peace-making mechanisms in NEA, additional case studies of local government cooperation in familiar, everyday settings is required, as is an analysis of the specific order-forming mechanisms created by non-state actors at the local level.

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