Abstract
Kobe port is a major international trade port in East Asia as well as in Japan. Exactly 150 years ago in 1868, the port of Kobe opened with the birth of a new world due to the Meiji Restoration. Although its emergence as a modern international harbor is only 150 years, it can be said that the history of prosperity of the actual Kobe Port and Kobe City is long and dramatic.

In the 12th century, there was a Bushi named Taira No Kiyomori. He is the hero of "The Tale of the Heike", who suppressed the aristocracy who was at the center of politics for a long time since ancient times and built the first samurai administration in Japan, and is a very famous person in Japanese history. Kiyomori thought that international trade would enrich the country and the people so he made it his lifelong aspiration to build a country that required Japan-Song trade. To make Kobe, a remote place formerly known as Fukuhara, a strategic position of maritime transportation and the current Kobe port(Owada No Tomari) prosper as a representative window of Japan-Song trade. Not only that, it is not a very well known fact but he tried to establish Kobe as the capital of Japan.

In this paper, the theme is the introduction of the prosperity of the international maritime city of Kobe in the Middle Ages and a person named Taira No Kiyomori who was committed to the internationalization of Japan.

Keywords
History of the international maritime city of Kobe, Owada No Tomari, Taira No Kiyomori, Heshi clan, Japan-Song maritime trade, Relocation of the capital to Kobe in Middle ages in Japan, Pirates as the maritime intellectuals

Introduction
Island of Japan sea route - important position of Seto Inland Sea(瀬戸内海) and Owada No Tomari(大輪田泊) for coastal defense and maritime transportation

Surrounded by the ocean on all sides, Japan has prospered through cultural exchange with East Asian continent for more than two thousand years. Japan has continued with the history of peace because the sea became a natural shield and it continued with the history of peace because the sea became a natural shield and it

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Taira No Kiyomori and the prosperity of the international maritime city of Kobe in the Middle Ages

(1) The history of Taira No Kiyomori and the Heishi clan

Taira No Kiyomori (1118-1181) is the first Bushi (a warrior) to hold power surpassing the royal family and is renowned as the person who built the world of Bushi administration lasting 700 years thereafter.

According to sources, the Heishi clan descended from the Imperial House of Japan from the Emperor Kanmu bloodline, but the Heishi clan of around the 12th century served the royal family and the aristocracy while remaining in a low official position. The Heishi clan when Kiyomori was born originally played an active part on Ise No Kuni (伊勢国) (present-day Mie Prefecture) as a base for generations.

Ise No Kuni, located on the Pacific side, is an area developed as a starting point for maritime transportation connecting the Kanto region to the Kyushu, Shikoku and Chugoku regions by way of the Seto Inland Sea. Heishi clan actively participated in marine advancement based on benefits of the sea without giving up on their intentions for the sea can be found at the roots of the Heishi clan.

was able to defend against the invasion of foreign enemies attacking using the sea route. Therefore, since the Yamato Imperial Court, the capital, which is the nerve center of politics, was in the present Nara and Kyoto, located in a safe mountain that the Seto Inland Sea passed through from the ocean coast. In addition, the ports on the coast of the Seto Inland Sea have also played a role as important positions for overseas trade, indispensable when the envoys to China (遣唐使 / Japanese Missions to Tang Dynasty) and Korea (遣新羅使 / Japanese Missions to Shilla Dynasty) set sail from the inner world to the outside world.

In the 8th century, Seppan-Gohaku (Ձ藩五泊) was built which became a major port on the Seto Inland Sea coast. Ships sailing in and out of the Seto Inland Sea formerly only sailed during the day and berthed in the evening in port, waiting for wind and tide. Owada No Tomari is located in the present-day Kobe and was regarded as the most important port among the Seppan-Gohaku because it is closest to Kyoto. Contributions and goods from various places carried through the Seto Inland Sea were unloaded here and then loaded onto riverboats and brought to Kyoto by going up the Yodo River. Also, Owada No Tomari flourished as a trading base with East Asian continent.

When talking about the history of the international maritime city of Kobe, Owada No Tomari, which is adjacent to Kobe, and Taira No Kiyomori are indispensable keywords.

Figure 1. The ancient Japanese sea road Setonaikai

Figure 2. Seppan-Gohaku (Kobe maritime museum)
Pirates of that time were also maritime intellectuals with information power of not only tidal current, but topography, weather, astronomy, steering, shipping, transportation, maritime law, and economics. Tadamori ruled these pirates under his control and made use of their knowledge to build a foothold for the family ocean expansion.

He also earned a financial fortune by independently trading with Song using his position of managing Bizen Kanzaki No Sho (備前神崎荘), which was trading with Song under the jurisdiction of the royal family.

In relation to the above-mentioned focus on Tadamori trade, a brief description of the history of Japan’s foreign trade will be given.

Since ancient times, Japan has continually interacted with East Asian continent. Under the Ritsuryō system, public trade under so-called state control was mainstream, and trade was promoted in the form of attending a cultural mission represented by Japanese Missions to Tang China.

In the 12th century, the way of trade reached a turning point. Following the development of shipbuilding technology and the destabilization of China’s state of affairs, trade at private level became prosperous. Kiyomori’s father, Tadamori, took advantage of the shift from public trade to private trade. He put Bizen Kanzaki No Sho and Dazaifu (博多/ present-day Hakata) in direct control and put effort into private trade. The primary factor for him becoming a courtier of Shirakawa-Hōō and Toba-jyōkō was his financial strength obtained by these private trade.

Kiyomori also actively engaged in trade with his father at Bizen Kanzaki No Sho and Dazaifu. He may had thought of this economic advantage to later conceive nation-building that required trade.

(2) Achievement of Taira no Kiyomori Part One “Advancement to the central government”

It was Kiyomori’s father, Tadamori (1096–1153) who dramatically expanded the power of the Heishi clan. Tadamori solidified his stronghold in the central government by being useful for Shirakawa-Hōō (白河法皇) and the former Emperor Toba-jyōkō (鳥羽上皇) who reigned in the Imperial Court as the highest power of the present day. When Tadamori was appointed to track down and kill pirates, he strived to suppress pirates who reigned in the Seto Inland Sea, Awaji Island, and Shikoku, and in the process, it is said that he promoted them from “pirates” to “military”, that is, regular army.
Kiyomori, who became head of the Heishi clan after the death of Tadamori, would eventually achieve remarkable success.

In addition to winning the Hōgen No Ran and the Heiji No Ran, he accomplished rapid promotion, as well as defeating the head of the Genji clan, Minamoto No Yoshitomo, who was a rival for many years as the same warrior class, and in the end became the champion Bushi. Through victory in the two rebellions, it can be said that it demonstrated to the public that the power of the Bushi is indispensable for the royal family and aristocrats.

Kiyomori served as director consecutively of Bizen(present-day Okayama Prefecture), Aki(present-day Hiroshima Prefecture), and Harima(present-day Hyogo Prefecture) and was soon selected to be Dazai No Daini(太宰大弐/Chief director of Dazaifu). Dazaifu is an international port that prospered from foreign trade through Japanese Missions to Tang China from around the 7th century. By obtaining control of Dazaifu, nation-building based on the Japan-Song trade would finally begin.

(3) Achievement of Taira no Kiyomori Part Two “nation-building that requires Japan-Song trade”

Kiyomori thought that trade would enrich the country and the people. His life ambition was to build a nation that required Japan-Song trade. Noteworthy is the establishment of bay coast facilities in the expanse of the Seto Inland Sea. It has been reported that the excavation construction work of “Ondo-No-seto” in present day Hiroshima Prefecture, which was a choke point of the Seto Inland Sea route, and the refurbishment of the port of “Sode-No-minato” in present day in Hakata was by Kiyomori. Moreover, he believed that the advent of family glory was dependent on ocean guardian deity of Itsukushima, and carried out a major construction of Itsukushima Shrine. Regarding the construction of Itsukushima Shrine, it is largely due to a display of power and religious motivation, but we can not overlook that this area of sea was highly regarded in transportation and navy formation in the Seto Inland Sea.

These were sophisticated construction work suspected to be feasible with the technological strength of the time, but it can be said that it is a great undertaking that reveals Kiyomori’s precise nature observation, creativity and strong passion for the sea.

At that time, Kobe was called “Fukuhara”(福原). Kiyomori was quick to keep an eye on the latent potential of this Fukuhara. Why Fukuhara? One of the reasons is the existence of Owada No Tomari. As mentioned previously, Owada No Tomari was an important port of the Seto Inland Sea route and had been developing from long ago as a base for domestic maritime transportation and foreign trade. Kiyomori who wanted Owada No Tomari got the Fukuhara territory and soon started large-scale renovation so that Owada No Tomari would be the second Hakata, a hub for Japan-Song trade.

The renovation work was major as they leveled the neighboring shiotsuchi-Yama to build an artificial island in front of the port with the earth and sand, in order to prevent strong winds and waves from destroying the port facility. It is said that construction was
Why did China choose Kiyomori as a point of contact for trade with Japan? In the era of Kiyomori, Ming-Zhou (明州) was one of the most important trade ports in China since the middle period of the Tang Dynasty, which was managing foreign trade in Song. Ming-Zhou’s trade administrative authority seemed to put an emphasis on piracy suppression, and Ming-Zhou’s marine trade, which was responsible for overseas trade affairs, presented to the Japanese side the maximum requirements for safe operation of trade ships in promoting trade with Japan. Especially in the Seto Inland Sea it is indispensable to suppress pirates, and for that purpose, they decided they would like to take measures against piracy by linking with the Heishi clan who were the most powerful people in Japanese military aspects and had piracy suppression know-how.

Relocation of the capital to the maritime city of Fukuhara by Taira No Kiyomori, and its subsequent failure

(1) Taira No Kiyomori’s Fukuharu withdrawal and the launch of “the new Heishi’s dynasty”

Before long Kiyomori was promoted to Dajō Daijin (chief minister of the government) which was likened to the highest position for humans at the time. The reign period was only three months, but while in office he raised the official position of his clan, solidifying the Heishi clan’s power in the nerve center of politics.

In 1168, when Kiyomori was 50 years old, he got sick and almost died; however, he miraculously recovered and decided to join the priesthood. He retired to Fukuhara soon after joining the priesthood, and for 11 years he lived in Fukuhara, and mostly did not go to the capital of Kyoto. However, he was a nominal priest and it was a nominal retirement, and he continued to have a strong influence and say on the Imperial Court as an influential politician.

Here, we will mention on Kiyomori’s intentional retreat to Fukuhara.

The royal family and aristocrats gradually raised a sense of restraint and rebellion against the fact that political power was concentrated on the Heishi clan, such as increase in enfeoffment by the Heishi clan and monopoly of key positions. Even though aristocrats acknowledged that the Heishi clan’s immense military
power and financial strength was indispensable to the Imperial Court, they were still reluctant to let the Bushi take charge of the government, having contempt for their lowly existence. Furthermore, in order to realize the nation-building that requires Japan-Song trade, the existence of Kiyomori who breaks existing practices and successively drives new measures such as the excavation of Ondo-No-seto, Sode-No-Minato, renovation of Owada No Tomari, construction of Itsukushima Shrine, and Song ships system of entry into inland sea ports, was provoking and a nuisance for other aristocrats who value the “importance of everything precedent”. For Kiyomori, confronting such non-understanding and anti-resolution surroundings, must had been frustrating as the nation building he envisioned was not proceeding. After reflection, by moving his residence to Fukuhara, while keeping the spatial and psychological distance from the central government, Kiyomori chose to manipulate politics at will with strong power as before from the far away land of Fukuhara. Fukuhara's land gradually became a base securing the Heishi clan's political power stability and autonomy, and eventually it would emerge as another capital, that is, the Heishi clan capital.4

In 1179, an incident to overthrow the Heishi clan by the established forces opposed to the Heishi clan occurred.5 Although it was exposed and suppressed before it happened, this incident was the beginning, and Kiyomori ultimately took a radical action in the form of a military coup. With the immense military power of the Heishi clan, the old political regime(院政/cloistered rule) that had been imposed for three generations of Shirakawa-in—Toba-In—Go Shirakawa-In was stopped, and the Kiyomori dictatorship finally started.

(2) Vision of Fukuhara as capital
In the following year of 1180, Kiyomori who gained the status equivalent to a monarch of the whole country from the earlier military coup, enthroned Imperial Prince Tokihito, son of his daughter Empress Tokuko and Emperor Takakura. Emperor Antoku, former Prince Tokihito was the first emperor with Bushi blood. On June 2nd of the same year, Kiyomori decided to enter Fukuhara, accompanied by Emperor Antoku, retired Emperor Takakura-Jōkō and Go Shirakawa-Hōō. The place where the Emperor is, is the capital of the whole country. This was the so called “relocation of the capital to Fukuhara”, and the establishment of “the New Heishi’s dynasty” with retired Emperor Takakura and Emperor Antoku as the head.

Although it seemed like a rather impulsive and hurried relocation of the capital, Kiyomori strived to build a new capital appropriate for the new world. Meanwhile, while anti-Heishi clan momentum increased, among them the Genji clan eldest son, Minamoto No Yoritomo, overthrown in the Heiji No Ran, as well as Minamoto No Yoshinaka raised an army and national scale rebellions successively broke out. Kiyomori made every effort to suppress the rebellions, leaving no time to develop the new capital. Then, after an appeal from family members, he reluctantly decided to return to the capital.

Furthermore, another reason for returning the capital to Kyoto was to calm the popular sentiment of anxiety and opposition that had strengthened to the former relocation of the capital. At the same time as the relocation of the capital to Fukuhara, natural disasters frequently occurred, and famine was widespread, and people rumored that this was due to the relocation of the capital. In the 8th century, there was a similar example of relocation of the capital during the reign of Emperor Kanmu. When he relocated the capital from Heijō-kyō to Nagaoka-kyō, floods and plague was widespread, Emperor Kanmu was forced to return the capital to Heijō-kyō again in order to appease popular sentiment.

In addition, when planning the permanent renovation of Owada No Tomari and the construction of Fukuhara-kyō, the public work done up until then was from the private funds of the Heishi clan, then turned into a major plan using the national treasury. As a result, excess tax collection and mobilization of the labor force was carried out, and the Heishi clan was abandoned not only by the central government but also by public sentiment.

The vision for the marine capital Fukuhara that includes the international trade port of Owada No Tomari fell apart in just five months. Not only was the capital left incomplete, it was subsequently burned down by the enemy army commander Minamoto No Yoshinaka, so details including the exact location of Fukuhara-kyō, and how far construction progressed remain unknown and lost in history.

In 1181, the next year after returning to the capital, while concentrating on suppressing the rebel army and rebuilding the political regime, Kiyomori died due to fever. He was 64 years old.
The Heishi clan who lost a huge leader of Taira No Kiyomori, followed the road of decline, and in April 1185, after the last battle of the Genpei War in Dannno-ura, it finally collapsed.

The History of “Kobe” After the Middle Ages

In the Kamakura period (the latter half of the 12th century to the 14th century), after Heishi clan completely collapsed, “Owada No Tomari” gradually became known to the public as “Hyogono-tsu”.

Having suffered through two invasions by Mongolia, the Kamakura Bakufu began to focus its efforts on strengthening its maritime defense more than the public trade with East Asian continent. Kobe subsequently relinquished its place as a hub for international trade, evident in the decision of the Kamakura Bakufu to abolish the Japan-Song trade.

During the Muromachi Period (14th century to the 16th century), positive foreign trade was encouraged under the influence of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, the third general Shogun of Muromachi Bakufu. Widely regarded as a major port for the “Japan-Ming trade,” the land of Kobe once again rose to prosperity. Trading vessels from China, Korea, and Kingdom of the Ryukyu frequented ports in Kobe, and Ashikaga Yoshimitsu himself met with an envoy from Ming in “Hyogono-Tsu” (Previously called “Fukuhara”, present-day “Kobe”).

As the Sengoku age drew to a close and the Edo period (17th century to 18th century) began, the economic center of Kinai (the metropolitan area) shifted to Sakai (present-day located in “Osaka”), which compromised the prestige of Kobe as an international port.

During the later years of the Edo period (the latter half of the 17th century), Western countries requested the Edo Bakufu to open major ports such as Shimoda, Yokohama and Hakodate.

At the same time, allied vessels from America, the Netherlands, England, who had long been attracted to Kobe’s appeal and potential as an international harbor, adamantly pressed for the opening of the port. Nonetheless, in consideration of Kobe’s geographical proximity to the capital city of Kyoto, the Edo Bakufu was hesitant to comply with such demands.

However, efforts made by the 15th general Shogun Tokugawa Yoshimitsu
were eventually realized with the opening of the port of Kobe in 1867, successfully marking Kobe's first step towards a modern international maritime city.

In 1995, The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake struck entire Hanshin region, including Osaka, Awaji Island, and most importantly, Kobe. The aftermath of the earthquake was so catastrophic to the point of which Kobe had to temporarily shut down its function as an international port. Shutting down of the port resulted in a series of crippling effects on the Japanese economy.

However, arduous efforts brought the region to full restoration within two years, allowing Kobe to once again reclaim its position as a center of international trade.

Summary

After the downfall of the Heishi clan, in the late Edo period (the latter half of the 17th century), the influence of Kobe that flourished as a result of the protection of Kiyomori was lost. However, exactly 150 years ago, Kobe opened as a port for various Western countries that had noticed its convenience, and again proceeded to become the prosperous international marine city of "Kobe".

The Heishi clan had power and survived the royal family and aristocracy and eventually became supreme leader of the times. At the center, was Taira No Kiyomori. However, as written in "The Tale of the Heike", the masterpiece war chronicle depicting the Buddhist sense of the vanity of life through the prosperity and downfall of the Heishi clan, he seized the central government through a number of evil and coercive policies, tormented the people as a "tyrant", "dictator" and "treacherous retainer"; hence, the evaluation for Kiyomori by subsequent generations is not very good.

However, Kiyomori clearly envisioned how the country should be. This vision is concisely expressed in "Build a rich country that is founded upon maritime trade". Of course, the core of the concept is maritime trade with East Asian countries based on the international maritime city of "Kobe". Make the country rich through trade, from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south, the image of a rich country connected by one transportation route and information network is the future that Kiyomori dreamed of. Under the old customs at the time, it is easy to imagine that it was impossible for the existing politicians who thought only of self-protection to understand Kiyomori’s foresight and creativity. Therefore, under the circumstances of opposition of surroundings and being isolated and helpless, the concept of making Kobe a capital came to nothing in only 5 months, and eventually the whole clan was destroyed.

Kiyomori’s ashes were stored at Hokkedo of Yamada (located in Kobe) according to his will. Strangely, after his death he eventually returned to the land of Kobe, the maritime capital he dreamed of while alive. Ferries connecting all areas of the Seto Inland Sea and foreign freighters frequently pass through Yamada, which overlooks Awaji Island and the Akashi Strait.

Kiyomori’s Buddhist name is "Jōkai(Yōkai or 幽海)", and maybe Kiyomori wanted to sleep eternally, wishing for a quiet sea, a clean sea, while listening to the fog whistle of ships coming and going from the Akashi Strait. For Kiyomori living in the sea and scattered in the sea, it can be said that there is no graveyard more suitable."
In Japanese historical studies, among descendants of Emperor Kanmu was Taira No Kiyomori’s clan. From the reign of Emperor Kanmu (736-806), a surname gift system was frequently carried out to encourage independence from the royal family, and one name given when denoted to the ranks of nobility was the Heishi clan.

In the preceding year 1169, Kiyomori sent a tribute to the Song Dynasty, and it is thought that the arrival of the Song Ship in 1170 was a form of repayment in which Song’s messenger visited. (Takahashi, Glory of the Heike clan, Japanese History Museum dictionary.)

Heiji No Ran (1159) : Military coup by Minamoto No Yoshitomo who were dissatisfied with the Heishi clan. Saikō was executed, Narichika banished to Bizen, and Naritsune, Shunkan and others were gathering all Chinese luxury items such as "Yangzhou’s' silk fabrics, nothing missing from all the treasures in the world". (Takahashi, Taira no Kiyomori’s Dream for Fukuhara.)

Takadochi, The Heike Clan from tales to historical facts.

Shishigatani Conspiracy: A secret meeting to defeat the Heishi clan held by Fujiwara No Narichika, Saikō, Naritsune, Shunkan in 1177 at the mountain residence of Shishigatani, Higashiyama, Kyoto, according to the intention of Go-Shirakawa-Kō who was dissatisfied with the authoritative Heishi clan. However, the meeting was tipped off by Tada Yukitsuna and the conspirators were apprehended by the Heishi clan. Saikō was executed, Narichika banished to Bizen, and Naritsune, Shunkan and Yasuyori to Kikaigashima. (Takahashi, Glory of the Heike clan, Japanese History Museum dictionary.)

1. From the reign of Emperor Kanmu (736-806), a surname gift system was frequently carried out to encourage independence from the royal family, and one name given when denoted to the ranks of nobility was the Heishi clan.

2. In Japanese historical studies, among descendants of Emperor Kanmu was Taira No Kiyomori’s clan called Ise Heishi who progressed to Ise and flourished. Furthermore, it is common to correct it from Taira to the Heishi family after becoming Imperial Court lineage in the era of Taira No Kiyomori, but in this paper it is consolidated into the Heishi clan for convenience.

3. Hōgen No Ran (1156) : Sutoku-Jōki and Fujiwara No Yorinaga who were dissatisfied with imperial succession, connected and confronted Emperor Go-Shirakawa and his chief advisor Kanku Fujiwara No Tadamichi. The Emperor had Taira No Kiyomori and Minamoto No Yoshitomo, and fought against Sutoku-Jōki, Kiyomori’s uncle, Tadamasa, and Yoshitomo’s father, Tameyoshi. The battle ended in the victory of Emperor Go-Shirakawa after one day, and after that the skill of Bushi was regarded as important. (Takahashi, Glory of the Heike clan, Japanese History Museum dictionary.)

4. Heiji No Ran (1159) : Military coup by Minamoto No Yoshitomo who were dissatisfied with the reward after the Hōgen No Ran and Fujiwara No Nobuyori. In the interval of Kiyomori’s absence during Kumanomōde (戦野譚), Emperor Go-Shirakawa’s attendant, Shinzei-Nyudo was murdered. In response, Kiyomori promptly returned to Kyoto and defeated Minamoto No Yoritomo, head of the Genji clan. It can be said that the Heiji No Ran was the starting point of the Heishi clan’s glory. (Takahashi, Glory of the Heike clan, Japanese History Museum dictionary.)

5. In the preceding year 1169, Kiyomori sent a tribute to the Song Dynasty, and it is thought that the arrival of the Song Ship in 1170 was a form of repayment in which Song’s messenger visited. (Takahashi, Taira no Kiyomori’s Dream for Fukuhara.)

6. Although there is no literary material remaining that directly shows the various items traded with Song, according to “The Tale of the Heike”, a story about the prosperity of the Heishi clan, there were gathering all Chinese luxury items such as “Yangzhou’s gold, Jingzhou’s jewels, Wu Commandery’s luxury fabrics, Shu-Jiang’s silk fabrics, nothing missing from all the treasures in the world!”. (Takahashi, Taira no Kiyomori’s Dream for Fukuhara.)

7. Takahashi, The Heike Clan from tales to historical facts.

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