

EastSea and seas of Europe

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1. Introduction

The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) will have its general meeting on April 22, 2012. Held every five years, the general meeting is expected to have important items on the agenda this time around. Of these items, the most important to Korea must be to adopt the name "East Sea." Although it has been a long time since this country first addressed the issue of adopting the name internationally, the disputes over the adoption between Korea and Japan remain at a standstill. To settle these disputes, it is believed that not only scholars of both countries, but also those in other regions around the world need to take interest in this situation.

This study aims to make a comparison between the Korean East Sea and European seas in terms of features and names. Europe has several seas with similar forms and features to the Korean East Sea: the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Ionian Sea, and the Aegean Sea. They attract Koreans' attention due to some similarities to the East Sea: the form, the size, and the instance of being shared by two or more countries. These European seas have one thing in common. Being shared by two or more countries, they are not named after a specific country.

This study intends to analyze the European seas under similar conditions to the East Sea, investigate the history of their names, and confirm the legitimacy of the name "East Sea." To do this, a comparative analysis of old European maps is performed to empirically determine the legitimacy of the name "East Sea." For this purpose, some old maps manufactured in Europe are selected to analyze the forms and names of the seas.

2. Analysis of European Seas

The European seas are under highly complicated circumstances, and many of them tend to be shared by two or more countries. Such European seas include the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Ionian Sea, the Aegean Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.

Of these, the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, and the Ionian Sea are in a similar international situation to the East Sea. These European seas can be analyzed in terms of forms as follows:

1. Name of North sea

A 1490 recreation of a map from Ptolemy's [Geography](#) showing the "Oceanus Germanicus"

Through history [various names](#) have been used for the North Sea. One of the earliest recorded names was *Septentrionalis Oceanus*, or "Northern Ocean," which was cited by Pliny.^[69] The name "North Sea" probably came into English, however, via the Dutch "Noordzee", who named it thus either in contrast with the [Zuiderzee](#) ("South Sea"), located south of [Frisia](#), or simply because the sea is generally to the north of the Netherlands.^[70] Prior to the adoption of "North Sea," "German Sea" or "German Ocean"--from the [Latin](#) name "Mare Germanicum" and "Oceanus Germanicus"--were the names in English, and they persisted even into the late 19th century.^[71] In Danish, the term "Vesterhavet" (lit. "Western ocean") is used as frequently as Nordsøen (lit. "North lake") as synonym for the North Sea.

2. Name of Baltic Sea

The Baltic Sea, in ancient sources known as [Mare Suebicum](#) (also known as [Mare Germanicum](#)),^[5] is also known by the equivalents of "East Sea", "West Sea", or "Baltic Sea" in different languages:

In [Germanic languages](#), except English, **East Sea** is used: [Afrikaans](#) (*Oossee*), [Danish](#) (*Østersøen*), [Dutch](#) (*Oostzee*), [German](#) (*Ostsee*), [Icelandic](#) and [Faroese](#) (*Eystrasalt*), [Norwegian](#) (*Østersjøen*), and [Swedish](#) (*Östersjön*). In [Old English](#) it was known as *Ostsæ*. In addition, [Finnish](#), a [Baltic-Finnic language](#), has [calqued](#) the Swedish term as *Itämeri* "East Sea", disregarding the geography (the sea is west of Finland), though understandably since Finland was a part of Sweden from Middle Ages until 1809. In another Baltic-Finnic language, [Estonian](#), it is called the **West Sea** (*Läänemeri*), with the correct geography (the sea is west of Estonia).

Baltic Sea is used in [English](#); in the [Baltic languages](#) [Latvian](#) (*Baltijasjūra*) and [Lithuanian](#) (*Baltijosjūra*); in [Latin](#) (*Mare Balticum*) and the [Romance languages](#) [French](#) (*Mer Baltique*), [Italian](#) (*Mar Baltico*), [Portuguese](#) (*Mar Báltico*), [Romanian](#) (*MareaBaltică*) and [Spanish](#) (*Mar Báltico*); in [Greek](#) (*ΒαλτικήΘάλασσα*); in [Albanian](#) (*DetiBalltik*); in the [Slavic languages](#) [Polish](#) (*MorzeBałtyckie* or *Bałtyk*), [Czech](#) (*Baltskémoře* or *Balt*), [Croatian](#) (*Baltičko more*), [Slovenian](#) (*Baltskomorje*), [Bulgarian](#) (*Baltijsko More* (*Балтийскоморе*), [Kashubian](#) (*Bôłt*), [Macedonian](#) (*БалтичкоМоре* / *Baltičko More*), [Ukrainian](#) (*Балтійськеморе* ("Baltijs'ke More"), [Belarusian](#) (*Балтыйскаемора* ("Baltyjskaje Mora"),

[Russian](#) (*Балтийское море* ("Baltiyskoye Morye")) and [Serbian](#) (*Балтичко море* / *Baltičko more*); in the [Hungarian language](#) (*Balti-tenger*); and also in [Basque](#) (*Itsaso Baltikoa*).

3. Name of Ionian Sea

The name *Ionian* comes from Greek Ἴόνιον (πέλαγος). In [Ancient Greek](#) the adjective *Ionios* (Ἴόνιος) was used as an epithet for the sea because [Io](#) swam across it.^[3] Its etymology is unknown.^[4] Ancient Greek writers, especially [Aeschylus](#), linked it to the myth of Io. There were also narratives about other [eponymic](#) legendary figures; according to one version, *Ionius* was a son of *Adrias* (eponymic for the [Adriatic Sea](#)); according to another, *Ionius* was a son of *Dyrrhachus*, eponymic for the ancient Greek city of Dyrrhachium (modern [Durrës](#) in Albania). When Dyrrhachus was attacked by his own brothers, [Heracles](#), who was passing through the area, came to his aid, but in the fight the hero killed his ally's son by mistake. The corpse was cast into the sea, which thereafter was called the Ionian Sea.

4. Name of Adriatic Sea

Etymology of the Adriatic Sea is linked to [Etruscan](#) settlement of [Adria](#), itself probably originating from [Illyrian](#) word *adur* meaning water or sea.^[96] In classical antiquity, the sea was known as *Mare Adriaticum* (*Mare Hadriaticum*, also sometimes simplified to *Adria*) or, less frequently, as *Mare Superum*.^[97] The two terms were not synonymous, however. *Mare Adriaticum* generally corresponds to extent of the Adriatic Sea, spanning from the [Gulf of Venice](#) to the Strait of Otranto. That boundary became more consistently defined by Roman authors—early Greek sources place boundary between the Adriatic and Ionian seas at various places ranging from adjacent to the Gulf of Venice to the southern tip of [Peloponnese](#), eastern shores of [Sicily](#) and western shores of [Crete](#).^[98] *Mare Superum* on the other hand normally encompassed modern Adriatic Sea and the sea off the southern coast of Apennine peninsula, as far as the [Strait of Sicily](#).^[99] Another name used in the period was *Mare Dalmaticum*, applied to waters off coast of [Dalmatia](#) or [Illyricum](#).

3. Analysis of Changes in the Names of the European Seas

The names of the European seas are characterized by the long history going back to ancient times. The names of the seas shared by two or more countries have two features: one is the integration of several names as in the case of the North Sea, and the other is to have been named specifically from ancient times. These two types of names have different historical backgrounds.

4. Conclusion

This study obtained the following results:

First, the European seas similar to the East Sea in terms of form and size include the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, and the Ionian Sea. Of these, the North Sea has the largest amount of similarities to the East Sea.

Second, it is the North Sea that is shared by two or more countries and has a similar form to the East Sea.

The sea north of the European continent has some different names until it adapted the standardized name of the North Sea in the 19th century. In other words, this sea had been named in different ways by map-manufacturing countries until it got the single name of the North Sea.

Third, the Baltic Sea, the Ionian Sea, and the Aegean Sea each has a single name in principle, but has never been named after a specific country.

Fourth, among other seas around the world, the Sea of Japan is the only case that is shared by two or more countries and is named after a specific country.

Fifth, naming a sea shared by two or more countries after one of the said countries is associated with violating the sovereignty of the other countries.

Sixth, the case analysis of the names of the European seas can provide a model that suggests how to name the sea over which disputes persist between Korea and Japan.

Seventh, the name East Sea is considered most legitimate for the sea shared by two or more countries in the east of the Eurasian continent.

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(Figure 1) GREECE CRETE BALKANS TURKEY 1788 BARBIE DU BOCAGE



(Figure 2) GREECE & EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN 1741 HOMANN



(Figure 3) SWEDEN DENMARK FINLAND NORWAY BALTICS 1730 HOMANN



(Figure 4) DENMARK SWEDEN BALTIC COUNTRIES 1690 CLUVER