

# The Geographical Names of the North-East Asian the Language Esperanto

G.B. DUDCHENKO

(Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography of Peoples of the Far East,  
Vladivostok, Russia)

Geographical names situation in the most of constructed languages is similar to the national ones. Some difficulties appear concerning the correct transcription and transliteration. As a rule the origins are geographical names from European languages. Because usually they are wide-spread in the whole world. The names in that case are formed by the principles adopted in the constructed language.

So there are some special rules for construction of words in Esperanto. All of nouns contain the letter “o” in the end. In tradition also geographical names must be nouns.

But really there wasn't an opportunity to put into this order everything of geographical names. Such affairs need a long-time work for the transition of names from various national languages into Esperanto. It is carried out mainly by special decisions of Esperanto Academy, which is situated in Rotterdam. At present only minority of geographical names are “esperantized”. Mostly they belong to names of countries, seas, biggest rivers, mountain ranges and cities. In the rest cases geographical names are passed by arbitrary transcription or transliteration, not as nouns.

There used the suffix “i” before the “o” to construct the name of country. So China in Esperanto is “Ĉinio” (chinio). For Japan there is word “Japanio” (yapanio). A little confusion arises only for Korea. Because both versions “Koreo” and “Koreio” are correct. Though at present the second version is more often preferable. It contains the suffix “i”.

Without the suffix “i” those nouns mean person of certain nationality. So “ĉino” (chino) is Esperanto for Chinese, “japano” (yapano) points to Japanese and “ruso” means Russian. Sometimes it can be used the word “koreo” for Korean, but completely correct for this case is the word “koreano” only. The suffix “an” means “belonging to something”.

Besides of names of countries also names of some cities in North-East Asia are “esperantized”. For example, “Tokio”, “Seulo”, “Pekino”, “Vladivostoko” and so on.

Unlike names of countries and cities ones of seas in Esperanto aren't nouns. They are formed by the word "maro", which means sea, and their adjectives. And all adjectives have the letter "a" in the end. For example, Sea of Okhotsk in Esperanto is "Oĥotska maro", Sea of Japan is "Japana maro" (yapana), and Yellow Sea is "Flava maro". The latter name has the same significance as in English.

However there is discussion about the name of Sea of Japan. In fact this sea is surrounded by shores not only of Japan, but also other countries. In its turn Japan is washed by Sea of Japan only in the West, though it consists of islands. According to sense of natural geography Sea of Japan belong to the mainland, archipelago of Japan, Korean peninsula and Sakhalin Island.

For this reason well-known expert of Esperanto, professor of economics from Seo Kyeong University of Seoul So Gilsu has a proposal to name Sea of Japan in Esperanto as "Verda maro". Being translated into English it means "Green Sea".

So Korean peninsula in that case would be washed on the both sides by "colored" seas: Yellow Sea in the West, and Green Sea in the East. Probably this idea must be taken into consideration for selection of geographical names in different cases and languages.