

The Role of French Geography in the Naming of the Sea between Korea, Japan and Siberia from 17th to early 19th Century

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The french cartographers, geographers and travellers played an important role in the naming of the sea between Korea, Japan and Siberia from XVIIth to early XIXth century. They disposed technological progresses, improvement in the knowledge of new spaces in the world and the wish to compete with british and dutch thalassocracies. They had many information sources from Russia, where one Delisle was the cartographer of the tsar, China, through jesuit missionaries, and Japan. They choose also many toponyms for naming the sea in Far East. The question is why the travel of Lapérouse finally contributed to impose the name of "Sea of Japan" (Mer du Japon).

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**THE FRENCH CARTOGRAPHERS
and the NAMING of the SEA
between KOREA, JAPAN and SIBERIA
during XVIIth et XVIIIth c.**

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*“ Generally, all this part of the World [= North and Northeast of Japan] is so little known
that it would be an unportant service to geography
and quite to business if we'll give an exact knowledege to European people ”*

Instructions given by king Louis XVI to Lapérouse in 1785

("Projet, instructions, mémoires...")

There are five reasons to consider the role of the French cartographers in the naming of the Sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries :

1. After the relative decline of the Dutch cartography, the French school of cartography becomes very influent in Europe from the middle of seventeenth century until early nineteenth century.

2. Its force depends on the wish of French kingdom to compete with Netherlands and England thalassocracies on sea, not only in North America or India but also in East Asia.

3. The French presence in East Asia is based upon the group of the French-speaking jesuits in Beijing, who make an enormous work of cartography especially during the reign of Kangxi emperor from 1708 to 1718, and who fuel the cartography in Europe and Japan.

4. The French cartographers are also present in Russia, within the tsarist court, with the astronome-

geographer Joseph-Nicolas Delisle (1688-1763), from 1726 to 1747, and his half-brother Louis Delisle de la Croyère (1687-1741), who participated to the Russian expeditions in Siberia.

5. After the journey of Lapérouse (1787) and his exploration from Korea to Sakhaline, the name of "Sea of Japan" gains success in the European cartography and then world-wide cartography.

As historians Donald Lach and Edwin Van Kley wrote : “ *The story of the dissemination in France of knowledge about the East neatly into two distinct periods : the first two generations (1600-60) and the remaining two-score years (1660-1700) of the century. (...) The seventeenth-century French writings about Asia were distinguished by their paucity in the first half of the century and by their abundance and richness in the age of Louis XIV*” (Lach & Kley, 1993, p. 433).

We have also not to forget the strong competition which underlies looking for new informations and new mapping. Peter Whitfield recalls us that “ *the making of the sea charts by European nations clearly depended on their ability to gather maritime information, and on their commercial need for them* ” (Whitfield 1996).

1. The importance of scales and the "dominos effect" of sea-naming

We have to recall the universal cartographic conventions lacked rigour for nomenclature before XXth c., especially for maritime space which had many names for the same place (logic of "polynymy"). But for the past criteria, it was not perceived as incoherence. As explained the geographer Martin Lewis, “*the insistence on consistent nomenclature for large geographical categories is to some extent an artifact of modernity*” (Lewis 1999, p. 196). The nuance is that some cartographers of modern period are looking for their own coherence, and some not. Nicolas De Fer (1646-1720), for instance, adopted a very flexible approach, changing often of nomenclature and proposing on the same place two or three solutions.

More new lands were discovered more the necessity to cartography the world through different scales was getting important, and more the toponyms (= place names) increased in number. In this context, if we choose a toponym for one space, we cannot re-use it for another space, unless to be confused or incoherent : this is the "dominos effect". Impressed by the discoveries, the new knowledge and the spirit of rationalism (cartesianism), the French geographers became aware from the late XVIIth c. to think global, and to establish the scale-system.

We can observe this phenomenon on three scales : macro (i-e worldwide or in our case Indian and Pacific oceans) ; meso (i-e in our case : the Asiatic sea-front of Pacific ocean = China, Korea, Siberia and Japan) ; micro (i-e in our case the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan, i-e "our sea")

= On macro-scale in the case of naming Pacific ocean, there are many various names, for the whole of this space, or only for a part of it, or changing part, etc. On the same way, we can also observe the evolution of the naming in "East sea" (= "mer orientale "or "océan oriental" in French) :

- first placed upon actual Indian ocean : Behaim (1492) Bertelli (1565), Mercator (1631) ;

- or sometimes upon the actual western pacific : Cantino (1502), Ortelius (1570) ;

- and lately, in the middle of XVIIth c., upon the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan.

= On meso-scale, due to the success of Dutch cartography, the toponym "Sea of China" becomes popular and very used by maps from the first half of XVIIth c. The jesuit cartographers or influenced by them do the same way : Nicolas Sanson ("Mer de la Chine", 1652 ; "Mare del la China", 1656), Alvaro de Semedo (1586-1658) ("Chinian Ocean", 1655), Philippe Couplet (1622-1693) ("Oceanus Sinensis", 1687).

= On micro-scale the name of the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan is confused until the mid-XVIIe s., first because this space is not very known by the European cartographers, and not so much by Chinese and Japanese cartographers.

We let aside two curiosities for the naming of Pacific ocean emerged in the late XVIIth c. One is the name of "Western ocean" : George Humble (1626), with "The West Ocean" located on the Northeast of Japanese archipelago ⁽¹⁾ ; Joan Blaeu ("Asia noviter delineata", in "Atlas major", Amsterdam, 1635 and 1662) ⁽²⁾ with "oceanus occidentalis" on the North of Japanese archipelago, and "oceanus chinensis" on the South ; Asia's map made by Nicolas-Joan Visscher (1667) ⁽³⁾ ; Pierre Duval d'Abbeville (1618-1683), nephew of Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville, on his map "Nouvelle description de Lamérique" [sic] (1667) with "Mer du Sud" and, in smaller letters, "Mer Pacifique" on southern side and "Océan occidental" on northern side.

The second curiosity is the "Eos" naming ("oriental" in greek) for all or part of Pacific ocean : "Oceanus Eous, Fine Orientalis" in Jodocus Hondius (1602), on Sea of China's place ⁽⁴⁾, then "Oceanus Occidentalis" (1623) ⁽⁵⁾ ; "Mare Eoum" on the same place on the Johann Nieuwhof's map (1666) ; "Oceanus Orientalis aut Eous" off the siberian and chinese coasts ("ocean-arc" type) in Guillaume Sanson d'Abbeville (1667) ⁽⁶⁾.

2. The "ocean-arc" approach

From the mid-XVIIth c., the French "connection" of cartography brings a new approach in naming the maritime space : the "ocean-arc" concept, in which ocean designations are displaced from basin cores to skirt or wrap around landmasses. There are at least two reasons for that :

- The new polar perspective, which gives objectively more importance to maritime spaces, and new visions of it ;

- the spirit of rationalizing the vision of the world on scientific basis.

This "ocean-arc" approach wishes to be more global, panoptic, scientific. It is impulsed from 1650 by

⁽¹⁾ "Asia with the Islands Adioyning Described, the Atire of The People, and Townes of Importance", BnF : GeD22031.

⁽²⁾ "Asia noviter delineata", BnF : GeDD1169 et GeDD4796 (28).

⁽³⁾ Also on the map called "Asia" (N.D. ; BnF : GeDD5111) of Visscher. Also on the map called "Le país d'Ezo" of Pieter van der Aa ("La galerie agreable du monde" [sic], Leiden, 1729).

⁽⁴⁾ "Asiae Nova descriptio", BnF : GeD8033.

⁽⁵⁾ "Asia Recens Summa Cura Delineata", BnF : GeD7969.

⁽⁶⁾ "Asia Vetus", BnF : GeDD2687 (49).

French geographer Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville (1600-1667), and widely adopted by other French cartographers : Vincenzo Coronelli (1687 ; venitian cosmograph working for French publishers like Nolin) ; Nicolas De Fer (1646-1720) ("Mappemonde ou carte générale de la Terre...", 1694) ; Jean-Dominique Cassini (1625-1712) (1696) ; Frémont d'Ablencourt ("Carte des Costes de l'Asie sur l'Océan", Amsterdam, 1700) ; Francis Halma (ca 1730) ; Didier Robert de Vaugondy (1723-1786). And also Heinrich Scherer ("Oceanus orientalis" covering the Arabian sea, Gulf of Bengal, Southern China sea, east offing of Philippines, on his "Asia"'s map of 1705).

The "ocean-arc" approach works on macro-scale, and also on meso and micro-scales. In our case, Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville with "Mer du Japon" (macro-scale : "L'Asie", 1652), with the naming "océan / oriental" (micro-scale : "Description des Isles du Japon", 1651, 1658) ⁽⁷⁾. We find the same way on the map of Pierre Duval d'Abbeville (1618-1683), in 1651, with the toponym "océan ou / mer orientale" framing northern and southern fronts of Honshû ⁽⁸⁾.

So it is not imprecision, ignorance or laziness at the micro-scale. It is the very application of a general conception, a cartographic and geographic rule. Then the "ocean-arc" approach which gives new values to cardinal points, as we have seen, ties again in some way with the traditional sinocentric conception (*shihai* : North, South, West and East seas), renewed by Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) from early XVIIth. c. It creates a kind of new mixed approach I call "cardinal sea-front" one. From mid-XVIIth c., this leads to give way to new application for the "East sea" toponym for :

- the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan ;
- but also for the offing of the whole Siberian sea-front, including the "Sea of Okhotsk" : Isbrandt Ides ("Oceanus Orientalis" + "Sinese Zee" off China in "Nova tabula imperii russici", 1687) ; Nicolaas Witsen ("oceanus orientalis" in "Asia en Europa...", 1687, and "Relation du Voyage de Evert Isbrandt", 1699), Antoine Thomas ("mare orientale" in "Carte de Tartarie", 1690).

3. The "basin" approach and the "toponymic duos" for both sea-fronts of Honshû

The "basin" approach becomes more and more adopted in the course of XVIIIth c. Not like the Ortelius's way, which did not hierarchize enough the different maritime spaces, making no difference for instance between "sea and "ocean", but as a new one, more precise, centered on single basin. This approach proposed by English cartographers (Emmanuel Bowen, 1744 ; John Senex, 1725) is consecrated by the French geographer Philippe Buache, the first to use bathymetric lines on maps (1744, 1758) (Lagarde 1996).

⁽⁷⁾ Reproduced in Akioka, n° 30. Sanson mentions in colophon his partial borrowing from Cardim, Varenius and others. he had accurate informations upon East Asia, through sources like Samuel Purchas, Michele Ruggieri, Martino Martini, Pierre Boym, Alvarez Semedo (almost jesuits).

⁽⁸⁾ Cf also Vincenzo Coronelli, with his map "Isola del Giappone e penisola di Corea" (1692) mentioning "Oceano / Orientale". Reproduced in Campbell, XIV, n° 33.

Through the example of the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan, we can see some reasons explaining this evolution of cartographic nomenclature. In effect, the "basin" approach is more precise, more convenient for the micro-scale, better than "ocean-arc" approach. He gives little by little way to its application on meso and macro-scales. So, two French cartographers use it for the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan :

- the jesuit Philippe Briet (1601-1668) ;
- the merchant Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605-1689).

The map called "Royaume du Japon" (1650) of Philippe Briet indicates "Océan Oriental" (for our sea) et "Mer de la Chine" (for the South of Honshû) ⁽⁹⁾. It is published within two books of Nicolas Sanson, the "Cartes générales de toutes les parties du monde" (Paris, 1658) and then "Les cartes générales de la Géographie ancienne et nouvelle" (Paris, 1676) ⁽¹⁰⁾. This map of Briet becomes quickly a reference. His terrestrial toponyms are re-used by other cartographers (Sanson, Tavernier, Van der Aa, Manesson-Mallet...). His sources come from Japan's maps of two other jesuits, the map (1617) of Christopher Blancus and the map (1646) of Portuguese Antonio Francisco Cardim (1596-1659) ⁽¹¹⁾. Both are linked to a cartographic filiation back to Japanese sources from the mid-XVIth c. ⁽¹²⁾ (Hubbard 1994, Kitagawa 1950).

However Cardim indicates any toponym on sea space ⁽¹³⁾. At contrary, the Blancus map (1617) mentions the duo "Mare japonium" (towards North) et "Oceanus chinensis" (towards South) ⁽¹⁴⁾. Before that, the Bernardino Ginnaro's map (1577-1664) choose the duo "Oceano boreale" (towards North) and "Oceano Cinese" (towards South) (1641). The Robert Dudley's maps (1573-1639) will choose "Oceano boreale del Gappone" [sic] and "Oceano cinese" (1646) ⁽¹⁵⁾.

⁽⁹⁾ "Royaume du Japon", BnF : GeDD2987 (7439). Another version in Nicolas Sanson's "L'Asie en plusieurs cartes nouvelles et exactes" (Paris, 1652).

⁽¹⁰⁾ Reproduced in Walter Lutz, n° 32.

⁽¹¹⁾ "Iapponiae Nova & accurata descriptio" (1612), BnF : GeDD2987 (7438)

⁽¹²⁾ Maps from Tōshōdaiji (ca 1557) and Jōtokuji (ca 1590), via Tcuzu/Moreira (1590) and Bernardino Ginnaro (1641), three other jesuits. According to Kay Kitagawa, many elements prove that Briet's map is based upon Gyōgi type Japanese maps (Kitagawa 1950, p. 112-113).

⁽¹³⁾ Nicolas Sanson uses Cardim for his "Description des Isles du Japon" (1651, 1658) but he adds his sea-naming conception ("Océan Orié / ental") (cf supra).

⁽¹⁴⁾ The Japan's map of Pieter van der Aa, from the "Atlas nouveau et curieux" (Leiden, 1696), choose the very opposite combination : "Oceanus Chinensis" towards North of Honshû, "Mare Iaponia" towards South. Reproduced in Kapitza (1990), vol. I, p. 362 and in Campbell (1967), XV n° 37. Also the Vincenzo Coronelli's map ("Isola del Giapone e penisola di Corea", 1692) with "Mare della China" (wrapping the South of Korean peninsula from West to East) and "Mare del Giapone". Reproduced in Campbell (1967), XIV n° 33. Let's note that in his 1729 map (cf infra), Van der Aa put "Mare Chinensis" to the Northeast of Honshû, and in his 1696 map, he named "mer orientale" the sea between Siberia, Korea and Japan. Van der Aa and Nicolas de Fer change often their sea nomenclature according to the XVIIIth c. cartographic trends.

⁽¹⁵⁾ This "mer du Nord" toponymy for the sea between Siberia, Korea and Japan also exists in Isaak Tirion ("Mare del Noort" in "Imperio del Giappone", 1740 ; "De Noord zee van Japan" in "Nieuwe kaart van't keizerryk Japan, 1744) (Reproduced, respectively, in Campbell, XXI-58, and Walter Lutz, n° 79), and also in Jacob Keyzer and Jan de Lat ("De Noord Zee van Japan of Corease Zee" in "Kaartje van het keizer-ryck Japan", 1747) (Reproduced in Walter Lutz, n° 51). The filiation with Dudley (1646, 1661) seems to be

Thirty years after Briet, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier offers a very interesting cartographic case. His map called "Carte des Isles du Japon" (1679) proposes the duo "océan oriental" and "mer du Sud", mentioning moreover "Meer de Coreer" on the Eastern gate of Tsushima/Korea strait (¹⁶).

Tavernier is an adventurer, a protestant merchant of jewels (¹⁷). He gives his service as well to king Louis XIV, whom he's gratified by the title of "baron d'Eaubonne (1669)", to the French "Compagnie des Indes" (founded in 1664), than the Dutch V.O.C. (¹⁸). For that, he's living in Batavia. Since he does not go as far as China, he got many informations upon Japan which will be published in best-seller books like "Recueil de plusieurs relations..." (Paris, 1679), edited in French, English and German.

His "Carte des Isles du Japon" (1679), included in this book, mentions his Dutch sources. His script "*la route tant par mer que par terre que tiennent les Hollandais pour se transporter de la ville de Nangasaqui a Iedo*" [sic] is taken from the map (1669) made by Arnold Montanus (ca 1625-1683), a theologian protestant closed to Hondius cartographers by family links, who are well connected with V.O.C. employees and their informations. Let's note the Tavernier's map still considers Korea as an island ("Isle de Coray ou de Coreer"), that shows limits of his geographical knowledge. It is based on Dudley's map (Blancus-Moreira type), but with deformations.

So with Briet and Tavernier appears again the name "océan oriental" but on a new place : the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan. However simultaneously, during the same period, it is also still located on the former places (as for "sea of China"), making the things confused. For instance, in 1696 (meso-scale), Nicolas de Fer makes a distinction between an "oriental sea part of Great Pacific" off the Japanese archipelago and an "oriental ocean" on the Southeast of Philippines. He gives up to the "ocean-arc" approach. In 1703, he chooses a very interesting nomenclature since he mentions, along the Siberian seafront of our sea : "*Mer peu ou point / connue des Européens / les Tartares l'appelle [sic] / Orientale*" ("Sea less or not known by Europeans, Tartarians call it Eastern").

He chooses no name for this sea. We know it takes his informations from China (Fuchs 1935, p. 144),

clear (moreover Dudley added the naming "Mare di Corai" too of the eastern Korean coasts. This choice is based upon a point of view from Japan, in conformity with the presence of Dutch in Japan, in Dejima, although other European people presence are not tolerated from 1640. The moving from "mer du nord du Japon" to "mer du Japon" only will be natural, rejoining the choice "mer du Japon" already made by other Dutch cartographers, for instance : Mappemonde de Pieter Schenk (1706) ; Abraham Maas, "De Japanse Zee" in "Nieuwe Kaarte van de Ootkusten van Groot Tartarië" (1727), BnF : GeB2369. We see this "mer du Nord" naming on a Chinese map of 1530. Let's notice that in medieval Japanese maps called Gyôgi, although they had no names for seas, generally indicated cardinal points. Often, they oriented the Japanese archipelago with South on the top, and North on the bottom.

(¹⁶) "Carte des Isles du Japon", BnF : GeDD2987 (7445). It is also the way of Alain Manesson-Mallet (1630-1706) in "Isles du Japon" (1684).

(¹⁷) Asia in the Making of Europe, III-1, p. 416-419.

(¹⁸) Jean-Baptiste Tavernier is invited in 1684 by the Brandebourg elector but failed to build his Germano-Dutch business program in East. After the Edit of Fontainebleau (1685) revocating the Edit de Nantes (1598), he left France to look for commercial partners in Scandinavia then in Russia. He died in Moscow. His map of Japan (1679) is made before informations he could have in Russia.

and also from various authors : Samuel Purchas, Melchisédech Thévenot (ca 1620-1692) or Nicholaas Witsen (1641-1717) (from 1694 only ; Witsen had in his possession many maps of Japan made by Japanese) ⁽¹⁹⁾. Nicolas de Fer takes his inspiration from jesuits like Luis Teixeira, Ignacio Moreira (1538-1600), Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688) - great follower of Ricci's cartographic works in Beijing - or Martino Martini (1614-1661), famous for his "Novus atlas sinensis" (1655) based on Chinese maps ⁽²⁰⁾.

During this period (early XVIIIth c.), the French literature use the name of "mer orientale" (Eastern sea) for the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan. We can quote a letter of the jesuit Antoine Thomas in 1698, remembering how Kangxi emperor named it in this way ⁽²¹⁾, or the famous 1735 book of Du Halde (1674-1743). This text abounds in "mer Orientale" (or "océan Oriental") naming but he also writes "mer du Japon" on map for the same place. So the author still is in the logic of "polynymy".

4. The contribution of Guillaume Delisle

Guillaume Delisle (1675-1725) follows this way of "mer Orientale" naming, bringing also an innovation because he adds "Mer Orientale ou Mer de Corée" ⁽²²⁾. He still mentions only "mer orientale" on some occasions : "Mappemonde" in 1700 ⁽²³⁾, map of "L'Asie" in 1708" ⁽²⁴⁾, 1714 hemisphere ⁽²⁵⁾.

The naming "mer de Corée" by Guillaume Delisle is important because it will be used again by many other maps and cartographers along the XVIIIth : the French Joseph-Nicolas Delisle (1750), his young brother ; Philippe Buache (1744, 1754), his nephew ; Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (1735, 1764, 1765), Didier et Gilles Robert de Vaugondy (1749, 1762, 1775), Jean-Denis Janvier (1754), Antide Janvier (1760), Hubert-Félix Jaillot (1792) ; and also the cartographers of other European countries influenced by French : the British John Senex (1711, Delisle type), Hermann Moll (1712), John Green (1741, D'Anville type), Emmanuel Bowen (1744, 1747, 1752), Robert Sayer (1794), John Arrowsmith (1794, 1798) ; the Italian Zatta (1785, Bellin type).

We have to notice that Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville (1697-1782), whose main sources are

⁽¹⁹⁾ Keuning 1954, p. 101.

⁽²⁰⁾ The famous Japan's map of Martini "Iaponia Regnum" inside this atlas doesn't put any sea name. BnF : GeDD1185 (17).

⁽²¹⁾ " (...) il [l'empereur Kangxi] parla de lever de même la Tartarie orientale depuis la frontière de Corée jusqu'à l'Eoum Mare [Mer Orientale], ensuite le rivage de la mer jusqu'à la frontière septentrionale du Japon qui n'est séparée de la Tartarie orientale que par un détroit peu large". Quoted by Bernard (1935), p. 454.

⁽²²⁾ "Carte des Indes et de la Chine", BnF : GeDD2987 (6808). Reproduced in Kish (1947), p. 111.

⁽²³⁾ "Mappe-monde dressée sur les observations de Mrs de l'Académie Royale des Sciences et quelques autres et sur les mémoires les plus récents" (Paris, 1700), BnF : GeGC1246 (9). Reproduced in Pelletier 2000, p. 286.

⁽²⁴⁾ "L'Asie dressée sur les observations de l'Académie Royale des Sciences et quelques autres, et sur les mémoires les plus récents", Amsterdam, 1708. Reproduced in Kapitza, II, p. 45.

⁽²⁵⁾ "Hémisphère septentrional pour voir distinctement les Terres Arctiques" (Paris, 1714), BnF : GeCC1246 (9). Reproduced in Kish (1980), p. 172.

jesuit, don't give any name for our sea ⁽²⁶⁾. It is also important, even if D'Anville is a "de cabinet" cartographer, he is also very influent and eminent during the XVIIIth c. He is promoted as "premier géographe du roi" when Buache died. Generally, D'Anville dislike to name seas, and his maps looks like very lightened. His choice is carry on by his follower, the hydrograph-ingenieur Rigobert Bonne (1727-1794) ⁽²⁷⁾.

On his side, Nicolas de Fer juggles again with the nomenclature, trying to give the maximum of informations. For instance, on a 1713 map, he mentions "Mer Orientale de la Chine et Septentrionale du Japon" ⁽²⁸⁾. Doing that, he gives together the "tartar" and "dutch-japanese" points of view. On his 1696 Asia's map (macro-scale), fifteenth years before, he had used the toponymic duo "Mer septentrionale de Japon" [sic] for northern side of Honshû and "Mer méridionale de Japon" [re-sic] for southern side ⁽²⁹⁾. On his 1705 planisphere, he maintained only "Mer Septen.le de Japon" ⁽³⁰⁾. We have to notice that Nicolas De Fer is one the most straight cartographer in naming seas. On his 1713 map, he explains on a "cartouche" how long extends the "mer Pacifique" in latitude.

How to consider the Delisle's "French" innovation ? We can stand four hypothesis.

- = 1. He keeps the Briet and Tavernier choice with "mer Orientale".
- = 2. He deeps the De Fer, Thomas, Du Halde and somebody else approach based upon the credo "Tartarians call it Eastern sea".
- = 3. He repositions towards South the broad naming of "Oceanus orientalis" made by Ides (1687), Witsen (1687, 1699), Thomas (1690) on the Sea of Okhotsk.
- = 4. He uses and includes the naming made by Antoine Thomas as "mare coreanum", the first european cartographer to do that.

So why and from where Antoine Thomas (1644-1709) chose this name of "mare coreanum" ? His sources are various. He is a Belgian jesuit who lives in Beijing (1685-1709), along another jesuit cartographer, the Flemish Ferdinand Verbiest (1623-1688), living in China from 1658 ⁽³¹⁾. As we have seen, Thomas knew Kangxi calling "mer orientale". He knew also the Russian map used by Gerbillon and

⁽²⁶⁾ "Carte Générale de la Tartarie Chinoise" (Paris, 1732), BnF : GeDD2987B (7270). Cf also archives of the Ayer Collection, the Newberry Library, Chicago, Ayer 135 A6 1737, map n° 37, reproduced in Ledyard (Harley & Woodward 1994), p. 300.

⁽²⁷⁾ For instance : "Atlas moderne, ou collection de cartes" (1762) ; "L'Asie" (1776) ; "Atlas de toutes les parties connues du Globe terrestre" (1776) ; "L'Empire de la Chine d'après l'Atlas Chinois avec les Isles du Japon" (1776) ; "Empire de la Chine, Rme. de Corée et Isles du Japon" (1780) ; "Carte de l'Empire de la Chine, de la Tartarie Chinoise et Royaume de Corée : avec les Isles du Japon" (1787). In some of this maps, Rigobert Bonne mentions "Océan Oriental" for the maritime space going from Hainan to Ogasawara islands (1776, 1787).

⁽²⁸⁾ "Carte de la Mer du Sud et de la Mer du Nord" (Paris, 1713), BnF.

⁽²⁹⁾ "L'Asie ou tous les points principaux sont placez sur les Observations de Mrs de l'Academie Royale des Sciences" [sic], BnF : GeDD2987B (6472).

⁽³⁰⁾ "Mappemonde, ou Carte générale de la Terre", BnF : GeDD2078 (2). Reproduced in Sandler (1905), tafel IV.

⁽³¹⁾ "Tartarias Imago" et "Tabula geographica Orientis". Reproduced in Florovski (1951). Archives de la Compagnie de Jésus, Rome.

other jesuits during the preparation of Nertchinsk Treaty (1689) establishing the borderline between Russia and China. But we don't know what map is, certainly the Spathary's one (1678), which have no name for the sea between Korea, Siberia and Japan. The Ides's map (1687) wrote "Sinese zee" ⁽³²⁾. The Witsen's map (1692), wrote "mer Orientale ou du Japon" (en français) ⁽³³⁾. So it appears the naming of "mare coreanum" is the own idea and creation of Thomas, revealing the growing interest to this still less known kingdom, already wrongly considerer as island during a long time : Korea ⁽³⁴⁾.

However at what extend could we accord credit to the Delisle's maps ? To be sure, Guillaume Delisle counts as a utmost French or even European cartographer during the XVIIIth also. He was also narrow-minded on some cases. For instance he denied for a long time to see Ezo (= Hokkaidô) as an island, which was indeed uncertain until Lapérouse's journey. Finally he inclined himself to the arguments of Johann-Caspar Scheuchzer (1727), translator (from German to English) and introducer of the famous "History of Japan" written by the westphalian doctor Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716). He denied also to see the Tsugaru strait as really a strait.

5. A franco-russian "connexion" ?

Another question is to know if Joseph-Nicolas Delisle (1688-1763) did influenced his elder brother Guillaume in his toponymic choice. As astronomer-geographer he was invited by the tsarist court in Russia (1726-1747), to promote cartography and to take a part in organizing expeditions through Siberia, including the second Vitus Béring (1681-1741) one in the Northern Pacific where disappeared Béring and died his half-brother Louis Delisle de la Croyère (1687-1741). Joseph-Nicolas Delisle receives informations about the negociations for the Nerchinsk Treaty, and got the famous China's map made by the sino-jesuit team lead by Pierre Pierre Jartoux (1687-1720) from 1708 to 1718. He "*en eut probablement connaissance avant d'Anville qui devait la reproduire en 1736 dans la "Description de la Chine" du P. Du Halde*" (Isnard 1915, p. 76).

Polemics burst out on the Joseph-Nicolas Delisle's role and the fact he gave information in France about the geographic situation of Russia and Siberia. L. Breitfuss (1937) considers him as "disloyal", maybe a kind of spy as his detractors of the tsarist court considered him. Albert Isnard (1915) reminds us the contract signed between J-N Delisle and Russian government, which was even formalized as treaty (july 8th 1725), mentions the contractant should still free to make all astronomical observations and to send it to the Académie des sciences in Paris ⁽³⁵⁾.

⁽³²⁾ BAGROW Leo (1952).

⁽³³⁾ Reproduced in Teleki.

⁽³⁴⁾ The first European map to show Korea as peninsula is G.B. Peruschi's one ("Informatione...", Rome, 1597), followed by Samuel Purchas (1625 ?), Hessel Gerritsz (1632) and Martino Martini (1655). The maps of Hondius, Mercator or Blaeu still considered it as island for a long time, until mid-XVIIth c. The Philippe Couplet's map (1687) seems to be the first one to indicate clearly "Corai Peninsula".

⁽³⁵⁾ BnF, ms fr. 9678, p. 30.

Jalousy from rivals ? Lack of diplomacy from Delisle ? Anachronic re-reading of the past through nationalistic bias ? Anyway, the Russian government was surprised and angry to state that Russian geographical discoveries on Siberia and North Pacific region appeared in the book of Du Halde, even if, in fact, the maps made by D'Anville were also based upon sino-jesuit sources.

Disappointed, coming back in France in 1747, Joseph-Nicolas Delisle presents a geographical sketch of Siberia and North-Pacific region to the Académie des sciences in Paris in 1750. Few days later he published it as map with the collaboration of his nephew Philippe Buache (³⁶). This map will very criticized by the Germano-Russian historian Gerard Friedrich Müller in a pamphlet (1753), to which answers Buache (1754). But this criticism don't concern our topic. We can state Delisle-Buache still write "mer de Corée".

6. The turning point with Reland-Kaempfer-Scheuchzer, and Bellin

The map made by Adrien Reland (1676-1718) in 1715 is the first one of a new cartographical set which revives the nomenclature in "mer du Japon", by the Germano-Dutch cartography with repercussions on another countries like France. It considers the sea located on the south of Honshû-Shikoku (= l'océan Pacifique) on the name of "maris japonici pars" (or "mer du Japon" on a 1716 French copy) (³⁷). But no name for our sea. The map called "isola del Giappone e penisola di Corea" made by the jesuit Vincenzo Coronelli do the same way, with "mare del Giappone" for the Pacific ocean, adding l'"mare della China" for our sea (³⁸).

The role of Reland is important too. He is a French famous orientalist scientist working for the V.O.C. He get new informations directly from Japan, through Dejima, especially Japanese maps of Japanese archipelago made by Ishikawa Ryûsen ("Honchô zukan kômoku" of 1687 according to Oda Takeo ; "Nihon kaizanchôriku zu" of 1691 according to Akioka Takejirô and Yamashita Kazumasa). But those maps, conforming to the Japanese tradition , don't use maritime toponym (³⁹).

The maps of Reland will be copied again and again : Mattheus Seutter 1720, 1737 ; Henri Abraham Chatelain 1719 ; Jonas Korte 1729 ; Isaak Tirion 1728, 1740). But its nomenclature change. Even if the Kaempfer's maps (1727, 1729), based more or less on the same Japanese sources, don't write any sea naming, the following cartographers give names. The austrian Georg Mattheus Seutter (1678-1757), pupil

(³⁶) "Carte des nouvelles découvertes au nord de la Mer du Sud". Delisle-Buache map of 1750, reproduced p. 92 , map of G. F. Müller p. 96 in Breitfuss (1937), in Kapitza (1990), II, p. 469. The Delisle-Buache map is re-edited in a Mémoire of Joseph-Nicolas Delisle in 1752, then in "L'Encyclopédie" of D'Alembert / Diderot, that bring it ipso facto a good fame.

(³⁷) BnF : 7613, GeDD 2987 (7437). Reproduced in Kish (1947), fig. 1 p. 102. Copy by Jean-Paul Bignonio, in couleur in "Nihon no shizen" (1988) vol. 10, p. 25, with error in legenda. Many reproductions in Kapitza (1990) II, Abb. 38, 42, 49.

(³⁸) Dedicated to the French jesuit Fontaine. BnF : GeC3060.

(³⁹) Reproduced in Akioka n° 51 (Ishikawa Ryûsen) and n° 52 (Mattheus Seutter). Oda (1973), p. 277 and n° 7, in colour, with annexes. Yamashita published a late version of 1691 Ishikawa Ryûsen's map (p. 49).

of Johann Baptiste Homann, is still faithful to Reland, mentioning "Maris Japonicum Pars" (1720) for the South of Honshû. Then he chooses and places "Mer du Nord du Japon" ("Regni Japoniae Nova Mappa Geographica" 1730, 1737, 1740) for the North of Honshû (with "Mer des Indes Orientales" for the South). This choice remains the same for the followers : Isaak Tirion (Amsterdam, 1728, c. 1740) with "De Noord Zee van Japan" (and "De Oostindische Zee" for Pacific ocean) ⁽⁴⁰⁾, as well Jonas Korte.

Jacques-Nicolas Bellin (1703-1772) takes inspiration from Reland, probably, and certainly from Kaempfer/Scheuchzer, as Philippe Buache too (1752) ⁽⁴¹⁾. His 1735 map of Japan uses again the duo cherished by the former French cartographers : "Mer du Japon" for Pacific ocean and "mer de Corée" for our sea, twice named ⁽⁴²⁾. Again with nuances for another maps ⁽⁴³⁾.

The Japan's maps of Bellin becomes very influent. It is published within books translated on various languages and diffused through Europa. The map "Carte de l'Empire du Japon" (1750) made by Gilles Robert de Vaugondy (1688-1766), follower of Bellin, still adopt the toponymic duo. But it adds the principle of "doublon" as Robert Dudley a century before (1646 et 1661), i-e double mention of "Mer de Corée", along the Eastern coasts of Korean peninsula, and "Mer du Japon", along the coasts of San'yô and Hokuiku in Honshû. In fact we can ask ourself if this mixing is not a coming back to the "ocean-arc" approach cherished by Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville, his ancestor, any way. We find it on another maps : "Carte de l'Asie" ("Atlas Universel", Paris, 1775 ; macro-scale) or even in Philippe Buache (1752) ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

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As matter of conclusion, we can sum up the following points for the French and European cartography during the XVIIIth c. :

- The Dutch cartographers prefer the "Sea of Japan"'s naming. Their sources are coming from Ricci's map and Japan.

- Almost the French, and also British, cartographers prefer the "Sea of Korea"'s naming. Their sources are coming from the sino-jesuits after Ricci and from Russian discoveries on Siberia.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Walter Lutz éd. (1994). 1740 map also in Kish (1947), fig. 14 p. 118.

⁽⁴¹⁾ "Extrait d'une Carte Japonoise de l'Univers apportée en Europe par Kæmpfer et déposée dans le cabinet de feu Mr. Han-Sloane président de la Société royale de Londres", in "L'Encyclopédie" (D'Alembert/Diderot).

⁽⁴²⁾ Comment below the title indicates : " Dressée sur les auteurs Japonois, sur les mémoires des Portugais et des Hollandais. Et en particulier sur ceux des RRPP. de la Comp^{te}. de Jésus ". BnF : GeDD2987 (7441). SHM : port 178, div 1, p 10.

⁽⁴³⁾ "Carte des Isles du Japon, Terre de Jesso et Pays voisins" (Paris, 1752), BnF : 80 C 102 606. "Carte de l'Empire du Japon" in "Petit Atlas Maritime" (Paris, 1764), BnF : GeDD2987 (7442). Reproduced in Pelletier (2000), p. 287.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ "Carte des nouvelles découvertes dressée par Phil. Buache Pr. Géogr? du Roi présentée à l'Acad? des Sciences le 9 Aout 1752 et approuvée dans son assemblée du 6 Septembre suivant" [sic].

- All the French cartographers don't have the same nomenclature. De Fer changes its often, D'Anville uses no name for sea.

- The "Sea of Korea"'s naming is not used by all cartographers, French or not.

- The Dutch cartographers's choice will retroact on the Japanese cartography since the European maps they introduced in Japan are often Dutch maps. For instance the first *rangaku*-fashioned Japanese world map, the "Yochi zenzu" (1792) of Shiba Kôkan (1747-1818), is inspired by a Alexis-Hubert Jaillot (1639-1712) map, which is itself a revised version of the Western and Eastern Hemispheres map of Guillaume Sanson⁽⁴⁵⁾.

- The journey of Lapérouse will bring a new nomenclature. It seems, according to brief outlooks, that the choice of "mer de Japon" was made before the departure of Lapérouse in Asia. So the question is : how and why ? This the topic of the following research.

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Saint-Etienne, july 2002.

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⁽⁴⁵⁾ Les frères Sanson, Guillaume († 1703) et Adrien († 1718), sons of Nicolas, and their editor Alexis-Hubert Jaillot had signed, probably in 1691, a contract with the cartographer-editor from Amsterdam Pierre Mortier.

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