

The Name of the East-Sea in a Historic Perspective

Henny Seveniji

This is the tenth conference on the naming of the East Sea, and previously many people have proven that the name “East Sea” prevailed on western maps during the ancient period. In papers presented in the past conferences I have not only seen excellent proposals for alternatives (Hahn, Kadmon, Naumov, and many others) but also excellent papers which described the importance of names. I believe it was Naftali Kadmon who described the importance of names in the most neutral way and with many examples. Independently, we have reached the conclusion that de la Prouse was the first to use the name “Japanese Sea” to describe the “East Sea.”

In my previous paper I tried to show the importance of the history of the map makers, and the classification of the maps in order to establish some kind of logic in the development of countries on these maps and the names of the bodies of waters surrounding these countries. Since I discovered some maps that have not been discussed before, especially the CHINAE, OLIM SINARUM REGIONIS, NOVA DESCRIPTIO (1584), 1602 made by Abraham Ortelius; I would like to add some additional notes to my previous papers. The CHINAE, OLIM SINARUM REGIONIS, NOVA DESCRIPTIO was the first Western map of China based upon the reports of Portuguese mapmaker Luis de Barbuda and was first published in Ortelius' "Theatrum" of 1584.



CHINAE,
 olim Sinarum regionis, noua descriptio.
 auctore Ludouico Georgio.

Scala leucarum, quarum novemdecim gradum efficiunt.

20	40	60	80	100	120	140	160	180	200	220	240
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The most curious part of this map is that Korea is hanging from Japan in the shape which we can later recognize that it is used by other map makers only they put Korea on the right spot. In this same atlas we can also see the shape of Japan introduced by Mercator, and in 1595, in the *Theatrum*, he used the map which was introduced to him by Luís Texeira.

I have not observed “East Sea” or “Japanese Sea” on any of the ‘first shape’ maps; this always occurs on copies based upon the original first publisher. Since my previous paper I have examined some other curious maps and have found them to support the body of my original thesis which has been more or less confirmed by papers presented in previous seminars concerning the naming of the East Sea. From research it becomes clear that the name of this body of water prior to the Conference of the International Hydrographical Organization in 1923, was more often referred to [50%] as the “Korea” or “East Sea”, while 25% of the maps did not name it and the remainder 25% as the “Japanese Sea.”

At the Conference of the International Hydrographical Organization in 1923, a resolution was accepted to permanently name the body of water as the “Japanese Sea.” Korea could not dispute the matter, since it, like Manchuria, was occupied by Japan and viewed by the countries in attendance at the conference as a Japanese province.

If you would print all the different names of that sea appearing on old maps on one modern map, the name “East Sea” would probably be in big bold letters and the name “Japanese Sea” in subscript, (provided you weigh the ink used for the letters by the number of occurrences).

In 1995 Song-Di Wu, Fudan University Shanghai, explained the use of the “Sea of Japan” in old Chinese documents, and Sang-Tae Yee, a senior researcher for the Korean National History Compilation Committee, did the same regarding Korean historical documents. Professors Alexei V. Postnikov and Profs. Dr Evgenii M. Popelov explained the importance and history of the naming of the Russian names for seas in particular for the body of water in question. All of them agreed that the names “East Sea,” “Korean Sea” or their variations, had a longer history and occurred more frequently than any other name. Only the map of Mateo Ricci appeared to be an exception, but was an example which was not followed by other cartographers. So roughly speaking, from the 16th till the 18th century the sea in question was NOT called the “Sea of Japan” by anyone except Mateo Ricci.

After de la Pérouse, the name "Japanese Sea" became fashionable. In 1995 Jong Soh Chul tried to propose an alternative, since neither "East Sea" nor "Japanese Sea" was agreeable to him. Hiroo Aoyama was of the opposite opinion and selectively chose maps

on which only the name Japanese Sea was used and declared that this was the standard and there could be no further discussion about the name. Chen Cai and An Hu Sen from the university Un Chanchun China more or less repeated the earlier opinions of the Chinese and thus China followed more or less the international practice and started using "Japanese Sea" for the sea in question.

Vladimir Kusov from the Moscow State University explained the developments of Korea on Korean maps, and one quote in particular impressed me. I refer to the paper for the full quotation in which he quotes Ivan Gorcharov (1812-1891): "... I observed one particular feature about the Koreans: asked about their country, town, etc, they answered the truth. " .." asked a Japanese or a Chinese for the same question? Not for anything" This pattern of proving that the name of "East Sea" or something similar was used much more in the past, was repeated in subsequent seminars and eventually many people of different countries, demonstrated the point. Some of them have shown the importance of names, such as Peter Raper, of the United Nations group of experts on geographical names; Seo Jeong-Cheol, from the viewpoint of cognitive linguistics, and Naftali Kadmon who argued in favor of the use of one international name for all seas and place names and in case of doubt the use of double names - for example, the sea in question he argued that the names "East Sea" and "Japanese Sea" should both be used until the countries surrounding the sea could agree upon one name. There are entirely too many excellent papers from the previous seminars for me to remark on, even in summary, but suffice it to say that "a picture says more than a thousand words" and maps are like pictures, indeed they were often used as such so that people could easily understand what was going on in the big wide world, in a time when there were few newspapers or other ways of disseminating news.

But what is this really about? It's not only the name which is so important but also recognition of past transgressions and loss of identity. Both China and Korea suffered a lot during the Japanese occupations. Koreans were forced to use Japanese names for their own locations and even forced to use Japanese names for themselves. The Japanese government has never acknowledged any responsibility and continues to downplay its role in WW II in Japanese textbooks used in schools. Despite international criticism, the Japanese president Koizumi still regularly visits the Yasukuni Shrine where many war-criminals from WWII are buried.

Shortly after World War II (which the Americans call the Great War), Germany was a humble partner in many of the negotiations and Germans came to realize and acknowledge that many wrongs had been committed. Beginning with Willy Brandt, who openly expressed remorse for Germany's actions, many have sought to atone for the past.

Germany does everything it can NOT to forget what happened during World War II, and to remember it as a lesson for the future. It maintains war memorials for the real victims of the war, the Jews, and also other innocent victims in their country. Germany opposes any form of Neo-Nazism which might spring up in the wake of the unification, and strives to solve the problems of possible Neo-Nazism.

In Japan, however, the only war memorials can be found in Nagasaki and Hiroshima and they are used to show the world how wrongfully the United States bombed these two cities with atomic bombs. I don't intend to start a discussion about atomic bombs, I just want to show how the Japanese use these incidents to their advantage. Germany, on the other hand, does not use the bombing of Dresden by the allies as a ploy to shift the blame or to confuse the issues.

When the Americans entered Korea in the wake of World War II, the majority of the soldiers - including Mac Arthur, were only aware that they came to occupy Japanese lands and were surprised when they were welcomed by Korean children waving and shouting "Mikuk, Mikuk".(America, America). Many of the soldiers erroneously thought the children were shouting "Me Gook" [a racial term for Asian] and shouted happily back: "We are Americans" or something of the sort.

Americans, and maybe most Westerners, knew a great deal about Europe, since much of the dominantly white population of America traced its roots to Europe, but knew only a little about Japan and China, and virtually nothing about Korea. This was reflected in the policy towards Asia. I am not here to stir up the whole politics towards Asia, in particular Japan, Korea and China and the dubious role America sometimes played. There are historians who know much more about this aspect than I do, but it did have an enormous impact on events in the Far East.

One thing is for certain, the Japanese government continues to downplay its role in World War II. Korea and China are both concerned about the reawakened militarism that made Japan powerful and imperialistic in the past and the right-wing factions in the present Japanese government. Recently I saw the quest of a Japanese woman, a teacher, who writes books concerning the Nanjing (or Nanking) Massacre in which approximately 3,000 people were cruelly murdered by the Japanese soldiers in an orgy of violence. I asked myself why would a Japanese woman write about this? She claims that the Japanese government does everything to make people forget these incidents and the people murdered. She feels that the victims don't deserve to be forgotten, nor all the other people who survived the Massacre and have suffered throughout their lives. As she went about interviewing the survivors she was often faced with people who had vowed that

they never would speak to a Japanese person again. Those who did speak often took weeks before they could put their stories into words - so deep was the pain. I could relate to their feelings for I have seen first hand similar behavior displayed by Dutch people interned in Japanese prisoner-of-war camps in Indonesia.

The Japanese have committed a great deal of wrong and yet, somehow, the American forces seem to have been more lenient toward Japan, than the combined forces have been to Germany.

The name of the Japanese Sea is just another example of Japan unwilling to give up its old Imperialism and acknowledge its wrong to Korea. Maybe this is the time to set that record straight

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