

Name of East Sea printed in Japanese Old Maps

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1. Introduction

Mountains, rivers and seas did not have their names in pre-historical times. They started to have their own names when civilizations advanced. People named them; all names reflected the mind and attitude of people toward the mountains, rivers and seas. The mind is the people's value, a spiritual product of a certain time in history and culture.

2. Name of East Sea used in Korea for the past 2000 years

Name of East Sea was first appeared in the first Korean history book, Historical Recording of Three Kingdoms, in King Tongmyung's part: "In the future, Koguryo would emerge in North Puyo, so North Puyo would move to Kasopwon on the coast of East Sea." That was B.C. 59. the Silla Kingdom was founded in B.C. 57, so that name of East Sea appeared even before Three Kingdoms emerged in the history book. Name of East Sea has been with the Korean in the past 2,000 years, and will be with them forever.

Another significant historical record of East Sea was engraved in the Monumental Stone of Koguryo's Great King, Kwanggaeto, which was erected in AD 414 by his son, King Jangsoo, who succeeded him. Since then, East Sea has been printed in many historical books and records.

Name, Sea of Japan, was first appeared in Mateo Ricci's World Atlas. That was 1,650 years after Korean people named East Sea on the same body of waters between Korea and Japan.

3. Name of East Sea expelled by Sea of Japan

Japan and Korea had maintained very close diplomatic relations over the years before the Japanese imperialism and military expansion into the Korean Peninsula and the Asian Continent in the last part of the 19th century. Japan, achieving modernization and industrialization under the central governmental leadership after launching the Meiji Restoration, showed the aggression to Korea. Eventually, the Japanese imperialism brought up the Pacific War, and offered the very tragic damages to Korea, Manchuria, China and Southeast Asian nations.

Japan needed information about the countries they invaded. The Japanese Government and military authorities produced many maps about Korea: at the present time, 4,000 maps are stored in the Japanese Library of Diet. Nearly all of these maps were made after the 19th century. They still printed East Sea, while printing Sea of Japan along the coastline of Japanese Islands, or printing Sea of Japan in the Pacific side of the Islands. The Chosunyojijundo (Map 1), and the Chosunjundo (Map 2) proved my statement true. In the revised GaejungsinjunChosunjundo (map 3), name of East Sea was changed to the Chosun Sea. In the Japan Chosun Southeast Asia Atlas (map 4), name of Chosun Sea was printed. In the Map 4, name of East Sea of Japan, name of West Sea of Japan, and name of South Sea of Japan were printed in. The map producer in 1882 distinguished West Sea of Japan from the Chosun Sea—the West Sea of Japan was printed to the Islands, and the Chosun Sea was printed on the sea close to the Korean Peninsula.

In 1894, Japan won a war with Ching, China, and established its military base in Korea firmly. Then, Sea of Japan replaced East Sea. In the Map, Precise Atlas of Japan and Korea, produced in 1894, East Sea was disappeared, and Sea of Japan appeared instead. In a map of Japan China Russia Korea produced in 1903 (map 5) and in another map of Manchuria Korea produced by the Current News in 1904, East Sea appeared in the area of South China Sea. That was a ridiculous location, because South China Sea could not be East Sea. East Sea could cover the sea south of Cheju Island in the map. How ridiculous it was!

In the map of Central Japan and Korea, detailed map produced by Japanese Bureau of Waterways in 1907, and in the map of Chosun produced by the same bureau in 1944 printed East Sea in the area of the South of Cheju Island. The name of Sea of Japan completely outstayed the name of East Sea by then.

Sea of Japan originally appeared in the coastal area of Japanese Islands, which slowly invaded

East Sea or Chosun Sea, and finally totally replaced it. This is a well proven fact when anyone compares the old maps stored in the Library of Japanese Diet.

In 1910, Japan annexed or colonized Korea. Korea lost its sovereign power. East Sea was disappeared under the Japanese colonial rule. In 1929, the first IHO conference, Japanese representative dictated the name of sea, Sea of Japan, in between Japan and Korea. There was no Korean representative attending.

4. Name of East Sea appeared in Official Japanese Maps

The Tokugawa Government maintained a “closed door” policy toward foreign nations. But it allowed limited trade with the Netherlands through the harbor of Nagasaki. The Netherlands developed advanced map making techniques with gunpower. Naturally, their map making skill was well transferred to Japan. Western ships sailed the sea surrounding the Japanese Islands, and threatened Japan in the beginning of the 19th century. Then, the Japanese Government started to produced world atlas under the governmental leadership (See Table 1).

Takahasi Kageyasu, the main in charge of weather and climate in the Tokugawa regime, in 1809 produced a map, “Japan and its Surrounding Areas.” That map was his first map as a first step toward making future world atlas, which was primarily designed for military purpose. This map showed Sea of Japan on the Pacific side of Japan, and Sea of Chosun in the area of East Sea in a large print. He was an officer in charge of climate and map making. So his map was the official one from the Tokugawa Government. In his map, Sea of Chosun was clearly printed in the area of East Sea.

In 1810, New World Atlas printed Sea of Chosun in the area of East Sea. That meant that japan officially recognized East Sea as Sea of Chosun in the first part of the 19th century. In 1835, Yasuda who succeeded Takahasi produced a map, Japan and its Northwest Surroundings under the order of the Tokugawa Shogun. This map also showed Sea of Chosun on the sea between Japan and Korea.

The Tokugawa regime continuously printed the name, Sea of Chosun, not Sea of Japan, in its official maps over the waters between Japan and Korea.

Table 1 List of Maps showing Sea of Chosun in Japan

- 1 New World Atlas 1794 Kasragawa
- 2 Japan and its Surroundings 1809 Takahasi Kageyasu
- 3 Newly Revised World Atlas 1810 Takahasi Kageyasu
- 4 Japan ad its Northwest 1835 Yasuda
- 5 New World Atlas 1844 Mizikuri
- 6 New Edition of World Atlas 1855 Yamazi kaigo
- 7 World/Earth Atlas 1870 Hashimoto Kyokyu

5. Conclusion

Sea of Japan appeared for the first time exactly 1650 years after the Koreans named East Sea over the sea between Korea and Japan. Japan's official maps showed East Sea or Sea of Chosun during the Tokugawa regime. At the end of the 19th century, Sea of Japan invaded East Sea or Sea of Chosun, and replaced the name completely later. Sea of Japan was, and is a sad product of Japanese imperialism and expansionism, and the Pacific War.