

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROBLEMS OF ANTIQUITY SEA NAMES

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Why did I decide to take part in this conference in Seoul, Korea?

Bulgaria is a country on the Black Sea coast, but the branches of science studying the seas are poorly developed. And the situation with our knowledge about oceans is even worse. This is why we lack good specialists in these fields.

Taking part in this conference, I will have the chance to get in contact with colleagues who are leading specialists in different fields of science. I believe that the conference will contribute to the establishment of closer contacts, cooperation and friendly relations between the colleagues, as well as between organizations and universities of different countries.

I think that at this conference we will be able to make the correct decisions concerning the sea names around the world.

Personally, I hope to make new friendships with colleagues from different countries at the conference in Korea. As a geographer, I can tell that the information about the Republic of Korea is very limited in Bulgaria. It is not always precise, either.

After my visit to Korea, I will be able to tell my colleagues about the accomplishments of the country and its people, as very few Bulgarian geographers have visited it.

As a geographer, I wish to help my colleagues teaching geography in Bulgaria, as well as those teaching history and geography of Bulgaria or the Bulgarian language in Korea. I can provide maps and offer my book *Geography of Bulgaria* (in English) to any of my colleagues or to students who take an interest in Bulgaria.

I also need to find a supervisor for my PhD, and I hope I will find one there.

I want to express my gratitude to Prof. Ki Suk Lee for his cooperation and help in the writing of this article. I also want to thank all the colleagues working for the National Academy of Sciences of Korea.

I wish to express my thanks to the organizers and the sponsors of the conference, as well as to the Korean state and people.

-Contents-

1. Historical review of names of antiquity seas
2. Cartographic presentation of seas in old maps
3. Contemporary geographical and cartographical problems with names of seas
4. Proposals for geographers and cartographers and other authorities in this field
5. Conclusion

Introduction

The inhabitants of the sea coasts have always had influence on the names of the seas. Very often the names of the seas were changed with the change of the dominating nationality living around the sea. This led to the setting of new names which were then used for hundreds and hundreds of years.

Sometimes some lakes were called seas.

In this review, I will present the historical development of the sea names from ancient times to the present day. I will focus on the seas in the North-Eastern part of the Mediterranean basin. I will also review the historical development of the sea names from antiquity to the present day – how the sea names changed through the years and what the reasons for those changes were.

The use of computers in cartography nowadays is unthinkable without the use of data taken from old maps.

This article will review and set as examples the names of seas used by our ancestors in the old maps.

In the last part of my article I will review the problems concerning some doubled sea names and the errors in their translation in some maps and atlases, as well as the problems arising from that.

I remember once watching a musician and composer at Apollonia festival (Apollonia is the ancient Greek name of the Bulgarian town of Sozopol). The musician said, 'I'm going to sing you a song about another sea, a warmer one, situated south of the Black Sea.' And the title of the song was "*The White Sea*". At foreigners looked at him in surprise and asked me what sea he had in mind. No one supposed that he meant the Aegean Sea, known as *the Thracian Sea* in Greece and Turkey.

As a final, I will come out with a proposal for the solution of some of the problems of geographers, cartographers and other specialists, concerning sea names.

With this article, I wish to contribute to the systematization and the study of the seas around the world, which in its turn will contribute to the better knowledge about the seas and oceans.

1. Historical review of names of antiquity seas

Toponymy and especially hydronymy (the names of rivers, lakes, seas and oceans), are very hard to change with the demographic changes in a given

region. They can serve as a relatively reliable source of information about the ethnical structure of a given area, about the inhabitants of a given region in ancient times.

Many of the rivers in Bulgaria have preserved their Thracian names, like Nestos (the Mesta), Hebros (the Maritza), etc. Many of these names are familiar to many of the Bulgarian people nowadays. In the regions around the ancient Greek colonies, some of the rivers have preserved their Greek names, e.g. the Ropotamo (*potamos* is the Greek for *river*). These names are 2 500-3 000 years old, and they have remained in spite of all the radical ethnical changes that have taken place in these regions since then. Some names of rivers and other geographical sites have remained unchanged to the present day.

The Thracians inhabited the Balkan Peninsula at the beginning of the neolith. According to the archaeological and linguistic information which we have, the Thracian nation was formed as such in XIII-XII century BC, and it was at that period that the term *Thracians* was first used by Homer in his works. The exact historical period is between 1 600 and 1 200 BC.

The name *Thraike* or *Threike* was used by the ancient Greeks as a general name of the lands situated to the North-East of ancient Greece. In other words, this is the territory of present day Turkish and Greek Aegean Thrace, and South Bulgaria(Upper Thrace).

The knowledge of the bards of Homer's epic, who were the first to mention the name *Thrace*, about the Thracian lands to the North, was extremely limited. At that time all that the term *Thrace* meant to them was the narrow strip of land along the coast of the Aegean Sea and *the Propontida* (the Sea of Marmora), as well as the lands on both sides of the *Hellespontus* (nowadays - the straits of the Dardanelles).

Gradually, the meaning of the term *Thrace* was widened, and yet the obscurity about it continued to reign in ancient Greek ethnography and geography.

The poet Hesiodus knew about the Rhodopes Mountains, the rivers Strimon (nowadays the Struma) and Nestos (nowadays the Mesta). He also knew about the cold Bureaus wind, which "rushed through horse-breeding Thrace". At that period, the name *Thrace* was used to denote the region between the Danube, the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmora. We must not forget that the greatest Thracian kingdoms were situated on the territory of present day Bulgaria, and the most magnificent Thracian tombs and other archaeological sites discovered are also on Bulgarian territory. Ethnically, the Thracian tribes of that period were very varied. They inhabited the lands from Northern Greece to Northern Bulgaria. The tombs discovered in Bulgaria near the town of Kazanlak in South Bulgaria and near the village of Sveshtari in the district of Razgrad in North Bulgaria are supposed to be the tombs of Thracian kings who ruled the most powerful Thracian tribes. The newly discovered cult centre of Perperikon near the town of Kardzhali is still being excavated. It is supposed to have been used by the Thracian tribes living by the "Thracian Sea" as a major devotional temple. It is the same sea which still bears the name of "Thracian Sea" in the Modern Greek maps. (We must not forget that the ancient Greeks did not know any oceans.)

In the Iliad XXIII 229-230, Homer wrote: "The winds "Bureaus" and "Zephyrus" dashed back and flew to the Thracian Sea to go back home, and the rough sea roared, raising high waves".

It is no doubt that the antique history of Thrace, as well as that of the settlements situated along the coast of the Black Sea, which were colonized by the Greeks, are a substantial and fruitful part of the history of the ancient world. (We must not forget that ancient Greek history is taught at all major universities in the world.) In addition we can say that Thrace was a vital source of raw materials for the ancient Greek towns.

As I mentioned above, Hesiodus was the first to mention the wind Bureaus. However, the first person to mention the Thracian Sea was Homer himself. The name *Thracian Sea*, mentioned by Homer, has been preserved to the present day in Greek maps and atlases. In fact the Thracian Sea is the most northern part of the Aegean Sea, i.e. the sea which washes the coasts of South Thrace. (See *Greece, Maps Production, Tsopelaos, p. 4-5.*)

All Bulgarian maps and atlases call the same sea – the White Sea. The only book where the term *Thracian Sea* is used is professor D. Kanev's textbook on "Geomorphology of Bulgaria" (p. 26-27, Sofia University Publishing House, 1989). There, this term is used to denote the sea which all Bulgarians call now – the White Sea. And it has received its name from the numerous marble deposits along the valley of the river Struma which flows into it. All Bulgarian textbooks and maps use the term *White Sea* to denote the Aegean Sea, while in Greek history, the respective name, ever since Homer, has been *the Thracian Sea*. These contentions have brought me into dispute with many Bulgarian geographers. Why do we Bulgarians have to use the term *White Sea*, if the ancient Thracian lands are nowadays mostly on Bulgarian territory and we are their successors, and we should be proud of the name *Thracian Sea*, as it is us, the Bulgarians, who present the treasures of the Thracians around the world.

As a Bulgarian and a patriot, I stand up for the name *Thracian Sea*, which was first mentioned by Thucydides, born in 460 BC, died in 399 BC, in his book *History of the Peloponnesus wars*. There it is mentioned as the great Cretan Sea. In Modern Greek maps, that sea is situated north of the island of Crete.

The same is the position of V. Magidovic in his book *Articles on the history of the geographical discoveries*, v. 1, p. 87.

Another sea, situated in the region of the Aegean Sea, is the *Mitrio Pelagos*. There are no literature sources concerning that sea, so for me it is a problem to be dealt with in the future.

Another author who describes the ancient seas is Strabon, born in 64 BC, died in 19 AD. In his book *Geography*, VIII, 1, 1-2, he uses the terms *Inner* and *Outer Sea*. The ancient Greeks had no knowledge of the oceans, not even of the Atlantic Ocean, which was not far from the cities they had colonized.

Strabon writes: "And we started from the western part of Europe, namely from those regions which are surrounded by the Inner and the Outer Sea."

It is at Strabo's time that the name *Inner Sea* started to be used, and this eventually became *the Sea in the middle of the earth*, which nowadays has changed to *the Mediterranean Sea*.

All Slavic, Germanic and Romance languages use the name *Mediterranean Sea*, only in Turkish the name is *the White Sea* instead of *the Mediterranean Sea*.

Homer's contemporaries considered *the Pontus* (the Sea) to be a second ocean, so those who entered it went as far from the world as when they crossed the strait of Gibraltar. As a matter of fact, *the Pontus* (in a Greek inscription) was considered to be the largest of the seas they had reached in their maritime expeditions. That was why they called it *the Pontus*, or *the Sea*. And this sea is in fact the Black Sea.

Originally, Strabo says in his book *Geography* VII, 3, 6, p. 286, that the Black Sea was considered by the ancient Greeks to be too rough and unsuitable for sailing, so it was called (*Αξεινυος Ποντος*) *the Inhospitable Sea*.

After the Ionians founded their colonies like Varna, Sozopol, etc. (their ancient names – Odessos and Apollonia respectively, are Greek) along the Black Sea coast, they changed its name to *the Hospitable Sea* (*Ενξεινυος Ποντος*).

So the name of the sea was changed due to the change in its economical, political and transport significance. It is impossible for it to be both "inhospitable" and "hospitable", i.e. both suitable and unsuitable for sailing in one and the same historical period. Nowadays this same sea is called the Black Sea, this name not making any real sense, as neither the sand nor the water are black now. It is the same with the Red Sea and the Yellow Sea. The name of the sea is defined by the predominant colors in it. So the name was translated from ancient Greek as "inhospitable", or "bringing death to the sailors". At present the Greeks do not use the names "hospitable" or "inhospitable" for it, but call it the Black Sea, although the word "sea" has shades of meaning in Greek.

Another sea from the ancient world is the Sea of Azov. In the Hellenic period, it bore the name of *Meotidean Lake*. This name was first used by Polybius in his work "Byzantion and a description of the Black Sea straits". Strabon called the same sea – *the Rotten Sea*. Another name for the Sea of Azov of that time is *The Great Lake of Meotida*. It was called "lake", because concentration of the salt content of that part of the Black Sea is the lowest.

Another sea, known from the antique literature and geography is the Sea of Marmora. It was once called *the Propontida*. In his work "Byzantion and a description of the Black Sea straits" IV, p. 38-43, Polybius used the same name for the Sea of Marmora – *the Propontida*.

The last sea the ancient Greeks sailed across was the Adriatic Sea. Around VI c. BC, the Dorians named it – *the Upper Sea*. The reason why they gave it that name was that at that time they had conquered South Italy and the island of Sicily, so for them that sea was far away and they named it like that.

Another ancient Greek author who wrote about that sea is Thucydides. In his work "The conflict for the island of Kerkira", I, 24-31, he called the sea – the Ionian Gulf. The same sea is also mentioned by Hecateus of Miletus.

At the end of my presentation about the names of the Adriatic Sea, I think we must accept Magidovic's opinion that the name of the sea has come from the mouth of the river *Adidzhe* in Northern Italy, this name having been later transformed to *Atria*, and finally to *Adria*. I suppose this is the origin of the name – the Adriatic Sea.

In conclusion, the statement which I. P. Magidovic and V. I. Magidovic set forward about the origin of the name of the Adriatic Sea is extremely interesting in geography as a science.

I should like to present to my honored colleagues my own hypothesis about the name of the Mediterranean Sea in Turkish.

Turkish geographers and cartographers call that sea – the White Sea (in Turkish – *Akdeniz*). It is my opinion that the name *Akdeniz* comes from the name of a river flowing into it. The name of that river is *Aksu Cayli* ("cay" is the Turkish for a small, rushing river, for a gully river, and for a drink). *Aksu* is the Turkish word for *White Water* (like the color of the river), or *Clear Water*. In a Turkish geography textbook by Professor Dr. Cemalettin Sahin, the same river is inscribed with only the name – *Aksu*. My assumption is that it is the white water of the river that has given the name of the sea, which all peoples now call – the Mediterranean Sea. (Don't forget that the same White Sea, i.e. the Mediterranean, includes part of the Aegean Sea according to Turkish geographers. The problem concerning the name of the White Sea must be studied by geographers and cartographers. The basis for these studies can be ancient Greek and Ottoman Turkish geographical and cartographical sources, of which there are various types.

This problem remains open for the future.

2. Cartographic presentation of seas in old maps

Before I present my opinion on some problems of cartography, I would like to say a few words about myself.

My name is Marin Marinov, I have graduated from Sofia University, with the specialty of Geography and Cartography. My hobby is collecting old geography books and old maps.

While I was preparing for the conference in Seoul, my colleague and I decided that the maps we had found should be preserved for the colleagues coming after us. So we decided to sell some of them at low prices, and others to give away to university libraries or other organizations, doing scientific research in the field of geography and cartography, or to private persons. We hope in this way we will bring about the development of history and geography, as we are perfectly aware of the great importance of maps in these branches of science.

The old maps I am going to analyze are my property. They were published in Germany, Austria and Bulgaria between 1900 and 1961 (I am positive about their year of issue), and are inscribed in German, Czech and Bulgarian.

Analyzing various old maps, I have come across some cartographic problems. A map which I suppose was published somewhere between 1860 and 1900 by the Geographic Institute in Vienna, is inscribed in Czech and not in German, which was then the official language of Austria-Hungary, part of which was at that time the Czech Republic.

And what are the differences in the sea names in those maps, compared to those in the modern ones?

The Adriatic Sea is spelled in Czech as *Adrijske more*, and now its name in Czech is *Jaderske more*; in the modern Serbian atlases the same sea is spelled in Cyrillic – *Јадранско море*. Therefore, either the name of the Adriatic Sea was translated into Czech in a wrong way, or it has undergone a certain degree of assimilation. And the question arises – is the name used today the right one from the point of view of historical geography?

In another map published by the same institute and of the same edition, the Mediterranean Sea is inscribed as *More Sredozemske*, and in the modern Czech maps the name of the sea is *Sredozemni more*. (The name of the sea has undergone inversion).

The same are the names of the Mediterranean in Serbian and Bulgarian (*Средоземно море* in Serbian, and *Средиземно море* in Bulgarian). The difference here comes from the fact that the Serbians and the Bulgarians use the Cyrillic alphabet and the Czech – the Latin one.

In a map of Russia printed by the same publishing house (Ed. Holzla), the Arctic Ocean is called *Severni ledove more* (the North Arctic *Sea*), and in the modern Czech maps and atlases the same “sea” is already *Severni ledovy okean* (the Arctic *Ocean*). And here comes the question – is the Arctic Ocean an ocean or a sea? The question remains open for discussion.

In the same region of Russia, you can find in the modern Czech atlases (see References at the end of this article: “Skolni Atlas Sveta” page 93) that there is the *Pechorskoye more*, which is part of the Barents Sea. However, the same territory is called by the Russian cartographers – the Barents Sea, and there is only the *Bay* of Pechora. And if we take a closer look at the old maps issued by the cartographic institute Ed. Holzla in Vienna, we will notice that the same Barents Sea is inscribed as *Severni Ledove More*, which is the Czech for *the North Icy Sea*, and this in its turn doubles the name of the North Sea. On the same map, *Karskoye More*, or *Kara Sea*, is *More Karskoe*, and the Aegean Sea has become *More Egeysko*, and the Caspian Sea is the *Caspian Lake* (*Jezero Kaspiskoe*). There is certain logic in that name of the Caspian Sea, as it is in fact a salt lake.

The same Caspian Sea is named in the Turkish maps and atlases – *Hazar Denizi*, or the sea of the Hazars (an ancient tribe). Further analyzing the same map, we can see that the only sea preserving its official name is the Black Sea (*Cerne More* on the map).

Another map I am going to analyze is the map of Verlag von Dietrich Reimer (Ernst Vohsen), Berlin SW. 48. That is a map of the Balkan Peninsula and Turkey. What is interesting about that map is that it reflects the changes in

the boundaries of the Balkan countries after the Balkan Wars and the First World War. Besides, it supplies statistic information about all Balkan countries. But the most interesting thing about it is that, having been issued in times of war, it gives the names of all antique seas in German, Russian in transcription, Turkish and Greek. It provides detailed information about the names of the seas.

There the Black Sea is inscribed as: *Schwarzes meer* in German; *Mavri Thalassa* in modern Greek; *Pontus Euxinus* in ancient Greek; *Kara-Deniz* in Turkish; *Tschornoje more* in Russian (transcribed).

The names of the Sea of Marmora on the same map are identical to the contemporary names in Turkish and German. On that map there is no inscription of the Thracian Sea, although it is very detailed, as it is of the scale of 1:1 500 000.

The Aegean Sea is only inscribed in German, and the inscription shows that it is situated on just half of the territory of what we call now – the Aegean Sea, or more precisely – it reaches as far as the district of Thessaly in Greece to the North and to the island of Skyros (or Skiros) to the South. In the contemporary Greek, Turkish, German, Russian, Bulgarian, English, etc. maps, these are not the boundaries of the Aegean Sea. From here, i.e. from the island of Skyros, is supposed to begin the White Sea, as its name is inscribed in Greek, German and Turkish as *Weisses meer*, *Aspri thalassa* (transcribed from Greek, and meaning *White Sea* again), and *Ak deniz* respectively. However, at present, *Ak deniz* is the name of the Mediterranean for the Turkish geographers and cartographers, and the mentioned inscription is on the territory of the Aegean Sea (*Ege deniz*). The sea described above is one of the so called “Disputable Seas”. But its name is the least important problem between Greece and Turkey. For centuries, the two countries have had obscure territorial arguments (including military conflicts) about some islands in that sea.

In the lowermost part of the map there is the Sea of Crete.

The other sea names are identical to the ones used nowadays.

In other old maps in the atlas *Taschen Atlas*, “Gotha” Publishing house: Justus Perthes, published in 1921 in Germany, we can see on the map of Spain and Portugal – the Balearic Sea (in German – *Balearisches meer*) and the Iberian Sea (in German – *Iberisches meer*). Another sea inscribed in the same atlas is the Sardinian Sea (in German – *Sardinische meer*).

As a whole, there is detailed information about the antique sea names in the old German maps. This information should be used in map making together with the GPS and GIS systems and computer cartography. The maps made in Bulgaria between 1879 and 1944 used as a basis maps made in Germany, and from 1944 to 1990 – maps printed in Russian. Most maps in Bulgaria have been made on that basis, and most of the cartographers translate or impose foreign names of seas and countries, not considering the peculiarities of the Bulgarian language.

The Bulgarian maps which I should like to present are from the period between 1913 and 1919, when Bulgaria had an outlet on the Aegean Sea. This map is another example of doubling the name *White Sea* for the Aegean Sea

and the White Sea washing the coasts of the Kola Peninsula in Russia. How can we differentiate one from the other in one and the same text, if no maps are enclosed? The problem of the two seas with identical names is controversial.

In the eight maps reflecting the territorial changes during the First World War, we can see names of oceans that are not used any more. For example, there is the Antarctic Ocean (*ЮЖЕН ЛЕДОВИТ ОКЕАН* in Bulgarian). At present, there is no such ocean in the Bulgarian hydrology textbooks and maps.

In the General Hydrology textbook by Prof. Petar Penchev, there is a list of all oceans and seas in the world. Still it is very difficult to sort out the White Sea round Greece and the White Sea in Russia.

In the next few sentences I am going to make an analysis of the name of *the Korean Sea*, which is known in Bulgaria and Bulgarian cartography as *the Japanese Sea*. In most school and university textbooks from the last century, the only name used was *the Japanese Sea*. The same name is used now in the Bulgarian textbooks and maps, as well as in the mass media. It has gained currency since the liberation of Bulgaria from Turkish rule after the Russia-Turkish War of Liberation (1877-1878). Most of the maps were then brought to Bulgaria from Russia, and most of the cartographers of that period were Russians. Another reason is that mainly Russian, German and some English maps and atlases were used at the Geography Department of Sofia University, when it was founded in 1888. So the name *Japanese Sea* became popular and is used nowadays.

If I were to ask a student at school or a university student where the Korean Sea is situated, they would look at the map and answer that such sea does not exist. This is the reason why I wish to make an analysis of old textbooks and maps published in Bulgarian, concerning the *Korean (Japan) Sea*. I will analyze Al. Karapetrov's map and P. Gochev's Geography textbook, published in 1926 in the city of Plovdiv.

In all maps, atlases and textbooks published in Bulgaria more than a century ago, the island of Honshu is marked as *Nippon*. I am not a specialist in Japanese, but I know that *Nippon* is the Japanese word for *sun*, but it is also the name of a group of islands in Japan, so this is where the name of the sea, as it is popular in Bulgaria, has possibly come from. Therefore, it is the name of the island of Honshu and that of Japan that led to the name *Japanese Sea*, popular in Bulgaria.

In Turkish textbooks and atlases (see References), no one uses the whole name of the *Pontian Mountains* (or: *the Pontian Plateau*). And the name *Pontian Mountains* comes from the Greek name of the Black Sea (*Pontus*). Turkish geographers give those mountains several different names, naming their separate parts. But you will never see that name either on a map or an atlas. The same is the situation with those mountains in the Russian maps and atlases. On the other hand, the German maps and atlases use the name *Pontian Mountains* for the whole mountain range and also for its separate parts.

Let us go back to the name of the Japanese Sea. I think that that name was

inevitable to gain currency, because at that time Japan was a great colonial power which had conquered territories from all the other countries bordering on the Japanese Sea, from the island of Sakhalin to the north, to Korea to the south. To us, Bulgarians, Korea has always been a separate state, although it was once conquered by Japan. This can be seen in P. Gochev's high school Geography textbook of 1926. There Korea is marked as a separate state, and not a part of Japan (p. 170-171), and its capital is the city of Seoul (as seen on Al. Karapetrov's map).

The name *Japanese Sea* was used in the old German maps of Taschen Atlas. It is still used by the German cartographers.

I think the problem of unification of sea names needs the joint efforts of geographers, cartographers and other specialists.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the importance of the old maps as a source of information and a basis for more accurate denominations of seas round the world. Besides, the old maps are the basis of the historical geography of the world. They were issued in very limited circulations, so we must preserve them carefully. Besides, very few libraries have Map and Atlas departments. Another problem is the preservation of the large wall maps in the libraries.

Collecting and preserving the old maps, we will contribute to the better knowledge of the geography and history of the world.

3. Contemporary geographical and cartographic problems with names of seas

The geographical denominations provide additional information about the nature of a given hydronymic site (a river or a sea), and about its specific characteristics.

To have a better understanding of the name of a given geographical site, we have to clarify its linguistic and geographical contents, as well as the reasons why it bears that name today.

The geographical discoveries, through which we have come to know our planet better, merge with linguistics, toponymy and geographical denominations.

An essential source of information for the geographers, cartographers and oceanographers is the toponymy of seas and rivers.

Hydronyms (the names of rivers, seas, lakes, etc.) are among the most conservative elements of all languages. They only undergo changes with the change of the dominating ethnoses or the tribe inhabiting the respective region. What is more, some hydronyms have been assimilated.

The renaming of major geographical sites has always led to big problems and misunderstandings of different nature.

Many specialists stand up against the uniform (or doubled) names of cities and seas. Others are categorically against any changes in them. A typical example of such changes is the capital of Montenegro – Podgoritz, which was changed to Titograd, and now has regained its original name. Similar is the case with the German city of Chemnitz – it was changed to Karl-Marx-Stad, and now bears its original name again.

The changes of names of cities, and especially of rivers or seas, without taking into consideration the historical facts, lead to their regaining their original names, which were used before.

The greatest difficulties arise from identical names of geographical sites, such as cities, rivers, seas, and that often leads to the loss of their "address function". The correct spelling and translation of geographical names of seas, their standardization and translation into foreign languages is an important and complicated problem. To solve that problem, which is often rather contradictory, the specialists need time, efforts and money, as well as international cooperation. The unification is impeded by the different types of writing – Latin, Cyrillic, hieroglyphic, as well as other linguistic problems.

The problem of standardization of the sea names is of great practical importance in applied cartography, geography, navigation, etc. The solving of that problem will facilitate the work of different specialists in the fields of radio and television, the press and communications, transport and education at schools and universities. In most small or non-developed countries, the cartographers and other specialists in that field come to be real "legislators" through their maps. They impose wrong names of seas and other hydrographical sites, which then gain currency. The main reason for those errors is that in translating them from a foreign language, the translators have to take into consideration different kinds of documents, instructions, normative directories, etc.

The way a geographical name is inscribed on a map has to be in accordance with its origin and historical development. The original names of the seas have to be preserved to the greatest possible extent. It is my opinion that the old names of seas, used in a given historical period, must be preserved in the modern historic maps, atlases and textbooks.

Trying to solve the above mentioned problems, I have established direct contact with the Bulgarian State Map Production Factory, so I have reliable information about the present situation with the inscription of sea names. The Director of the Factory and manager of the Cartography Department Mr. Petrov has been looking for business contacts with different countries for exchange of newly printed and published maps and cartographic information concerning sea names and other newly-coined names. However, he has had very little success. No copies of Bulgarian maps have been asked for by any major map production companies either. This leads to the imposing of obsolete or wrong names of geographical sites on the maps.

I hope that through this article I will have the chance to offer cooperation between the basic Bulgarian state-owned map production company and similar producers round the world. Bulgarian is not an international language, but Bulgaria is a nautical nation. Besides, the company prints some of its maps in foreign languages like English, German, Macedonian, Turkish, etc.

It is my opinion that the cooperation concerning the inscription of sea names in Bulgaria is rather insufficient. And many small port towns in the country have changed their names since the downfall of communism, so even

some of the latest maps may come to be outdated.

Most of the names of seas, bays and straits bear the names of the nearest adjacent regions, cities or rivers. For example, the name of the Okhotsk Sea is connected by all Russians (as well as other peoples of the Slavic language group) with a sea where there may be rich fish catch. And in fact its name comes from the word *okat* which is the word for *river* in the language of the Evenki tribe.

Another typical example is the case with the White Sea (*Byeloye More* in Russian). In the early 1740s Vladimir Vinkov and the Russian Admiralty Board decided for Russian war ships to cast anchor and spend the winter in the bay of the city of Murmansk in the Northern part of the Kola Peninsula. Those ships were the first to sail across the White Sea and leave us a description of it.

Later the Russian Alexander Ivanovich Fomin published in 1797 his book "Description of the White Sea, of its shores and islands". There he gives a description of the severe climate of the Arctic regions of the Earth. He says: "To the South-West of Nyuhchi starts "a white rocky ridge" which goes to the waterfalls of the river Onega. Most of the islands in the White Sea are "barren islands", i.e. islands made of white rocks and bare of any vegetation.

If we compare maps made and printed in different countries, we will see that they all agree about the White Sea and the Black Sea. The name is *Weisses Meer* in German, White Sea in English, *Bile More* in Czech; respectively – *Schwarzes Meer* in German, Black Sea in English, *Cerne More* in Czech and *Mavros Pelagos* in Greek.

But what is the main problem with the names of the White Sea and the Black Sea?

In Bulgarian geography, the name *White Sea* denotes two different seas. One is situated near Kola Peninsula in Russia, and the other one is situated in the Northern part of the Aegean Sea, the same part which the Greeks and the Turkish still call with its ancient name – the Thracian Sea.

There is a similar example of doubled sea names in Turkish cartography. It again involves the name *White Sea*. One is again the White Sea off the coasts of Kola Peninsula. There are two words for "white" in Turkish. One is "*ak*", and the other is "*beyaz*", the latter being of Arabic origin and meaning "white color, as white as milk, religiously unblemished". The word "*ak*" also means "white color, without stains, religiously unblemished", but the older Ottoman Turkish word is "*beyaz*". Unlike the example in Bulgarian, where the names of the two seas are identical, in Turkish they are different – "*ak*" and "*beyaz*". So *Akdeniz* is the Turkish name of the Mediterranean Sea.

So there are two White Seas for the Turkish cartographers and geographers – the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea.

In 1299 Sultan Ottoman I created the Ottoman Empire in Western Asia Minor. At present the Turks use as a name of the Mediterranean a contemporary Turkish word. The question is: How was it called at the dawn of the Ottoman Empire? The question is still open for discussion.

I have a version of my own about the name "*Akdeniz*". Like some other seas, the names of which come from names of rivers, the White Sea (i.e. the

Mediterranean) has taken the name of the *Aksu* river (*aksu* is the Turkish for "white water"). And that river takes its source from *Akdagi* mountain (*akdagi* is the Turkish for "white mountain"). It flows into the Mediterranean in a bay near the city of Antalia, hence the Turkish name of the Mediterranean – the White Sea.

I think the Mediterranean received that name much later.

The other historical facts connected with the White Sea on the territory of Russia are that the first descriptions of that sea were made in XVIII c. We can hardly find any historical logic in that name. I don't think it logical that at the time of decline of the Ottoman Empire in XVIII c., when the reforms started, the Arabic word *beyaz* should be used in the name of the sea. As a matter of fact, the process of cleansing the Turkish language from Arabic and Ottoman Turkish words is still going on. And the last point in my statement is that the Turks were at that time the rulers of the Northern Seas.

There is a similar situation in Turkish geography with the doubling of the names of the Black Sea and *the Karskoye (Kara) Sea* (see the atlases of Rand McNally, p. 17, and *Buyuk Dunya Atlasi*, Utard Publishing house, p. 73, 76). Both seas have been translated there as *Black Sea*. And to differentiate one sea from the other, *the Karskoye Sea* is the Black Sea. Another possible translation of the name is "a sea surrounded by firm land". However, this translation is only valid for the *Kara Sea*, but the spelling is the same. The other possible translation of the name *Karskoe Sea* is "*the black sea*", or *Karadeniz* in Turkish. It is curious how one could tell one from the other with no maps enclosed.

In 1739 the Russian navigator Stepan Gavrilovich Maligin reached the coasts of the island of Yamal in *Karskoye Sea*. (*Yamal* means "*the end of the Earth*" in the language of the Nentzi tribe.

Traveling across the *Karskoye Sea*, Maligin reached the river Karoy. It is from the name of that river that the sea has received its name – *Karskoye Sea*.

That adaptation and translation of the name of *Karskoye Sea* is absolutely wrong. In some British atlases like Webster's Concise World Atlas, 1995, p. 13, 14, the name of the sea is *Kara Sea*. Such translation does not fit the name of the river Karoy which has given the name of the sea.

In the Modern Greek language and cartography, the name Black Sea (*Mavros Pelagos*) has been established as the official name of the sea, replacing the ancient Greek word *pontus*.

In Greece at present, there is a process of imposing Modern Greek language. Ancient Greek is still used in science, religion, public administration, etc. This leads to the using of two different names of the same sea, one of them having descended from ancient Greek and having deep historical roots which make it possible for it to be used in Modern Greek. On the other hand, the name in Modern Greek has come from the direct translation of the *contemporary* name of the sea. This process of replacing ancient Greek words with modern ones is still going on in the Greek language. The above mentioned process is similar to the one in the Turkish language. This is a process of updating and development of the language. However, those Greeks who use the ancient Greek language in

their everyday communication are considered to be part of the intellectual elite of Greece. Another reason for that is that ancient Greek words are now used as terms in many branches of science.

The process of modernization and improving of the Turkish language are radically different. There the people using words of Arabic or Ottoman Turkish origin are considered to be illiterate in the Turkish society.

On the other hand, except for the existence of ancient Greek and Modern Greek name of a sea, there is still another problem with the word "sea".

- 1) The word "*pontus*" has come from ancient Greek.
- 2) Another word is "*thalassa*", which also means "sea" in Modern Greek.
- 3) The third word in Modern Greek is "*pelagos*", which means "open sea".

(You can find information about the meanings of the words in the References. See the Greek-English and the English-Greek dictionaries.)

The present sea names used in Greek are the following:

- Mesoyeios Thalassa* (the Mediterranean Sea);
- Alaios Thalassa* (the Aegean Sea);
- Adriatiko Pelagos* (the Adriatic Sea);
- Mavros Thalassa* (the Black Sea).

Other meanings of the word "*mavros*" are "*misfortunate*" and "*mysterious*". These meanings of the word are similar to the meaning of the word "inhospitable" in the ancient name of the Black Sea.

With this example about the Black Sea we demonstrate how the phonetic and literal composition of the words used in the name *Black Sea* has changed through the ages, and yet it has preserved the meaning characterizing the sea as evil and misfortunate for the sailors. There is a similar legend in Bulgarian, where the sea is characterized as "deadly" and "misfortunate for the sailors".

The question about some small seas, parts of the Aegean Sea, is still open. The names of these seas can only be seen in Greek and some Turkish maps and atlases. Some of them are the following:

- 1) *Karpathio Pelagos*;
- 2) *Kritiko Pelagos*;
- 3) *Mirtoo Pelagos*;
- 4) *Ikario Pelagos*.

The study of the history and geography of those seas is a challenge for the scientists nowadays – historians, geographers and other specialists. Any cartographer, making a new map, has to take into consideration these studies, to make sure the names of these seas are inscribed in the correct way.

4. Proposals for geographers, cartographers and other authorities in this field

The names of the seas round the world are an essential element of the contemporary maps and atlases, cartography, geography and history. The basic problems nowadays with the implementation of the new computer technologies are the following:

- 1) Classification of the sea names
- 2) Defining their boundaries
- 3) Creation of a data base of reference literature connected with the ancient and modern sea names
- 4) Producing a detailed map of all the seas in the world.

The above mentioned four proposals will improve the work of geographers, cartographers, hydrologists and other specialists.

The doubling of sea names stultifies the work of computer cartographers and other specialists.

The standardization of the sea names would be of interest to many different organizations. This activity would facilitate the practical work of international organizations in the field of sea navigation and aviation, as well as the International Hydrographers' and Cartographers' Organization, the International Postal Union, etc.

As a whole, the problem of sea names is an international problem.

5. Conclusion

The problem of contemporary sea names is extremely complicated, because in order to solve it, we need productive international cooperation among specialists in different fields of science. This is also a very delicate problem to solve, as there are still many interstate arguments concerning islands and borderlines at sea. If in Seoul we manage to come out with a solution to some of those complicated problems concerning the sea names, it will be our contribution to the development of science. I will be happy if I have contributed to the solving of these problems.

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