

Replacement of the Name East Sea with the Sea of Japan

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1. The name East Sea first began to be used some 2,000 years ago

Initially, the mountains, rivers, and oceans that surrounded man had no proper names. However, as human culture developed, people began to bestow names on these natural elements that reflected their own growing awareness of their indigenous cultures. In this regard, the names given to mountains, rivers, and oceans can be perceived as expressions of individual people's perceptions of values, as well as a natural denouement of the development of their histories and culture.

The first Korean reference to the *Donghae* (東海, East Sea) occurred some 2,000 years ago, appearing in an entry related to King Dongmyeong of Goguryeo found in the <*Samguk sagi* ((三國史記, History of the Three Kingdoms)>. This entry related how the founding of Goguryeo on the territory of North Buyeo had forced the latter to relocate to the Gaseopwon area along the *Donghae* (East Sea) coast. As this incident is said to have occurred during the 3rd year of the Shenjue reign period of Emperor Xuandi of the Han Dynasty, it is believed to have taken place in 59 BC. Moreover, as Silla was only founded in 57 BC, the claim can be made that the name *Donghae* (East Sea) in fact started to be used even before the foundation of the Three Kingdoms (Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla). The name has continued to be used all the way to the present. As such, the Korean nation has referred in an uninterrupted manner to the sea off its eastern coast as the East Sea for some 2,000 years.

The references to *Donghae* (East Sea) found on the King Gwanggaeto Stele established by King Jangsu of Goguryeo in 414 AD to celebrate the achievements of his father Gwanggaeto serve as additional proof of just how

long the name East Sea has been used by the Korean nation. The name East Sea also appears in epigraphs produced during the 5th century.

Meanwhile, the first references to "*Nihonkai* (日本海, Sea of Japan)" can be found in the *Kunyu wan'guo quantu* (坤輿萬國全圖, Great Map of Ten Thousand Countries) produced by Matteo Ricci in 1602. In other words, the name "Sea of Japan" appeared some 1,650 years after the term East Sea began to be employed by the Korean nation.

2. Replacing the name Donghae with the Sea of Japan

The histories of Japan and Korea have long been intertwined. Although the two nations maintained amicable relations for long periods of time, the Japanese turn towards imperialism in the modern era created an unfortunate chapter in the history of ties between the two countries.

The establishment of a centralized state that followed the Meiji Restoration saw Japan, which had by then also become an industrialized country, attempt to encroach on the Asian mainland at the end of the 19th century. Japan refuted the claims that its actions amounted to an invasion of other countries' territories, and instead referred to its attempts to encroach on the mainland as an effort on its part to expand its territory. Little consideration was given to the extent to which its actions damaged other countries.

The sustained effort to make inroads on the mainland required that much information be collected on its neighbors. To this end, a large number of maps of Korea were produced. For instance, the National Diet Library of Japan currently houses some 4,000 maps related to Korea. The majority of these maps were produced during the 19th century.

A look at the name of seas contained in these ancient atlases housed in the National Diet Library of Japan reveals that while the East Sea is routinely rendered in its regular position ancient maps of Korea produced in Japan during the late 19th century, the Sea of Japan is situated near the Japanese mainland or off the east coast of Japan where the Pacific Ocean begins. Such a spatial arrangement is evident in maps such as the *Chosen Yochi Zenzu* (朝鮮輿地全圖, Map of Korea) (Map 1) and *Chosen Zenzu* (朝鮮全圖, Map of Korea) (Map 2). Meanwhile, the East Sea of Korea is inscribed as the Sea of Goryeo (高麗海) on the *Shinsen Chosen Yochi Zenzu* (新撰朝鮮輿地全圖, New Map of the Country of Joseon) (Map 3) and as the Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海) on the *Dai Nihon Chosen Shina Sanguo Zenzu* (大日本朝鮮支那三國圖, Map of Great Japan, Joseon, and

China) (Map 4). In this regard, the *Dai Nihon Chosen Shina Sanguo Zenzu* (大日本朝鮮支那三國圖, Map of Great Japan, China and Korea) produced in 1882 referred to the seas surrounding Japan as the East, South, and West Seas of Japan. Tellingly, the portion of the sea which Japan currently refers to as the Sea of Japan that sits adjacent to Korea is labeled as the Sea of Joseon, while that which abuts the Japanese archipelago is referred to as the West Sea of Japan.

However, Japan's defeat of Qing during the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 effectively provided it with a bridgehead to enter the mainland. Thereafter, in keeping with Japan's policy of territorial expansion, the sphere occupied by the Sea of Japan was expanded from the Japanese coast to include what had heretofore been referred to as the East Sea. Meanwhile, the East Sea was conveniently relocated next to the East China Sea (東支那海).

It was during this period that maps featuring the Sea of Japan in the traditional location occupied by the East Sea began to appear. For instance, in the *Nicho Jissoku seizu* (日韓實測精圖, Precise Map of Japan and Korea) produced in 1894, the Sea of Japan is substituted for the East Sea, which is forcibly relocated to the area occupied by the East China Sea. The East Sea is also rendered in the area traditionally associated with the East China Sea in the *Map of Japan-China-Russia-Korea and the Far East* (日清露韓極東地圖) (Map 5) produced in 1903, and in the *Revised Map of Korea* 時事申報滿韓地圖 produced in 1904. However, the universal recognition of the name East China Sea meant that Japan's efforts to replace the East China Sea with the East Sea could not be logically justified. As a result, new Japanese maps which placed the East Sea in the area south of Jeju Island rather than in its rightful location, or even in the East China Sea area, began to be produced.

Examples of such maps include the Map of Central Japan and Joseon (日本中部及朝鮮) (Map 6) produced by the Hydrographic Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Navy in 1907 and the marine map called *Chosen*(朝鮮) (Protected. 5193) produced by this same Hydrographic Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Navy in 1944. These two maps were included in the official atlases of the Hydrographic Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Navy. In both of the maps, the Sea of Japan sits in the location traditionally associated with the East Sea, which has been relocated to the area south of Jeju Island.

Meanwhile, there also began to appear other maps which, while placing the Sea of Japan customarily associated with the area off the immediate coast of Japan in the region traditionally occupied by the East Sea, thoroughly omitted to include the latter. In other words, the East Sea was blatantly replaced by the

Sea of Japan on these maps. Korea's assertions regarding the legitimacy of the name East Sea are thus clearly supported by a look at the ancient maps of Korea produced by Japan which are currently housed in the National Diet Library of Japan.

Japan's pilfering of Korean sovereignty in 1910 inevitably resulted in the East Sea being replaced with the Sea of Japan, and this despite Koreans' protests to the contrary. Furthermore, as Korean representatives could not participate in the 1st International Marine Conference held by the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) in 1929, no mention was ever made of the name East Sea. As a result, the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) adopted the name Sea of Japan.

In this regard, the time has come to give the sea that lies off Korea's east coast its rightful name back; a name which was brazenly replaced by the Sea of Japan as part of imperial Japan's expansion on the Asian mainland.

3. References to the East Sea found on official maps produced in Japan

Much like Korea, Japan by and large shunned exchanges with foreign countries and pursued a seclusion policy during the Tokugawa Bakufu era. Nevertheless, Japan's limited trade with the Netherlands, whose people were renowned cartographers, through Nagasaki, had the effect of moving the art of cartography in Japan to a higher level.

The growing number of foreign ships that began to make their way to Japan at the turn of the 19th century had the effect of further accentuating the general sense of unease towards the West. The need to collect information about the Western world spurred Japan to produce various government sponsored maps of the world and particular regions (please refer to <Table 1>).

In 1809, the court astronomer Takahashi Kageyasu produced the *Nippon Henkai Ryakuzu* (日本邊界略圖, Simplified Map of Japan's Periphery). While Takahashi had in fact been ordered by the Bakufu to produce a world map, he began by manufacturing this map designed to strengthen Japan's national defenses by facilitating a precise analysis of the situation in neighboring countries. While the Sea of Japan was rendered next to the Pacific Ocean, the East Sea was rendered, in bold letters, as 'the Sea of Joseon.' Takahashi was at once a court astronomer and a government official. To this end, this map produced by Takahashi can be regarded as the official position of the Japanese government. Here, special attention should be drawn to the fact that he referred

to the East Sea as the 'Sea of Joseon,' and not as the 'Sea of Japan.'

Takahashi also referred to the East Sea as the 'Sea of Joseon' on the *Shintei Bankoku Zenzu* (新訂萬國全圖, Revised World Map) produced in 1810. Thus, we can see that the Japanese government itself did not officially refer to the area traditionally occupied by the East Sea as the Sea of Japan.

In 1835, Takahashi Kageyasu's successor Yasuda Raishu manufactured, at the behest of the Bakufu, the *Atlas of Coastal Waterways of Greater Japan* (本邦西北邊境水陸略圖). Yasuda also referred to the East Sea as the 'Sea of Joseon' and not the 'Sea of Japan.'

These official Japanese government maps were produced by officials who held the position of court astronomer under the Tokugawa Bakufu. In all of these maps, the East Sea is clearly referred to as the 'Sea of Joseon,' and not as the 'Sea of Japan.' These maps can be taken as the Tokugawa government's official confirmation of the hollowness of current Japanese claims that the East Sea should not be referred to as the Sea of Japan.

<Table 1> List of Japanese maps on which the term Sea of Joseon is inscribed

	Name of map	Year of production	Producer	Remarks
1	Map of Asia (北槎聞略 附亞細亞全圖)	1794	桂川甫周 (Katsuragawa Hoshu)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
2	<i>Nippon Henkai Ryakuzu</i> (Simplified Map of Japan's Periphery, 日本邊界略圖)	1809	高橋景保 (Takahashi Kageyasu)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
3	<i>Shintei Bankoku Zenzu</i> (Revised World Map, 新訂萬國全圖)	1810	高橋景保 (Takahashi Kageyasu)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
4	<i>Kaei Kotei Tozai Chikyu Bankoku Zenzu</i> (Revised World Map, 嘉永校訂東西地球萬國全圖)	1835	栗原信晁 (Kurihara Shincho)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
5	<i>Shinsei Yochi Zenzu</i> (New Map of the World, 新製輿地全圖)	1844	箕作省吾 (Mitsukuri Shōgo)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
6	Atlas of Coastal Waterways of Greater Japan (本邦西北邊境水陸略圖)	1850	安田雷州 (Yasuda Raishu)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
7	<i>Chikyu Bankoku Hozu</i> (World Map, 地球萬國方圖)	1853	翠堂彭 (Suidō Hō)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)

8	<i>Chôtei Bankoku Zenzu</i> (Revised Map of the World, 重訂萬國全圖)	1855	山路諧孝 (Yamaji Yukitaka)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
9	<i>Kankai Kôro Shinzu</i> (環海航路新圖)	1862	廣瀨保庵 (Hirose Hoan)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
10	<i>Dai Nihon Sôkai Ryakuzu</i> (大日本總境略圖)	1865	玄玄堂 (Kikutei Saneyori)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
11	<i>Chikyu Bankoku Hozu</i> (World Map, 地球萬國方圖)	1871	湯津香榎 (Murakami oshishige)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
12	<i>Bankoku chikyu bunzu</i> 萬國地球分圖	1870	橋本玉蘭齋 (Hashimoto Gyokuransai)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
13	<i>Dai Nihon Chosen Shina Sanguo Zenzu</i> (Map of Great Japan, China and Korea 大日本朝鮮支那三國圖)	1882	武田勝次郎 (Takeda Katsushiro)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海), West Sea of Great Japan (大日本西海)
14	<i>Shinsen Bankoku Yochi Seizu</i> (新撰萬國輿地精圖)	1888		Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海) Sea of Japan (日本海)
15	<i>Shinsen Bankoku Zenzu</i> (新撰萬國全圖)	1894		Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海) Sea of Japan (日本海)
16	<i>Shintei Bankoku Zenzu</i> (新訂萬國全圖)	1934	高橋景保 再刊行 Tamotsu Takahashi	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
17	<i>All coasts of Joseon</i> (朝鮮全岸)	1906	Hydrographic Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Navy (日本水路局)	East Sea (東海)
18	<i>Nihonkai kyu Kokai</i> (Sea of Japan and Yellow Sea, 日本海及黃海)	1936	Hydrographic Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Navy (日本水路局)	East Sea (東海)
19	<i>Chosen</i> (朝鮮)	1944	Hydrographic Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Navy (日本水路局)	East Sea (東海)
20	<i>Chosen Sekai Dai Chizu</i> (朝鮮細密大地圖)	1949	在日本朝鮮科學技術協會編 (Japanese Association for the Study of Joseon Science and Technology)	East Sea (東海)

21	<i>Kaei Kotei Tozai Chikyu Bankoku Zenzu</i> (Revised World Map 嘉永校訂東西地球萬國全圖)	1990	岩田文庫 (Iwata Library)	Sea of Joseon (朝鮮海)
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4. Conclusion

Initially, the mountains, rivers, and oceans that surrounded man had no proper names. However, as human culture developed, people began to bestow names on these natural elements that reflected their own growing awareness of their indigenous cultures. In this regard, the names given to mountains, rivers, and oceans can be perceived as expressions of individual people's perceptions of values, as well as a natural denouement of the development of their histories and culture.

The first Korean references to the *Donghae* (東海, East Sea) were made some 2,000 years ago, a claim that is supported by an entry found in the <*Samguk sagi* (三國史記, History of the Three Kingdoms)> which details the foundation of Goguryeo, as well as by a look at a similar inscription found on the King Gwanggaeto Stele. Meanwhile, the first references to "*Nihonkai* (日本海, Sea of Japan)" can be found in the *Kunyu wan'guo quantu* (坤輿萬國全圖, Great Map of Ten Thousand Countries) produced by Matteo Ricci in 1602. In other words, the name "Sea of Japan" appeared some 1,650 years after the term East Sea employed by the Korean nation.

The name East Sea was officially recognized by the Japanese government up until the mid-19th century. To this end, official maps produced by the Japanese government clearly refer to the 'Sea of Joseon,' not the 'Sea of Japan.'

Japan unilaterally changed the name of the East Sea as part of an imperial expansionist policy that included the turning of Korea into its colony. Korea's status as a colony of Japan prevented it from dispatching a delegation to the meeting of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) held in 1929. As such, based on Japan's unilateral assertions and Korea's inability to plead its case for the logic of referring to the sea as the East Sea, the international community decided to refer to the area as the Sea of Japan. In this regard, it is essential that the invalid name 'Sea of Japan' be discarded once and for all, and that the traditional name of 'East Sea' given to the sea off the east coast of the Korean peninsula be restored.