

Panel Discussion

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In this year's 20th International Seminar on Sea Names held in Gyeongju, Korea, 16 presenters, 20 discussants, and many experts interested in East Sea naming participated from Korea, U.S., U.K., Australia, Algeria, Russia, Hungary, and Belgium. The presenters gave speeches on their expertise of their countries.

From Korea, Professor Choo Sungjae, Kyunghee University, made a speech on the topic of "Achieving the Impossible: The status quo of the East Sea/ Sea of Japan issue and possible way forward." And Professor Kim Shin, Professor Emeritus, Kyunghee University, gave a speech on "Map of Korea and Dual Names." The two presenters argued the legitimacy of the map naming '*East Sea*,' and they claimed the theoretical reasoning behind this as the appearance of the name '*East Sea*' in Korean historical documents. This is further described in the pictures below. This talk will discuss Professor Choo and Kim's presentations, and will present arguments on Korea's '*East Sea*' naming.

Professor Choo and Professor Kim give these following reasons as evidence for why the single naming '*Sea of Japan*' is wrong. First, the name "*East Sea*" was found from the reign of King Dongmyeong in accordance with the Part "Records on Goguryeo" in "Samguksagi(History of the Three Kingdoms)". The name "*East Sea*" was written in a number of literature and ancient maps of Korea including the Great King Gwanggaeto Stele, Paldochongdo(Map of Eight Provinces of Korea) and Agukchongdo(Map of Joseon). Furthermore, the name "*East Sea*" was used 700 years before the name of the country "Japan" was established, which could be the origin of the name "*Sea of Japan*". Most of all, a name contains the history, culture and identity of the people using that name. As shown in the first line of the National Anthem of Korea, the name "*East Sea*" for the sea of Korea has been sharing the life and history of Koreans.

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Figure 1. Articles related to the East Sea during the reign of King Dongmyeongseong in the Part "Records on Goguryeo", Vol. 13, "Samguksagi(History of the Three Kingdoms)". East Sea recorded on Great King Gwanggaeto Stele.



『삼국사기』 권13 고구려본기 동명성왕조의 동해(東海) 관련 기사



광개토왕릉비에 기록된 동해(東海)

As these maps show, we disagree with Japan's contention that East Sea belongs to them because the "Eight State Map," made in 1530 clearly shows East Sea as Korea's sea about 70 years earlier than the Japanese maps were made by Matteo Ricci(1552-1610) in 1602. Due to these historical evidences, Korea is claiming the dual naming of East Sea/ Sea of Japan to the international society and to Japan. Professor Choo and Kim give the following reasons for the concurrent naming

1. Summary on the issue on the naming of *East Sea*

Korea and Japan have been in confrontation with the international common name on the sea between Korean Peninsula and Japanese islands. Considering the injustice on the single name "*Sea of Japan*" and the reality between Korea and Japan using different names on the sea area in question, Korea made a concession to use both names "*East Sea*" and "*Sea of Japan*". However, Japan doesn't accept any names except "*Sea of Japan*" which it insisted as the internationally accepted name. In the reality which Korea and Japan do not agree on the naming of the sea shared by both countries, Korea considers it will be proper to use the names by each country in terms of the geographical feature of East Sea region, international norms on the geographical names and historical legitimacy on the name "*East Sea*".

2. Our position: legitimacy on the naming of “*East Sea*”

1) Geographical features of *East Sea* region

East Sea region comprise territorial seas of four countries, Republic of Korea, North Korea, Japan and Russia and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). As such, it can't be justified to use a single name by a specific country on the sea under the sovereignty of several countries and relevant sovereign rights. Naming for the geographical features shared by two or more countries is determined by the agreement between relevant countries. If the relevant countries fail to reach the agreement, it is a general rule of the international cartography to print both names used by each relevant country. Such rule is also confirmed by the resolution of United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographic Names (UNCSSG) and International Hydrographic Organization (IHO).

3. Rules of international organizations

International Hydrographic Organization Technical Resolution (A.4.2.6) and United Nations Resolution on the Standardization of Geographical Names (III/20) recommend that the relevant countries sharing a geographical feature and using different names on it should endeavor to reach agreement on determining a single name for the feature concerned. If they fail to reach agreement, the names used by each relevant country should be accepted for charts and publications.

International Hydrographic Organization Technical Resolution

A4.2.6 International Standardization of Geographical Names (1974)

It is recommended that when two or more countries share a given geographical feature under a different name form, they should endeavor to reach agreement on fixing a single name for the feature concerned. If they have different official languages and cannot agree on a common name form, it is recommended that the name forms of each of the languages in question should be accepted for charts and publications unless technical reasons prevent this practice.

United Nations Resolution on the Standardization of Geographical Names III/20 (1977)

Considering the need for international standardization of names of geographical features that are under the sovereignty of more than one country or are divided among two or more countries, it is recommended that relevant countries sharing a given geographical feature under different names should endeavor, as far as possible, to reach agreement on fixing a single name for the feature concerned. If those countries do not succeed in agreeing on a common name, it should be a general rule of international cartography that the name used by each of the countries concerned will be accepted.

4. Korean and the name “*East Sea*”

The name “*East Sea*” was found from the reign of King Dongmyeong in accordance with the Part “Records on Goguryeo” in “Samguksagi(History of the Three Kingdoms)”. The name “*East Sea*” was written in a number of literature and ancient maps of Korea including Great King Gwanggaeto Stele, Paldochongdo(Map of Eight Provinces of Korea) and Agukchongdo(Map of Joseon). Furthermore, the name “*East Sea*” was used 700 years before the name of the country “Japan” was established, which could be the origin of the name “*Sea of Japan*”. Most of all, a name contains the history, culture and identity of the people using that name. As shown in the first line of the National Anthem of Korea, the name “*East Sea*” for the sea of Korea has been sharing the life and history of Koreans.

5. Background of expanding usage of the name “*Sea of Japan*” and indication on the concurrent usage of the name “*East Sea*”

International Hydrographic Organization was established to determine the international rules required for safety of navigation and international standardization of geographical names of the seas in 1921. The Organization published the “Limits of Oceans and Seas”(S-23) in 1929 through the discussion for several years. “Limits of Oceans and Seas” published as the standard for naming the seas all over the world

became the important opportunity to expand the usage of the name “*Sea of Japan*” on the charts and publications in a number of countries in the world. Nevertheless, Korea couldn’t raise any legitimate objection on naming the East Sea region in the international community because Korea was under the Japanese colonial rule at that time. Since then, “Limits of Oceans and Seas”(S-23) Second Edition (1937) and Third Edition(1953) were published. However, both editions showed “*Sea of Japan*” on the East Sea region. Since Korea was forcibly occupied by Japan or was at war at those times, Korea couldn’t assert the opinions on naming the East Sea region. Korean Government could officially raise the objection on naming the East Sea region in the international community through the “United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographic Names” in 1992 since its UN membership in 1991. Since then, the Korean Government has been devoting to restore the name “*East Sea*”.

6. Usage of name “*East Sea*” and international community

1) Expanding concurrent usage of the name “*East Sea*” in international community

A number of cartographers in the world have been changing from the usage of single name “*Sea of Japan*” to the concurrent usage of “*East Sea* and *Sea of Japan*”. In accordance with the survey on the atlas by Korean Government in 2007, the ratio using the concurrent name “*East Sea* and *Sea of Japan*” reached 23.8%. Expanding the concurrent usage can be confirmed by the survey by Japan. In accordance with the survey on the atlas by Japan in 2000 and 2005, the ratio of concurrent usage “*East Sea* and *Sea of Japan*” was increased from 2.8% to 18.1%. *East Sea* and *Sea of Korea* in Asia Map(18th Century) by John Senex. *East Sea* concurrently used with *Sea of Japan* in the map site of Bing, the MS search engine.

7. Opinions of UN Secretariat

While Japan insisted that a UN official approved “*Sea of Japan*”, it’s absolutely not

true. It's not UN that uses the name "*Sea of Japan*", but it is used only by UN Secretariat, one of the main organizations of the UN. The usage of "*Sea of Japan*" by UN Secretariat doesn't represent the opinions of 192 UN members. Furthermore, UN Secretariat uses the single name "*Sea of Japan*" just in accordance with its internal practice specifying that "for any names in dispute, it uses the most widely used name before relevant parties reach the agreement". UN Secretariat doesn't support any one party related to the dispute between any countries and expresses that its practice to use a single name should not be used as the evidence by one party to strengthen its status in the dispute. (Letter from UN Secretariat to UN Ambassador of Korea in June 2004).

1) Opinions of America

United States Board on Geographic Names(BNG) has been emphasizing the importance of agreement between Korea and Japan for the issue using the name East Sea. BNG uses the name "*Sea of Japan*" in accordance with its custom because it is widely used at present until both countries reach the agreement. Accordingly, the usage of the name "*Sea of Japan*" by BNG can't be accepted as the approval on the usage of the name "*Sea of Japan*".

8. Conclusion, Korea and *East Sea*

Korea wants the name "*East Sea*" to be widely used in maps in all countries in the world. In consideration of the fact that Korea and Japan can't reach the agreement on the name, Korea accepts that both names "*East Sea*" and "*Sea of Japan*" should be concurrently used in the atlas in accordance with the international norms. No Koreans accept that the islands on East Sea belonging to Korea exist on the sea of Japan. All Koreans hope the name "*East Sea*" restores its name on the atlas now even though the international community couldn't recognize the name "*East Sea*" because of the horrible imperialism of Japan. Korea will continuously endeavor to explain the legitimacy of concurrent usage of the name "*East Sea*" and the injustice in using the single name "*Sea of Japan*" in the international community in accordance with the objective facts and general international rules.