

WRAP-UP

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This 20th *International Seminar on Sea Names*, just concluded, has been about geographical names, those markers on Earth's surface that inform us about the cultural traits, spatial linkages, and changes that have occurred through time. Geographical names represent the most important and perhaps the most widely used labels, exceeded only by family and personal names. They are the threads in the fabric of geography that weaves the experiences of people to specific places and features, and the names that signify those places and features. Geographical names have universal recognition communicated through maps, atlases, prose, and verbal traditions. Geographical names are also of considerable international interest. In some cases, they represent major issues regarding the way that a country identifies its past, present, and perhaps the future. The international interest in geographical names and the issues that accompany names are implied by the title of the seminar: *The 20th International Seminar on Sea Names*.

While the international issues that accompany geographical names receive considerable attention, names are also national and local concern within countries. Sometimes a geographical name is recognition of honor that provides specificity to a place or region. A name may refer to a location or place that has an emotional attachment among people, nationally and locally. National attachments to a name are displayed in different ways, but the most prominent way is for the geographical name to appear or occur in a symbol of national pride and character. South Koreans have included words that equate the endurance of their country with the existence of the East Sea waters. The people of South Korea sing emotional praises in their national anthem about the significance of the name East Sea to their culture, geography, and history.

The 20th Seminar has ventured to explore both international and national issues of geographical naming, with a particular focus on the naming of seas. Maritime names present the greatest opportunity for issues to develop over geographical names for sev-

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eral reasons. I will mention two of those reasons that I believe are particularly relevant. First, the waters of seas, in most cases, reach the shores of different political jurisdictions. Countries are neighbors not always because of land borders, but also because of the shores of water bodies. When water bodies join countries, there is a stake in the name of the water body for historical, cultural, navigational, and national identity reasons. The international standing of a country among the countries of the world may provide privilege for a name, or past colonial domination of the seas may be important forces leading to names that are not consistent with traditional geographical names. Both conditions may be observed to accompany sea names. The second is happenstance. Due to a combination of events or circumstances, the name of a sea may have changed, or a new name was given, without knowledge or recognition of a prior geographical name given by earlier people to the same feature or place. If the new name were entered on a map, and the map became the model for subsequent maps, then the name is changed and widely recognized by default. The new name moves like the wind on the sea surface from cartographer to map producer and with time the name becomes the most widely used identifier for the water body. The names become the de facto common reference, leaving traditional naming without official recognition among the world's official lists of geographical names. *The 20th Seminar* has addressed those issues related to several topics and in several regions of the world during the paper presentations and discussion sessions.

I will focus on 5 major topics that have developed in the paper presentations and discussion during the 20th Seminar regarding geographical naming. They are: 1. the role of evidence; 2. the role of emotion; 3. the role of cultural heritage; 4. the role of geography education; and 5. the role of social justice. I will briefly comment on the significance of each for geographical naming as produced by the papers and discussions presented during the seminar.

1. The Role of Evidence

There are several widely recognized sources of evidence regarding the geographical name given to a place. They include verbal accounts if the principal participants in the naming are present. They include documentary written narratives and ships logs of the numerous encounters people have with geographical features, places, or seas. By far

the most important evidence of a geographical name is a map with decipherable names and a date. The papers in the seminar have reinforced the importance of maps for building the validity of a geographical name. Maps are compelling evidence that represent different times and preferred usage of a name. This is the case for both maritime and terrestrial naming issues. Several presentations emphasized the importance of maps to establish baseline data, and others to reflect on inconsistencies in the evidence. I do not intend to analyze each paper, but to emphasize the important role that old maps have in determining past geographical names. We have heard scholarly presentations of colonial effects on geographical names, post-colonial reconstruction of maps to reflect preferred or corrected names, and national influences of geographical names on world maps published and distributed. We have heard exceptional examples of research that is necessary to reconstruct the nomenclature pathway of individual as well as categories of geographical names. In most cases of evidence for geographical name correction or reconstruction, the significance of maps has been compelling.

2. The Role of Emotion

The names of individuals are similar to private property. They are a personal attachment to a word. For example, my name is Joseph, but I also accept the shortened version, Joe. However, if some refers to me as Samuel, or some other name, then I respond either directly or emotionally in a negative manner. People have similar emotional ties to geographical names. If a place has had a specific name for many hundreds of years, then an emotional identify forms with the population. This attachment of the people to a geographical name represents a national self-being. This emotional attachment is evident in the words East Sea in the South Korean National Anthem and the praise given to the water body, which is also labeled as the Sea of Japan on many maps. Emotionally, Koreans view the water body between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago as the East Sea. The water of the East Sea literally flows through their arteries and blood vessels and provides emotional sustenance. It is safe to say that the Japanese proponents of the name, Sea of Japan, feel equally fervent about the geographical name of the water body. The papers in the seminar addressed such an emotive response to geographical names in different regions of the world. Eastern Europe, for example, has a similar record of changing geographical names that repre-

sents hundreds of years of territorial expansions and contractions, of conflict and armistices, and ethnic preferences within the realm of nationalistic dictates. The papers in the seminar frequently left the participants with the question: What is in a name? They also began to delve into the national and ethnic psychic of populations displaying the firm convictions that the name they use is correct, and furthermore, is the only possible name. The occurrences of dual naming, linguistic translations, and parochial or traditional preferences for names are affected by the deeply held emotions that accompany a geographical name.

3. The Role of Cultural Heritage

The attachments to a geographical feature of place reflect the cultural values associated with the name that a group of people espouses as they seek identity with the place. Identity extends beyond the mere association with the place or name, and includes artifacts, sociofacts, and mentifacts that are inherent within the cultural group. For example, maps with long accounts of a geographical name represent artifacts. Folklore and verbal accounts of a geographical features related to the lives of individuals within a cultural group. They signify deeply held convictions of the name's significance as social engagement occurs. The social engagement reiterates and reinforces the importance of the feature or place and its geographical name. Nationalism, for example, is a powerful force that utilizes the social milieu of a cultural group to reinforce the associations with a geographical name. People and groups carry ideas around in their minds that are a maze of attitudes, perceptions, and values that govern how they view geographical naming, among many other topics. Mentifacts are the most difficult of the triage of conditions that comprise culture. Artifacts and sociofacts are identifiable, observable, and subject to analysis in discussion sessions. Mentifacts tend to be elusive to the researcher, since they include the ideas that people carry in their minds. Mentifacts represent a critical component of what people think about a geographical naming issue. Papers in the seminar addressed the role of cultural heritage in geographical naming. It is largely contextual, but is present when geographical naming is an issue.

4. The Role of Geography Education

Geography education provides the means to enhance and enlighten issues of geographical naming. Education provides the information and skills needed to analyze naming issues in order to take an informed position regarding a possible resolution. The process of becoming informed and taking a position results from both formal and informal education in geography. Formal education is a planned educational process such as school curricula. Informal education relies on experiences other than formal education. They include informal discussion among friends, family, community members, as well as visits to museums and historical displays, and information that one acquires from direct experiences throughout life. Geography education provides two advantages in learning about and taking a position on a naming issue. First, the information and skills that improve the capacity of students for engagement in geographical naming issues also add to the value of the education. In this way, education is similar to compound interest on a principal investment. The compounding continues to increase the value of the original principal. Geography education prepares the baseline knowledge and skill necessary to address conditions and situations encountered in life. Associations with geographical names, their origins, and issues that engulf names are, of necessity, within the formal and informal educational realms and worldviews of people in the 21st century. Second, geographical naming issues are subject to capacity building in scientific inquiry through geography education. Once those inquiry capacities are developed, they remain within the intellectual skills repertoire of the learners. The intellectual skills developed through inquiry in geography education are then used in later in life as students and others address challenging global and local issues. Those challenges include taking positions on public policies regarding geographical naming. The capacity to think about and take action on geographical naming is a value added dimension of geography education. Adding value to the analysis of naming issues and possible resolutions contributes in a positive manner to resolving issues of sea names. The papers in the seminar referred to communication of the issues and becoming knowledgeable regarding the conditions that affected naming issues. Participants to the seminar discussed the importance of education for groups that intend to build a constituency and influence public policies regarding geographical naming.

5. The Role of Social Justice

Social justice has considerable application to geographical naming issues. Social justice refers to the advantages and disadvantages experienced by a society and its people. Those experiences, both positive and negative initially included mainly wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society. Within the scholarly community, social justice has taken on a larger meaning that extends to indiscretions exercised by a country against other countries in the past and present. During periods of major conflict, it is usually determined that reparations by an aggressor are due to countries and people affected. However, in of political and military domination there are negative consequences that affect the emotional well being and cultural heritage of a society. The examples provided in the papers and discussions of the *20th International Seminar* addressed the effects of indigenous names replaced by colonial names, the rewriting of historical periods to privilege a particular name, and the reluctance to negotiate a reasonable solution to geographical naming issues. Each of these conditions reflects a social injustice or inequity related to geographical naming. For example, the emotive response and cultural pride of South Koreans with the geographical name, East Sea, is readily recognized. Do the emotive and cultural heritage deprivations of South Koreans regarding the absence of the East Sea name on maps and in narratives about Northeast Asia represent a social injustice? There is considerable evidence in hindsight that social justice was not served regarding the East Sea geographical naming issue during and following the 20th century colonial period in East Asia and World War II. In a 21century world where due consideration is given to righting past wrongs, the issue of social justice has become a prominent consideration. It applies to geographical naming issues. Furthermore, social justice adds a dimension to the discussion of geographical names that is not easily discounted. Social justice is both an academic and social pursuit that is capable of placing geographical naming inequities under the spotlight.

6. Conclusion

The papers in the seminar reflected the continued importance of geographical naming issues in the 21st century. Examples of the role of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, international law, cultural heritage, emotional attachment to a

name, and the availability of map and document evidence used to reconstruct the past uses of a name were abundant and expertly presented. The range of geographical naming issues and their importance for 21st century geopolitical and economic reasons suggested in particular the necessity for resolutions to the issues. The authors of the paper expressed optimism at times with particular naming issues, and expressed pessimism at other times with regard to resolving naming issues. Geography education was widely used in the seminar discussion as a means to engage greater numbers of people in geographical naming issues in order to affect public policy. The educational way forward will require building a constituent base for reconciling differences regarding geographical names and proposing solutions to issues. In the case of the East Sea/Sea of Japan naming issue, this is well underway with the South Koreans agreeing to dual naming as a policy for all maps and navigational information, and in textual and electronic materials used by students. There is considerable forward movement the use of dual naming on instructional materials in the Commonwealth of Virginia, USA. While evidentiary-based arguments, such as using historical maps and documents, are powerful and raise the visibility of geographical naming issues, there are considerable untapped capacities in using social justice as a further component to raise attention to and resolve geographical naming issues. Geography education, both formal and informal, presents pathways for adding a social justice dimension to the issue of geographical naming. *The 20th International Seminar on Sea Names* represented another advancement in considering the opportunities for and necessities to resolve geographical naming issues. While evidence from old maps and the forensic study of maps and atlases remains an essential point of geographical naming, those evidentiary items have been joined by several other important considerations. They are emotion, cultural heritage, geographical education, and social justice. They introduce the important dimension of “humanness” to the geographical naming issues. That leaves us with an important question from the *20th International Seminar on Sea Names*. Will the “human dimensions” of geographical names result in the ultimate resolutions of the issues?