

## Discussion

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In this panel we have three papers with three very different academic traditions.

Isolde Hausner explains in the first paper the Alpine Convention as a framework convention with the goal to protect the natural environment and to promote the development of this region in its manifold facets. The Alpine range is shared by 8 countries. What is of special interest for us is the fact that also toponomastic aspects play an important role in protecting the diversity of culture within this region:

- Projects to acquire and develop regional knowledge through toponomastic research
- Erection of information boards in towns and villages with the most important and significant place names.

How important ideas which stand behind that kind of conventions can be we can see with a look at the conflict about the bilingual place name signs in Carinthia/Austria. The German and Slovenian place names here are an old and common “immaterial cultural heritage” where the population of Carinthia can be proud of. Unfortunately there were political forces that had a polemic attitude against bilingual signs. Now, in the meantime, a compromise has been reached, in which 164 bilingual place name signs were erected.

A second field the paper did focus on was sustainable tourism. In the Alps there are a lot of conflicts because tourism damages the environment. Often we see a conflict between ecology and economy.

The paper explained the Alpine Convention and its benefits and merits. This makes us curious about the conflicts which made this convention necessary and how these conflicts will be solved in reality.

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Lee Young Choon shows in his paper that there are several national rituals, community rituals and people's individual ones which deal with the East Sea. Interesting is that in Silla there are four altars, one for the East Sea, one for the South Sea, one for the West Sea and one for the North Sea. In 1414 during the Joseon Dynasty (1392– 1910) however rituals for the North Sea were abolished. Here we see a new consciousness of the Koreans regarding their territory as a peninsula and not as an island.

Before the unification by Silla there has been the time of the three empires in Korea, where the territory of Silla has been situated in the southeast of the peninsula and the capital of Silla was situated in today's Gyeongju (in the southeast of Korea). This may be one of the reasons why three out of four rituals paid to the seas in the Silla era were paid to the East Sea.

If we further look to the fact that for example during the Goryeo era (918–1392) a shrine is called 'the shrine for the East Sea' or 'the shrine for the Dragon King of the East Sea' and that in 1414 the silk gifts to the seas at the rituals were distinguished by color, dark blue for the East Sea, red for the South Sea, white for the West Sea we can see the parallels to the Chinese rituals for the Sea gods. In Chinese mythology there are four Dragon Kings which govern the four seas:

- Dragon King of the East Sea, the azure dragon (青龍)
- Dragon King of the South Sea, the red dragon (赤龍)
- Dragon King of the West Sea, the white dragon (白龍)
- Dragon King of the North Sea, the black dragon (黑龍)

Also in Japan and in Vietnam we can find similar myths. So it would be an interesting task to examine the convergences and the differences between the rituals and myths regarding seas between the different countries in East Asia to explore what are the specifics in which Korean rituals differ from rituals of other countries.

Hydronyms are among the earliest examples of human language in Europe. Some of them are much older than settlement names. One reason for this is likely the importance of the rivers for people in ancient times. While villages at this time could be easily abandoned or destroyed, rivers changed little. The people use them for transportation as well as for orientation.

So the research about potamonyms (river names) of Central Europe has a long history. The paper of Urszula Bijak stands in this tradition and shows the high level of scholarship in the field of the research of potamonyms.

The studies of the potamonyms of the Vistula river basin do not only give information about the different layers of river names, they may give useful hints in the discussions about controversial issues like

- the concept of the Old European hydronymy (Hans Krahe) or the
- relations between the Veneti, the Slavs, and the Balts.