

Discussion

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There are three different specialties and perspectives, which are very helpful for the better understanding the place-name issues. Instead of questions, I would like to use three papers to think about the sea naming issue.

First of all, it would be good to remind the key ideas of the presented papers. As a geographer, Professor Stoltman asked us to think about the similarity and difference between the Baltic and East Asian region. He tried to understand the complex geopolitical and historical situation behind the naming issues in East Asia. Linguist, Professor Buss's presentation reminds us the basic but important fact that neighboring language groups influence each other and in very complex ways. Therefore, if we trace back the changes of sea names, we can increase our knowledge of history and human civilization.

Finally, Cartographer, Tjerrd Tichelaar's presentation is showing the development or evolution of sea names and naming practices. When I read these three papers, I came up with a two words, "process" and "context" which I love much as a political geographer.

First, I want to focus on the process. When we look at the old maps, the names are quite different from the names we use nowadays. As the three presented papers pointed out, there is a kind of trend. One of them is the tendency from very simple and generic names to more specific names and sometimes representing culture, history, ideology, and politics. Sea names are in the process of changes, which may suggest that we may have different names in the future. Many names have disappeared, and some of them have survived. Why? Some are better than the others? Not really. The papers show that there are many factors, for example, number and influence of language groups, the change of language itself, the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires, the increase

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of human knowledge on seas and activities such as trade and warfare. It would be an exaggeration, but I would like to say that this seminar or activities of The society of East Sea can be added as a factor of this process of naming in a long term.

Second, with regard to context, as Tichelaar's presentation shows, and Gammetoft also stressed yesterday. There are many ways of naming seas, based on settlement, appearance, country name, direction, and characteristics. It may be possible to say that some names are more acceptable to neighboring groups and countries but others are not. For example, sea names after country names are less likely to be welcomed, but sea names based on characteristics of the water body is more likely to be accepted. However, it does not always work. Here context comes in to explain why some names are accepted and other are not. Professor Stoltman's paper about the difference between Baltic region and East Asia, there are many reasons but I want to call it 'context'. Whether a name derived from a country name is accepted to its neighbors is decided in the context that the countries are located. Therefore the issue between Korea and Japan should not be detached from the cultural, historical, and geopolitical map of East Asia.

In sum, when we consider two words, process, and context, the promotion of *East Sea* should not be evaluated or judged by a single criteria. It is a process in a specific context. This process of promoting *East Sea* does not and should not mean 1) denouncing Japan, 2) blaming Western Powers, sailors, explorers, and cartographers. 3) promoting nationalistic project 4) cardinal aspect of the name *East Sea* does not impair the justification or legitimacy of it.

The truth is simple. Koreans want share their beloved name 동해 and translated it for the international community as the *East Sea*. That is the reason why the society for *East Sea* was founded in the early 1990s. The activity of dual naming was designed for peace and coexistence. Yes, I admit it was fueled by somewhat nationalistic sentiment. But back in 1990s, Japan started provoking remarks on the past. That is a part of context in this region. And dual naming practice of *East Sea/Sea of Japan* is increasing. I am not sure this trend would be maintained or not but one thing very clear is we should not understand this naming issue as competition and be careful about making judgement on names. We just explain why *East Sea* is important to Korean people and expect others to understand the fact that it is worthwhile using the *East Sea* as well as *Sea of Japan*.