

## Panel Discussion

MOON Myung-Ho\*

Before starting my discussion, let me show you a map and a video clip. On this map is the Korean peninsula, which embraces both South Korea and North Korea. On the right side of the map is the *East Sea*. There is a harbor city adjacent to the *East Sea* in the North. Its name is Heungnam. The story of this movie starts with Heungnam. Taking place in the area near Heungnam was one of the most fierce battles during the Korean War (1950–53). During the war, the South was supported by U. S. Army as the UN forces and the North by the People's Republic of China army. The battle is called the Changjin Lake battle (Chosin Reservoir battle in English).

The movie, entitled *Ode to My Father*, has been a box office hit. Its Korean title is the International Market, which mostly sold foreign goods during the war in the southern port city of Busan. The movie begins with **the SS Meredith Victory, which evacuated 14,000 North Korean refugees to safe destination in the south.** Originally, the UN military authorities planned to carry soldiers, military weapons and equipments. But US commander made a decision to unload nearly all weapons and supplies from the ship in response to desperate petitions from North Korean refugees. The Guinness Book of World Record recognized the Meredith Victory for its role in the greatest single rescue in the history of mankind.

What was amazing is the birth of five babies on the ship which evacuated along the *East Sea*. Their temporary names were Kimchi 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The US soldiers who gave the names knew that Kimchi is the most favorite vegetable dish in Korea. Kimchi 5, whose parents later gave to their changed the name as Lee Kyung-pil, is now aged 65.

He said that his birthplace is the *East Sea*. According to him, he often visits the *East Sea* together with other 'Kimchis.' Four years later, Captain Leonard LaRue became a

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\* Editor in Chief, Korea Journalists Society, Korea

monk of the Benedictine order, expressing his wish to pray for the Korean people.

It is the *East Sea* which helped the exodus of 14,000 refugees, not *Sea of Japan*. The *East Sea* embraces Koreans' spirits, dreams and history.

I think that it is important that Korea and Japan should move toward future through dialogue and cooperation, not through conflict or antagonism. It will be beneficial to the two countries. However, Japanese Abe administration and extreme right wing do not sincerely acknowledge its past history tainted with aggression and colonial occupation.

Many women, from China, the Philippines, the Netherlands, Indonesia, etc., who were forced into sexual slavery for Japanese soldiers during the World War II, witnessed Japanese atrocity and brutality. However, the Japanese government denies forced mobilization of comfort women and refuses to offer whole-hearted apology. The U.S. government recently confirmed that the Japanese action was "terrible, egregious violation of human right."

The issue of *East Sea* is in the same context with Comfort Women issue.

Numerous historical materials and old maps show that the name of *East Sea* has been used in Korean peninsula for more than 2,000 years. Meanwhile, the first documented map to name the area the *Sea of Japan* appeared in 1602. On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Korean independence from the Japanese rule, the Korea Land and Geospatial Informatic Cooperation conducted a survey on the name of the sea appearing in 693 world's maps between 1469 and 1910. It found that more than 60 percent used Korean name. It was after the 1910 Japanese annexation of Korea that Japanese colonialists replaced the name of the *East Sea* with *Sea of Japan*.

Japanese colonialists attempted to change another maritime name, Korea Strait, Daehan Hyeheop. It is the passage between Korea and Japan in the South Sea of Korea. According to a recent paper presented by Prof. Han Cheol Ho of Dongguk University, up until the 19th century, Japanese texts and maps named it as the Joseon (old name of Korea) Strait or used two names, the Joseon Strait and Tsushima Strait (対馬海峡). Beginning in the early 20th century, Japanese used only Tsushima Strait. Nowadays, the name, Korea Strait is used internationally.

It is well-known fact that Japanese colonialists also forced every Korean to use Japanese name, and not to use Korean language. Ko Un, one of the most famous poets

in Korea, said that he threw away his Japanese name Dakabayashi Doraske when Korea was liberated from Japanese rule on Aug. 15, 1945. (I quote) "The day was also the liberation day for our letters, Hangul. Since then, I have been writing poems throughout my life using that liberated Hangul.

Korea has been making efforts to recover the *East Sea* name on international maps. Japan also has been making counter-efforts to block our endeavors. And some in the international society seem to feel fatigued about the issue. Then, what should we do? While Japanese denied historical wrong doings and blocked our efforts to correct this, should we stop all efforts and remain silent?

What is clear is that Koreans cannot let the *East Sea's* wrong name, *Sea of Japan*, transmit to our descendents. I think we should continue efforts to recover what is "ours." As the first step, I agree to Prof. Ryu's suggestion to name *East Sea* for the Korean sea-side area and name *Sea of Japan* for the Japanese side-sea area. I also support Prof. Suh Jong Chul's idea to use the both Korean and Japanese name following the IHO and UNGEGN resolution. Prof. Rainer Dormels also said that "... It will be pointed out the fact that the name '*East Sea*' is used very often worldwide for the sea area between Korea and Japan could become a decisive actor to use both names '*Sea of Japan*' and '*East Sea*' in the S-23 publications of the IHO.

Recently, we are glad to see that the U.S. Virginia State approved to use the dual name, "East Sea" along with "Sea of Japan" in the state's textbooks. This measure, we hope, will make impact on New York and other states. I believe that the world's conscientious people will increasingly support our efforts to recover the *East Sea* name.

Koreans feel very encouraged when world' intellectuals issued a statement reaffirming the illegitimacy of Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910 and opposing Japan's distortion of imperial past in last July. They were 524 intellectuals from Korea, Japan, United States and Europe. Among them are Wada Haruki, a professor emeritus at Tokyo University, Dr. Kim Jin-hyun who is with us here, Prof. Alexis Dudden of the University of Connecticut, Prof. Noam Chomsky of the MIT and Prof. Wolfgang Seifert of the University of Heidelberg. They also urged Japan's Prime Minister Abe to offer sincere apologies for Japan's past aggression and colonial rule. However, in last week statement, Abe did not convey heartfelt apology and made ambiguous wording.

I think we need to increase joint efforts with conscientious Japanese intellectuals. About 10 days ago, Former Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama visited the Seodaemun Prison History Hall in Seoul. He knelt down to apologize to those who experienced harsh tortures and death there during Japan's colonial rule. The existence of conscientious politician like him makes us to expect the improvement of Korea-Japan relations.

It is also desirable to conduct a joint forum with Japanese intellectuals and journalists. Coalition efforts are also needed with China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Myanmar which experienced Japanese occupation. In this movement, the recovery of territory and name should be included. Japan has been asking for the return of four northern islands captivated by old USSR. Is it right for Japan not to return the *East Sea* name while claiming for the northern islands?

As leading countries in the area, Korea, Japan and China should take a role for the promotion of peace and prosperity in East Asia. Korea and Japan should clear up what's were wrong in the past and move forward for the future. As a journalist who is greatly concerned about the Korea-Japan relations, I think the role of media is important. The media should restrain themselves from extremely nationalistic and populist reporting.

As you saw in the movie I showed at the beginning of my comment, the *East Sea* is the sea of spirits and everyday life for the Korean people.