

# Discussion

Isolde HAUSNER\*

---

The interesting paper by professor Cheng brings a perfectly elaborated theory of the first recorded name of *East Sea*, its historical backgrounds, the appearance of the name *Sea of Japan* and the uncertainties in the use of these names. This water body had not been surveyed until the 18th ct. The thoroughly reasonable process of the use of these two names reads as follows:

The French missionary Joseph Francois Marie Anne de Moryac de Mailla made his first map of East Asia in 1779 and marked the water body between the Korean peninsula and the Japanese archipelagos with the name Ocean Orientale, which reflected, as prof. Cheng found out, the first-hand knowledge about the sea area off the coast of Siberia. His map making and his connection with French cartographers and publishers made this name the most popular one on European maps in the 19th ct. The Italian missionary Matteo Ricci (1552-1610) had marked the water body as *Sea of Japan* for the first time in his map of Asia, but never used this name in his later records on Asia. The French missionary Jean François Gerbillon (1654-1707) collected on his 8 travels to Manchuria and East Siberia a lot of informations and he used the name *East Sea* in his journals "... jusqu'à la mer orientale ..." (see the scan from Gerbillon's book). Gerbillon used three sources, the direct observation during his trips, the direct contact with coastal people and indirect informations from imperial investigators. The Jesuit missionaries from then on preferred the name *East Sea* instead of Ricci's *Sea of Japan*. The name *East Sea* must have been known in Europe even in the beginning of the 18th ct. through the correspondence of Jesuit missionaries with their colleagues in Paris. But on the "Jesuit Atlas" the water body between Korea and Japan was left blank, prof. Cheng can only speculate about the reasons. In the English version of d'Anville's atlas, the French imperial cartographer Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville (1697-1782) the publishers without the consens of the author put the name *Sea of Japan* in. The Jesuit de Mailla made his own map for Manchuria and Siberia in 1779 and replaced the name *Sea of Japan* by the name *East Sea* as it always had been Jesuits' tradition. From the second half of the 18th ct. on and during the 19th ct. the name *East Sea* again was used by professional cartographers.

---

\* Professor, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria.

Discussion came up concerning the reliability of the sources as it reads e.g. ... mer orientale ... in Gerbillon`s report and the missing capitalization, so that it wouldn`t be sure, if these words can be classified as a name. But it was contradicted that capitalization of names in that time was not at all the rule, especially when a name is derived from a common noun, and therefore cannot be used as argument against the valence of the source.

The presenter, Mr Atoui, contrasted the Islands Habibas (or locally called Îles de Kheira) in Algeria and the Island Dokdo between Korea and Japan. Both islands are of vulcanic origin and have no permanent population. One could think that in both cases it is a matter of minor interest. But the historical background is different: the Islands Habibas have always been under Algerian sovereignty, whereas the island Dokdo has a contradictory historical past. But in both cases one regards a strong emotional attachment combined with the ownership of this piece of land and the author raises the question, if a profound research study could bring also other facts to light beyond emotions. The following short discussion saw this as new approach for a solution of the case.