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FEATURES BEYOND A SINGLE SOVEREIGNTY

On the historical and toponymical consideration of the name of the sea situated in  
between the Korean peninsular and Japanese archipelago

(Submitted by Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

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This paper is to clarify historically and toponymically the origin and evolution of the name of the sea situated in between Korean peninsula and Japanese archipelago and to prove the validity of “the East Sea of Korea” and the injustices of “the Sea of Japan” in the representation.

**1. Consideration of the historical and toponymical course through which the name of the sea situated in between Korean peninsular and Japanese archipelago originated and evolved.**

**1). Consideration of name “The East Sea of Korea”**

“The East Sea of Korea” which we claim to name as internationally standardized name for the sea in question has the deep root with long history.

The Eastern sea of Korea was exploited and became known abroad by the Korean nation. The continental coast and islands enveloping the east sea in the country were inhabited early by the Korean nation and other several nations including Ainy tribe, Malgal tribe, Tataru tribe etc and among them, the Korean nation is the first one who exploited, named and utilized the sea.

During the long history of hundreds of thousands of years, to say nothing of B.C., the Korean nation had made the wide use of the eastern sea. In this course, the Korean nation had come to gain the ample knowledge of the Eastern Sea by discovering Ullung Islands in 512 and called the sea “the East Sea”.

The sea name, that is “the East Sea” called after its location situated in the east of Korean peninsular, passed current in all states of our country from B.C. to the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

According to historical documents and marine charts of those days including Samguksagi (the chronicle of the Three Kingdoms-Koguryo, Paekje and Silla), Samgukyusa (the time-honoured history of the three Kingdoms), the chronicle of Koryo dynasty, Lijosillok (the true records of the Li dynasty), Paldochongdo (the whole map of eight provinces), chonhado (the sky and land map), the name of the sea in question was referred to “the East Sea” from the beginning.

According to “the World map” printed in Europe in the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the name of the eastern sea of Korean peninsular was marked as “the Oriental Sea” (the Eastern Sea).

Japan had not had the sea name for a long time. The names of sea including the eastern sea of Korean peninsula could not be found in any Japanese ancient documents and marine charts printed in from the 8<sup>th</sup> century to the 16<sup>th</sup> century such as “the historical records of Japan” and “records of the ancient history” which were edited in the dawn of the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the name of the sea called as “the East Sea” was referred to “the Sea of Korea” (the COREA SEA).

Until the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century before the human activities to realize and conquer the world was expanded to the worldwide scale, there were a great number of seas without their own names and several ones with the same name in the world. Such a reality of those days had caused much inconvenience to the ever-increasing activity for man.

Therefore, with the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a great number of seas in the world came to have their own names and seas of the same began to be called respectively as their unique ones.

The name of the eastern sea of the Korean peninsular was inscribed as “the Sea of Korea” (the COREA SEA) in numbers of cartographies published in Italy, England, France, Netherlands, Russia, USA and other countries in the world until before the 20<sup>th</sup> century such as “the Asian Map” printed in Portugal in 1615, and in historical materials of several nations including “the Britannica” edited in England in 1771.

The maps and historical documents published in Korea those days had represented as “the Sea of Korea” and such an example could be found in historical documents edited in the period of Ri Dynasty.

The geographical name for “the Sea of Korea” was recognized and used as it was by Japan who had not had the sea name even the time after the middle period of the middle age. The sea in between the Korean peninsular and Japans archipelago was represented as “the Sea of Korea” in many maps including “Asian Map” printed by Kasruga in 1794, “the World Map” by Grishaky in 1847, “the New Islands of the Great Japanese History” by Hashimoto in 1872, and Some of the Japanese people recognized “the Sea of Korea” even until the mid-period of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Those historical facts imply that the name of “the Sea of Korea” is the one for standardization.

After liberation in 1945, the Eastern Sea was renamed as “the East Sea of Korea” in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. This was the righteous measure to retrieve the original name of which the use was prohibited compulsively by the military occupation of Korea and the fair and generous proposition acceptable for Japan.

As a matter of fact, the reason why the name of “the Sea of Korea” recognized officially not only by Korea and Japan but also by many other nations in the world from long time ago was changed into “the Sea of Japan” lies not in the lawful course of the origin and development of the geographical name, but in the coercive and unilateral actions of Japan in those days.

Therefore, it is unconditionally reasonable to erase the name of “the Sea of Japan” with her defeat in Korea, and to reuse the original one of “the Sea of Korea”.

## **2). Consideration of “Sea of Japan”**

It is only within one hundred and a few tens of years when the Sea of Japanese insisted on faking as a place name by Japan appeared on the eastern sea in our country.

The reason to claim so are these facts that first of all Japan herself recognized the eastern sea in our country as “the Sea of Korea” until the middle period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and marked like that on all official maps and some of the Japanese people recognized “the Sea of Korea” even until the mid period of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

And then due attention should be paid to such a fact that the eastern Pacific of Japanese Island was marked as “the Sea of Japan” on these maps produced by some European cartographers. One typical example is the Japanese map produced by Engel Bert Campfer and J. C. Shushjer of Netherlandish origin in 1727. Of course, on those maps, “the Sea of Korea” was marked on the eastern sea in our country. Japan, too, had called the Pacific in the eastern Japanese Islands “the Sea of Japan”. “The Sea of Japan” or “the Great Japanese Sea” was marked on many maps including “Yolbujedobuilgungdo”(New Japanese Maps) produced by Sankawajondo in 1808, “the Newly-standardized World Maps” by Dakabashi in 1810 and “the New Islands of Great Japanese History” by Hasimodo in 1872, and “the Sea of Korea” was represented on the eastern sea in our country.

But the representation of “the Sea of Japan” on the eastern sea in our country by Japan began from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the Japanese disclosed their aggressive intention of our country.

Since those days “the Pacific” had its own fixed place name, Japan could mark no more “the Sea of Japan” on the Pacific from then.

On the other hand, those days Japan began to rob the actual authorities of Ri Dynasty, depraved and incompetent.

Under these circumstances, Japan displaced the name of “the Sea of Japan” banned on the east to the west. At first Japan marked “the Sea of Korea” on the sea off Korea and “the Sea of Japan” on the one off Japan instead of the single name. But after occupation of Korea, Japan prohibited by force the name of “the Sea of Korea” and allowed only that of “the Sea of Japan” to be used in common. Worse still, Japan extended its move into the international arena. Nevertheless, Korean nation has never ever recognized the wrongful name; “the Sea of Japan”.

As a result, the name of the eastern sea in our country which was used in the common on the worldwide scale and called after the single name of our country, has changed by “the Sea of Japan” in a numerous maps, marine charts and publications printed by many other countries in a short time.

## **2. The validity of representation of “The East Sea of Korea” and the injustices of that of “the Sea of Japan”**

Which name is proper or wrongful in marking the sea in between Korean peninsular and Japanese archipelago can be clearly defined through above-mentioned consideration of the origin and evolution of the name of sea in question, however, further consideration would be made in a few aspects.

**Firstly**, due attention should be paid to the validity of the origin and evolution of the place name. The place name is to be originated in the course of the certain recognition and

knowledge by man about the geographical objects approved valuable to life. After that, it comes to be recognized officially at that time when the interest of peoples to realize and reform the world in the developing course of history. All of these facts serve as the legitimacy of its origin and evolution.

“The Sea of Korea” is the very name that has taken its root to the “the East Sea” called by reflecting the standpoint and view of our nation who exploited and utilized the eastern sea in our country from the first time. At the same time, it is the fair and square name created through the legitimate course of the origin and evolution of the place name by inheriting from “the Sea of Korea” which had been recognized by a great number of countries and used in common on the world wide scale because of its development with the name of our country which was widely known in history.

That is why that Japan has regarded the name of “the Sea of Korea” as the official one for the sea between three countries such as Korea, Japan and Russian and then utilized it until before the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

On the contrary, “the Sea of Japan” is a name whose historical and geographical records of the origin and evolution is the unscientific and improper one as one which took its place in coercive way on the sea recognized officially in the world from hundred years long after being removed from its natural place name.

So there was no opportunity when the name of “the Sea of Japan” was used no more in our nation so far.

**Secondly**, the name of “the Sea of Korea” is in full conformity with the mission of the geographical name, but the one of “the Sea of Japan” is against it heavily.

The geographical name is, as one of the cultural remains of human beings, the indispensable tool to serve the activity of man for realizing and conquering the world.

The reason lies in the fact that the geographical name reflects the history of human activity for realizing and making a good use of the natural and socio-historical characteristics of the geographical object. Therefore, through the medium of the geographical name, man realizes the geographical states of the nature and society and obtains the divers knowledge including history, culture and geography of the corresponding geographical object.

Since the name of “the Sea of Korea” reflects in the true sense the long history of a human being for exploiting and conquering this sea, it serves truly the human activity for realizing and utilizing the world.

But “the Sea of Japan” would cause the adverse effects in the development of geographical standardization by misrepresenting and can ceiling the historical truth.

**Thirdly**, the validity and injustice can be distinguished clearly considering the universal practices in the naming of the sea.

The universal practice is to be formed by reflecting the will and aspiration of the human arising in the course of the social and historical development. That is why the respect and observance of the universal practice and standard is the duty and rule for all of the nations and states to discharge. That universal practice has also existed in the naming of the sea. It has begun to be formed from the dawn of the 16<sup>th</sup> century when seas without its own name heretofore were named and those with the same name done distinctly and individually with the true shape of the global surface realized and grasped in a scientific way.

The basic principle in the international practice on the representation of the sea is to name the sea on the basis of the geographical knowledge about the land accumulated for a long time in order to contribute the easy understanding about seas recognized and grasped later than the facing land. In detail, the sea (coast) facing the nearest continental shelves is to be called after the geographical name of the corresponding object already known to the world from old times among the geographical objects near the continent and the sea between islands to be done after the most famous one among them nearby. If the continental shelves facing the sea or islands wrapped by the sea have no place name, the sea is to be called after the explorer's name or the specific characteristic.

About 60 seas were almost named in this way. Among them, coasts such as the eastern sea in our country were 18 and 12 of them had respectively their own names derived from the famous ones of the facing continent like "Ohozuku Sea", "Arabia Sea" and "Eastern Sibri Sea". And the names of the rest 4 were derived from the famous ones of explorers who had discovered first the corresponding seas like "the Beringgu Sea" or "Coral Sea", and the specific feature of seas, and only 2 were done from the name of islands. One of 2, "Kanaria Sea" could but be derived from the name of Kanaria Islands exploited earlier than the continent facing the sea, for there is no sea name to be called after as the east part of the African continent are covered with desert.

"The East Sea of Korea" was derived from the name of the continental shelves facing the sea according to that universal practice and therefore, in detail the sea name associated with the name of Korea known abroad from old times among place names of the land or Islands wrapped by the sea.

Since Japan consist of islands in the middle of the sea of which the existence or no was not known to a great number of the world people for a long time, "the Sea of Japan" is the illegal name ignoring the historicism and practice for geographical name.

Therefore, it is an imperative and realistic issue to rectify the wrongful name of "the Sea of Japan" from historical and toponymical consideration and with a view to the sound development of standardization for the geographical names in the future, too.

The issue of the international standardization for the name of the sea situated in between the Korean peninsular and Japanese archipelago should be addressed in conformity with the mission of geographical name, the international norms and practices for standardization as well as legitimate requirement of the origin and evolution of geographical name and its current trend.