Ancient Maps



Paldo chongdo 八道總圖

General Map of Eight Provinces, 16th century, woodblock print, 28.5×34.0 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at Seoul National University

Amnokgang byeongyedo 鴨綠江邊界圖 Map of Amnokgang River (Yalu River) frontier. 18th century, color manuscript copy, 68.0×106.0 cm, National Museum of Korea

pre-modern era. Although the boundaries of the territory on these maps are not as clear as on maps made in the modern era, these antique maps reflect various and unique aspects of historic Korean territory and serve as evidence for territorial claims made today. Collectively, they represent Korean land ownership and Korean territorial perceptions of land as they have been shaped over time. These territorial documents are found not only on maps of prefectures, military maps, and general maps of Korea, but also on world maps made by cartographers, both Korean and others from around the world.

Although mapmaking in Korea dates back to before the Three Kingdoms Period, only the maps made during the Joseon Dynasty now survive. The oldest existing Korean map today is the Honil gangni yeokdae gukdo jido (Map of Integrated Lands and Regions of Historical Countries and Capitals), which was made in 1402. This map is recognized as one of the best world maps among those in both Eastern and Western civilizations at the time. On the Gangnido, Joseon territory is bigger on the map than Africa, which reflects the Joseon Dynasty's pride in itself as a civilized state akin to China. Korean territory is most precisely delineated in a series of maps entitled Joseon jeondo (Complete Maps of Joseon). In the 15th century, cartographic efforts at making world maps and general maps of Joseon were largely based on land surveys. Under the reign of King Sejong, the fourth king of the Joseon Dynasty, the distances between counties and prefectures were measured, and the latitudes of Baekdusan Mountain, Manisan Mountain, and Hallasan Mountain were determined, which prepared the

Korean territory was represented on old maps created in the future scientific foundation for the efforts of the Joseon Dynasty Japan and Manchuria, various types of maps were made with the phers. Jeong Cheok completed a map of the two borde regions (currently Hamgyeong Province and Pyeongan Province) in 1451 and made the *Dongkuk jido* (Map of Korea) with Yang Seong-ji in 1463 (the 9th year of King Sejo). The Joseon bangyeok *jido* (Map of the Korean Territory) is a great example of the Joseon jeondo series made in the 15th century. This map features the Korean Peninsula, Manchuria to the north of the Amnokgang River, and the Dumangang River. It represents the view of the national territory held by Korean elites and scholars like Yang Seong-ji, who believed Korean territory extended beyond the Peninsula to include Manchuria.

> The Paldo chongdo (General Map of Eight Provinces) included in Sinjeung dongguk yeoji seungnam (Complete Conspectus of the Territory of the Eastern Country), which was made in 1530, is one of the most representative maps of Korean territory produced in the early Joseon Dynasty. This map takes the form of an appended chart to complement the geographical description, but its description of the land is rather crude. The purpose of the map is not to delineate the country's territory in detail, but to express the establishment of royal authority and Confucian ideas for governance by means of commemorative rites of the national land. The map indicates noted mountains, large rivers, and seas that are included in ritual codes. It also features some islands in the East Sea and the Yellow Sea such as Ulleungdo, Usando (currently Dokdo), and Heuksando, which highlights the fact that they belonged to the Joseon Dynasty as long ago as the 16th century.

In the late Joseon Dynasty, after the two devastating wars with (Territorial Map of the Great East).

ic intention of defining the boundaries of Joseon territory increased awareness of border regions, such as the northern part of the Peninsula and the coastal and insular areas, was reflected in these maps. Military maps like Yogye gwanbang jido (Map of the Yogye Borderland) and Seobuk pia yanggye malli illam jido (Comprehensive Map for Defense of the West and North Border) identified the borderlands near the Amnokgang River and the Dumangang River. Sea route maps were needed to defend the territorial boundaries and coast. These maps prove that the specified borderlands belonged to Joseon.

In the mid-18th century, the *Dongkuk jido* (Map of Korea), made by Jeong Sang-ki, was a watershed moment in late Joseon Dynasty mapmaking. Unlike the maps of the early Joseon Period, the scale of this map is large at 1:420,000. It contains the channels of the Amnokgang River and the Dumangang River and describes the coastlines as precisely as contemporary maps. The *Dongkuk jido* was hailed as the first map to truly describe Korean territory. It was widely copied and used by government offices and civilians, later becoming the basis for block-printed maps of Korea, such as the Haejwa jeondo (Complete Map of Haejwa). When the two volumes are unfolded side by side, the sections combine to form a comprehensive view. In 1861, Kim Jeong-ho completed the Daedong yeojido in wood-blocks, a splendid cartographic masterpiece of the Joseon Dynasty.

The territorial boundaries of the Joseon Dynasty were firmly established when Kim Jeong-ho made the Daedong yeojido







Dongguk daejeondo 東國大全圖

272.7×147.5 cm, National Museum of Korea

Haejwa jeondo 海左全圖

Kim Jeong-ho compiled an atlas entitled the Cheonggudo (Map of Korea) in 1834 based on previously accumulated cartographic knowledge and accomplishments. The Cheonggudo is comprised of two books: Volume 1 includes odd-numbered sections and Volume 2 contains even-numbered sections.

Complementing the Cheonggudo, the Daedong yeojido was an innovation in terms of its form and content. The Cheonggudo was presented in book form, but in the Daedong yeojido Korean territory is divided into 22 sections, and each section is assembled into a foldable booklet. Each booklet is easily carried and unfolded, and several booklets can be pieced together for an overall view. Mountains and rivers are shown in a realistic perspective, and various symbols are used on the map. The pathways are marked at every 10-ri (approximately 3.9 km) for an easy understanding of geographic distances between locations. The map skillfully delineates the unique aspects of Joseon territory from inland mountains and waters to coastal and insular regions.

Korea's cartographic tradition initiated another watershed moment in 1876 when Joseon opened its ports. Joseon cartographers at that point adopted modern survey techniques brought from Japan by practicing cartography using the scientifically-based method of triangulation to create accurate cadastral maps (large-scale, carefully surveyed maps). Triangulation was first conducted in Seoul. Cadastral maps were also made in other areas through surveys. Such techniques were used for the maps created in that period. Daehan jiji (Geography of Korea) and Daehan shinjiji (New Geography of Korea), which were both created for textbooks, included complete territorial maps of Korea based on a coordinate system with lines of latitude and longitude. Daehan jeondo by Jang Ji-yeon, in particular, shows North Gando, a major settlement of ethnic Koreans, and includes it as part of Korean territory. In 1910, when Japan began its occupation of Korea, the long tradition of Korean cartography devoted to the delineation of the national territory on maps was interrupted; this interruption lasted for the duration of the Japanese occupation.



Woodblock of Daedong yeojido 大東輿地圖 木板 Kim Jeong-ho, 1861, 32.0×43.0 cm, National Museum of Korea



Honil gangni yeokdae gukdo jido 混一疆理歷代國都之圖

Map of an Integrated Territory of Historic Countries and Their Capitals, Kwon Keun and Lee Hoe, 1402, color manuscript copy of an original now kept in Ryukoku University, Japan, 158.0×168.0 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

This map is a copy of a manuscript world map made by Kwon thanks to the diffusion of Islamic cartography imported through Keun, Kim Sa-hyung, Lee Mu, and Lee Hoe in 1402 (the 2nd year Mongol influence during China's Yuan Dynasty. The map shows of King Taejong). With China at the center of the map, it depicts the that Joseon cartographers were aware of and interested in different general form of the Old World, including Africa and Europe in the parts of the world, and is based on the China-centric world view. west with Joseon and Japan in the east. The western part of Arabia According to the preface at the bottom, the map was constructed is also drawn on the map as it was known to Joseon cartographers from sources based on two Chinese maps (Shengjiao guangbei tu

and Hunyi jiangli tu), a map of Joseon, and a map of Japan. The map is recognized as one of the best world maps among those produced in the early 15th century and in particular, as the first world map that depicts the African continent as a whole.



Cheonha dojido 天下都地圖

Map of the World, late 18th century, color manuscript copy, 60.0×102 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

The Cheonha dojido is a western-style world map drawn in Joseon based on Wanguo quantu (Complete Map of All the Countries) in Zhifang wai ji, a book-length geographical description of the entire world authored by Giulio Aleni, a Christian missionary. Like the Kunyu wanguo quantu (A Map of the Myriad Countries of the World) made by Matteo Ricci, a Jesuit priest, this map placed China and East Asia at the center of the projection with the central meridian placed in the middle of the Pacific

Ocean. It was an intentional arrangement promoting Sino-centrism. Southern continents were marked as mystery lands, reflecting that the southern hemisphere, including Oceania, was not yet known to the cartographer. The Cheonha dojido clearly labeled the "Small East Sea" and the "Small West Sea," referring to the East Sea and the Yellow Sea, which did not appear on Aleni's map, Wanguo quantu.



Cheonhado 天下圖

Map of the World, late 18th century, color manuscript copy, 85.6×61.9 cm, Yeungnam University Museum

The Cheonhado is a circular world map highly popular among literati-scholars of the late Joseon Dynasty. The map was drawn within a circle. The structure of the map consists of an inner continent surrounded by an inner sea, an outer continent, and an outer sea. The inner continent contains actual countries like China, Joseon, Annam, and India. The inner sea includes both real island countries like Japan and the Ryukyu Kingdom, as well as imaginary states like the Ilmok Kingdom, the Daein Kingdom, and the Samsu Kingdom that appeared in the Chinese Shanhaijing (Classic of Mountains and Seas). The outer continent is mostly filled with mythological kingdoms. This circular map is unique, reflecting the traditional ideas of "Tian Yuan Di Fang" (round heaven and square earth), Sino-centrism, and Taoism.



Jigu jeonhudo 地球前後圖

Map of the World, Choi Han-ki, 1834, woodblock print, 37.0×37.5 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

The *Jigu jeonhudo*, made by Choi Han-ki in 1834, is a wood-block atlas of the hemispheres based on Zhang Tingfu's world map. The bottom left of the *Jigu jeonhudo* is marked with the production date and the nom de plume (pseudonym) of the cartographer, Tae Yeon-jae, which was the Buddhist name of Choi Han-ki. This map is different from the Kunyu quantu (Map of the World), an earlier map of the eastern and western hemispheres made by Ferdinand Verbiest, a Western missionary. While the Kunyu quantu has gaps between the lines of longitude that widened toward the edges, the Jigu jeonhudo has even gaps between lines of longitude. Also, the 24 seasonal divisions were labeled, something which did not appear in other contemporary maps. The equator, ecliptic latitudes, and the tropics were highlighted. Unlike the Kunyu quantu, Oceania and Antarctica were drawn separately, implying that Choi Han-ki knew about the discovery of those regions.



Joseon bangyeok jido 朝鮮方域之圖

Map of a Territory of Joseon Dynasty, Jeyonggam (Tribute Management Office), 1557, color manuscript copy, 132.0×61.0 cm, National History Compilation Committee of Korea, National Treasure 248

This is a complete map, which contains both a clear identification of the cartographer and the year of its making. It was created by Jeyonggam (the Tribute Management Office), which was in charge of the supply of royal garments and food. Scientific mapmaking projects were initiated in the early Joseon Dynasty during the reign of King Sejong, resulting in the publication of the cumulative geographic knowledge portrayed in the Dongkuk jido (Map of Korea) by Jeong Cheok and Yang Seong-ji. The Joseon bangyeok jido is supposedly a copy of the Dongkuk jido. The name of the map appears at the top, the map itself is at the center, and the list of participating officials is at the bottom. The geographic features of the mid and southern parts of Korea are relatively precise, but those in the north are rather distorted. The drainage patterns are very accurate, except for the Amnokgang River and the Dumangang River; mountain ranges are expressed in the form of mountain chains based on the traditional geomantic understanding of the land.

Aguk chongdo 我國總圖

General Map of Our Country (Joseon), late 18th century, color manuscript copy, 152.5×82.0 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

Resembling the style and design of the Dongkuk jido made by Jeong Sang-ki, the Aguk chongdo presents the beauty of Korean territory in an exquisite manner. This map is notable for its use of vivid color: green for mountain ranges, blue for rivers, and five distinctive colors for different counties and prefectures. Provincial offices and barracks in eight provinces were circled and marked with respective place names to make them distinguishable. Islands off the coasts of Joseon were drawn in detail, implying the growing national interest in the coastal and insular regions.

Dokdo in the East Sea is identified to the east of Ulleungdo under the name Udo, and Tsushima is also portrayed on the map. The marginal spaces were filled with the frontier territory, the respective lengths of east to west and south to north distances to Seoul from the endpoints in all four directions, and the number of counties and prefectures in each province.



Daedong yeojido 大東輿地圖

The Territorial map of the Great East [Korea], Kim Jeong-ho, 1861, woodblock print, each section measured at 30.5×171.5 cm (22 sections in total), Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

The Daedong yeojido, made by Kim Jeong-ho, is a splendid achievement that built upon previous cartographic develop-ments during the Joseon Dynasty. Its scale is approximately 1:160,000. Kim divided the territory from north to south into 22 sections (each 120-ri). Each section is folded at every 80-ri and collapses into a folding booklet. The 22 booklets can be unfolded and pieced together to form a complete map of Korea that measures 410 cm in width and 660 cm in length. The method of description reflected the principles of partition and unity of the mountains and the streams. Various legends were used, and the pathways were marked for every 10-ri. Above all, the map is an impeccable masterpiece with greater artistic beauty than any other map ever produced during the Joseon Dynasty.



Local Map of Joseon Dynasty



Doseongdo 都城圖

Map of the National Capital [Seoul], the late 18th century, color manuscript copy, 67×92 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

With Dobongsan Mountain and Bukhansan Mountain in the background, this map depicts the beautiful natural environment of Seoul in the form of a landscape painting along with the mountains of Baekaksan, Inwangsan, Mokmyeoksan (present-day Namsan), and Taraksan (present-day Naksan), which are collectively called Naesasan. In-town landscapes were drawn vertically and marked with place names. The planar description is intentional to contrast with the surrounding mountainous terrain. Written on the margin are descriptions of administrative districts, and the size of the city, roads, and streets with Donhwamun Gate, the main gate of the Changdeokgung Palace, in the center to highlight Changdeokgung Palace as the main working palace of the country. The map was featured with a south-up orientation to reflect that the king would have sat facing south when taking care of state affairs.



Seobuk pia yanggyeo malli illam jido 西北彼我兩界萬里一覽之圖

Comprehensive Map for Defense of West and North Border, mid-18th century, color manuscript copy, 142×192 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

This Korean frontier map focuses on the northwestern region of Korea and Manchuria during the Joseon Dynasty. The word "pia" in "Seobukpia" refers to both the Chinese Qing and Korean Joseon Dynasties. As a type of military map, it was designed to defend the country against an invasion from China. The map covers a wide area with Baekdusan Mountain at the center spanning from the Heilongjiang River (Black Dragon River) in Manchuria in the east to Shanhai Pass in the west, delineating post towns and military bases established along the extensive fortress walls and roads. Its map orientation is unique. Instead of aligning the map with a northsouth direction, "haejwa sahyang," the country faces the sa (south-southeast) direction with the direction hae (north-northwest) in the back. Places like Jilin and Ningguta, where the Qing Dynasty was founded, were marked in red.



Giseong jeondo 箕城全圖

Map of Giseong [Pyeongyang], late 19th century, color manuscript copy, 167×96 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

This panoramic map portrays Pyeongyang in a picturesque style as a boat on the Daedonggang River. Giseong is a nickname for Pyeongyang, which originated from a legend in which Gija took care of a field in Pyeongyang. With Yongaksan Mountainidentified as a guardian mountain in the background, the map displays government offices, roads, place names, and residential areas of the city in detail. Even the streets that sell cold noodles in small towns and villages are labeled. The white stone walls of the internal fortress and the north fortress, various types of boats docked in Daedonggang River, the long forest spreading 10-ri, the pine forest of Ulmildae, the fields outside the Jungseong Fortress, and the earthen ramparts were all skillfully portrayed. The map vividly shows a panoramic view of Pyeongyang 100 years ago.



Complete Map of Unconquerable Fortress, late 18th century, color manuscript copy, 79×120 cm, Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at SNU

The map describes in detail a wall surrounding Yeongbyeon, which was called an unconquerable fortress. It was the final line of defense in the Gwanseo area. Being surrounded by rugged mountains on all sides meant that it was located in a natural fortress. Even during the Manchu War of 1636, the castle never fell to the Qing army. The castle is comprised of the main fortress, the north fortress, the new fortress, and the west fortress. The south gate was an important gateway that connects Anju and Pyeongyang. The west fortress, also known for Yaksan, is a famously scenic place. Beautiful Yaksan dongdae is well known for "Yaksan Azaleas," which are mentioned in the poem "Azaleas" by Kim Sowol.





Ulleungdo and Dokdo on Haejwa jeondo

East Sea on Aguk chongdo

The name East Sea refers to the sea to the east of the Korean Peninsula. The name East Sea appears in various references, such as the monument of King Gwanggaeto, old records such as Sinjeung dongguk yeoji seungnam, and on old maps. The name East Sea is clearly labeled on the late 18th-century Aguk chongdo at the Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at Seoul National University. Aguk chongdo was created in the late 18th century. This map is a small-sized map similar to the *Dongkuk jido* made by Jeong Sang-ki, and it is notable for its beautiful coloration. The map displays the names of the seas around Korea: the East Sea, the Yellow Sea, and the South Sea. Yeojido, which was designated as National Treasure No. 1592, is composed of three volumes of illuminating manuscripts and maps created during the late-Joseon Dynasty. The first volume contains six copies of maps including a world map, a map of China, a map of Beijing and Hanyang, and a national map. Among them, Joseon ilbon ryukyu gukdo, which depicts Joseon, Japan, and the Ryukyu Kingdom (currently, Okinawa prefecture of Japan) clearly shows the names East Sea and Ulleungdo.

The name East Sea also appears on a Western-style world map entitled Cheonhado jido, which is now preserved in the Kyujanggak Institute for Korean Studies at Seoul National University. It was made during the Joseon Dynasty and was based on the Wanguo quantu by Giulio Aleni. On this map, the East Sea is referred to as the "Small East Sea," and the Yellow Sea as the "Small West Sea." These names were added in the Cheonha dojido by the Joseon cartographers as they did not appear in Aleni's Wanguo quantu.

Dokdo appeared on various ancient maps of Korea. It was called "Usando" during the Joseon Period. The island was marked as Korean territory on various Joseon jeondos (Maps of Korea) as well as on the Ulleungdo maps included within the maps of counties and prefectures. Dokdo, or Usando, was erroneously marked to the west of Ulleungdo on maps made in the early Joseon Period. However, in the late Joseon Period, the location was corrected, and the island was placed to the east of Ulleungdo as a result of the famous Ahn Yong-bok incident, which facilitated the communication of information about Dokdo. The Dongkuk jido by Jeong Sang-ki placed Dokdo very close to its actual location. A close-to-accurate

placement is also found on the Haejwa jeondo.

The Haejwa jeondo is assumed to have been made in the middle of the 19th century. "Haejwa" refers to Joseon, which sits to the east of China. Its format and content are similar to the Dongkuk *jido* made by Jeong Sang-ki; the mountain chain, the hydrographic pattern, and the transportation network were drawn in the same manner as on the Dongkuk jido. On this map, Jungbong Peak on Ulleungdo was described as a mountain, and Usando was depicted as a small islet with a mountainous peak and part of Ulleungdo's insular area. A sea route starting from Uljin appeared on the map. In the margin is a short statement about the history of Ulleungdo and raphic background, which is the same as the one included in the Sinjeung dongguk yeoji seungnam, a geography book.

The Joseon jido of the 18th century is an atlas of counties and prefectures, including those that included Dokdo. The Joseon jido Joseon on Cheonha dojido

was a product of the national mapmaking project that sought to produce complete maps of Korea, like the *Dongguk jido* created by Jeong Sang-ki during the reign of King Youngjo. This map was drawn with a checkerboard system, and each cell was 4.1-4.2 cm. Its accuracy in distance measurements and direction was a great improvement over the pictorial maps of counties and prefectures. Given the overall structure and content, its description of Ulleungdo seems to have been based on a separate Ulleungdo map that was compiled from previous cumulative research efforts on Ulleungdo. On this map, Usando is located farther to the east of Ulleungdo than on previous pictorial maps. Since one cell equates to 20-ri, the distance between Usando and Ulleungdo is measured to be approximately 40-ri. Because Usando is detached from Ulleungdo. it confirms that the Usando portrayed on that map is, in fact, present-day Dokdo.



Ulleungdo on Joseon jido

The names East Sea and Dokdo are also found on early maps produced by western cartographers. Joseon first appeared on a European map produced after the 16th century. Initially, the country was described as an island on those maps, and only over time did it take the shape of a peninsula. The name East Sea or the Sea of Korea appeared on maps, and those names refer to the present-day East Sea. A good case in point is a map of Asia made in 1720 by an English cartographer, John Senex. It is an English translation of a map made in 1705 by Delisle, a French mapmaker. Senex's map shows a Korea scaled horizontally wider than its actual width. The country name is marked as the "Kingdom of Corea." The East Sea is marked as "The Eastern Sea" or "Corea Sea."

Joseon had not been mapped in great detail on European maps prior to the early 17th century, and this omission meant that Ulleungdo and Dokdo rarely appeared. Later, in 1735, Joseon was described in detail on Royaume de Corée (Complete map of the Kingdom of Joseon) by Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville, a French cartographer. D'Anville drew Ulleungdo and Dokdo in the East Sea. Royaume de Corée, which was included in Atlas de la Chine, showed two islands labeled as "Tchian-chantao," referring to Usando (Dokdo), and "Fan-ling-tao," referring to Ulleungdo. This map was greatly influential to successive maps, so many subsequent maps in France, the United Kingdom, and Germany were produced with Ulleungdo and Dokdo properly labeled.





Korea on John Senex's Map of Asia

Ullengdo and Dokdo of Royaume de Corée by d'Anville

The inclusion of Dokdo as Korean territory is also found on maps published in Japan. The map of the boundary between China, Korea and Japan, created by Hayashi Sihei, clearly represents the two islands in the East Sea, Ulleungdo and Dokdo, in the same color scheme as Joseon, indicating that Dokdo is Joseon Territory. Additionally, the words 'the territory of Joseon' were written right next to the island. Shinsen chosenkoku zenzu (Newly Edited Whole Map of Joseon Dynasty) by Tanaka Akiyosi in 1894 labeled Ulleungdo and Dokdo as "Jukdo (Takeshima)" and "Songdo (Matsushima)" in the same color scheme as the Korean Peninsula, which shows that Japan acknowledged Dokdo as Korean territory.

Along with Ulleungdo and Dokdo, the name East Sea also appears on Japanese maps. A good case in point is the Nihon henkai ryakuzu (A Simplified Map of Japan's Periphery) produced by Takahashi Kageyasu in 1809. This map was the first official Japanese map on which the Japanese archipelago is placed in the center. Latitude and longitude lines were included on the map, and Japan was described and presented with surveyed measurements that were completed by Ino Tadataka, a Japanese cartographer. Maps of the Qing Dynasty of China and the map of Joseon in Huangyu quan lan tu (Atlas of the Chinese Empire), as well as other Chinese maps, were assumed to have been referenced for Takahashi's Nihon henkai ryakuzu. Again, the East Sea was labeled as the Sea of Joseon, and Ulleungdo and Usando were labeled as Ulleungdo and Cheonsando, respectively, indicating that they belonged to Joseon.



The East Sea of Nihon henkai ryakuzu (A Simplified Map of Japan's Periphery) by Dakahashi



Shinsen chosenkoku zenzu (Newly Edited Whole Map of Joseon Dynasty) by Tanaka

