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**Dokdo:  
Korean Territory Since  
the 6th Century**



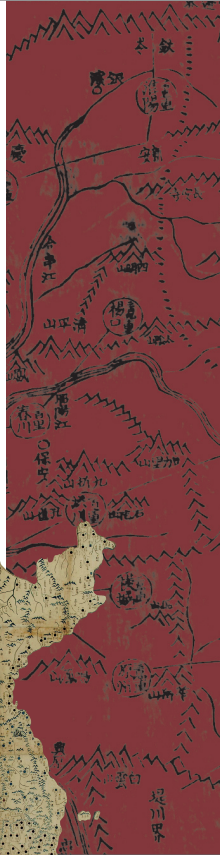
It is a matter for regret that Japan is undermining relations between the two nations by challenging Korean sovereignty over Dokdo, an island that has been Korean territory for fifteen hundred years. Korean title to Dokdo is indisputable, borne out by a wide variety of historical and documentary evidences, including documented cases where the Japanese government itself recognized Korean sovereignty over the island. In spite of these facts, Japan is making a groundless territorial claim to this Korean island. Sadly, Japan's territorial claim prompts Koreans to recall painful memories of brutal Japanese colonial rule, and to ask themselves whether they can cultivate genuine friendship with their island neighbor. As the following paper will demonstrate, Korean sovereignty over Dokdo is truly beyond question or argument. Japan's continued challenge against it - sustained only by disregarding or distorting well-established historical facts - only serve to reinforce our suspicion that the public apologies by Japanese leaders and politicians for Japan's past aggression have been nothing but hollow words and empty gestures.





## Part I

# Profile of Dokdo





# 1. Geography and Environment

Dokdo is a Korean island located roughly midway between the Korean Peninsula and the Japanese Archipelago (at 37° 14' 26.8" N and 131° 52' 10.4" E). Actually, Dokdo is not a single island, but a group of islands. It consists of two main islands, Dongdo (East Island) and Seodo (West Island), around which 89 smaller rocks are scattered. The area of Dongdo is 73,297m<sup>2</sup>, and Seodo has an area of 88,740m<sup>2</sup>. The total land area of Dokdo is 187,554m<sup>2</sup>.

Dokdo has a unique ecosystem. Producing a small amount of fresh water, its volcanic surfaces, partially covered with thin soil and moss, serve as a habitat for about 70 to 80 species of plants, 22 species of birds, and 37 species of insects. The island's surrounding waters, where cold and warm ocean currents meet, are also home to a diverse community of marine organisms, including seals and as



many as 100 species of fish.

Dokdo had been used for centuries as a temporary anchorage for Korean fishermen, and in 1953, a permanent human settlement was established on this lonely island. In April that same year, a 33-member voluntary Dokdo guard organized by Korean civilians became the first year-round inhabitants of the island. The voluntary Dokdo guard would remain on the island for three and a half years, until the Korean National Police assumed official responsibility for the island's defense in December 1956.

Dokdo carries a great symbolic importance for the Koreans because it constitutes Korea's easternmost national territory. But, its importance is also practical, as it has for centuries provided shelter for Korean fishermen who fish in the central stretches of the East Sea. The island also serves as Korea's easternmost seismological observation platform and meteorological observation station.



It should be noted that Koreans have long considered Dokdo to be an associated dependency of Ulleungdo, a Korean island situated 87.4 km to the northwest of Dokdo. Dokdo is readily visible from Ulleungdo in clear weather, and Ulleungdo residents have long sailed to Dokdo to fish in its waters. The 33 members of the voluntary Dokdo guard were all residents of Ulleungdo.



## 2. Names

Today, the Korean and the Japanese use the names “Dokdo” and “Takeshima” respectively to refer to the island. But, before these names were adopted, a wide variety of names were used to refer to Dokdo in both Korea and Japan.

Dokdo has had several different names throughout Korean history, including Usando, Sambongdo, Gajido and Seokdo. (The suffix “do” means “island” in Korean) However, Usando had been the most commonly used name for the island until the late 19th century, when the names Seokdo and Dokdo gained widespread usage. Seokdo and Dokdo are two different Chinese translations of the same Korean word, Dolseom or Dokseom, meaning “rock island” in the dialect used by the inhabitants of Ulleungdo. (During the Joseon Dynasty, most official docu-



ments were written in Chinese characters. When “Dokseom” was translated to Chinese ideographs according to its meaning, it was written as “Seokdo”. When translated into Chinese ideographs according to its pronunciation, it is written as Dokdo.)

Japanese had also previously used a variety of names for the island, such as Matsushima, Riyangkotō and Takeshima. It would not be until 1905 that the Japanese adopted the name of Takeshima for Dokdo. It is particularly interesting to note that the Japanese mistakenly used the names Takeshima and Matsushima for Ulleungdo and Dokdo interchangeably until the very beginning of the 20th century. In 1667 Japanese topographical survey, *Onshū Shichō Gōki*(Records on Observation in Oki Province), Dokdo and Ulleungdo were called Matsushima(Pine Tree Island) and Takeshima(Bamboo Island), respectively. From that time up until the late 19th century, the Japanese have used the name “Matsushima” to refer to Dokdo. Riyangko or Yangko, is the Japanese name for the French whaling ship, “Liancourt,” that had first discovered Dokdo with Western eyes and given rise to the name “Liancourt Rocks,” which historically has enjoyed popular usage in the West. From 1905, the Japanese have referred to Dokdo by the present name of Takeshima, which means “Bamboo Island.” However, Japanese source, official or unofficial,



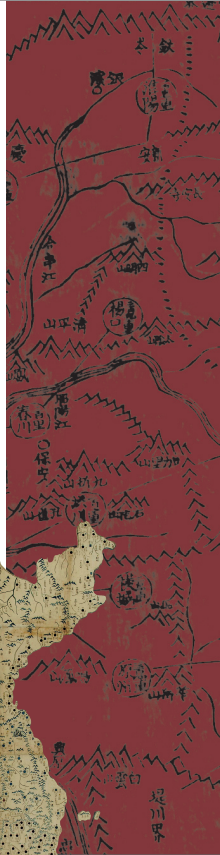
has not yet come to light on a convincing account of how this rocky island came to be called by this name.





## Part II

# Korean Sovereignty over Dokdo - Facts and Evidence



# 1. When Did Dokdo Become a Part of Korean Territory?

Korean title to Dokdo dates back to the 6th century. According to the records of *Samguk Sagi* (History of the Three Kingdoms), Korean sovereignty over the island was established with the incorporation of Usanguk (“guk” means “state”) into the Silla Kingdom, one of the three ancient kingdoms of Korea, in 512 A.D. *Samguk Sagi* records that Isabu, a Silla government official, subjugated the island state in that year. The territory of Usanguk comprised the islands of Ulleungdo and Usando (present-day Dokdo). Historical facts surrounding this event and the establishment of Korean title to Dokdo are further buttressed by medieval Korean records: *Sejong Sillok Jiriji* (Geographical Appendix to Veritable Records of King Sejong) and *Sinjeung Dongguk Yeoji Seungnam* (Revised and Augmented Version of the Survey of the National Geography of Korea), published



in 1454 and 1530 respectively. Within the two official records marking sovereign limits of the Joseon Dynasty, Dokdo was clearly marked as belonging to Gangwon Province, one of eight provinces of the medieval Korean kingdom. It is particularly worth noting that *Sinjeung Dongguk Yeoji Seungnam* appends *Paldo Chongdo* (Map of Eight Provinces of Korea) and *Gangwondo Jido* (Map of Gangwon Province), both of which mark Ulleungdo and Dokdo as belonging to Korea's Gangwon Province.

The variety of Korean documentary and cartographical evidence naturally leads to questions to what, if any, kind of materials the Japanese have presented in challenging Korean ownership over Dokdo. The first documented Japanese mention of Dokdo appeared in the mid-17th century. *Onshū Shichō Gōki*, the 1667 topographical survey, was edited by a local official in the Izumo region, which was then a part of the present-day Shimane Prefecture. It contains the following passage:

The Japanese have adopted the first underlined sentence as written evidence representing their geographical knowledge of Dokdo in the 17th century, and also as evidence that Dokdo was an associated island dependency of Oki Island. However, it is logical to infer from the second underlined sentence that the Japanese at the time clearly did not consider Dokdo to be a part of their territory, since Oki Island was explicitly referred to as the “limit of Japan.”



“Onshū of Japan (present-day Oki Island) lies in the middle of the northern sea. It is, thus, called Oki Island.... **Going further from there for two days and one night in a northworthy direction, one reaches Matsushima (Dokdo). Also there is Takeshima (Ulleungdo) at another day’s travel.** While no one lives on the two islands, viewing Goryeo (Korea) from this island is the same as viewing Onshū from the Izumo region. **Therefore, the northern limit of Japan is this Shū (Onshū or Oki Island).”**

### **Onshū Shichō Gōki (1667)**

隠州在北海中 故云隠岐島…… 戌亥間行二日夜有松島 又一日程有竹島 (俗言磯竹島 多竹漁海鹿 按神書所謂五十猛鯨) 此二島無人之地 見高麗如自雲州望隠州 故日本之乾地 以此州為限矣



## 2. Ahn Yong-bok's Activities and Japan's Confirmation of Korean Sovereignty over Dokdo

In the late 17th century, a quarrel occurred between Korean and Japanese fishermen, creating the circumstances for Korea and Japan to make the first intergovernmental contacts regarding Dokdo. This event must be constituted as a central landmark in the history of Dokdo for the simple fact that it resulted into Japanese government's first official recognition of Korean sovereignty over Ulleungdo and Dokdo.

Ahn Yong-bok was a Korean who had sailed to Ulleungdo to engage in fishing. According to the records in *Sukjong Sillok*(Veritable Records of King Sukjong), published in 1728, it was in 1693 that Ahn and other Korean fishermen had become involved in disputes with Japanese fishermen of the Ōya family. During the dispute, Japanese fishermen forcibly took Ahn and another Korean fisherman to



Oki Island. Upon arriving in Japan, Ahn appeared before the magistrate of Oki Island to assert Korean ownership over Ulleungdo. Ahn was later repatriated back to Korea, but his activities in Japan prompted the feudal Japanese magistrate to make an inquiry to the central authority in Edo (present-day Tokyo) over Ulleungdo's sovereign status. (In 1696, the Toku-gawa Shogunate (then the *de facto* Japanese government) affirmed that Ulleungdo and its associated feature - Dokdo - belonged to Korea.) The Japanese central authority's affirmation of Korean ownership over Ulleungdo and Dokdo is recorded in official Japanese documents of the Genroku Era (1688-1704).

However, the Japanese government's recognition of Korean ownership appeared to have failed to guarantee the complete cessation of Japanese fishermen trespassing in to these Korean islands, which subsequently resulted in what is known as "Ahn's second journey to Japan," as recorded in Sukjong Sillok.

In 1696, Ahn sailed to Ulleungdo with the aim of stamping out the encroachment of the Japanese nationals. Upon arriving in Ulleungdo, Ahn spotted and rebuked the Japanese fishermen for encroaching upon Korean territory. Ahn even chased after them beyond Dokdo, and ended up going as far as Oki Island. Following his arrival at this Japanese island, Ahn was once again granted an audience



by the magistrate of Oki Island, and once again he protested against the continuing Japanese encroachment upon Korean territory. Ultimately, at the inquiry made by the magistrate of Oki Island, the Lord of Hokishū (present-day Tottori Prefecture of Japan) reaffirmed Korean ownership over Ulleungdo, along with that over Dokdo. Subsequently diplomatic documents were exchanged in 1699 which recognized Korea's title to Ulleungdo and Dokdo.

Some Japanese scholars have attempted to discredit evidential value of the 17th century episode by saying that the activities were no more than a fiction or that Ahn had falsified his activities. Yet, Ahn's activities are established historical facts recorded in Korean as well as Japanese sources. These Japanese sources include: 竹島紀事 (*Takeshima Kiji*), 竹島渡海由來記拔書控 (*Takeshima Tokai Yuraiki Nukigaki Hikae*), 異本伯耆誌 (*Ihon Hōkishi*), 竹島考 (*Takeshima Kō*), 因府年表 (*Inpu Nenpyō*).



### 3. Korean Sovereignty over Dokdo Reconfirmed: Japanese Documentary Evidence of the Late 19th Century

#### **(1) *Chōsenkōku Kosai Shimatsu Naitansho, 1870* (A Confidential Inquiry into the Particulars of Foreign Relations of Korea)**

From the 17th century onward, Japan would maintain a policy of seclusion(Sakoku) for around two hundred years. Under this policy, a strict ban was placed upon overseas travel for Japanese nationals. This policy of seclusion would not be lifted until the overthrow of the Tokugawa Shogunate in 1868. It was within such a context that the Japanese government sought to study the Korean situation. For this purpose, the Japanese government dispatched a team of three Foreign Ministry officials to Korea in 1869. A part of their mission was to obtain a clear picture of developments on the long-forgotten islands of Ulleungdo and Dokdo. The mission



was entrusted to them through a Japanese Foreign Ministry Directive entitled Takeshima Matsushima Chōsen Fuzokuni Sōseikōshimatsu (The Particulars of How Takeshima and Matsushima Have Come Under Korea's Possession). On completing their mission, this study team presented a report, Chōsenkoku Kōsai Shimatsu Naitansho (A Confidential Inquiry into the Particulars of Korea's Foreign Relations), which stated:

“1. The particulars of how Takeshima (Ulleungdo) and Matsushima (Dokdo) have come under Chōsen's (Korea's) possession

Matsushima (Dokdo) in this case is a neighboring island of Takeshima (Ulleungdo). No document has been filed concerning Matsushima so far. There was a case in which Takeshima had been leased from Chōsen for settlement for some time during the Genroku era. At that time, it was still an uninhabited island, as was before. Reeds bigger than bamboo trees or bamboos grow, and wild ginseng grows naturally. It is said that there are also marine products of various kinds.”

一竹島松島朝鮮附屬ニ相成候始末  
 此儀ハ松島ハ竹島ノ隣島ニテ松島ノ儀ニ付是迄搦載セシ  
 書留モ無之竹島ノ儀ニ付テハ元祿度後ハ暫クノ間朝鮮ヨ  
 リ居留ノ爲差遣シ置候處當時ハ以前ノ如ク無人ト相成竹  
 木又ハ竹ヨリ太キ葭ヲ産シ人參等自然ニ生シ其餘漁産モ  
 相應ニ有之趣相聞ヘ候事

## **(2) Dajokan Directive of 1877, A Prima Facie Evidence of Japan's Recognition of Korean Title to Dokdo**

In 1877, the Japanese government announced an important administrative measure that reflected its view of Dokdo. The whole affair had been initiated by an inquiry made by a local government in Japan. On October 16, 1876, the Japanese Naimusho (Ministry of Home Affairs) received an inquiry from its Shimane Prefecture. This inquiry was about whether or not the prefecture should extend its administrative sphere to Takeshima (Ulleungdo) and Matsushima (Dokdo), and whether the islands should be officially included on its map and land register. Since the inquiry involved territorial sovereignty over the nation, the Home Ministry again consulted Dajokan (Council of the State), then Japan's highest national decision making organ, the following year. A subsequent note of inquiry presented by the Home Ministry, dated March 17, 1877, states the following:

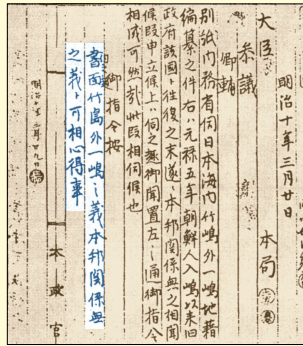
"A Note of Inquiry about the Compilation of the Land Register and on Takeshima (Ulleungdo) and Another Island (Dokdo) in the Sea of Japan  
... although we were told that Japan has nothing to do with (these islands), we hereby consult you as per the enclosed papers, since disposition of territory is a matter of great importance."



It is also important to scrutinize the annex to the note enclosed in the Home Ministry memorandum, since it clearly establishes that “another island” mentioned above in the main text was Dokdo. The annex states, following an account of Takeshima (Ulleungdo), “Then, there is an island called Matsushima (Dokdo). Lying along the same route toward Takeshima (Ulleungdo), its circumference is

“Re: The Cadastre for Takeshima and Another Island in the Sea of Japan as per Home Ministry Inquiry

Knowing that our country has nothing to do [with the islands] as the result of the communication between our old government and that country involved after the entry into the island by Korea in Genroku 5, and having examined the view stated in the inquiry, the following draft directive has been made for deliberation and sanction.



**Dajokan Directive(1877):**  
 In 1877, Dajokan, then Japan’s highest national decision-making organ, concluded that <Japan had nothing to do with Ulleungdo and Dokdo> and ordered not to include thdse islands in the land register of Shimane Prefecture.

**Draft Directive**

**Re: Note that our country has nothing to do with Takeshima (Ulleungdo) and another island (Dokdo) inquired about.”**

(approximately) 3.270 km. Trees or bamboos are rare.” This passage in the annex is an unmistakable indication that “another island” in question was Dokdo. No island in the East Sea other than Dokdo can realistically fit the geographical description of it as referred to in the memorandum and specified in the annex.

Ultimately, after some deliberation, Dajokan conveyed the following official reply, dated March 29, 1877, to the Home Ministry as follows:

As articulated in these governmental correspondences, the Japanese government recognized that Japan had title to neither Ulleungdo nor “another island inquired about,” which was Dokdo.



## 4. The Rise of Japanese Imperialism and Japan's Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40 (1905)

### (1) Japan's Bizarre Rationale in Claiming Sovereignty over Dokdo

Another key event in the history of Dokdo would occur on February 22, 1905. On this day Japan's Shimane Prefecture issued Notice No. 40, announcing the incorporation of Dokdo into its territory. Japan has long referred to this administrative measure as a central piece of evidence in challenging Korean sovereignty over Dokdo but the Japanese themselves are split about the Shimane Prefectural Notice. That is, there appear to be two Japanese arguments about what the 1905 measure represented for Japan's claimed sovereignty over Dokdo. The first is that Japan legitimately incorporated Dokdo into its territory in 1905 and that the island had previously been *terra nullius* (no man's land). The sec-



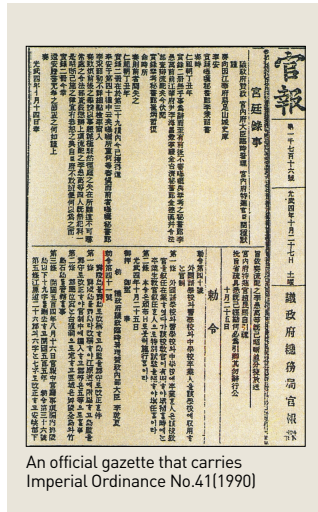
ond view holds that Dokdo had been Japanese territory since “olden times”, and that the 1905 measure was nothing more than a reconfirmation thereof.

It is interesting to note also that the Japanese government itself has developed a bizarre mix of two conflicting rationales in its position toward the legal effect of the 1905 measure. Originally, Tokyo incorporated Dokdo into its territory under the rationale of the acquisition of legal title to *terra nullius*. In making a cabinet decision of January 28, 1905 to incorporate Dokdo, the Japanese government stated, “no evidence can be found of this uninhabited island being under the possession of any foreign country.” However, the Japanese government would modify its original position by combining the “integral part of Japanese territory since olden times” rationale with the “adding to the territory of Japan” rationale (see Japanese *note verbales* dated July 13, 1953 and February 10, 1954). The inconsistency in the Tokyo’s position raises a seemingly unanswerable question of how Japan could “add” to its territory an island that had already been its territory since “olden times.” No convincing Japanese account for this bizarre combination of two irreconcilable rationales has yet been given.

In fact, there is plenty of evidence that Dokdo was never *terra nullius* at the time Shimane Prefecture issued its Notice No. 40 and that this Japanese act itself failed to stand



up as a valid act of state in acquiring territorial sovereignty. First, the Japanese argument that Dokdo was *terra nullius* at the time of Notice No. 40 is rendered groundless - even contradicting Japan's own previous position [by the actions of the Japanese government itself]. The Japanese government had already recognized Korean title to Dokdo, in the form of the Dajokan Directive of 1877. In addition, five years before the Japanese act of 1905, the Korean government took a significant step in reaffirming its sovereignty over Ulleungdo and Dokdo. In issuing Imperial Ordinance No. 41, Korea upgraded the administrative level of Ulleungdo to *gun* (county), establishing that the Ulleung-gun Office had jurisdiction over Ulleungdo itself as well as Jukdo (an islet off Ulleungdo) and Seokdo (Dokdo). This measure was taken following the delivery in 1900 of a protest to the Japanese Minister in Seoul against Japanese encroachment upon Ulleungdo. The content of the Imperial Ordinance was also carried in the official gazette at that time, so the Japanese cannot reasonably claim igno-



rance of any possible Korean territorial right to Dokdo at the time.

Second, as can be inferred from in the above account, Japan made no attempt to notify Korea of its intention to acquire Dokdo despite sufficient awareness of the possible Korean title to the island. Attention needs to be called here to the historical precedent that was set when the Japanese government gave notification to the consular offices of the United States, France and Germany in Tokyo before incorporating Ogasawara shoto (The Bonin Islands) in 1876. Note how, by contrast, these notification and verification procedures were conspicuously ignored in the case of Dokdo.

It can be pointed out that an exception might be allowed to the prior notice requirement for acquiring a new territory. This exception was made in the very famous case of the Island of Palmas arbitration (1928). In this case, sole arbitrator Max Huber ruled that prior notice was not a requisite for occupation because said island was an inhabited one (with a population of about 750) and where the owner, presuming there to be one, would notice any attempted occupation by another party. However, this significant exception created by Judge Max Huber's arbitral award could never be applied to the Japanese incorporation of Dokdo in 1905 for the following reason: There are strong indications that, at least by the time the cabinet decision of January 1905 was made, the



Japanese had a clear awareness that Dokdo was Korean territory and indications that Japan in this case had deliberately glossed over the requirement of giving notice of the intention to acquire a new territory. A clue as to why Japan took these anomalous steps can be found when one examines the activities of Nakai Yōsaburo.

## **(2) Nakai's Memorandum, A Testimony to the Underhandedness of the Japanese Incorporation of Dokdo in 1905**

Nakai Yōsaburo was a Japanese national who engaged in seal hunting business. Knowing that Dokdo would be a lucrative sealing site, Nakai submitted a request to the Ministries of Home Affairs, Agriculture-Commerce and Foreign Affairs on September 29, 1904, entitled *Riyangotō Ryōdohennyū Narabi Kashisagenegai* (A Request for the Incorporation of Dokdo into National Territory and for its Lease), in which he requested that the ministries incorporate Dokdo into Japanese territory and lease him the island. Nakai's 事業經營概要 (Jigyō Keiei Gaiyou - A Summary of Business), written in 1911, provides important contextual information pertaining to the situation prior to Japan's incorporation of Dokdo in 1905. It offers the following description of events:



The first and second underlined sentences in the above passage clearly indicate that Japan proceeded to incorporate Dokdo into its territory in spite of its own strong presumption of Korean sovereignty. The second underlined

**“...Thinking that the island was Korean territory attached to Ulleungdo, I went to the capital and made many plans, trying to submit a request to Residency - General. But, as suggested by Fishery Bureau Director, Maki Bokushin, I came to question Korea’s ownership of Takeshima, and after diligent investigation into the matter, I finally became convinced that the island belonged to neither party based on the conclusion made by the then Hydrographic Director Admiral Kimotsuki.**

Accordingly, I submitted an application stating in detail the commercial reason for its necessity via the Home Ministry to the Home, Foreign and Agriculture-Commerce Ministers, respectively, urging incorporation of the island into Japanese territory and for its lease to me. **The Home Ministry authorities cautioned that the gains would be extremely small while the situation would become grave if the acquisition of a barren rock suspected of being Korean territory at this point in time [during the Russo-Japanese War] would greatly rouse the suspicion of various foreign countries that Japan has an ambition to annex Korea.** Accordingly, the Home Ministry authorities, saying that it would not be easy, seemed set to reject my petition.

Thinking I could not now be frustrated thus, I immediately rushed to the Foreign Ministry to discuss the matter in detail



sentence also points to the fact that Japan had a good reason to cover up its incorporation of Dokdo. That is, it was of Japan's concern that such a striking act of state would invite external powers' check on Japan's supremacy in East Asia.

with the then Political Affairs Bureau Director, Yamaza Enjiro. He said incorporation was particularly urgent under the present situation and that it was not only advisable but necessary to construct observation posts and install wireless or submarine cables to keep watch on hostile warships. Particularly he said diplomacy is free of such considerations as required in the Home Ministry. In high spirits, he said the application must be speedily forwarded to the Foreign Ministry. Thus this island was finally incorporated into our territory.”

### Nakai's Summary of Business (1911)

...本島ノ鬱陵島ヲ附属シテ韓國ノ所領ナリト思ハルルヲ以テ將ニ統監府ニ就テ爲所アラントシ  
上京シテ種種劃策中時ノ水産局長牧朴眞氏ノ注意ニ由リテ必ラスシモ韓國領ニ屬セザルノ疑ヲ  
生ジ其調査ノ爲メ種種奔走ノ末時ノ水路部長肝付將軍斷定ニ頼リテ本島ノ全ク無所屬ナルコト  
ヲ確カメタリ依テ經營上必要ナル理由ヲ具陳シテ本島ヲ本邦領土ニ編入シ且フ貸付セラレンコ  
トヲ内務外務農商務ノ三大臣ニ願出テ願書ヲ内務省ニ提出シタルニ内務當局者ハ此時局ニ際シ  
(日露開戦中)韓國領地ノ疑アル莫荒タル一箇不毛ノ岩礁ヲ收メテ環視ノ諸外國ニ我国ガ韓國併  
呑ノ野心アルコトノ疑ヲ大ナラシムルハ利益ノ極メテ小ナルニ反シテ事體決シテ容易ナラスト  
ヲ如何ニ陳辨スルモ願出ハ將ニ却下セラレントシタリ  
斯クテ挫折スベキニアラザルヲ以テ直ニ外務省ニ走り時ノ政務局長山座円二郎氏ニ就キ大ニ論  
陳スル所アリタリ氏ハ時局オレバコソ其領土編入ヲ急要トスルナリ望機ヲ建築シ無線若クハ海  
底電信ヲ設置セバ敵艦監視上極メテ屈竟ナラズヤ特ニ外交上内務ノ如キ顧慮ヲ要スルコトナシ  
須ラク速カニ願書ヲ本省ニ回附セシムベレト意氣軒昂タリ此ノ如クニシテ本島ハ竟ニ本邦領土  
ニ編入セラレタリ  
明治三十八年二月二十二日其告示アルヤ本島經營權ノ獲得ニ就キ



What made the Japanese hypersensitive to any such foreign meddling was apparently the bitter lesson learned from the "Tripartite Intervention". Japan captured China's Liaotung Peninsula as spoil of the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). But Japan had no option but to return the strategically important peninsula back to the Chinese, when three Western powers - Russia, Germany and France - required it to do so. Thus it stands to reason that Japan devised such stealthy incorporation of Dokdo in order to avoid repeating the mistake it had made a decade earlier.

Finally, the third underlined sentence confirms that the forcible incorporation of Dokdo into Japanese territory at that particular point was being driven by strategic incentives. As the Foreign Ministry official Yamaza pointed out, construction of the Dokdo watchtower seemed to carry great urgency to the Japanese Navy facing impending battle with its Russian counterpart. In the summer of 1904, Russia had already decided to dispatch its Baltic Fleet to the Northeast Asian theatre. Ultimately, a Japanese cabinet decision was made to incorporate Dokdo into Japan on January 28, 1905, and the Shimane Prefecture issued Notice No. 40 on February 22, 1905 announcing this administrative measure. The Dokdo watchtower was completed in August, and submarine cables were laid connecting Dokdo with Ulleungdo and Izumokuni of Japan in October 1905. It is also important to note that Dokdo was not the only Korean territory that the Japanese had appropriated for tactical purposes in the war



against Russia. In order to monitor Russian fleet movements, Japan built and operated some twenty observation posts in Korea, including those in Jukbyeon, Ulsan, Geomundo, Jejudo and Ulleungdo.

Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40 and Japan's incorporation of Dokdo were tactical interest-driven covert measures without basis in any standard of international law. As further evidence, one can review a variety of post-Notice No. 40 Japanese materials describing and marking Dokdo as belonging to Korea. These Japanese materials include a series of charts published by the Hydrographic Office of the Japanese Navy Department: Vol. 6 and Vol. 10 of 日本水路誌 (*Nihon Suiroshi* - Hydrographic Chart of Japan), published in 1911 and 1920 respectively, and 朝鮮沿岸水路誌 (*Chōsen Engan Suiroshi* - Hydrographic Chart of Korea), published in 1933. Also, in 1930, a renowned Japanese scholar Hibatakke Sekko, in an article carried in a Japanese journal, 歴史地理 (*Rekishī Chiri* - Historical Geography), stated that "Takeshima and Ulleungdo belong to Gangwon Province of Korea, and they constitute the eastern limit of Korea."

### **(3) The First Korean Knowledge of and Response to Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40**

In arguing the legitimacy of its incorporation of Dokdo in



1905, Japan asserts that Korea did not expressly protest the Japanese measure. The fact is, however, that Korea could not protest because it did not know about the Japanese act. Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40 was issued secretly, without proper notification: not even the Japanese public itself, let alone foreigners, would have had knowledge about this measure. The notice was not publicized in Shimane's official gazette, nor was it an external display of state intent, issued as it was in the name of the prefectural governor. Thus, the Japanese incorporation of Dokdo in 1905 had no legal effect whatsoever upon the status of the island as a Korean territory.

The Koreans learned of the Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40 a full year after the actual issuance of the measure. On March 28, 1906, Japanese local officials of Shimane Prefecture, who were visiting Ulleungdo, informed the Korean governor of Ulleung-gun of Japan's incorporation of Dokdo. This was reported to the central government in Seoul. On receiving this report, Yi Ji-yong, Minister of Interior, denounced the Japanese measure as being invalid. In addition, Deputy Prime Minister Pak Je-sun ordered an investigation of the facts surrounding what the Japanese had done, also condemning the Japanese act. Yet the Korean government appears to have failed to lodge an official diplomatic protest against the Japanese incorporation of



Dokdo into its Shimane Prefecture.

Such a failure must be seen in the context of the prevailing balance of power between Korea and Japan at the time. Since being forced to sign the Korea - Japan Protocol of February 1904, Korea had been under Japanese military administration, enforced by two Japanese divisions and a several thousand - strong military police. In signing a further Korea - Japan Agreement in August 1904, Korea's diplomatic and financial affairs would come under the control of foreign advisors appointed by Japan. In addition, following the signing of the Treaty of Protectorate in November 1905, Korea was deprived of the right to autonomously conduct diplomatic affairs and its Foreign Ministry was disbanded. It was thus virtually impossible for Korea to deliver any meaningful diplomatic protest. Still, Korean opposition to the Japanese act was, however, clearly expressed in major Korean newspapers - such as *Daehan Maeil Sinbo* (May 1, 1906) and *Hwangseong Sinmun* (May 9, 1906), both of which declared that the Japanese act was completely invalid.

#### **(4) The Fall of Japanese Imperialism and the Restoration of Korean Sovereignty over Dokdo**

After Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910, contention over the status of Dokdo became irrelevant. Then, after the



Second World War, Korea was liberated and regained its entire territory and Japan was obligated by the 1943 Cairo Declaration to renounce all the territories it had “taken by violence and greed.” In the 1945 Potsdam Declaration, the Allied Powers declared: “Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the Islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku, and such minor islands as we determine.” When it surrendered to the Allied Powers in 1945, Japan accepted this Declaration unconditionally. The Allied Powers did not include Dokdo among “such minor islands” whose Japanese sovereignty was to be determined. Instead, in 1946, the Supreme Command for the Allied Powers explicitly separated Dokdo from Japanese territory proper by issuing SCAPIN No. 677, which provides: “Japan is defined to include the four main islands of Japan... excluding (a) Utsuryo (Ulleung) Island, Liancourt Rock (Take Island)....”

However, no mention of Dokdo was made in the final text of the Treaty of Peace with Japan (also known as the San Francisco Peace Treaty), signed in September 1951. Article 2 (a) of the treaty provided as follows: “Japan recognizing the independence of Korea, renounces all right, title and claim to Korea, including the islands of Quelpart, Port Hamilton and Dagelet.”

According to the Japanese interpretation, Japan



regained its ownership over Dokdo by such omission. The Japanese government argues that the peace treaty did not explicitly include Dokdo among the islands to be returned to Korea. If one follows the Japanese interpretation of the treaty, only three Korean islands would have been returned to Korea. Given the fact that there are more than 3,000 Korean islands, such an interpretation is absurd. Clearly, this clause intended to name only three islands from among all the Korean islands for illustrative purposes, rather than resorting to an exhaustive enumeration of the islands to be returned to Korea.



Quelpart, Port Hamilton and Dagelet are names that had been used by Westerners to refer to the Korean islands of Jejudo, Geomundo and Ulleungdo, respectively.





## Part III

# The Only Conclusion



When Korea was liberated in 1945 from Japanese colonial rule, its long-established title to Dokdo was also restored. With the establishment of the Republic of Korea in August 1948, Dokdo was given an address - 1 Do-dong, Nam-myeon, Ulleung-gun, Gyeongsangbuk-do, Republic of Korea. Now, the island is granted separate administrative status - 1-96, Dokdo-ri, Ulleung-eup, Ulleung-gun, Gyeongsang-buk-do, Republic of Korea.

Increased Korean concerns about ecological disruption was also reflected in this easternmost tip of their national territory. As part of an effort to preserve Dokdo's natural environment and ecosystem, the Korean government designated the island as "Natural Monument No. 336" in 1982, and an "Environmentally Protected Area" in accordance with the "Protection of Cultural Properties Act" in 1999. In 2000, under the "Special Act on the Preservation of the Ecosystem of Dokdo and other Island Groups," Dokdo was given a "Special Island" designation.

Today Dokdo is no longer a lonely island. The island has residents who live on it all year round. At the moment, about 40 Korean National Police officers and three lighthouse keepers are the residents of San 1-37, Dokdo-ri. It is also amazing to see the once-lonely island becoming an increasingly popular sightseeing attraction. These days, two ferries, operated by two Korean companies, navigate regularly



between Ulleungdo and Dokdo. Based in Ulleungdo, these ferries convey Korean tourists to Dokdo and offer them a unique opportunity to explore the easternmost territory of their country. The increased number of visitors to Dokdo has compelled the Korean government to take regulatory measures aimed at preventing ecological disruption and improving safety on the steep rocky terrain of the island. Hence, the maximum number of visitors now allowed to land on Dokdo is limited to 1,880 per day and 470 at one time.

Korean sovereignty over Dokdo is beyond question or argument. As enumerated throughout this paper, Korean sovereignty over this island is abundantly documented and supported by historical facts, the rules of international law, and a wide range of official documents issued by both the Korean and Japanese governments. What's more, Japan itself has confirmed and reconfirmed Korean sovereignty over Dokdo. Yet in spite of these historical facts, Japan has attempted to justify its claim to Dokdo by devising invalid rationales, such as the one based upon Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40, a measure that was a manifestation of Japan's imperial ambitions in the Korean Peninsula. Japan's challenge of Korean sovereignty over Dokdo, most recently issued in the form of the Shimane Prefectural Assembly's passage of the so-called "Takeshima Day" ordinance on March 16, 2005 amounts to a denial of Korean



independence from Japanese colonial rule, and an effective withdrawal of the apologies that Japanese leaders and politicians have made for Japan's past aggressions and imperialist record.



# Dokdo Facts

Location (Coordinates)	Dongdo (East Island)	37° 14' 26.8"
		131° 52' 10.4"
	Seodo (West Island)	37° 14' 30.6"
		131° 51' 54.6"
Distance Between	Dokdo - Ulleungdo	87.4 km
	Dokdo - Jukbyeon (Gyeongsangbuk-do )	216.8 km
	Jukbyeon - Ulleungdo	130.3 km
	Dokdo - Oki Island*	157.5 km
	Dongdo - Seodo	151 m
Land Area	Dokdo	187,554 m <sup>2</sup>
	Dongdo	73,297 m <sup>2</sup>
	Seodo	88,740 m <sup>2</sup>
	Adjoining Insular Features	25,517 m <sup>2</sup>
Highest Point	Dongdo	98.6 m
	Seodo	168.5 m
Circumferences	Dongdo	2.8 km
	Seodo	2.6 km
Number of Adjoining Insular Features	89	

\* the nearest Japanese island from Dokdo

The Samgbong-ho, a Korea Coast Guard ship, patrols Dokdo's waters.





# **Dokdo**

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