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Japan Must Live Up to
Its JDZ Commitment

4. Conclusion

When the Shimane prefectural assembly passed an ordinance designating 'Takeshima Day' on March 16, 2005, the Masan (currently, Changwon) city council of Gyeongsangnam-do, Korea established 'Daemado Day' on March 18 of the same year. On June 9, 2005, the Gyeongsangbuk-do provincial council of Korea introduced a draft ordinance making October the 'Dokdo Month.' As illustrated in this case, the Dokdo issue flared into frictions among local governments of Korea and Japan, going beyond diplomatic dispute between the central governments of the two nations.

Given the recent developments in the Dokdo issue in Japanese politics, politicization of the issue has become obvious. The political community is making an internal affair out of a diplomatic issue. In a break with the past, as many as fourteen legislators took part in the 'Takeshima Day' event held in Shimane Prefecture on February 22, 2011. Lawmakers of the ruling DPJ attended the event for the first time, which shows that the event is becoming larger in scale. Shimane Prefecture has persistently requested that the Japanese government provide direct attention and support to the Dokdo issue as much as it has to the Northern Territories issue. Shimane Prefecture's argument has gradually gained currency throughout Japan following the enactment of the Takeshima Day ordinance.

With the Dokdo issue being cited more and more frequently amid domestic political strife in Japan, the issue is becoming increasingly explosive through various media channels. From the standpoint of politicians, a territorial issue is the best way to fuel patriotism. However, remarks and actions on a territorial issue can hardly be toned down or irrevocable intrinsically. The more the Dokdo issue is amplified in Japan, the stronger the response Korea will have to make in the nature of the issue at hand. The heated tenor of Japanese politics and the controversy over the Dokdo issue have already reached alarming levels.

Modern fishing off Dokdo before 1905

Around the year 1900, fishing boats were not motorized, but powered by sail or paddles. By these non-motorized boats, it took one day to sail from Ulleungdo to Dokdo, and two days from the Oki Islands of Japan to Dokdo.

Far from them, the waters of Dokdo were not an attractive fishing destination. Fishing boats could not be moored off of Dokdo as it was very rocky; there were little abalone or seaweed to collect since the island was small; there was no reason to go out into the rough sea to Dokdo as abalone or seaweed was available for collection off Ulleungdo or Oki Islands; and just a few kinds of fish were accessible by the fishing techniques then used since the waters were so deep. Fishing was not a major undertaking around Dokdo. It was only in 1899 that fishing off Dokdo began because of special circumstances. As a result, residents of Ulleungdo started learning more about Dokdo through their fishing activities, and Dokdo was proclaimed as Seokdo in Edict No. 41 of the Daehan Empire in 1900. Fishing off Dokdo by Ulleungdo fishermen also proves that Dokdo was not terra nullius. Therefore, Japan's incorporation of Dokdo in 1905 on the grounds that it was terra nullius is illegitimate. In light of the material importance of fishery off Dokdo before 1905, this paper details out fishing off Dokdo around that time.

This report does not quote sources, but detailed background information can be found in my book, *Fishery Off Ulleungdo and Dokdo in the Last Years of the Korean Empire from a Viewpoint of Territorial Issues*, published as a separate volume (in Korean and Japanese by Korea Maritime Institute in 2009).

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1. Collection of abalone and seaweed off Dokdo

According to one testimony, Iheiji Nakaura, a fisherman of Kumamoto Prefecture, Kyushu, collected abalone or hunted sea lions on Dokdo in 1883, on the way back from Ulleungdo. This testimony lacks authenticity since it came from a grandson of Iheiji Nakaura. At that time, Japanese fishermen were banned from fishing around Ulleungdo by the Ulleung Governor. If Nakaura's testimony is correct, his grandfather likely collected abalone on Dokdo after giving up on fishing off Ulleungdo.

According to another testimony, Seibe Hamaguchi of Mie Prefecture of Japan sailed to Dokdo via Ulleungdo and collected abalone and seaweed around the year 1890. As the testimony of a grandson, this also lacks authenticity. At that time, the Japanese were allowed to fish off Ulleungdo but were not allowed to live or build work space for fishing on Ulleungdo. If Hamaguchi's testimony is correct, they must have ceased fishing off Ulleungdo and collected abalone on Dokdo.

Collection of abalone off Dokdo was first recorded in the year 1899. This year saw very low abalone stock around Ulleungdo. According to the record, in May of the same year, fishermen with diving apparatus from Yamaguchi Prefecture went to Dokdo to collect abalone, but failed because of interference by sea lions.

The next record of collecting abalone off Dokdo dates to 1902. There were too many collectors at Ulleungdo at this time. The Japanese consulate based in Busan to monitor Japanese on Ulleungdo reported to the Foreign Ministry of Japan the following:

There are three islands 50 nautical miles due east to this island (Ulleung). They are called Lyanko Island. Japanese call them Matsushima. Some fish off these islands because there is abalone. However, there is not sufficient drinking water on these islands, so they return to Ulleungdo 4-5 days later.

It is not clear if the fishermen were Japanese or Korean, but this record shows that the residents of Ulleungdo went to Lyanko (Dokdo) for fishing and returned to Ulleungdo 4-5 days later, and Lyanko did not have much abalone because it was small. In his book Takeshima oyobi Utsuryoutou, Hekiun Okuhara stated, "Dokdo is a small rocky island. There is no abalone after 2-3 days of collection."

Ulleungdo became a base for both Koreans and Japanese who fished off Dokdo.

Since no freezer or refrigeration technology existed at that time, fish had to be immediately treated for preserving by drying or other means. A fishing base for drying racks and workspace had to be established on Ulleungdo because Dokdo was unsuitable for such.

Japanese fishermen were permitted to fish off Ulleungdo, but residing or establishing a fishing base on the island was a violation of the treaty. However, the Governor of Ulleung had permitted the Japanese to take up residency since 1897. The Governor of Ulleung was appointed by the government, but it was just a title. He was neither paid nor given a budget to run the Governor's office. The tax revenue collected was a small sum. The Governor of Ulleung collected an export tax of two percent of the cargo value from Japanese nationals who were not supposed to be permitted to live on the island. This means the Governor practically gave Japanese people permission to live on Ulleungdo as the Governor allowed those Japanese residing on Ulleungdo to conduct business.

Those Japanese based on Ulleungdo fished off Dokdo. In its report to the Japanese government, the Japanese consulate recognized Dokdo as an appendage of Ulleung and reported about fishing off Dokdo. As will be explained later, the Japanese consulate's view had not changed even six months after Japan claimed Dokdo as Japanese territory.

2. Shark fishing off Dokdo

In 1899, 14 fishermen of Oita Prefecture, Japan, took two fishing boats to Ulleungdo and Dokdo and caught sharks. They used a new fishing technique involving the use of multiple hooks but could not fish in most parts of Japan because the higher catch rate that it afforded incurred opposition by Japanese fishermen. Fishermen of Oita and Yamaguchi Prefectures were practiced in the use of advanced fishing techniques and went to fish on the South Sea of Korea, which did not have regulations against the new technique. Their success prompted a deluge of Japanese fishermen onto the South Sea of Korea, and they subsequently depleted the fish resources there. Japanese fishermen, in search of new grounds moved up along the coast of Korea and they reached Ulleungdo in 1899. They discovered a new island, and the news appeared in The Journal of Geography. However, the island turned out to be Dokdo, what Japanese called the Yanko Islands. When shark fishing off the Yanko Islands, Shusuke Kuzuu recorded "There are good shark fishing waters nearby. In recent years, every May and June,

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fishing boats from Oita turn up to catch sharks.”

Confusion over the name of the island led to Dokdo widely being referred to as the Yanko Islands. Once, in Japan, Ulleungdo had been called Takeshima and Dokdo Matsushima. Matsushima in Japanese means “pine tree island”. Despite the fact there was not a single pine tree on Dokdo, the Japanese called Dokdo Matsushima because Dokdo was paired with Takeshima, the bamboo island. Sailing to these two islands was banned in 1837, after the earlier ban in 1696, causing the Japanese to have forgotten about them and their names. Ulleungdo became known as either Takeshima or Matsushima, and Dokdo was called Matsushima, Lyanko, Yanko or Lanko, derived from “Liancourt Islands”.

3. Sea lion hunting

Historical records confirm sea lions were hunted at Dokdo in 1897. Squid boats were wrecked on the way back from Ulleungdo to the Oki Islands. While the Oki residents scouted around Dokdo, they caught sea lions. This was a one-time hunt because there was no market for sea lions.

In 1903, the prices of leather and oil spiked just before the Russo-Japanese War, making sea lion hunting economically viable. That year, Yozaburo Nakai of Tottori Prefecture and Matsutaro Ishibashi of Oki islands attempted sea lion hunting at Dokdo. The next year, Nakai moved to the Oki Islands and started sea lion hunting in full swing. Numerous fishermen went out for hunting as word spread that sea lion hunting was promising. Iwasaki of Yamaguchi Prefecture based on Ulleungdo went out for sea lion hunting with Koreans. In 1904, hunters caught sea lions indiscriminately. A total of 2,760 sea lions were caught. Of these, 400-500 were baby sea lions, which were thrown away because they did not fetch a high price. Nakai realized that the sea lion population on Dokdo would soon be annihilated if such reckless hunting continued. With the intention of obtaining exclusive rights to sea lion hunting, Nakai went to Tokyo and contacted the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce of Japan in order to find a way to ask for a lease from the Korean government, because he believed Lyanko to be Korean territory. In the process, he was informed by the Japanese Navy that Lyanko was terra nullius and changed his plan. He ultimately submitted to the Japanese government a petition to incorporate Lyanko and to issue a lease for him. The Ministry of Home Affairs opposed the incorporation of Lyanko as it was suspected

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to be Korean territory. However, Enjiro Yamaza, then Director-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, fully supported Nakai and pushed for incorporation of Lyanko, saying, “In this time of war against Russia, it is urgent to incorporate Lyanko.” In February, 1905, the Japanese government incorporated Dokdo.

To his disappointment, Nakai was not granted exclusive rights to hunt sea lions at Dokdo. In June, Shimane Prefecture issued only one common license to be shared by four fishermen - Nakai, Hashioka, Iguchi and Kato. They all had experience in sea lion hunting, and these fishermen including Nakai established “Takeshima Fishery and Hunting Corporation” to hunt sea lions. Sea lion hunting had been going on for two months prior. Three teams from Ulleungdo, four from the Oki Islands, and one from Tottori were overhunting sea lions. Three teams from Ulleungdo consisted of both Japanese and Koreans. The Governor of Ulleung was fully aware of such activities of fishermen on Ulleungdo. When reporting to the Korean government the activities of the “Takeshima Survey Team” dispatched from Shimane Prefecture in 1906, Governor Heung-Taek Shim wrote “Dokdo belongs to Ulleung Province”. Governor Shim clearly considered Dokdo a part of Ulleung Province.

4. Perception of Dokdo by the Japanese government

The Japanese government also regarded Dokdo as an appendage of Ulleungdo. In 1902, the Japanese consulate in Busan, which had been monitoring residents on Ulleungdo, included Lyanko (Dokdo), in the “Research brief on Ulleungdo”, a report to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The Japanese consulate treated Dokdo as one of the Ulleungdos. This report was published almost verbatim on Tsusho Isan, published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Not only the Korean government, but also the Japanese government perceived Dokdo as an appendage of Ulleungdo because the Japanese government had learned about Dokdo in detail through fishing activities of Ulleung residents. Regardless, the Japanese government claimed Dokdo to be terra nullius and incorporated it in 1905.

This incorporation was not, however, published in the official gazette, and the Japanese government kept it a secret. The only announcement thereon was made by Shimane Prefecture, under the Japanese government’s directive. Shimane Notice 40 placed Dokdo under the authority of the Governor of the Oki Islands. This appears to be the reason

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why the Japanese consulate in Busan was not aware of the Japanese incorporation of Dokdo. In July 1905, the Japanese consulate submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan a report called "Current status of Ulleungdo", in which it provided a summary about Lanko, namely, Dokdo, as follows:

A sea animal called the todo inhabits Lanko, located about 25ri (100km) southeast of Ulleungdo. Since last year, people from Ulleungdo started catching them. They catch todos for six months, from April to September. Each team consists of 10 members including hunters and sailors. It is told they catch on average five todos per day. Thirty people engage in todo hunting in three teams with three boats. The average market price for one todo is 3 yen at the present time.

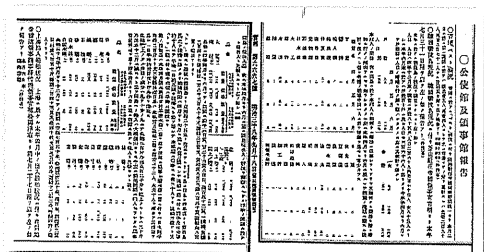


Figure 1. Japanese official gazette introducing Lanko as an appendage of Ulleung (September 18, 1905)

On record, the Japanese consulate recognized Dokdo as a part of Ulleung, where Ulleung residents conducted economic activities since 1902. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan did not change Dokdo's name to Takeshima as decided at the Cabinet and published it as Lanko, as stated in the Consulate's report, on Tsusho Isan. Officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan recognized Lanko as an appendage of Ulleungdo, in other words, a Korean territory. As shown in Figure 1, the "Current status of Ulleungdo" was published in the official gazette as it was. The official in charge issued the official gazette, also believing Lanko, namely, Dokdo to be part of Ulleungdo. This was an official view of the Japanese government, and proof that Dokdo was not terra nullius. Therefore, the Japanese cabinet's decision to incorporate Dokdo on the grounds of it being terra nullius cannot be justified and Shimane Notice 40, issued under such a decision by the cabinet, loses its ground.

Name Changes of Dokdo and Ulleungdo

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section I

The original Korean name of the ancient kingdom in the middle of the East Sea of Korea, consisting of Ulleungdo and Dokdo, was Urumoe Urumo, Urumae, Uruma. The Japanese could not pronounce diphthongs, so they called it the Uruma State. The name Urumoe had been used until the 5th century, when Korea started borrowing Chinese characters to transliterate state names and changed the name to Usan-guk.

"Uru" from Urumoe means head, king, or emperor, and "moe" means mountain or high ground. The Urumoe State meant the country of the king's mountain.

In Chinese, Urumoe was written as Ulleungdo 鬱陵島, Usan-do 于山島, or Seongin-bong 聖人峰. In the name Ulleung 鬱陵 or 蔚陵, "Ul" 鬱 or 蔚 was a contracted phonetic expression of "Uru", and "Leung" 陵 meant "moe," the high ground.

The Chinese characters "武陵", pronounced in Korean as Muleung, were also used as the character "Mu" 武, which sounded in Chinese as "U" for Uru. Another transliteration of Urumoe was pronounced as Muleung but used different Chinese characters "茂陵", like the name of the gravesite of Emperor Mu of Han.

Another name for Urumoe was Usan 于山 or 芋山. "U" 于 or 芋 was the transliteration of "Uru", dropping "ru", and "san" 山 meant "moe", the mountain.

Seongin-bong 聖人峰 consisted of "Seongin" 聖人, a respectful way of referring to the king or the emperor, and bong 峰, meaning "moe", the mountain. It is believed that Seongin-bong was another way to transliterate Urumoe, but referring to the big mountain on Ulleungdo while differentiating it from Ulleung or Usan.