

Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact

Shin Sakuma Bldg. 3F, 2-13-14, Nishi-Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0003, JAPAN

Tel 03-3519-4366 Fax 03-3519-4367 URL <http://www.sdh-fact.com>

August 20, 2008

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500
USA

Dear Mr. President:

Recently, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names changed the country code of the island group known variously as Liancourt Rocks, Takeshima and Dokdo from KS (South Korea) to “undesigned sovereignty.” In the face of a subsequent, vehement protest and intense pressure from the South Korean government, the U.S. government decided to reverse the change.

At a press briefing held on July 30, 2008 by Dennis Wilder, Senior Director for Asian Affairs at the National Security Council, Mr. Wilder stated that you had directed Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to investigate this matter, and that “it was decided after that review that the change in designation was not warranted at this time.”

At a later briefing (on July 31, 2008), Sean McCormack, a U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, stated that that “decision was taken because ... in the course of this exercise, it was detected that there were a number of anomalies and inaccuracies in the database.”

Without a doubt, the description of this group of islands (whose rightful name is Takeshima) as of “undesigned sovereignty” is inaccurate. The designation should be corrected to “Japan.” As stated in the attached document, Takeshima does not appear on a Korean map drawn in 1899. In fact, until recent times, Koreans were not even aware that the island group existed. After World War II, the Korean Ambassador to the U.S. wrote to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, requesting that Takeshima be included on the list of territories to be forfeited by Japan in the Treaty of Peace with Japan, signed in San Francisco. Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Dean Rusk denied that request, in no uncertain terms, in his response dated August 9, 1951 (we enclose both letters).

We hope that the U.S. government will not take any action that undermines the San Francisco Treaty, which was concluded on the basis of a clearly stated government viewpoint. To do so would send the message to Japan, a friendly nation, and to the rest of the international community, that the U.S. government cannot be counted on to be consistent or to act in good faith.

In closing, we urge you, Mr. President, to instruct the U.S. Board on Geographic Names to ensure that future reviews are informed by fairness and historical fact.

Very truly yours,

KASE Hideaki, Chairman



Enclosures: Essay ("Takeshima Is Indisputably Japanese Territory") and three attachments

Attachment 1: Maps

Attachment 2: Letter from You Chan Yang, ROK Ambassador to the U.S., to Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State

Attachment 3: Letter from Dean Rusk, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, to You Chan Yang, ROK Ambassador to the U.S.

TAKESHIMA IS INDISPUTABLY JAPANESE TERRITORY

Moteki Hiromichi, Secretary
Society for the Dissemination of Historical Fact

1. The ROK's claim that the group of islands known as Takeshima is South Korean territory can ultimately be traced to an historical work entitled *History of the Three Kingdoms of Korea*, completed in 1145. That work states that Usando, a group of islands adjacent to Ulleungdo (Utsuryo in Japanese), belonged to the Korean Kingdom of Silla. Later historical works contain descriptions that are essentially identical, i.e., that Usando has been Korean territory since the 4th or 5th century AD. However, an old Korean map (Map A in Attachment 1) shows Usando situated to the west of Ulleungdo. Takeshima, on the other hand, lies 92 kilometers southeast of Ulleungdo. Therefore, Usando and Takeshima cannot possibly be one and the same. Furthermore, Map A indicates that it is possible to travel from Uljin to Ulleungdo and Usando in two days by ship. If Usando were Takeshima, the 92-kilometer journey there would require an additional 24 hours, for a total of *three* days.
2. Why, in the face of such blatantly obvious evidence, does the ROK insist that Takeshima is Usando and, therefore, Korean territory? One reason may be that the names of small islands in the vicinity of Ulleungdo have changed several times over the centuries. The island group currently known as Takeshima was previously referred to as both Matsushima and Liancourt Rocks. Additionally, there are small islands, including one named Takeshima, near Ulleungdo (see Map C in Attachment 1). We assume that these are the islands that came to be known as Usando, but they are located to the east of Ulleungdo. Map A is inaccurate. According to Map B, which was drawn somewhat later, Usando appears in approximately the same position as Takeshima in Map C (adjacent to Ulleungdo), we can be virtually certain that Usando refers to that Takeshima.
3. Not once do islands 90 kilometers distant from Ulleungdo, i.e., present-day Takeshima, appear on maps drawn during the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1987). Only small islands like Ulleungdo and nearby Usando appear. This is not surprising, since even Ulleungdo was off-limits during the Joseon Dynasty, a result of the Korean "empty-island" policy. The Koreans were simply not interested in (or unaware of) islands beyond Ulleungdo. The Tokugawa Shogunate gave the Oya and Murakawa families permission to sail to Ulleungdo, where they engaged in fishing and sea lion hunting. What has confused matters is the fact that the Japanese then referred to Ulleungdo as Takeshima. Nevertheless, Matsushima, which is on the route to the old Takeshima, is mentioned in Oya and Murakawa records in the location currently occupied by present-day Takeshima. Therefore, the confusion involves nomenclature, not territoriality.
4. Given these historical facts, there is absolutely no basis for the Korean claim. On September 25, 1954, the Japanese government proposed submitting this dispute to the International Court of Justice. But the Korean government, inexplicably, rejected the proposal, which makes the ROK's continued belligerent stance all the more incomprehensible.

5. This dispute was resolved internationally more than 50 years ago: in 1951, Korea asked the U.S. government to include Takeshima (called Dokdo by the Koreans) in the list of territories to be forfeited by the Japanese. In a reply dated August 10, 1951, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Dean Rusk, wrote the following:

As regards the island of Dokdo, otherwise known as Takeshima or Liancourt Rocks, this normally uninhabited rock formation was according to our information never treated as part of Korea and, since about 1905, has been under the jurisdiction of the Oki Islands Branch Office of Shimane Prefecture of Japan. This island does not appear ever before to have been claimed by Korea.

Attachments: (3)

1. Korean maps
2. Letter from You Chan Yang (ROK ambassador to the U.S.) to Dean Acheson (U.S. Secretary of State)
3. Response to Yang from Dean Rusk (Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs)

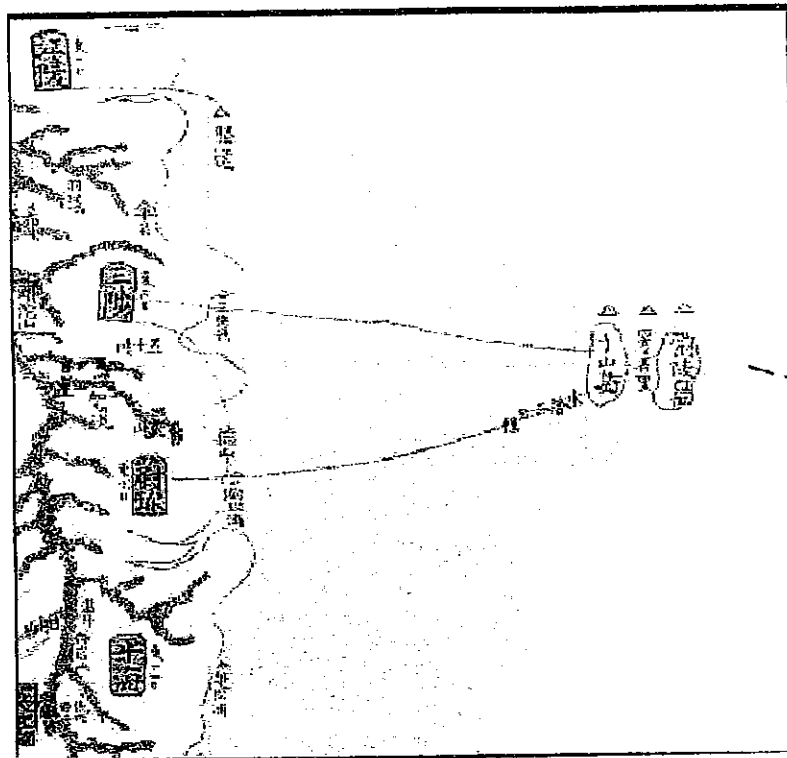
<ATTACHMENT 1>

MAP A – Korean map of Gangwon-do (published in 1710)

Kyujanggak: Royal library of the Joseon Dynasty
maintained by Seoul National University

Maps source: Gerry Bevers; <http://www.occidentalism.org/?p=319>

The map contains a comment to the effect that the journey from Ulleungdo and Usando to Uljin takes two days by boat.



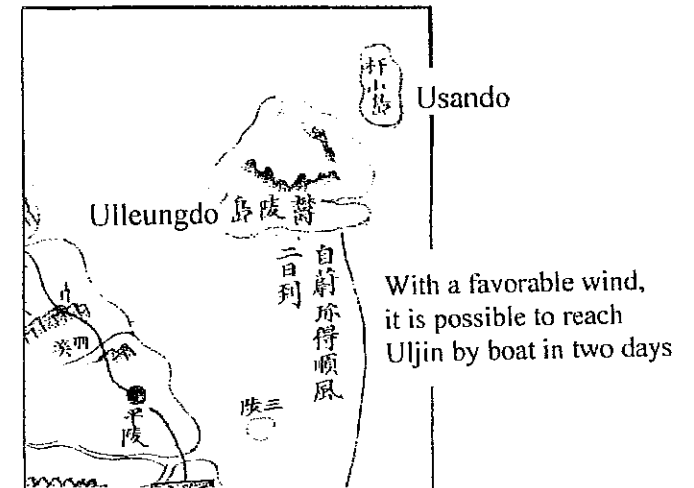
If Takeshima (Matsushima or Dokdo) had been included in the map, it would be located here.

However, it was not included in Map A, nor in the *Daehanji*, an atlas of Korea published in 1899. (This area, more than 90 km away from Ulleungdo, was apparently beyond Korean's interest or awareness.)

MAP B – Korean map published in the 18th century

Maps source: Gerry Bevers; <http://www.occidentalism.org/?p=451>

Here Usando has been positioned much more accurately. This map also includes the comment about the Usando's being a two-day journey away from Uljin.



MAP C – Current map of Ulleungdo



<ATTACHMENT 2>

Letter from ROK Ambassador to the United States You Chan Yang
to United States Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson

July 19, 1961

Your Excellency,

I have the honor to present to Your Excellency, at the instruction of my Government, the following requests for the consideration of the Department of State with regard to the recent revised draft of the Japanese Peace Treaty.

1. My Government requests that the word "renounces" in Paragraph A, Article Number 2, should be replaced by "confirms that it renounced on August 9, 1945, all right, title and claim to Korea and the islands which were part of Korea prior to its annexation by Japan, including the islands Quelpert, Port Hamilton, Dagelet, Dokdo and Parangdo."

2. As to Paragraph A, Article Number 4, in the proposed Japanese Peace Treaty, my Government wishes to point out that the provision in Paragraph A, Article 4, does not affect the legal transfer of vested properties in Korea to the Republic of Korea through decision by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in the Pacific following the defeat of Japan confirmed three years later in the Economic and Financial Agreement between the Republic of Korea and the United States Military Government in Korea, of September 11, 1948.

3. With reference to Article 9, my Government wishes to insert the following at the end of Article 9 of the proposed Peace Treaty, "Pending the conclusion of such agreements existing realities such as the MacArthur Line will remain in effect."

Please accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

You Chan Yang

Via Excellency
Dean G. Acheson
Secretary of State
Washington D C

<ATTACHMENT 3>

Letter to ROK Ambassador to the United States You Chan Yang
from United States Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Dean Rusk

Excellency:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your notes of July 19 and August 2, 1951 presenting certain requests for the consideration of the Government of the United States with regard to the draft treaty of peace with Japan.

With respect to the request of the Korean Government that Article 2(a) of the draft be revised to provide that Japan "confirms that it renounced on August 9, 1945, all right, title and claim to Korea and the islands which were part of Korea prior to its annexation by Japan, including the islands Quelpart, Port Hamilton, Dogalet, Dokdo, and Parangdo," the United States Government regrets that it is unable to concur in this proposed amendment. The United States Government does not feel that the Treaty should adopt the theory that Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration on August 9, 1945 constituted a formal

His Excellency

Dr. You Chan Yang,

Ambassador of Korea.

or final renunciation of sovereignty by Japan over the areas dealt with in the Declaration: as regards the island of Bokdo, otherwise known as Takashima or Liancourt Rocks, this normally uninhabited rock formation was according to our information never treated as part of Korea and, since about 1905, has been under the jurisdiction of the Oki Islands Branch Office of Shimane Prefecture of Japan. The island does not appear ever before to have been claimed by Korea. It is understood that the Korean Government's request that "Parangdo" be included among the islands named in the treaty as having been renounced by Japan has been withdrawn.

The United States Government agrees that the terms of paragraph (a) of Article 4 of the draft treaty are subject to misunderstanding and accordingly proposes, in order to meet the view of the Korean Government, to insert at the beginning of paragraph (a) the phrase, "Subject to the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Article"; and then to add a new paragraph (b) reading as follows:

(b) "Japan recognizes the validity of dispositions of property of Japan and Japanese nationals made by or pursuant to directives of United States Military Government in any of

the areas referred to in Articles 2 and 3^a.

The present paragraph (b) of Article 4 becomes paragraph (c).

The Government of the United States regrets that it is unable to accept the Korean Government's amendment to Article 9 of the draft treaty. In view of the many national interests involved, any attempt to include in the treaty provisions governing fishing in high seas areas would indefinitely delay the treaty's conclusion. It is desired to point out, however, that the so-called MacArthur line will stand until the treaty comes into force, and that Korea, which obtains the benefits of Article 9, will have the opportunity of negotiating a fishing agreement with Japan prior to that date.

With respect to the Korean Government's desire to obtain the benefits of Article 15(a) of the treaty, there would seem to be no necessity to oblige Japan to return the property of persons in Japan of Korean origin since such property was not sequestered or otherwise interfered with by the Japanese Government during the war. In view of the fact that such persons had the status of

Japanese nationals it would not seem appropriate that they .

obtain compensation for damage to their property as a result of
the war.

Accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest con-
sideration.

For the Secretary of State:

Dean Rusk