

THE ULLEUNGDO DISPUTE OF 1693 AND THE MYTH OF JAPAN'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER DOKDO

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Abstract: I examine the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 to demonstrate that Ulleungdo and Dokdo were already confirmed to be Korean territories in 1693 and that Japan did not "discover" these islands and own them in the late 17th Century. The Dajokan Directive of 1877 later reconfirmed this fact. Collectively, the Ulleungdo Dispute and the *Dajokan Directive* not only show that Japan did not establish sovereignty over Dokdo in the late 17th century, but also clearly demonstrate that Korea had legitimately won the Ulleungdo Dispute and that the conclusion of the Dispute still retains its historicity and legality by remaining valid for over a century. Finally, this article clearly demonstrates that it was impossible for the Dajokan Directive to have confused the identity of Takeshima because it reaffirmed the conclusion drawn from the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 which confirmed Dokdo and Ulleungdo to be adjacent Korean territories.

Keywords: Ulleungdo; dispute; Takeshima; Dokdo; Dajokan Directive of 1877

INTRODUCTION

In 1694, Tada Gozaemon arrived in Han-yang (the Choson Dynasty's name for what is now Seoul) to renegotiate terms concerning the Korean government's insistence that Ulleungdo be placed off limits to Japanese access. A year earlier, several Japanese fishermen associated with the Oya family witnessed 40 Korean fishermen drying their catch of fish and seaweed off the Ulleungdo coast, whereupon they threatened the Koreans to never visit the island again, selected An Yong-pok and Pak Ŏtun among the forty fishermen, and sent the two men to the Bakufu for questioning. To make sure that the Korean government understood the Japanese fishermen's message and the overall situation An and Pak were in, the Japanese government had sent Gozaemon as their principal envoy, only to be disappointed by the Korean government's refusal to accept Japan's claim of sovereignty over Ulleungdo (Kim et al., 2020, p. 14).

Gozaemon returned to Korea a year later and repeated the Japanese claim that because Takeshima was under the direct administration of Tsushima's So Family, any future attempts from Koreans to venture into the island would constitute a direct violation of Japanese sovereignty. However, the Korean government refused to amend its earlier rejection of Japan's argument and replied that Ulleungdo and Chuk-to, the latter representing the same Chinese characters for "Takeshima" in Japanese, were both names for the same island. Despite Gozaemon's protest that "there was no law of nature which states that what was deemed to be Korean or Chinese territories centuries earlier had to remain as such," the Korean representative Yecho Ch'amp'an Yi Sŏn-pu declared that when "the waves are rough, as is the case with the waters surrounding Ulleungdo, Korean fishermen inevitably and inadvertently happen to cross

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into the Japanese portion of the island. Concerning the naming of the island, it is the opinion of the Korean government that, regardless of whether there are two names or one, Ulleungdo (or Chukto, as your countrymen call it) will indisputably remain as Korean territory. The fact is clearly stated in geography texts such as *Chipong-yu-sol* and *T'aek-ri-chi*, and therefore, the Korean government sees no reason to revise or change that fact in any way conceivable as it clearly points to Korean sovereignty over Ulleungdo." (Kim et al. 2013, p. 50) In other words, Yi was arguing that any coincidental Korean entry into a certain "Japanese" section of Ulleungdo was a consequence of nature's unpredictable character represented through the constantly changing directions of currents, and the coincidental "trespassing" was a relatively minor issue compared with the more important and, in the Korean government's view that Ulleungdo would remain permanently as a Korean territory because there was already sufficient historical evidence decisively proving that Korea had owned the island for a long time prior to the dispute. Japan's protest and inquiry had almost no meaning with regard to the question of territorial sovereignty over Ulleungdo.

The *Bakufu*, irked with the Korean government's suggestion that it would not recognize Japanese sovereignty over Takeshima (Ulleungdo), had requested Gozaemon to visit Korea again to definitively settle and clarify matters. Gozaemon complied and delivered the *Bakufu*'s opinion that regardless of whether Korea relied on "texts that were more than 200 years old" to establish its claim, many territories "which were considered to be Chinese or Korean territories in olden times have changed masters frequently over many years," and therefore, leaving Takeshima as an exception to that rule seems to be an anomaly." (Kim et al., 2013, p. 51) In short, Gozaemon was criticizing the Korean government for failing to realize that constant changes in a territory's name, insofar as they are reflections of an ever-changing balance of power, are inevitable.

However, the Korean government dismissed the argument and simply pointed out that it had already replied to a similar inquiry before, and it was up to the Japanese government to check the facts for itself. So Yoshitoshi, then the Daimyo of Tsushima, begrudgingly accepted the Korean government's suggestion, whereupon he was forced to admit that there were no Japanese records matching those of Korean texts mentioned by Yi Son-pu, and therefore, Takeshima, or Ulleungdo, had to be classified as Korean territory and Japanese sailors were warned to not enter Ulleungdo, for doing so would cause "unnecessary diplomatic complications" between Korea and Japan. The Ulleungdo Dispute, which had begun with Japan's insistence of territorial sovereignty, had ironically ended with Japan confirming that it had no historical records to effectively counter Korea's claim of historicity behind its ownership of Ulleungdo.

The conclusion which the Korean government had delivered to its Japanese counterpart and So Yoshitoshi finally confirmed himself by checking Japan's records found itself repeated verbatim almost a century later through the Meiji Government's most significant official statement on the status of Ulleungdo and Dokdo: "Utsuryoto and one other Island have no relation whatsoever to Japan and this fact must be remembered at all times." Yet, human memory, insofar as it is selective and does not have the capacity to address the entirety of time which has passed, inherently becomes limited and even distorted such that facts which were once established very clearly are destined to be forgotten. Such is the case with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which, despite the Meiji Government's official declaration, still claims that the Prohibition of Passage to Ulleungdo did not extend to Dokdo, and therefore, Takeshima, now the current name for Dokdo in Japanese, is still open to contention.

Although nationalist passions still run very high concerning Dokdo between Korea and

Japan, the tension surrounding the island need not persist very long once the forgotten facts about the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 are recounted. The importance behind the dispute not only rests on the fact that both Korea and Japan concluded that Ulleungdo would permanently remain under Korean jurisdiction, but also on the fact that the conclusion had such irrefutable clarity and legal standing such that the Japanese government formally acknowledged the accuracy of that very conclusion even without any political intervention or diplomatic altercation involving Korea. Finally, although Japan's current claim over Dokdo persists because it believes that Dokdo is a territory distinct from Ulleungdo, because Dokdo is uninhabitable and the nearest inhabitable space which represents effective occupation of Dokdo is Ulleungdo, and because both islands share an important body of water, underneath which is thought to be storing copious amounts of rare minerals and natural gasses, that the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 still retains its legally binding power through its acknowledgement in the Dajokan Directive of 1877, for this fact effectively implies that Japan already officially recognized Korean sovereignty over Ulleungdo and Dokdo over three centuries ago.

A REVIEW OF THE SCHOLARLY LITERATURE

However, in contrast to the enduring historical significance of the Ulleungdo Dispute, very little has been written about the topic in English. Although there are several Korean and Japanese scholars who have published extensively on Dokdo, attention to the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 remains in paucity and in want of further development in the English-language scholarship. Min Kyo Goo, Alexander Bukh, and Kimie Hara addressed Dokdo within the context of Korea-Japan diplomatic relations and the San Francisco Peace Treaty and demonstrated the enduring legacy and shadow of Japanese imperialism over Dokdo. (Koo, 2009; Bukh, 2020; Hara, 2007; Hara, 2015) Sung-jae Choi, Seok-woo Lee, and Sung-bae Kim have examined Dokdo within the context of Korean civic activism, implications of the San Francisco Peace Treaty on future developments in Korea-Japan relations, and Japanese attempts to revise high school textbooks to emphasize Japanese sovereignty over Dokdo. (Choi, 2005, 465-494; Lee, 2011, 361-380; Kim, 2010, 1-27) These attempts further substantively elaborated on Dokdo's importance to Korea-Japan relations from the perspective of international law and the most essential post-war treaty which established the "hubs-and-spokes" system for East Asia throughout the latter half of the 20th century and beyond.

There are also some notable articles by Masako Ikegami and Daisuke Akimoto discussing possible solutions to the dispute over Dokdo, such as "sharing" Dokdo between Korea and Japan, and resolving the issue through a mediated conference and dialogue between the two countries, although the efficacy of these solutions is not clearly elaborated. (Ikegami, 2009, 1-22; Akimoto, 2020, 52-89) Moreover, because Ikegami and Akimoto omit the fundamental fact that Dokdo cannot be physically occupied since it is a rock, and only by occupying Ulleungdo can one really claim to have "occupied" Dokdo, their proposals are not geographically realistic. Finally, Elena Atanassova-Cornelis and two other scholars produced a comprehensive report on territorial and maritime disputes in Northeast Asia, which helps contextualize Dokdo within a broader international and regional perspective, allowing for a comparative assessment of Dokdo's position in Korea-Japan relations with other disputed territories and respective positions in the diplomacy between other nations. (Atanassova-Cornelis et al., 2015, 7-53)

Although the English-language literature directly addressing the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 is very thin compared with the rich literature on Dokdo, there have been significant strides made to advance knowledge about Korean and Japanese perceptions of Ulleungdo in relation to Dokdo. Young-hoe Choe nicely summarized Japanese scholarship on Dokdo by

incorporating debates concerning the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693, but it is just treated as a minor episode in the history of Dokdo, and he does not examine the fact that the Japanese acknowledgement of Ulleungdo's ownership by Korea had a high validity such that the Dajokan Directive of 1877 repeated Japan's official position verbatim while declaring that Ulleungdo and Dokdo had no relation whatsoever with Japan. (Choe, 2015, 1-27)

Takashi Tsukamoto examined the Ulleungdo Dispute and its relationship with Dajokan Directive of 1877, but regarding the former, he only critiques An Yong-pok's statements and Japanese interpretations of that statement without considering other responses from the Korean government during the Dispute. Concerning the Dajokan Directive of 1877, Tsukamoto's main focus is on whether "Takeshima" as used in the Directive ought to be understood as Ulleungdo (as it was understood in Japan during the 17th century) or Dokdo, as it is currently called by Japan. However, this configuration fundamentally misunderstands the important geographical fact that to ban residence on Ulleungdo is akin to banning entry into Dokdo, because the latter was uninhabitable and the only way to "live" on Dokdo was and still is, by living on Ulleungdo. Although Tsukamoto contends that the Prohibition of Passage to Ulleungdo did not apply to Dokdo, this claim is untenable, for an official ban can only have a tangible effect on a residential area, and because Dokdo cannot be actually occupied in the sense that housing can be provided, prohibiting passage to Ulleungdo implies and includes prohibiting passage to Dokdo.

Moreover, although Tsukamoto, like many preceding Japanese scholars, repeats the claim that the Dajokan was mistaking "Takeshima" as Ulleungdo instead of Dokdo when it issued the Directive, this claim is unsupportable and even wrong for two reasons. First, there are no existing records from the Japanese government showing that the Dajokan was indeed mistaken, and second, given that nearly a century had passed since the Ulleungdo Dispute and that the identity of "Takeshima" had only transformed into Dokdo in the 20th century, it is unlikely that the Dajokan Directive had made a mistake. Even if "Takeshima" did indeed mean Ulleungdo, the fact that "one other island" is mentioned suggests that the Directive applied to Dokdo. Despite Japanese contentions and conjectures about what the precise identity of "one other island" might mean, there are simply no other candidates besides Dokdo to be even relevant to current Korean-Japanese relations, and Japan has yet to produce a convincing alternative candidate to Dokdo, which suggests that the only possible conclusion is "one other island" must definitively mean Dokdo. (Tsukamoto, 2014, 1-25)

As it is clear from the review of the recent literature, much of the scholarly attention has been devoted to examining protests and contestations over Dokdo and solutions to resolve conflicts between Korea and Japan, but the significance behind the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 in decisively clarifying Korean sovereignty over not only Ulleungdo but also Dokdo has not been sufficiently acknowledged, largely due to the implicit acceptance of the Japanese assumption that a dispute over Dokdo is distinct from that concerning Ulleungdo. However, because Ulleungdo is the only geographical space through which one can actually prove that Dokdo is territory worth occupying, the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 is significant because it clarified Korean ownership over both islands and established it as an undeniable fact such that the *Dajokan* acknowledged as such nearly two centuries later.

This article, bearing the clear purpose of providing more substance to what has been claimed so far and to do justice to such significance, and present the Korean perspective on the Ulleungdo Dispute, will examine the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 by analyzing its principal details and argue that the Korean claim to sovereignty was not only fully acknowledged by Japan in that year, but also that the validity of the original recognition still remains valid

because the Dajokan Directive of 1877 unequivocally reconfirms the original conclusion. What these facts commonly imply is that, contrary to the Japanese government's belief that a territorial dispute over Dokdo is ongoing, the matter had already been settled much earlier because the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 did not establish Japan's claim over Takeshima "at least during the late 17th century," as the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs officially claims. Rather, the Dispute had affirmed Korea's sovereignty over Ulleungdo. Furthermore, this article will show that because the Dajokan affirmed the identity of Takeshima to unequivocally be Dokdo, Tsukamoto's claim is false because there was no confusion about whether Takeshima really meant Dokdo or not. This affirmation is important because it is a settlement which the Dajokan affirmed as a final and done deal almost 200 years after the Dispute. Therefore, there is, by principle, no dispute whatsoever concerning Dokdo, given the geographical proximity of Ulleungdo and the determination of Ulleungdo's status by both Korean and Japanese governments in the aforementioned occasions.

THE ULLEUNGDO DISPUTE OF 1693

In 1693, two fishermen named An Yong-pok and Pak O-tun were stranded on Ulleungdo. The island had been subject to Korea's *Kong-to* (Vacant Island) policy for many years, which meant that there should have been no residents besides themselves on the island, since many of its residents were now living on the Korean Peninsula for many years. (Son, 2010, 275-313) However, to their surprise, they were confronted by several Japanese fishermen who inquired about why the Koreans were on Japanese territory. An, enraged at the suggestion that Ulleungdo was Japanese territory, retorted that the island had been under Korean jurisdiction for many years, and therefore, he had no choice but to inform his government about the intruders. After a brief altercation, the Japanese fishermen apprehended their Korean counterparts and made them subject to the Japanese government's questioning, to which An replied that the Korean government had declared Ulleungdo to be Korean territory many years earlier. The *Bakufu*, piqued at An's statement, decided to send Tada Gozaemon as a special envoy to inquire about Ulleungdo. (Kim et al., 2020, 17-18)

Tada inquired about the Korean government's usage of "Ulleungdo" in reference to "Takeshima," for if Japan had already affirmed sovereignty over the island, there would be no need to refer to "the same island with two different names." The Korean government replied that it had treated the Korean fishermen's attempt to "trespass into Chuk-to a grave crime" and had "severely punished them to ensure that nothing of the sort would ever happen again" and explained that the fishermen "must have been stranded off Chuk-to while on their way to a "Korean island called Ulleungdo." Therefore, the Korean government promised that it would instruct Korean fishermen to "never set sail for Ulleungdo again." (Kim et al., 2020, 19) In short, the Korean government promised that no Korean fisherman would ever attempt to enter "Takeshima," but it also delivered an ambiguous reply which on one hand, seemed to suggest that Chukto and "Takeshima" were distinct islands, but on the other hand, seemed to reprimand and warn the Japanese that they must clearly understand that Ulleungdo was Korean territory. Border control was the most certain solution to avoid diplomatic complications, and the letter seemed to imply that Ulleungdo was definitely Korean territory, and the Koreans would be sure to manage it as such to avoid misunderstandings with Japan.

Upon receiving the Korean government's reply, Tada immediately sensed that there was something strange about it. What was this new name of "Utsuryoto," which neither he nor any Japanese official had ever heard of? Was this the name of another island besides Takeshima, or was this the Korean name for Takeshima? His intention was to clarify that Takeshima" was

clearly Japanese territory, but the Koreans had seemingly let that argument drift away, concentrating on ascertaining that Takeshima, which the Koreans had named "Ulleungdo," was their territory. Unable to resist the uneasy feeling that the Korean response had answered the second question on purpose, Tada immediately wrote an indignant reply aiming to refute the Koreans' attempt to play tricks by engaging in a double entendre. Tada retorted in a memorandum to the Korean Foreign Minister that if the Koreans were trying to "refashion one island into two different islands" and deny the fact that "Takeshima, which is known as Ulleungdo, was now part of Japan after the Imjin War," the Koreans had to "assure that no trespassing would occur on Japan's Takeshima" if Korea wished to avoid "needlessly complicated altercations." (Kim et al., 2020, 20)

In short, Tada believed that the seven years' war which saw much of the Korean Peninsula ravaged and pillaged was a Japanese victory, and Takeshima had become one of the principal spoils of the war. Therefore, Tada was warning that he would not be duped into thinking that Takeshima was Ulleungdo because he believed that Takeshima was already under Japanese control since 1598. Moreover, given that such a fact would be immutable despite any Korean attempt to reverse it, the best policy that Korea could afford to practice should be implementing a ban against all Koreans wishing to visit Takeshima for fishing and other maritime activities. Failure to impose or abide by the ban would render Japan to consider it a direct violation of territorial sovereignty, and diplomatic tensions would only mean a waste of time and energy for both sides.

However, the Koreans refused to cower to Tada's warning and repeated the original position that while they could promise that no Korean fisherman would venture out to "Takeshima in your border, the same restriction would have to also apply to Utsuryoto." (Kim et al., 2020, 161) Exasperated by the Koreans' repeated refusal to precisely understand his intention, Tada tried once more to reason with the Koreans by demanding to know why the Koreans kept using two names for what clearly was one island. Although Tada had heard from the chief Korean interpreter in Tsushima that while the Korean government was well aware that "Takeshima" is indeed Ulleungdo, it did not wish to sever relations with Japan over a small island, which is why "the Korean government wished to preserve "Ulleungdo" in name while abandoning the island," Tada was not entirely convinced, and proceeded to inquire directly to the Korean Foreign Minister about why the Koreans persistently used Ulleungdo as an alternative name for Takeshima. (Kim et al., 2020, 161)

In other words, while it may be true that Korea did wish to avoid diplomatic conflicts, Tada was uncomfortable with the possibility that such might be the only goal the Korean government wished to pursue without relinquishing sovereignty over Takeshima. Should that be the case, it would be Japan which would be left with nothing, for should the Koreans even drop the idea of even negotiating about Takeshima, there was no other way for Japan to sustain its warning and pressure on Korea not to make advances on Takeshima ever again. Therefore, Tada and several others encouraged So Yoshizane to file a complaint about Korea's deliberate use of "Ulleungdo" despite knowing all too well that "Takeshima" was the Japanese name for the island. (Kim et al., 2020, 162)

The Korean Foreign Minister Yi Yō was unperturbed by So's letter, which essentially recommended that the Korean government refrain from using Ulleungdo to refer to Takeshima. In a letter courteously addressed to So Yoshizane, he explained that the main reason for the existence of the two names was because Koreans were well aware of Ulleungdo, which is located east of Ul-chin, and "had to be left vacant for many years because navigational routes to the island were exposed to high waves, rendering the routes very dangerous for travel." (Kim

et al., 2020, 166) In reference to An Yong-pok's arrest by the Japanese, the Korean Foreign Minister pointed out that when the "fishermen happened to visit the island, they were surprised to meet several Japanese citizens who had crossed the border and became involved in an altercation," whereupon your countrymen arrested the Koreans and forced them to visit Edo." (Kim et al., 2020, 166-167)

Regarding Japan's confusion about "Takeshima" being called "Ulleungdo," the Korean Foreign Minister explained that because "numerous bamboo trees grow on the island, where Koreans traditionally lived off of fishing, even Koreans temporarily called the island 'Chuk-to' (Takeshima in Japanese)—a fact which is also well known by many people in your country. Yi also pointed out that despite Japan's eagerness to prohibit Koreans from fishing near Takeshima by arguing that the island was within its jurisdiction, the Japanese were "hesitant about discussing the fault of Japanese citizens who had trespassed into Korea's maritime space." (Kim et al., 2020, 167) Yi stressed that it was "imperative for Japan to police its citizens and warn them to not trespass into Ulleungdo to prevent the occurrence of such negative altercations," it would be a greatly fortunate outcome to enhance the camaraderie between the two countries. (Kim et al., 2020, 167)

Although Tada and So must have been disgruntled and disappointed with their failure to obtain the response they desired to hear—Takeshima is definitely Japanese territory—they had no choice but to check the facts pertinent to the dispute themselves. After asking for Suyama Shoemon, an eminent agronomist, who replied that "a long time has passed since Takeshima had been a part of Korea." However, Suyama pointed out that if "Koreans, despite knowing that the Japanese had fished near Takeshima for 70 or 80 years and yet had not protested that they had trespassed into Korean waters," it was partially the Koreans' fault not to "consider maritime borders seriously." (Kim et al., 2020, 174) Therefore, Suyama suggested that the Bakufu inquire about where the origins of "Ulleungdo" can be found in Korean texts and why, on several occasions, the Korean government had "shown hospitality to stranded Japanese sailors thrice in the past 80 years and yet brand the current occasion as an intrusion." (Kim et al., 2020, 174) In short, the Bakufu felt that it had inquire whether Korea had to assume responsibility for failing to secure its maritime borders and inspect them and whether it was trying to avoid such responsibility by arbitrarily branding Japanese attempts to fish near Ulleungdo in 1693 as a particular intrusion when Korea did not do so on previous occasions.

However, to the *Bakufu's* dismay, the Korean government had grown tired of the altercation and had disallowed the Japanese messenger to deliver the message directly at Han-yang, for the Korean government perceived allowing such a privilege as an insult to national sovereignty and prestige. The letter which the Koreans had told the messenger to send as a reply merely repeated what Yi Yō had told So Yoshizane earlier, and added that "Takeshima is known as Ulleungdo in Korea and is located between the waters of Kyong-sang and Kangwŏn Provinces. This is a fact recorded in *Yo-to* (The Complete Map of Korea) and was already known since the days of the Silla and Ko-ryo dynasties. During the Choson dynasty, the government "frequently captured fugitives who ran away to the island to send them back to the peninsula. Although the island "may seem to have been abandoned," the Korean government warned that such an appearance should under no circumstances be mistaken as a sign suggesting that "indiscriminate intrusions are welcomed by the Korean government." (Kim et al., 2020, 189)

Furthermore, the Korean government warned that since "all forms of exchanges between the two countries can only be made through this island at the present moment, any stranded ship, would henceforth be considered as enemy vessels." Finally, if the Korean government is

constantly reminding all officials posted near Korea's maritime borders to "sternly keep promises," the Japanese government ought to "do the same by clearly defining borders and assuring that no intrusions or trespassing would occur in the future for the sake of maintaining good faith between the two countries." (Kim et al., 2020, 189)

In short, the Korean government gave a stern and cold warning to the Japanese government that because Ulleungdo had long been confirmed by ancient historical records to unequivocally be Korea's territory since the Three Kingdom's period, not only was there no doubt in Korea about Ulleungdo absolutely being a Korean territory, but if the problem of responsibility should be addressed, that problem singularly lies with the Japanese government's failure to clearly define borders and apply appropriate security measures, for Korea had already and regularly done so, which meant that if Japan could make consummate efforts to secure its own maritime borders, no future intrusions would disrupt relations between the two countries. Whether Ulleungdo would remain as a constant thorn preventing the restoration of peaceful relations between the two countries or not rested squarely with Japan because historical records and practical border controls were already in bountiful supply in Korea; Japan only had to promise that it would strengthen its sense of geographical parameters to ascertain that no unnecessary altercations would negatively impact relations between the two countries in the near or distant future.

Realizing that they had been given a cold shoulder and that the Koreans would not welcome any further disputations, and instead consider such attempts to be direct challenges to Korean sovereignty, the *Bakufu* realized that it had no choice but to confirm and ascertain whether the Korean government's blame regarding Japan's failure to clearly identify maritime borders was actually true. Failure to do so might mean crossing a river of no return in terms of the two countries' diplomatic relations, and because Japan enjoyed the privilege of being a primary importer of Korean ginseng, which could be sold to China for high profits, severing relations with Korea might mean losing a major source of foreign income. Furthermore, the *Bakufu* knew that its public popularity and legitimacy were also on the line, since Japan enjoyed a steady stream of cultural exchanges with Korea through colorful celebratory receptions of the T'ongsinsa—a major diplomatic ceremony welcomed and enjoyed by the Japanese public. (Tashiro, 1982, 283-306)

In short, the *Bakufu* had much to lose in severing ties with Korea, since it would not only result in incurring a major economic loss during a time when interactions with foreigners was strictly monitored, but also had the probability of damaging the Bakufu's own legitimacy and support among the Japanese public for preventing them from enjoying a rare occasion of exchanging knowledge about foreign culture in general, since Korea and China were the only significant windows through which Japan could learn about the outside world during the late 17th century.

Therefore, the *Bakufu* could not assume the risk of provoking the Korean government any further and decided that So Yoshitsugu, the new Daimyo of Tsushima had to determine the truth behind "Takeshima" himself. Therefore, So inquired about whether "Takeshima" was indeed Ulleungdo and a part of Korea to the *Roju* of Edo. Since there was no better way to determine a nation's territorial sovereignty other than measuring the proximity of the territory, the *Roju* of Edo proceeded to measure the distance himself using various Japanese maps, only to find out that Ulleungdo was indeed Takeshima and it was much closer to Korea than Japan. (Kim et al., 2020, 28) In addition, the *Roju* discovered that a decree called *Isotakeshima Oboegaki* had proclaimed that Japanese fishermen were banned from visiting Takeshima to avoid unnecessary diplomatic conflicts with Korea, which implied that Japan was already well

aware that Ulleungdo was a foreign territory and therefore, it was natural for Takeshima to have a Korean name. (Kim et al., 2020, 27)

In short, Japan had inadvertently done Korea a service of checking Korea's territorial sovereignty over Ulleungdo based on approximately modern standards of international law, since geographical proximity is still a valid yardstick to determine territorial ownership and no country issues a permanent ban on a territory unless there is some threatening foreign presence or there is certainty that the territory is fundamentally irrelevant or out of bounds for a nation's citizens because it is a foreign property. So informed Tada about these facts and cautioned him to not provoke the Korean government any further, since all existing evidence concerning Takeshima pointed to the inevitable conclusion that Korea had a rightful ownership over the island.

Although Tada relayed the *Bakufu's* concession about Ulleungdo by adding the condition that the concession was not a "sign or a consequence of Korea's superiority over Japan," the phrase was merely a decoy through which Tada did not wish to reveal his humiliation about making a false charge that Koreans had trespassed on Japanese territory. It was the essence of admittance about Korea's sovereignty over Ulleungdo which was more important, for that had been the core issue of the original diplomatic altercation concerning Japan's interrogation of An Yongpok and Pak Ōtun. (Kim et al., 2020, 208) The *Bakufu* had to begrudgingly concede that "Takeshima" did have an alternative Korean name and because there was a precedent of banning Japanese access to Ulleungdo and because Ulleungdo much nearer to Korea than Japan, the *Bakufu* had to make what seemed from its perspective, a bitter concession that not only was the confusion over "Takeshima" having another alternative name a distinctly Japanese rather than a Korean problem, but also that considering relatively more objective indicators such as geographical proximity and the existence of a major legal precedent in the form of a Japanese ban on Japanese fishermen attempting to trespass Ulleungdo.

In other words, the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 is significant because it remains as a major Japanese document which decisively affirmed Korea's territorial sovereignty over Ulleungdo based on what can be described as approximate standards used in accordance with international law in the modern sense to determine territorial sovereignty. Ultimately, these findings imply that the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs is not only wrong to argue that it had "first established sovereignty over Takeshima (Dokdo) because Ulleungdo is the only livable space representing a nation's sovereignty over Dokdo, but also wrong to claim that Korea is "illegally occupying Dokdo" since the fact that Korea could lawfully claim Ulleungdo had already been established more than 2 centuries before Shimane Prefecture "incorporated" Dokdo in 1905 unbeknownst to a Korean government on the verge of becoming usurped by Japanese imperialism. (Bukh, 2015, 47-70)

THE DAJOKAN DIRECTIVE AND THE ENDURING RELEVANCE OF THE ULLEUNGDO DISPUTE OF 1693

Despite the Japanese government's insistence that the dispute had been resolved because of the "gracious magnanimity of the *Bakufu*" rather than a confirmation of Korea's superior diplomacy, the dispute's original conclusion proved to clearly be a sign of the latter even if the Koreans had no intention of making it be so. (Kim et al., 2020, 246-247) About 2 centuries later, the Dajokan, the highest governing body in the Meiji government certified the confirmation even before any formal request from the Korean government had been made. In 1877, the Japanese Ministry of the Interior inquired about Takeshima on behalf of Shimane Prefecture, especially with regard to the fact that "matters had been settled in the 12th year of

Genroku after Japan had sent its fourth reply and written a memorandum." (Kim et al., 2020, 246) More specifically, the Japanese Ministry of the Interior was inquiring whether the conclusion to the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693, in which Gozaemon reported back to So Yoshizane that "matters had been amicably settled" towards confirming Korean ownership of Ulleungdo, was still valid. (Kim et al., 2020, 267) After examining records of the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 and attaching the full transcript of exchanges between Japan and Korea as described in the preceding section of this article, the *Dajokan* issued a directive which unequivocally stated that "henceforth, Takeshima and one other island have no relation to Japan, so let this fact be widely and clearly known." (Kim et al., 2020, 247).

Although the statement was very brief, what establishes the statement's importance is not only the words used, but also the evidence on which the statement is based. The *Dajokan*'s use of the records concerning the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693-4 verbatim to reach its official conclusion that Ulleungdo (and by extension, Dokdo) had no relation to the Japanese mainland suggests that it not only acknowledged that all details, including ones examined in this article, were factually accurate, but also that, despite being nearly 2 centuries since the records were originally compiled, the Japanese records of the dispute still had a considerable legal standing in determining the precise owner of Ulleungdo.

The direct reference to the "fourth reply and a memorandum" suggests that the *Dajokan* fully acknowledged the Japanese admittance of Korean sovereignty over Ulleungdo following the Bakufu's exchange of letters with Yi Yo, and because the memorandum refers to So Yozatoshi's own private investigation into the matter himself, after which he declared that Ulleungdo ought to be classified as Korean territory, it follows that the Meiji government accepted So's conclusions and his decision to end the dispute in favor of Korea. The requirement that the irrelevance of Ulleungdo to Japan be "widely known" suggests that the Meiji government had elevated the decision stemming from the dispute to a final and an official judgment of the Meiji government itself, thereby proving that the Meiji government had declared the Ulleungdo Dispute's conclusion to be valid and therefore, no further questioning was necessary or required, even without consulting or negotiating further with the Korean government. In short, the *Dajokan* Directive of 1877 serves as decisive evidence that there is in legal and historical terms, no further dispute about Ulleungdo and Dokdo because the Meiji government had deemed such a course of action to be acceptable based on its independent research using Japanese records concerning the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 .

Since all judgments are susceptible to human error, it might be possible, as Tsukamoto claims, that the *Dajokan* misidentified the precise identity of "Takeshima" because "one other island" could theoretically imply other islands near Korea besides Dokdo. (Kim et al., 2020, 245) However, there are two problems with Tsukamoto's claim. First, even if "one other island" could refer to another island, Korea has some 3,000 islands. Although there is an island named *Chuk-to*, that island has no relation to Ulleungdo in any manner, whether geographical or historical, and therefore, is fundamentally irrelevant to the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 and the current dispute over Dokdo which only Japan thinks is ongoing with Korea. *Chuk-to* also has no relation to the fact that the *Dajokan* relied on the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693's records to reach its conclusion. In short, there is no reason to believe that "one other island" can mean any island other than Dokdo because neither Korea's *Chuk-to* nor the fact that the *Dajokan* perused the records concerning the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 have any relation to the Ulleungdo Dispute or Dokdo.

Second, Tsukamoto's claim overlooks the fact that the *Dajokan* actually did meticulously scrutinize records relating to the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693, especially the portion concerning

the Korean government's explanation about the existence of two names for Ulleungdo. While it cannot be precisely established why the *Dajokan* decided to examine this particular piece of evidence, it is clear that by accepting the real-time record of Gozaemon's inquiry and the Korean government's reply, the *Dajokan* was highly certain in issuing the final verdict of reconfirming the original conclusion. As the conclusion of the *Dajokan's* investigative report clearly stated, its official findings were based on the "negotiations the old government had undertaken with Choson in the 5th year of Genroku" and from such negotiations, the "Ministry of the Interior (*Naimusho*) was able to deduce that Takeshima had no relation with Japan." (Kim et al., 2020, 268) The *Dajokan's* report added no further details besides this statement, which is a definitive sign that the *Dajokan* trusted the veracity of the Japanese record concerning the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693, and declared the Ulleungdo Dispute to be definitively concluded through the confirmation of the original decision to recognize Ulleungdo and "one other island" to be Korean territories.

In other words, the *Dajokan* had not made any mistake in identifying "Takeshima" for if it is true that the *Dajokan* had made a mistake of such nature, then it follows that the *Dajokan* had made the fundamental error of selecting the wrong historical document from which its conclusion was based. However, as Younghoe Ch'oe correctly points out, Japan was only able to establish any kind of claim on sovereignty towards Ulleungdo in the late 17th century because records concerning the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 is the only existing piece of historical evidence from which the claim can arise. (Choe, 2015, 7) However, because even that piece of evidence clearly shows that Japan begrudgingly concluded the dispute in favor of Korea and because the *Dajokan* affirmed the validity of that conclusion by invoking the records verbatim, it is clear that the *Dajokan* did not make any mistake in selecting the exchanges between the Japanese and Korean government concerning the dispute in 1693. There could not have been any error in interpreting "Takeshima" in the context of the 17th century because no other Japanese record from years preceding the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 existed when the *Dajokan* was making its official decision. In short, both the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 and the *Dajokan Directive* of 1877 must be holistically understood to constitute a unitary body of decisive and irrefutable evidence that Japan had verified and acknowledged Korea's sovereignty over Ulleungdo, and because Ulleungdo remains as the single and closest geographical representative of Dokdo as a livable space, Korea's sovereignty over Dokdo was also established through this body of evidence.

CONCLUSION

The Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 began with a seemingly minor incident involving a sudden arrest of two Korean fishermen who had visited Ulleungdo and were threatened by their Japanese counterparts to never visit the island again, as the Japanese considered Ulleungdo to be their territory. However, upon exchanging letters and posing inquiries to the Korean government, So Yoshizawa, the Daimyo of Tsushima and his messenger Tada Gozaemon, were surprised to learn that the Korean government had considered Ulleungdo as a historically legitimate Korean territory, and that the Koreans were unperturbed by the use of dual names to refer to the island. From the Koreans' perspective, these two essential facts which had stupefied the Japanese were common knowledge because Ulleungdo already had a long history of Korean governance dating back to the Three Kingdoms' Period and the Korean-Japanese name of Chukto or Takeshima merely described the fact that bamboo trees grew abundantly on Ulleungdo. Although the Japanese tried to reason with the Koreans to concede that "Takeshima" was Japanese territory because the Koreans had practiced Kong-to for nearly 80

years and did not prohibit Japanese fishermen from fishing near Ulleungdo's waters, and Koreans had rescued stranded Japanese sailors without interrogating about why the sailors had visited Ulleungdo, the Koreans had grown increasingly tired and annoyed with Japan's repetitive questions about an island whose national identity could not be changed due to numerous pieces of historical evidence already existing in Korea and even in Japan. Therefore, the Koreans issued a final ultimatum that all foreign ships stranded near Ulleungdo would be seized upon sight, and the Japanese Bakufu had no choice but to ascertain Ulleungdo's sovereignty to lie with Korea for themselves.

However, the real importance of that conclusion does not merely rest with the fact that it had resolved a territorial dispute which could have erupted into a major diplomatic conflict, but in the fact that the legal validity of the conclusion still remained relevant nearly 200 years later. The Japanese Ministry of the Interior submitted an inquiry about the precise nationality of Ulleungdo, and because the *Dajokan* had the entire record of the exchanges made between Korea and Japan during the 1693 dispute, the *Dajokan* wasted no time in reconfirming the same conclusion which the *Bakufu* had drawn earlier. What the simplicity behind the *Dajokan's* method of reaffirming the original conclusion suggests are that Japan officially recognized Ulleungdo as Korean territory as a permanent fact and that the inclusion of the phrase "and one other island" suggests that the *Dajokan* Directive considered Dokdo to also be Korea's territory. Since Ulleungdo is the only island adjacent to Dokdo to form a relationship in which the former represents the latter as a livable geographical space, it follows that there is no question about what the precise identity of "one other island" must be other than Dokdo.

Ultimately, what this article's examination of the Ulleungdo Dispute's records shows is that the Ulleungdo Dispute confirmed Korea's ownership of Ulleungdo (Takeshima in 17th century Japanese usage) and in affirming Korea's ownership over Ulleungdo, the *Dajokan's* findings demonstrated by implication, that "one other island" must indeed have no relation with Japan because Ulleungdo's geographical significance can only be explained through the existence of Dokdo. The *Bakufu's* conclusion about the Ulleungdo Dispute of 1693 retains its relevance to the 21st century, not because it confirmed Japanese sovereignty over Dokdo but rather affirmed that of Korea over both Ulleungdo and Dokdo because the conclusion was influential enough to live on for another 200 years to inform the Meiji government that both Ulleungdo and Dokdo are indeed Korean territories.

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