

Letter to the Students of SMB School

Dear Students,

Thank you for your letter. I read through your comments in the letter about the Takeshima (Dokdo) issue several times. I believe that the points you have made can be summarized as below. I have included your interpretations of history, which are followed by my thoughts on each point. Let's think about the issue together.

1. Dokdo became Korean territory as a result of Ahn Yong-bok's activities.
2. Japan's Dajokan (Grand Council of State) Order concluded that Dokdo had no relation to Japanese territory.
3. The *Sejong Sillok Jinji (Geographical Appendix to the Veritable Records of King Sejong)* states that Dokdo was subordinate to the Uljin-hyeon (district) and located near Ulleungdo.
4. The *Samguk Sagi (History of the Three Kingdoms)* states that General Kim Isabu of Silla subjugated Ulleungdo and Dokdo and made them part of Silla's territory.

1. The activity of Ahn Yong-bok in question was his June 1696 visit to the Tottori-*han* (Tottori domain) in Japan, at which time he allegedly negotiated with the lord of the Tottori domain to have the islands of Ulleungdo (Utsuryo Island) and Dokdo (Takeshima) recognized as Korean territory.

However, by January 1696, the Edo Shogunate had already prohibited Japanese vessels from sailing to Ulleungdo. Ahn Yong-bok's visit to the Tottori domain occurred five months later. So, the Edo Shogunate had prohibited Japanese ships from crossing the sea to Ulleungdo before Ahn Yong-bok visited the Tottori domain. This fact proves that the ban on travel to Utsuryo Island had nothing to do with Ahn Yong-bok's activities. Furthermore, not only did Ahn Yong-bok not negotiate with the lord of the Tottori domain, he was deported by the Tottori domain under the order of the Edo Shogunate. These facts are also stated in the *Tsukou Ichiran* compilation of documents related to the foreign relations of the Edo Shogunate.

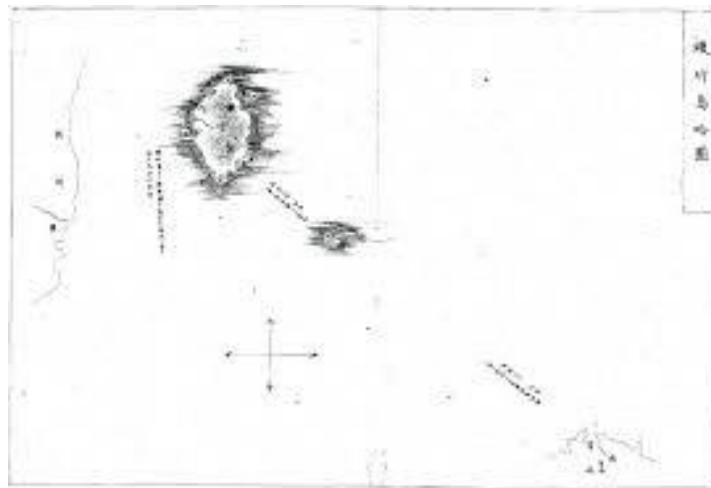
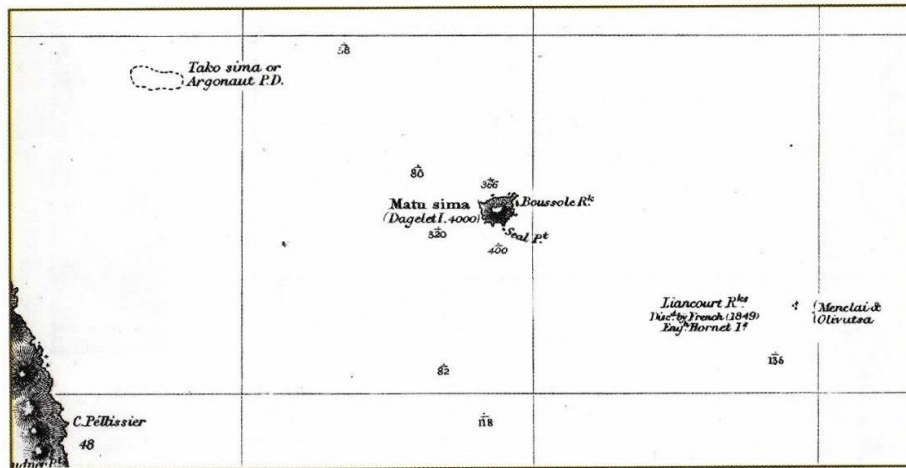
The *Sukjong Sillok (Annals of King Sukjong)* record the activities of Ahn Yong-bok. Nevertheless, this is in the testimony that Ahn Yong-bok offered when he was being

interrogated as a criminal for secretly voyaging to Japan at the *Pibyōnsa-tungrok* (or “Border Defense Council” of Joseon). In order to be able to judge whether he was telling the truth or not, it is necessary to read related historical materials and documents to see if they corroborate his statements.

2. The Dajokan Order of 1877 states “Takeshima and one other island have no connection to Japan.” If we just consider the “Rough Sketch of Isotakeshima” (*Isotakeshima Ryakuzu*) submitted by Shimane Prefecture, it is obvious that “Takeshima” there refers to Ulleungdo, and the “one other island” called “Matsushima” must be Takeshima (Dokdo).

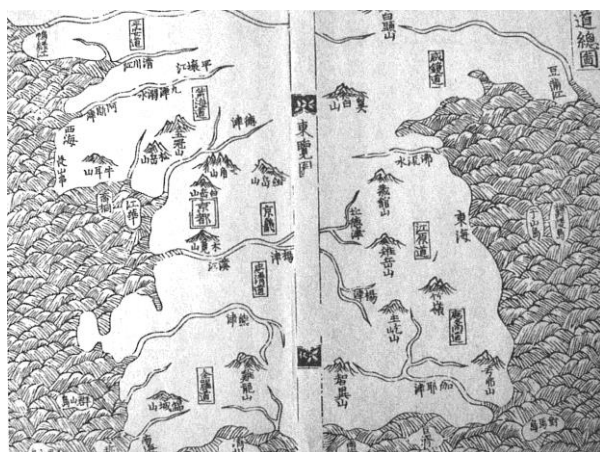
However, we need to confirm that the Takeshima and Matsushima depicted in the “Rough Sketch of Isotakeshima” are the same islands as the “Takeshima and one other island” mentioned in the Dajokan Order. The reason why is that nautical charts from that time refer to Ulleungdo (Utsuryo Island) as “Matsushima,” which is different from the “Matsushima” shown in the “Rough Sketch of Isotakeshima.” In addition, these same nautical charts, besides showing Takeshima and Matsushima, also show today’s Takeshima (Dokdo) under the name “Liancourt Rocks.”

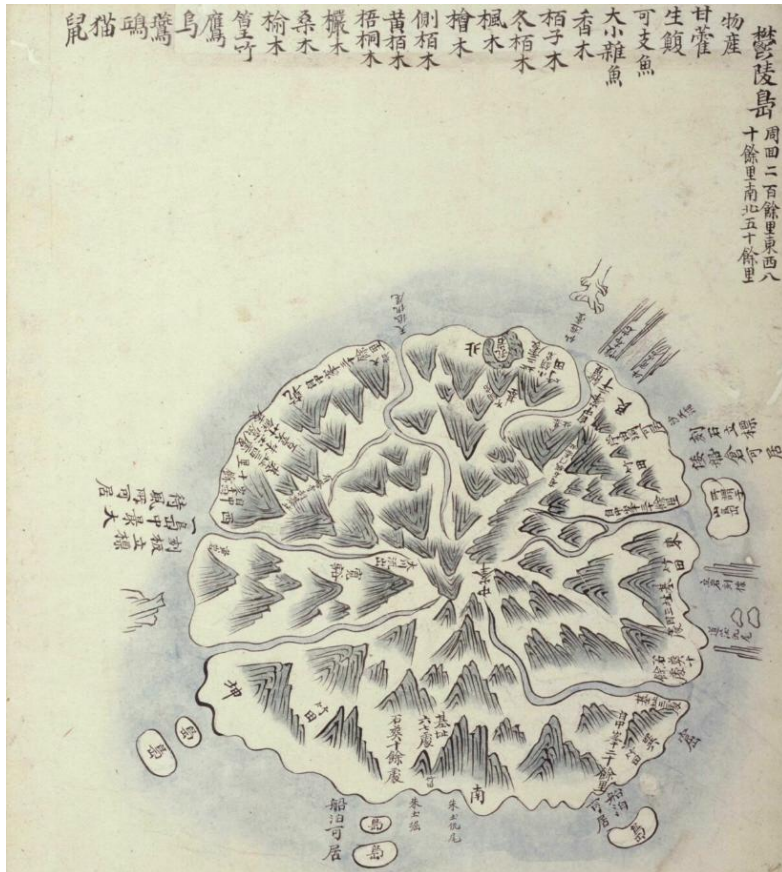
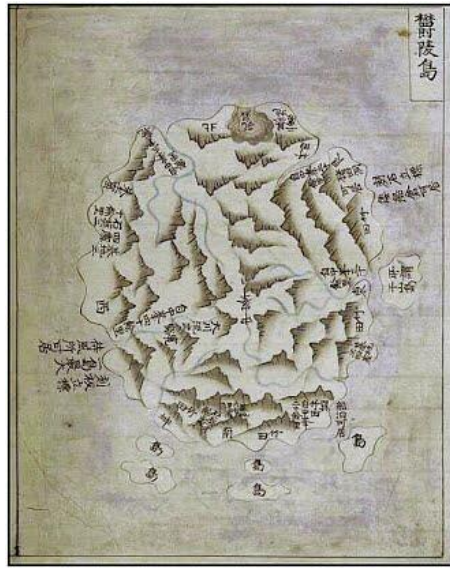
At the time that the Dajokan Order was issued, the nautical charts showed three different islands; namely, Takeshima, Matsushima, and today’s Takeshima (Dokdo). If the Dajokan consulted these nautical charts and determined that “Takeshima and one other island have no connection to Japan,” it clearly was not referring to today’s Takeshima (Dokdo) in the phrase “Takeshima and one other island.” This is because at that time Takeshima (Dokdo) was described as “Liancourt Rocks.” Therefore, when the “Liancourt Rocks,” which had been referred to as Matsushima in the “Rough Sketch of Isotakeshima,” became Japanese territory, they were given the name Takeshima, the name commonly used for Ulleungdo (Utsuryo Island), which was described on nautical charts as Matsushima.



3. Takeshima (Dokdo) is visible from Ulleungdo. As such, in “*Learn the Truth about Dokdo*” and other textbooks, the words “is visible” in the *Sejong Sillok Jinji* (*Geographical Appendix to the Veritable Records of King Sejong*) have been interpreted to mean that Usando (Usan Island) “is visible” from Ulleungdo, and that Usan Island, observable from Ulleungdo, refers to Dokdo. Nevertheless, the expression “is visible” used in the *Geographical Appendix to the Veritable Records of King Sejong* cannot be interpreted to mean that Dokdo is visible from Ulleungdo. That is because the *Sinjeung Dongguk Yeoji Seungnam* (*Revised and Augmented Edition of the Survey of the Geography of Korea*) uses the expression “is visible” in an entry stating that “Ulleungdo is visible from Uljin County (i.e., from the Korean mainland).” So, in effect, this geographical work is saying that “Ulleungdo and Usando are the same island.” That is why in his *Daedong Jiji* (*Geographical Accounts of the Great East Land* (meaning Korea), the 19th century geographer Kim Jeong-ho shows Ulleungdo but does not show Usando.

The reason for this was that Kim was not sure of the location of the Usando mentioned in the entry from the *Geographical Appendix* to the *Veritable Records of King Sejong*. Usando was first indicated on the “*Ulleungdo Dohyeong*” (“Map of Utsuryo Island”) drafted by inspector Bak Seok-chang in 1711 after its existence had been confirmed. On this map, Bak shows Usando as a rocky outcropping roughly two kilometers off the east coast of Ulleungdo. This Usando is also depicted variously to the right or upper right of Ulleungdo on maps associated with Chong Sang-gi’s “*Dongguk Daejiji*” (“*Great Map of the East Country*” [i.e., Korea]). “Learn the Truth about Dokdo” makes no mention of Bak Seok-chang’s *Ulleungdo Dohyeong*, even though it is extremely important for determining the facts. Furthermore, during his interrogation by the Korean authorities, Ang Yong-bok stated, “Usando is the Japanese ‘Matsushima.’” That is because this Usando (Matsushima) he was talking about was the island to the northeast (upper right) of Ulleungdo. However, Dokdo is actually 87.4 km to the southeast of Ulleungdo. The Usando that Ang Yong-bok was speaking of was definitely not Dokdo.







18세기에 제작된 정상기의 「동국전도」를 19세기에 그대로 옮겨 그린 지도야. 울릉도의 동쪽에 독도(于山)가 그려져 있어.





4. Based on an entry for the 13th year of the reign of King Jijeung of Silla in the *Samguk Sagi* (*History of Three Kingdoms*), the textbook “Learn the Truth about Dokdo” claims that General Kim Isabu made the Usan-guk (State of Usan), which included Dokdo, part of the kingdom of Silla. On this basis, it asserts that Dokdo was Korean territory as early as 512. However, the *Samguk Sagi* clearly states that the State of Usan was a sea island, the alternate name of which was Ulleungdo, and included “an area of 100 *ri* square.” That is to say, the State of Usan and Ulleungdo were one and the same, and its territory spanned “100 *ri* square.” In other words, it was roughly equivalent in size to a traditional county or district (*gunhyeon*). As this entry makes no reference whatsoever to Dokdo, there is no basis to conclude that Dokdo was a territory attached to Ulleungdo.

There is also an entry about the State of Usan in the *Samguk Yusa* (*Memorabilia of the Three Kingdoms*). It confirms that the circumference of the State of Usan measured 26,370 *bu* (or “paces”). This is roughly equivalent to the current circumference of Ulleungdo. Without a doubt the State of Usan was Ulleungdo, the island “100 *ri* square in area” with a “circumference of 26,370 *bu*.” Documentary evidence is required as proof that Dokdo was somehow attached to the State of Usan if that claim is to be

demonstrated to be true. Lacking such evidence, it is impossible to say that Dokdo was subordinate to the State of Usan or was Korean territory as early as the year 512.

The above are my thoughts concerning the proof you have offered in your letter to show that Dokdo is Korea territory. Wouldn't you say that your previous thoughts and the real history are somewhat different? When considering the history of the past, in order to clarify one's thinking, it is necessary to prepare reliable documents. You have been studying the Takeshima (Dokdo) issue by reading the textbook "Learn the Truth about Dokdo," but I would suggest that you study the historical facts contained in documents that the textbook does not cite in order to grasp historical truth. Please read your text again, comparing it to what I have written in this letter, and then send me your thoughts.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Masao Shimojo

Chairman

Takeshima Dispute Research Council

Shimane Prefecture