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**THE KOREAN-JAPANESE TERRITORIAL DISPUTE  
OVER DOKDO/TAKESHIMA**

by

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December 2007

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**THE KOREAN-JAPANESE TERRITORIAL DISPUTE OVER  
DOKDO/TAKESHIMA**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the Korean-Japanese territorial dispute over the sovereignty of Dokdo/Takeshima. The Japanese government has argued that Dokdo/Takeshima is inherently Japanese territory. But this thesis demonstrates the baselessness of this argument by exploring the two countries' views of Dokdo/Takeshima's status before and after the Russo-Japanese War and focuses in particular on Japan's incorporation of Dokdo/Takeshima in 1905 during the Russo-Japanese War, an important episode in the contemporary dispute over the island's status.

Before the Russo-Japanese War, both Korea and Japan recognized Dokdo/Takeshima as Korean territory. In the course of the war, Japan attempted to offset Russian threats to Japan's sea lanes by constructing observation posts along the Korean coastline. In doing so, Japanese officials incited a Japanese fisherman to petition to incorporate Dokdo/Takeshima into Japanese territory. In the end, Japan surreptitiously incorporated Dokdo/Takeshima into its territory and constructed an observation post on the island that was dismantled after the war. Nevertheless, Tokyo continued to recognize Dokdo/Takeshima as part of Korean territory even after its incorporation in 1905 and its formal annexation of Korea in 1910.

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I would like to thank those who will read my humble thesis. This thesis is intended neither to promote strong Korean nationalism nor an anti-Japanese sentiment, but to promote rational consensus between the Korean and Japanese people, who seek a real reconciliation and friendship based on a level-headed recognition of historical fact.

Finally, I thank God, who always has been, is, and will be beside me.



## I. INTRODUCTION

The territorial dispute over the Dokdo/Takeshima<sup>1</sup> has been one of the most prominent obstacles to the establishment of good relations between Korea and Japan. The new millennium started with then Japanese Prime Minister Mori Yoshiro's remark which claimed the Japanese sovereignty over Dokdo in 2000. In 2002, the Japanese Ministry of Education approved historical textbooks which promoted Japan's title to Dokdo. In 2003, the issuing of a Korean stamp commemorating Dokdo troubled the Japanese people. In 2004, the Japanese right-wing group, Nihon Shidokai, disturbed the Korean people when it announced its plan to land on Dokdo.

The Japanese establishment of "Takeshima Day" in 2005, which was intended to celebrate its annexation of Dokdo in 1905, provoked large scale protests and anti-Japanese demonstrations in Korea. In 2006, Japan's attempt to send a survey ship to Dokdo highly intensified tensions between the two countries; Japan cancelled its plan after negotiating with a special envoy from South Korea. In May 2007, a supplementary textbook mentioning Dokdo as Japanese sovereign territory was approved by the Japanese Ministry of Education for use in Japanese schools. Even though the number of students who study with this book is low, the fact that it is in use increased the South Korean people's level of antagonism toward Japan.

In addition, historical distortions in some Japanese history textbooks, which glorify and justify Japanese activities before and after World War II, also have strengthened anti-Japanese sentiment in both China and Korea. The fact that both Japan and Korea claim sovereignty over Dokdo critically affects the relationship between the two countries. Military conflict over it, at the worst, is not the question if we do not carefully handle this problem. At any rate, it is clear that this issue will have a negative impact on the development of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hereafter, the author uses the term Dokdo to refer to the island in order to avoid confusion. However, the terms "Takeshima," "the Liancourt Rock," or "Liancodo" are also used, based on their appearance in the referenced materials. The name of the islands has been changed time after time, and different sources also use different names that reflect their perspective, in this case Korean or Japanese.

There are many territorial disputes between states that try to maximize their economic interests by acquiring areas rich in oils, natural gases, minerals, or fisheries. Dokdo appears to be one of these when one looks at the intensive tension between the two countries concerning the establishment of the 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), which involves the issues of fishery, mining undersea minerals, and exploiting resources in vicinity of Dokdo as well as Ulleungdo.

However, this thesis argues that Dokdo is a historical issue rather a political one. It further argues that this issue has been politicized in both countries in spite of the fact that very few people know the historical facts, i.e., what happened with respect to Dokdo? This issue will not be resolved until both countries' peoples understand the core of the problem. Therefore, this thesis seeks to recast the highly politicized issue into a rationally acceptable historical one, in the expectation that the truth about Dokdo will help overcome the emotional and political mobilization of both peoples.

#### **A. PURPOSE**

This thesis explores the incorporation of Dokdo by Japan at the time of the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War in order to trace the roots of the present territorial dispute. Assessing the historical facts will help answer the following questions:

- Which country had sovereignty over Dokdo before the Russo-Japanese War?
- What is the relationship between the war and Dokdo?
- When did Japan incorporate Dokdo?
  - What was the process of incorporation by Japan?
  - Why did Japan incorporate Dokdo?
- How did the Japanese treat Dokdo after Japan's formal annexation of Korea?
- Finally, what are the implications of the answers to the aforementioned questions?

## B. GEOGRAPHY OF DOKDO

Dokdo consists of two small rocky islands, called Dongdo (East Island) and Seodo (West Island) in Korean, and 89 small islets. It is located in the East Sea/Sea of Japan at 131°51'22" east longitude and 37°14'18" north latitude. Dokdo is located 217 kilometers (117 nautical miles) east of Chukpyon on the central South Korean mainland, and 87 kilometers (47 nautical miles) southeast of Ulleungdo.<sup>2</sup> Dokdo is about 200 kilometers (108 nautical miles) north of the main Japanese island of Honshu, and about 158 kilometers (85 nautical miles) northwest of the Japanese island of Oki.<sup>3</sup> Dokdo can be seen from Ulleungdo on a clear day, while it cannot be seen from Oki Island, the closest Japanese territory. The island group has a total land area of 23 hectares (186,121 square meters).<sup>4</sup> Only three Korean civilians live on the islands. Dokdo has been guarded by the Korean maritime police, who have been stationed at Dongdo (East Island) since 1954.

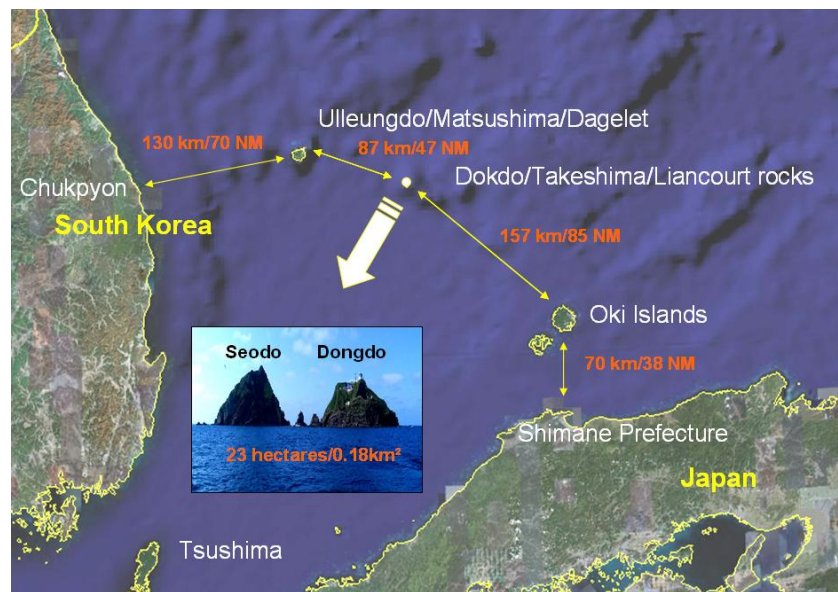


Figure 1. The Geography of Dokdo/Takeshima<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ulleungdo is called “Matsushima” in Japanese, and is known as “Dagelet” to Westerners.

<sup>3</sup> Alan J. Day, ed., *Border and Territorial Disputes* (New York: Longman, 1987), 337.

<sup>4</sup> The group was measured by the Korean Alpine Society survey team in November 1952; the whole area is equivalent to 400 square meters. Hideki Kajimura, “The Question of Takeshima/Tokdo,” *Korea Observer* 28, no. 3 (1997), 433.

<sup>5</sup> Dokdo in Korea, [www.dokdo.go.kr](http://www.dokdo.go.kr) (accessed December 13, 2007).

## C. HISTORY OF THE DISPUTE AFTER WORLD WAR II

The dispute over Dokdo emerged with the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which was signed on September 8, 1951. At first, the Allied Powers' policy concerning the sovereignty of Dokdo was clear: Japan had to relinquish its sovereignty over Dokdo. The first five drafts of the Treaty required that Dokdo be returned to Korea.<sup>6</sup> For example, the November 2, 1949 draft (Chapter II, Territorial Clauses, Article 6) states that:

Japan hereby renounces in favor of Korea all rights and titles to the Korean mainland territory and all offshore Korean islands, including Quelpart (Shaishu To), the Nan How group (San To or Komun Do) which forms Port Hamilton (Tonankai), Dagelet island (Utsuryo To, or Matsu Shima), Liancourt Rocks (Takeshima), and all other islands and islets to which Japan has acquired title lying outside the line described in Article 3 and to the east of the meridian 124° 15' E. longitude, north of the parallel 33° N. latitude, and west of a line from the seaward terminus of the boundary approximately three nautical miles from the mouth of the Tumen River to a point in 37° 30' N. latitude, 132° 40' E. longitude.<sup>7</sup>

But one month later, the sixth draft of December 1949 included Dokdo as Japanese territory. Kimie Hara gives two reasons for this change.<sup>8</sup> First, a commentary on the fifth draft from William J. Sebald, political advisor to the Supreme Commander, Allied Powers in Japan, to the State Department might have influenced this change. Sebald's commentary stated, "Recommend reconsideration Liancourt Rocks (Takeshima). Japan's claim to these islands is old and appears valid. Security considerations might conceivably envisage weather and radar stations there."<sup>9</sup> Second, strategic considerations might have influenced the change.<sup>10</sup> According to Hara,

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<sup>6</sup> Kimie Hara, "50 Years from San Francisco: Re-Examining the Peace Treaty and Japan's Territorial Problems," *Pacific Affairs* 74, no. 3 (2001): 369.

<sup>7</sup> National Archives, Files of the Department of State, Office of Northeast Asia Affairs, Records Related to the Treaty of Peace with Japan-Subject File, 1945-41, Box 6, NND913302, RG59, Lot 56D527, Box 1, as cited in Hara, 369.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Hara, "50 Years from San Francisco," 368-369.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 370.

This was in late 1949, in the midst of escalation of the cold war, when communism was expanding internationally and had just taken power in China. Japan therefore came to be viewed as the country of primary importance for U.S. strategy in Asia, whereas Korea, whose future appeared unclear, was accorded only secondary importance. If the communists of the North came to dominate the whole of Korea, it was preferable for those islands (Takeshima) in the Sea of Japan not to be Korean territory.<sup>11</sup>

Consequently, the Allied Powers' policy toward Dokdo lost consistency. The sixth, eighth, ninth, and fourteenth drafts listed Dokdo as Japanese territory, while the seventh, tenth through thirteenth, and fifteenth through eighteenth drafts and the final draft did not clearly mention the status of Dokdo. In the end, the peace treaty's Article 2 (a) sowed the seeds of the dispute between Korea and Japan by leaving Dokdo out entirely, stating only that "Japan, recognizing the independence of Korea, renounces all right, title and claim to Korea, including the islands of Quelpart, Port Hamilton and Dagelet."<sup>12</sup>

In July 1951, the then-South Korean ambassador to the United States, You Chan Yang, sent a letter to then-Secretary of State Dean G. Acheson requesting that "Dokdo" and "Parangdo" be listed into the treaty as territories that Japan should renounce.<sup>13</sup> However, Acheson denied the Korean ambassador's request.<sup>14</sup> In January 1952, three months before the peace treaty came into force, the then-South Korean president Syngman Rhee proclaimed Korean jurisdiction over waters ranging from 60 nautical miles up to 170 miles from the Korean coast. The so-called "Syngman Rhee Line" or "peace line," included Dokdo within its boundaries.<sup>15</sup> Since then, the dispute has persisted for more than five decades.

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<sup>11</sup> Hara, "50 Years from San Francisco, 371.

<sup>12</sup> Here, those islands were internationally recognized by the Western countries at that time; Quelpart is currently Jeju, Port Hamilton is Geomundo, and Dagelet is Ulleungdo, in the Republic of Korea.

<sup>13</sup> This document can be found at [http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/takeshima/pdfs/g\\_sfjoyaku02.pdf](http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/takeshima/pdfs/g_sfjoyaku02.pdf) (accessed August 15, 2007).

<sup>14</sup> This document can be found at [http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/takeshima/pdfs/g\\_sfjoyaku03.pdf](http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/takeshima/pdfs/g_sfjoyaku03.pdf) (accessed August 15, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> Day, *Border and Territorial Disputes*, 337.

## D. LITERATURE REVIEW

While there are many books and articles related to this issue written both in Korean and Japanese, there are only a few articles and books concerning this issue in English. However, because this writer does not read Japanese, the variety of resources for this research have been limited to original sources written in Korean, Japanese scholars' works translated into Korean, some works translated from Japanese into English, and a few articles written in English. Nevertheless, the sources available in Korean or English should make it possible to examine the argument and critiques of both countries.

Drawing a line among the approaches to the Dokdo issue is relatively simple. The differences fall into three categories. The first concerns the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty, the second concerns the relevance of the historical record dating back to antiquity, and the third concerns the validity and legality of the Japanese incorporation of Dokdo in 1905. According to the literature, each country's argument is almost the same.

In order to comprehend the differences between the two approaches as well as the two countries, a review of the current Japanese government's position toward the Dokdo issue is a good place to begin.<sup>16</sup>

- In the light of historical facts and based upon international law, it is apparent that Takeshima is an inherent part of the territory of Japan.
- The occupation of Takeshima by the Republic of Korea is an illegal occupation undertaken on absolutely no basis in international law. Any measures taken with regard to Takeshima by the Republic of Korea based on such an illegal occupation have no legal justification. (Note: The Republic of Korea has yet to demonstrate a clear basis for its claims that,

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<sup>16</sup> The main argument of the first school of thought, which upholds the Japanese government's position, is well summarized in Benjamin K. Sibbett, "Tokdo or Takeshima? The Territorial Dispute between Japan and the Republic of Korea," *Fordham International Law Journal* 21 (1998): 1606-1646. Another good summary is presented by Byung-Ryull Kim, *Dokdo-e daehan ilbonsarmadul'ui Jujang* (The Japanese Arguments on Dokdo) (Seoul: Dadamedia, 2001). The main arguments of the Japanese scholars, and criticisms of these arguments are well summarized in Kim, *Dokdo Non-Jaeng* (A Debate on Dokdo) (Seoul: Dadamedia, 2005), 108-224. A debate between famous Japanese scholar Simozo Masao and two Korean scholars, Byung-Ryull Kim and Chang-Kwon Kwak, shows the main points of arguments between the two schools of thought and the two countries. Kim, *A Debate on Dokdo*, 283-433.

prior to Japan's effective control over Takeshima and establishment of sovereignty, the Republic of Korea had previously demonstrated effective control over Takeshima).<sup>17</sup>

## 1. The First Debate: Interpretation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

The first debate is over the interpretation of the San Francisco Peace Treaty signed in September 1951. While a first school of thought maintains that Dokdo was returned to Japan,<sup>18</sup> a second school of thought complains that Dokdo was not returned to Japan.<sup>19</sup> The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereafter, MOFA), based on the first school of thought, states that:

(1) The San Francisco Peace Treaty, signed in September 1951, stipulated that Japan should recognize the independence of Korea, and that Japan should renounce all right, title and claim to “Korea, including the islands of Quelpart, Port Hamilton and Dagelet.”

(2) Upon learning of this section drafted by the United States and United Kingdom, in July 1951, the ROK submitted a letter to Dean G. Acheson, the Secretary of State of the United States, from You Chan Yang, Korean Ambassador to the United States. This letter contained, “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

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<sup>17</sup> Japan, MOFA, *The Issue of Takeshima*, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/index.html> (accessed May 28, 2007). Most recently, in April-May 2007, the Japanese MOFA remodeled its internet homepage, strengthening and defending its previous arguments after being criticized by several scholars. This quotation is from the revised Japanese MOFA's argument. The old argument reads: Based on historical facts and international law, it is apparent that Takeshima is an integral part of Japan's sovereign territory. The occupation of Takeshima by the Republic of Korea is an illegal occupation undertaken with absolutely no basis whatsoever in international law. Any measures taken with regard to Takeshima by the Republic of Korea based on such an illegal occupation have no legal justification. (Note: The Republic of Korea has yet to demonstrate a clear basis for its claims that, prior to Japan's effective rule over Takeshima and establishment of sovereignty, the Republic of Korea had previously demonstrated effective rule over Takeshima).

<sup>18</sup> Kawakami Kenzo (天上健三), *A Historical and Geographical Study on Takeshima (Takeshima no rekishi chirigakuteki kenkyu, 竹島の歴史地理學的研究)* (Tokyo: Kinkoshoten (古今書院), 1966), 252-256; 植田捷雄, “竹島の歸屬をめぐる日韓紛争,”一橋論業, 54 卷 1 號 (1965), 23-24; 皆川洸, “竹島紛争と國際判例,” 前原光雄教授還歴記念, 國際法學の諸問題 (東京: 慶應通信, 1963), 368-369; 高野雄一, 日本の領土 (東京: 東京大學出版部, 1962), 69, quoted in Kim, *The Japanese Arguments on Dokdo*.

<sup>19</sup> Young Koo Kim, *A Pursuit of Truth in the Dokdo Island Issue: Letters to a Young Japanese Man* (Seoul: Bubyongsa, 2003); Yong-Ha Shin, *Hankook-gwa Ilbon-ui Dokdo Youngyookwon NonJaeng* (The Korean-Japanese Dispute over the Sovereignty of Dokdo) (Seoul: Hanyang University Press, 2003), 203-241; Shin, *Dokdo-ui Minjok Youngto-sa Yeon'gu* (A Territorial and Historical Study on Dokdo) (Seoul: Jisik Sanupsa, 1996), 241-322; Byung-Ryull Kim and Naito Seichu, *Hanil Jeunmoon-ga-ga Bon Dokdo* (The Korean-Japanese Experts' View on Dokdo) (Seoul: Dadamedia, 2006), 119-131, 275-293.

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, Dagelet, Dokdo and Parangdo.”

(3) In August of the same year, the U.S. responded to the above-mentioned request, with a letter from Dean Rusk, United States Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs to Ambassador Yang. The content of the response was, “...the United States Government does not feel that the Treaty (San Francisco Peace Treaty) should adopt the theory that Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration on August 9, 1945 constituted a formal or final renunciation of sovereignty by Japan over the areas dealt with in the Declaration. 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. The island does not appear ever before to have been claimed by Korea.”

Based on this correspondence, it is evident that Takeshima has been affirmed as part of the territory of Japan.<sup>20</sup>

When the United States denied the South Korean government's request to include Dokdo in the treaty as Korean territory, it seems that the United States was in favor of the Japanese side. However, considering that Japan had made every effort to retain its rights over several territories, which the Imperial Japan had acquired before and during the

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<sup>20</sup> Japan, MOFA, *The Issue of Takeshima*, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/position.html> (accessed May 28, 2007). The old argument reads: In all of the documents regarding the series of measures taken prior to the conclusion of the Treaty of the Peace with Japan (Directive SCAPIN-677 issued by the General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers on January 29, 1946, provides for an interim cessation by Japan of the exercise or attempt to exercise governmental or administrative authority over Takeshima, and Directive SCAPIN-1033 of June 22, 1946, places Takeshima outside the area delineated by the MacArthur Line, which established areas in which Japanese fishing, whaling and similar operations were authorized), it is made clear that the documents do not represent final decisions concerning the attribution of Japanese sovereign territory, and it is also clear that Takeshima is not excluded from Japanese territory. The statement issued following the Cairo Conference in 1943 stipulating that, "Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed," in particular the reference to "territories which she has taken by violence and greed" in no way applies to Takeshima, which is an integral part of Japan's sovereign territory.



Second World War, including Dokdo,<sup>21</sup> and the Japanese had had formidable influence on the drafting process,<sup>22</sup> a more correct conclusion might be that the Allied powers, at the least, did not intend to state their position over the sovereignty of Dokdo, choosing instead to “remain silent on the issue, thus leaving the issue open for further deliberation.”<sup>23</sup>

## 2. The Second Debate: Historical Facts

Among the three debates, the most complicated and controversial is related to the interpretation of historical facts. The Japanese MOFA and its supporting school of thought maintain its position with a consensus on the overview of the “Sovereignty of Takeshima.”

The knowledge of Japanese people on Takeshima is closely linked with the history of the development of Utsuryo (Ulleungdo) Island. From the first half of the 17th century, merchants of the feudal clan of Tottori were granted permission for passage to Utsuryo Island by the Shogunate, where they ventured to develop the island on the basis of this Shogunate

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<sup>21</sup> For instance, Yoshida Shigeru, then the Japanese Prime Minister, stated in his *Memoirs* that: The Japanese government submitted materials to the U.S. so abundant for them as to speak for Japan in the course of negotiating the Peace Treaty. Particularly, we concentrated our utmost efforts in preparing the materials for the territorial clause of the draft treaty. We stressed and gave a full explanation that those outlying islands, such as Okinawa, Bonin, Kuril, and Sakhalin islands have the indivisible relationships with Japan in respects of history, geography, race and economy. The collected materials submitted to the U.S. had piled up to 7 volumes only in relation with the territorial clause. Yoshida Shigeru, *Memoirs of the Ten Years*, vol. 3 (Tokyo: Shinchosa, 1957), quoted in Kim, *A Pursuit of Truth in the Dokdo Island Issue*, 67.

<sup>22</sup> Mr. Shimoda Takezo, the then-Under-secretary, the Treaty Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, who was closely involved in the drafting process, recollected in his memoir that: The SCAP, being conscious of the other allied powers like the USSR, had initially refused to receive such reports made by the enemy, Japan, until 1946. As the U.S.-USSR confrontation formulating the post cold-war situation had become intensified, however, Washington had come to realize the real value of those Japanese reports and begun to receive them willingly. Shimoda Takezo, *The Post Japanese Diplomacy: A Memoir* (Tokyo: Centre for the Study of Administration, 1984), quoted in Kim, *A Pursuit of Truth in the Dokdo Island Issue*, 67.

<sup>23</sup> Jon M. Van Dyke, “Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary,” *Ocean Development and International Law* 38, nos. 1 & 2 (2007): 184.

permission. From that time onwards Takeshima became a stopping-off port for passage to Utsuryo Island, and fishing activities started around Takeshima.<sup>24</sup>

Some different interpretations of historical records exist even within the same school of thought. Nevertheless, generally speaking, the first school of thought and the Japanese government maintain that Dokdo is Japanese territory on the basis of its interpretation of the historical facts.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, the second school of thought supports the Korean government's position.<sup>26</sup> Most recently, Jon Van Dyke made a thorough study of the Dokdo issue, from the old history of both countries to the recent debate.<sup>27</sup> As an answer to the historical problem, he concludes that:

Korea's claim to sovereignty over Dokdo is thus substantially stronger than that of Japan, based on the historical evidence of Korea's exercise of sovereignty during previous centuries and the recognition of Korea's claim by Japanese cartographers and government officials during the eighteen and nineteenth centuries.....<sup>28</sup>

### **3. The Third Debate: Validity of the Incorporation of Dokdo by Japan**

The third debate concerns whether the Japanese incorporation of Dokdo in 1905 was valid or not. The Japanese MOFA and its supporting school of thought maintain that:

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<sup>24</sup> Japan, MOFA, *The Issue of Takeshima*, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/sovereignty.html> (accessed May 28, 2007). The old argument reads: In light of the following historical facts, it is apparent that at the latest by the middle of the 17th century, Japan had established sovereignty of Takeshima based on effective rule. After 1905 too, Japan's claim to sovereignty of Takeshima was reaffirmed as a modern nation state, based on a Cabinet decision, and in this way Takeshima has effectively been ruled by Japan.

<sup>25</sup> Kawakami Kenzo, *A Historical and Geographical Study on Takeshima*, quoted in Kim, *The Japanese Arguments on Dokdo*.

<sup>26</sup> Kim, *A Debate on Dokdo*, 76-105; Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts' View on Dokdo*, 3-58, 163-247; Yong-Ha Shin, *Hankook-gwa Ilbon-ui Dokdo Youngyookwon NonJaeng* (The Korean Japanese Dispute on the Sovereignty of Dokdo) (Seoul: Hanyang University Press, 2003), 109-165, 197-201; Yong-Ha Shin, *Dokdo-ui Minjok Youngto-sa Yeon'gu* (A Historical Study on the Sovereignty of Dokdo) (Seoul: Jisik Sanupsa, 1996), 55-203; Seichu, "Is Takeshima (竹島) Japanese Indigenous Territory?," in *A Fresh Look at the Dokdo Issue: Japanese Scholars Review Historical Facts*, trans. M. Marek and S.J. Choi (Seoul: Dadamedia, 2006): 19-52; Seichu, "An Introduction to Pre-modern Historical Studies on Takeshima," in *A Fresh Look at the Dokdo Issue*, 53-98; Seichu, "Ahn Yong-Bok in Oki (隠岐)," in *A Fresh Look at the Dokdo Issue*, 99-134.

<sup>27</sup> Van Dyke, "Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary."

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 195-196.

Based on the Cabinet Decision and the Ministerial Instruction from the Minister for Home Affairs, the Governor of Shimane Prefecture published in February 1905 that Takeshima was officially named as “Takeshima” and that it came under the jurisdiction of the Okinoshima branch. He also informed the Okinoshima branch to this effect. These measures were carried in the newspapers of the day and were broadly publicized.<sup>29</sup>

The first school of thought maintains that the Japanese incorporation of Dokdo met the standard of international law, and, by this, Japan also “reaffirmed” its sovereignty over Dokdo.<sup>30</sup> In contrast, the second school of thought criticizes this position on the basis that the Japanese government took Dokdo from Korea during the Russo-Japanese War to use this island for military purposes, despite its recognition that Dokdo was Korean territory.<sup>31</sup> Professor Naito Seichu argues that the Japanese government’s argument is paradoxical, because, if Dokdo was *terra nullius*,<sup>32</sup> the Japanese government could not claim that Takeshima was its inherent territory.<sup>33</sup> Benjamin K. Sibbett, after studying several similar territorial disputes worldwide and evaluating Japan’s and Korea’s positions in the context of the Japanese government’s “occupation”<sup>34</sup> of Dokdo in 1905, also concludes that:

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<sup>29</sup> Japan, MOFA, *The Issue of Takeshima*, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/incorporation.html> (accessed May 28, 2007). The old argument reads: The measures to incorporate Takeshima into Shimane Prefecture in 1905, through the Cabinet decision and notification by Shimane prefecture reaffirmed the intention of the Japanese government to claim territorial rights as a modern nation over Takeshima. There were no indications that Japan did not hold territorial rights prior to that, nor were there any counter claims by any other country of territorial rights over Takeshima. In addition, the incorporation of Takeshima was reported in the newspapers and was not undertaken secretly, hence it can be seen to have been implemented validly. (Note: It is not an obligation under international law to notify foreign governments of measures to incorporate territory).

<sup>30</sup> Kawakami Kenzo, *A Historical and Geographical Study on Takeshima*.

<sup>31</sup> Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts’ View on Dokdo*, 59-118, 249-293; Kim, *Ilbon Gunbuui Dokdo ChimTalsa* (The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military) (Seoul: Dadamedia, 2006); Matsumoto Takeo (松本健男), “How to Achieve a Fair Solution to the Senkaku Islands and Takeshima Problems: Recognizing the Need to View the Issue as a Result of Policies of Aggression,” in *A Fresh Look at the Dokdo Issue*, 1-17; Shin, *The Korean Japanese Dispute on the Sovereignty of Dokdo*, 167-196; Shin, *A Territorial and Historical Study on Dokdo*, 203-240.

<sup>32</sup> *Terra nullius* or *territorium nullius* is uninhabited or inhabited territory that does not belong to any state, Benjamin K. Sibbett, “Tokdo or Takeshima? The Territorial Dispute between Japan and the Republic of Korea:” 1624.

<sup>33</sup> Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts’ View on Dokdo*, 250.

<sup>34</sup> “Occupation” is a state’s intentional appropriation of sovereignty over territory treated as a *terra nullius*. Sibbett, “Tokdo or Takeshima? The Territorial Dispute between Japan and the Republic of Korea:” 1624.

Any Japanese claim to sovereignty based on occupation will be fraught with difficulty because occupation presumes that the occupied territory does not already belong to a state. Liancourt's history defies this presumption because it appears to have initially belonged to Korea. Indeed, Japan's assertion of sovereignty, based on a series of agreements with Korea prior to and including the 1910 Annexation Agreement, negates any discovery-based ownership claims Japan might have because it concedes a lack of initial ownership.<sup>35</sup>

## **E. SCOPE OF THESIS AND ARGUMENTS**

Among the aforementioned disputes, it is the last dispute concerning the incorporation of Dokdo by Japan in 1905 that this thesis will explore. As was discussed earlier, the Allied powers seemed to have wanted the question of the sovereignty of Dokdo to remain open. Most scholars acknowledge that Korea has the stronger claim in terms of history. Thus, one question remains: the validity of the incorporation of Dokdo by Japan. The Japanese claim has two controversial arguments, as noted by Naito Seichu. First, did Japan recognize Dokdo as its sovereign territory? Second, was Dokdo *terra nullius* before Japan formally incorporated it? To find appropriate answers, this thesis will explore Japan's recognition and treatment of Dokdo before, during, and after the Russo-Japanese War.

Based on the research, this thesis will argue that:

- Japan recognized Dokdo as Korean territory before and during the Russo-Japanese War.
- Japan incorporated Dokdo to use it for a military purpose during the war.
- Japan recognized Dokdo as part of Korean territory even after it annexed Korea.

## **F. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES**

This thesis explores Japan's actions to incorporate Dokdo before and after the Russo-Japanese War in order to uncover the historical facts. Also explored are Japan's

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<sup>35</sup>"Occupation" is a state's intentional appropriation of sovereignty over territory treated as a *terra nullius*. Sibbett, "Tokdo or Takeshima? The Territorial Dispute between Japan and the Republic of Korea:" 1624.

recognition and treatment of Dokdo before and after the war to evaluate whether Dokdo was inherently a Japanese territory, whether the incorporation of Dokdo was undertaken with good reasons and by fair means, and, ultimately, whether the current Japanese government has a right to claim sovereignty over Dokdo.

Due to the limited literature written in English on the subject, especially regarding the relationship between the Russo-Japanese War and the incorporation of Dokdo by Japan, the majority of sources consist of professional and scholarly literature published in Korean, as well as the work of Japanese scholars that has been translated into Korean or English. However, by including the primary sources referred in the secondary sources, a balanced analysis will be conducted.

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## II. DOKDO BEFORE THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

### A. KOREAN RECOGNITION OF DOKDO

#### 1. Korean Documents from before the War

The oldest Korean historical record related to Dokdo appears in AD 512, when Silla, one of the old Korean kingdoms in the Three Kingdom period, subjugated the Kingdom of Usanguk (an old Kingdom that was based on Ulleungdo).<sup>36</sup> The Korean people referred to Dokdo by a number of different names over time, including Usando, Jasando, and Sambongdo.<sup>37</sup> However, the recognition of and execution of sovereign rights over Dokdo by the Korean people was maintained continuously.

From 1416 until 1881, Korea maintained a “vacant island policy,” which banned Koreans from living on islands that were remote from the Korean mainland.<sup>38</sup> This policy was intended to protect Koreans from attacks by Japanese pirates, as well as to prevent them from avoiding taxes or military service.<sup>39</sup> However, historical records show that Korea exercised continuous administrative control over Ulleungdo and Dokdo. For instance, according to *The Annals of King Sejong*, in 1425 King Sejong appointed a

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<sup>36</sup> Kim Bu-Sik, *History of the Three Kingdoms* (Samguk Sagi), vol. 4, Section on “King Jijeung,” compiled in 1145 under the order of King Injong (1122-1146), as cited in Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo: A Historical Study* (Seoul: Tokdo Research Association, 1997), 25-28. The status of Dokdo was not clearly mentioned in *History of the Three Kingdoms*, but Korean scholars maintain that Usanguk must have governed both Ulleungdo and Dokdo, given that these islands are in the same vicinity and can be seen from each other. Professor Yong-Ha Shin states that “There is no doubt that a sea route was much more convenient in ancient times than a land route, and when a terra firma was occupied its adjacent islands were generally included in it.” Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Several names are recorded referring to Dokdo in Korean history, but it seems Dokdo was referred to as “Usando” from the 1400s until the late 1800s, when Korea renamed it “Dokdo.” Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 56.

<sup>38</sup> *The Annals of King Taejong* (Taejong Silnok), vol. 33, entry for January, 17<sup>th</sup> year of King Taejong, in Dongbuga ui P’yonghwa rul wihan Parun Yoksa Chongnip Kihoektan (hereafter Parun Yoksa Kihoektan), *Dokdo Jaryojip* (Dokdo Data) 1 (Seoul: Dadamedia, 2005), 98-104.

<sup>39</sup> Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 47-48.

Commissioner of Pacification for Usan (current Dokdo), Murung (current Ulleungdo) and other islands<sup>40</sup> and directed him to check the implementation of the policy.<sup>41</sup>

*The Gazetteer of the Annals of King Sejong* (Sejong Silnok Jiriji) describes Ulleungdo and Dokdo as follows: “Two islands of Usan (current Dokdo) and Murung (current Ulleungdo) are located on the sea due east of this County (Uljin County). These islands are not so far from each other and are faintly visible on a clear day. They were called Usanguk during the period of Silla.”<sup>42</sup>

In June 1614, an envoy from Tsushima came to Korea to ask for help in surveying Ulleungdo. Korea denied the Japanese request on the basis that Ulleungdo was Korean territory, though the island was vacant in accordance with the “vacant island policy.”<sup>43</sup>

In 1693, the Choson dynasty had a territorial dispute with Japan. The dispute is called the “Ahn Yong-Bok Incident” in Korean and “Takeshima (current Ulleungdo, not Dokdo)<sup>44</sup> affair” in Japanese. The dispute began as a conflict between Korean and Japanese fishermen concerning fishing rights off the shores of Ulleungdo and Dokdo. Following negotiations between the two countries, Japan acknowledged Ulleungdo as Korean territory and prohibited its fishermen from sailing to the island – a policy that it kept until the Meiji Restoration in 1868. The Japanese government’s decision “appeared to recognize that Dokdo was an appendage linked to Ulleungdo and subject to the same regime.”<sup>45</sup> However, the present Japanese government maintains that:

. . . in 1692 when the members of the Murakawa traveled to the island, and again in 1693 when the members of the Ohya traveled there, they encountered many Koreans who were engaged in fishing around the

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<sup>40</sup> *The Annals of King Sejong* (Sejong Silnok), vol. 29, entry for August, 8 year of King Sejong, in Parun Yoksa Kihoeoktan, *Dokdo Data* 1, 113- 116.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 117-121.

<sup>42</sup> *The Annals of King Sejong* (Sejong Silnok), vol. 153, entry for Uljin County, Kangwon Province, in Yoksa Chongnip Kihoeoktan, *Dokdo Data* 1, 195-202. This record is one of the important records which show that Korea considered itself sovereign over Ulleungdo and Dokdo for centuries.

<sup>43</sup> Byung-Ryull Kim, *Dokdo Jaryo Chongnam* (A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo) (Seoul: Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, 1997), 159-162.

<sup>44</sup> Until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Japanese referred to Ulleungdo as Takeshima and Dokdo as Matushima.

<sup>45</sup> Van Dyke, “Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary,” 166.



island. This prompted the initiation of negotiations between the governments of Japan and Korea concerning the sovereignty of Utsuryo Island. Ultimately, in January 1696, the Shogunate issued a ban on the passage of ships to Utsuryo Island (the so-called “*Takeshima Ikken* (The Affair of Takeshima). However, there was no prohibition placed on travel to Takeshima.<sup>46</sup>

The Japanese government accepts that Dokdo was used as a navigational check point when Japanese fishermen sailed to Ulleungdo for fishing. However, given the Japanese prohibition on traveling to Ulleungdo, it is questionable whether the Japanese needed that check point. In this regard, a more reasonable interpretation might be that, when the Tokukawa shogunate renounced its claim over Ulleungdo and banned sailing to the island, it also renounced the same claim over Dokdo, since the island was merely a check point for navigating to Ulleungdo.

After opening its door to Japan in 1876, Korea gradually came under Japan’s influence. Even though the Meiji Government still adhered to the ban on sailing to Ulleungdo, illegal Japanese fishing in the vicinity of Ulleungdo and Dokdo and lumbering on Ulleungdo became a problem for Korea. Therefore, Korea strongly protested to Japan, demanding that it “prohibit Japanese voyages to Ulleungdo.”<sup>47</sup> While delaying its reply to Korea, Japan carried out research concerning the status of Dokdo and concluded that the island was Korean territory.<sup>48</sup> In 1881, Japan acknowledged that its people had been illegally voyaging to Ulleungdo and exploiting its resources, and promised that they would withdraw from the island. However, this promise was not fully kept.<sup>49</sup> Finally, Korea abolished the “vacant island policy” and, in 1883, started developing Ulleungdo by moving Koreans there from the mainland.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Japan, MOFA, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/position.html> (accessed October 1, 2007).

<sup>47</sup> Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 107.

<sup>48</sup> Kitazawa Shosei carried out the research and submitted his results in July 1881, in a report entitled *A Research on the Ownership of Takeshima*. Cited in Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 107-108.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-108.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 108-117.

In 1897, King Kojong changed the name of his dynasty from the Choson Dynasty to the Korean Empire (Daehan Jeguk). In the face of ever-increasing Japanese influence over Korea and illegal activities on Ulleungdo, Emperor Kojong decided to confirm the ownership of both Ulleungdo and Dokdo. On October 25, 1900, Emperor Kojong promulgated Imperial Ordinance No. 41, entitled “On the Re-designation of Ulleungdo as Uldo County and the Change of the Title of the Island Superintendent to County Magistrate.”<sup>51</sup> This Ordinance reads:

Article 1

Ulleungdo shall be re-designated Uldo country and placed under Kangwon province; the title of Island Superintendent shall be changed to County Magistrate; it shall be incorporated into the administrative system and the county shall be of grade five.

Article 2

The county office shall be located at Taehadong; the county shall have under jurisdiction the whole island of Ulleungdo, Chukdo and *Sokdo* (Dokdo) . . . <sup>52</sup>

By this, Korea upgraded the status of Ulleungdo and placed Dokdo (referred to as “Sokdo”) under its jurisdiction. After two days, on October 27, 1900, Korea officially announced this fact on the official gazette of the Korean Empire.

## 2. Korean Maps from before the War

*A Map of Kangwon Province* (Kangwon Jido) from 1481 and *A Complete Map of Eight Provinces of Korea* (Paldo Chongdo) from 1531, which was included in the *Revised and Augmented Version of the Survey of National Geography of Korea* (*Sinjeung Dongguk Yeoji Seungnam*), described Ulleungdo and Dokdo, though their position is incorrect. Between the 17<sup>th</sup> and mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, several Korean maps showed the same

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<sup>51</sup> Parun Yoksa Kihoektan, *Dokdo Data* 1, 745-747; Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights on Dokdo*, 123-126.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

error, but they clearly described two different islands in the East Sea/Sea of Japan.<sup>53</sup> Since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the position of Dokdo and Ulleungdo became settled as the Korean people's understanding of geography grew.<sup>54</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Korean maps became more detailed and correct.<sup>55</sup> For instance, *A Complete Map of Korea* (Tongguk Jundo) from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and *A Map of Korea* (Haejwa Jundo) from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century clearly show Usando (Dokdo) as Korean territory.

## **B. THE JAPANESE RECOGNITION OF DOKDO**

### **1. Japanese Documents from before the War**

When Korea maintained its “vacant island policy” from 1416 to 1881, Japan recognized Ulleungdo and Dokdo as Korean territory. For instance, in 1620, the Tokugawa Bakufu executed some Japanese people who were smuggling into Ulleungdo.

The oldest Japanese governmental record related to Ulleungdo and Dokdo is an observational trip report to Oki Island (隱州視聽合記) in 1667. This report was the first and most important historical record presented by the Japanese government when the territorial argument first started in the 1950s. However, this report was not helpful to the Japanese; instead, it weakened the Japanese position. This report stated that the “two islands (Takeshima and Matsushima) are uninhabited and getting a sight of Koryo (Korea) from there is like viewing Oki from Onshu. Thus, marks the northwestern boundary of Japan.”<sup>56</sup>

After the “Takeshima affair,” Japan adhered to its ban on sailing to the island and this policy continued until the late 1800s. After the Meiji Restoration, Japan grew into a new imperialistic power in Asia. The main victim of Japanese imperialistic expansion

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<sup>53</sup> Sang-Tae Lee, *Historical Evidence of Korean Sovereign over Dokdo* (Seoul: Kyongsae-won, 2007), 19-37.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-48.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 49-59.

<sup>56</sup> Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 260-261.

was Korea. However, the Meiji government clearly recognized Dokdo as Korean territory. A good example of this can be seen in “A Confidential Inquiry into the Particulars of Foreign Relations of Korea,” published in 1870.<sup>57</sup>

In 1869, a group of Meiji Foreign Ministry officials led by Sada Hakubo went to Busan, a port city in southeast Korea, to secretly investigate the situation in Korea under the direction of the Dajokan (The Great Council of State), then Japan’s most powerful government organ. One of the directives to the secret investigators was to carry out a “full accounting of Ulleungdo and Dokdo under which circumstances they became part of Korean (Chosen) Territory.” After a year of investigation in Korea, the group submitted a report entitled “A Confidential Inquiry into the Particulars of Foreign Relations of Korea,” in 1870. This report reads that:

Circumstances under which Takeshima (current Ulleungdo)<sup>58</sup> and Matsushima (current Dokdo) have become Korean possession:

Regarding this case, Matsushima is an island adjacent to Takeshima and there has been made no document on it to date; concerning Takeshima, Korea sent people to settle there for a while after the Genroku period. Then the island became uninhabited as before. Bamboo, ditch reed, which is thicker than bamboo, and ginseng are found there. Besides, the island is said to be fit for fishing . . .<sup>59</sup>

This report shows that the Japanese recognized Ulleungdo and Dokdo as neighboring islands, which implies that they recognized Dokdo as Korean territory given that they clearly thought of Ulleungdo as Korean territory. In addition, apart from the contents of the report, the directives to the investigators show that the Meiji government recognized that Ulleungdo and Dokdo were part of Korean territory, i.e., the Meiji government sent them in order to know why these islands were Korean territory. This

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<sup>57</sup> Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 314-315; Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 89-93.

<sup>58</sup> Until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Japanese referred Ulleungdo to Takeshima, and Dokdo as Matsushima.

<sup>59</sup> Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 314-315; Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 89-93.

fact also clarifies the contradiction of the current Japanese government's arguments that it incorporated Dokdo in 1905 and that, at the time, Dokdo was not owned by any country (*terra nullius*).

Another example can be found in a Meiji government document from 1877. On October 16, 1876, when the Meiji government started compiling land registers, Shimane prefecture officially asked the Japanese Home Ministry whether Ulleungdo and Dokdo should be included within its sphere of jurisdiction. After months of thorough reflection, the Japanese Home Ministry concluded that Ulleungdo and Dokdo had been the territory of Korea as of 1692 and “had nothing to do with Japan.”<sup>60</sup>

However, considering the importance of the territorial issue, the Home Ministry of the Meiji government asked for a final decision from the Dajokan in March 1877. On March 20 of the same year, the Dajokan instructed it to “bear in mind that that Ulleungdo and other island (Dokdo) have nothing to do with Japan.”<sup>61</sup> Based on this final decision from the Meiji government, Shimane prefecture excluded Ulleungdo and Dokdo from its jurisdictional area.

Since 1876, there were several Japanese who asked the Japanese Foreign Ministry to allow them to develop ownerless Matsushima (Ulleungdo) in the East Sea/Sea of Japan. In June 1876, Muto Heigaku first asked the Foreign Ministry, and in the following two years, several other Japanese made the same request to the Ministry.<sup>62</sup> Finally, the Japanese Foreign Ministry decided to conduct an on-site survey of Matsushima. The Ministry sent the Japanese warship *Amagi* in July 1880, and the survey concluded that Matsushima was Korean territory and, thus, the Foreign Ministry turned down all the applications.<sup>63</sup>

In November 1881, the Home Ministry inquired to the Foreign Ministry concerning the status of Ulleungdo with the instruction from Dajokan in 1877. The

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<sup>60</sup> Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 344-346.

<sup>61</sup> The East Asian History Foundation, *The History of Dokdo*, 33.

<sup>62</sup> Kazuo Hori, “Japan’s Incorporation of Takeshima into Its Territory in 1905,” *Korea Observer* 28, no. 3 (1997): 492-494.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 494.

Foreign Ministry did not object the Dajokan's instruction to exclude Ulleungdo and Dokdo from the Japanese territory, by which it acknowledged Korean sovereignty over the two islands, a position it maintained until 1905.

In sum, prior to 1905, the Japanese governmental organizations—Dajokan, Home Ministry, and Foreign Ministry—knew and recognized that Ulleungdo and Dokdo were Korean territory. In 1905, Japan claimed Dokdo as *terra nullius* and incorporated it.

## 2. Japanese Maps from before the War

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Kawakami Hasayoshi made a colored map called *Map of Korea* (Chosen Chizu), which switched the names of Ulleungdo and Dokdo.<sup>64</sup> In 1785, the Japanese scholar Hayashi Shihei finished *A Map of Three Adjoining Countries*, which displayed Korean territory in yellow and Japanese territory in red.<sup>65</sup> On this map, the words “Korea’s possessions” or “belongs to Korea” are written next to Dokdo.

Japanese maps from after the Meiji Restoration show the same perception of Ulleungdo and Dokdo as Korean territory. These maps include *The Complete Map of Korea* (Chosen Yochi zenzu) in 1875 by Sekiguchi Bisyo,<sup>66</sup> and *The Complete Map of Japan* (Shochu nihon zenzu) in 1876 by Kashihara Yoshinaga.<sup>67</sup>

In addition, the Japanese military's maps also recognized Ulleungdo and Dokdo as Korean territory. These include *Complete Map of Korea* (Chosen Jenzu) in 1875 by the Ministry of Army;<sup>68</sup> *Map of Choson (Korea)'s Eastern Seashore* (Kankoku tohe zu) in 1876 by the Hydrographic Office of the Ministry of the Japanese Navy;<sup>69</sup> and *Choson*

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<sup>64</sup> This error is almost the same as that seen on the old Korean map. Therefore, it seems that both Korea and Japan confused the names of Ulleungdo and Dokdo. The positions and names of both islands were settled by the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. Sang-Tae Lee, *Historical Evidence of Korean Sovereign over Dokdo*, 100.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 120.

*Coast Pilot* in 1899 by the same office.<sup>70</sup> If Japan recognized Dokdo as its sovereign territory, it would have included it in the *Map of the Northwest Coast* or the *Japan Coast Pilot*. But Japan did not do so. “The emergence of such maps in Japan provides strong evidence that the Japanese had come to recognize Dokdo as part of Korea during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> East Asian History Foundation, *The History of Dokdo*, 34.

<sup>71</sup> Van Dyke, “Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary,” 167.

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### III. OUTBREAK OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

#### A. POWER STRUGGLE OVER MANCHURIA AND KOREA

While the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) was a struggle for the mastery of Korea, the Russo-Japanese War was the result of another struggle between two countries which had the same expansionist ambition regarding Manchuria and Korea. The collision between the two countries seemed to be destined when Russia, after being blocked in its further expansion “to the west by Germany and Austria-Hungary and to the South by the British and French shoring-up of the Ottoman Empire,”<sup>72</sup> turned its eye to the East in the 1850s.<sup>73</sup>

Russia had always wanted a warm water port. Vladivostok (‘Rule the East’<sup>74</sup> or ‘Lord of the East’<sup>75</sup>), Russia’s first port in the Far East, implicitly showed the empire’s interest in this area. Russia acquired Kamchatka in the seventeenth century and acquired Sakhalin in 1875 in exchange for ceding the Kurile Islands to Japan.<sup>76</sup> Russia’s announcement of its Siberian Railway project in 1891 was enough to make Japan feel threatened. Russia’s increasing ambition in Manchuria and Korea was expressed once again when Nicholas II visited Japan with several warships after the inauguration of the railway scheme at Vladivostok: one of the warships was the *Manjour* (Manchuria) and another was the *Koreyetz* (Korea).<sup>77</sup>

This section examines four reasons for the origins of the Russo-Japanese War: Japanese anti-Russian sentiment after the Sino-Japanese war; the aggressive encroachment of Russia with Manchuria and Korea; the Japanese need to ensure its

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<sup>72</sup> Geoffrey Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War, 1905-1905* (Osprey Publishing, 2002), 7.

<sup>73</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 7.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>75</sup> Richard Connaughton, *Rising Sun and Tumbling Bear: Russia’s War with Japan* (London: Cassel, 2003), 11.

<sup>76</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 7.

<sup>77</sup> Connaughton, *Rising Sun and Tumbling Bear*, 15.

sphere of influence in Korea; and the failure of negotiations to compromise between the two countries. An additional argument will be made that direct and indirect support of Japan by Great Britain and the United States encouraged Japan to dare a war with Russia.

### 1. Memory of the Sino-Japanese War

The Sino-Japanese War was a conflict between China and Japan for the mastery of Korea. The war began when the Japanese navy launched a surprise attack on a Chinese steamer in Korean Bay on July 25, 1894. On August 1, the two countries officially declared war on each other. The war clearly showed the different results of each country's modernization. After humiliating the Chinese military (mostly Li Hung-Chang's Huai army and the Peiyang fleet) both on land and at sea, Japan highhandedly signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895. It provided for: 1) recognition of Korean independence; 2) an indemnity of 200 million taels to Japan; 3) cession of Taiwan, the Pescadores, and the Liaotung Peninsula to Japan; 4) the opening of Chungking, Soochow, Hangchow, and Sha-Shi as ports; and 5) the right of Japanese nationals to open factories and engage in industry and manufacturing in China.<sup>78</sup>

Unlike China, Russia did not accept Japan's gain in North East Asia, as the Russian minister Count Cassini hinted to the Chinese government: "Japan will not be permitted, either now or in the future, to seize upon any part of Manchuria or the mainland."<sup>79</sup> Russia instigated France, a partner in the Dual Alliance, and Germany, which wanted Russia to be preoccupied in the East so as not to pose a threat in Europe, to intervene.<sup>80</sup> In a joint note, the three parties warned Japan that "the possession of the Liaotung Peninsula by Japan would menace Peking, render illusory the independence of Korea, and threaten the general peace of the Far East"<sup>81</sup> and demanded a favorable

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<sup>78</sup> Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 342.

<sup>79</sup> Judson Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East: The Story of Korea's Transformation and Japan's Rise to Supremacy* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons: 1919), 148. Count Witte, the Russian Minister of Finance, also openly stated that "it was imperative not to allow Japan to penetrate into the very heart of China and secure a footing in the Liaotung Peninsula," quoted in Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 345-346.

<sup>80</sup> Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 345-346.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 345.

response within forty-eight hours. It was impossible for Japan to declare another war so soon after the Sino-Japanese war. At this juncture, a Japanese cabinet minister cried, “If we only had three battleships we would declare war against Russia within twenty-four hours. We have but one, recently captured from China, and it will not be fit for service within six months, while the tsar has six here in our harbors. What can we do but submit to this insolent threat?”<sup>82</sup> Japan reluctantly decided to retrocede Liaotung to China in return for 30 million taels. From that day Japan put every effort into strengthening its military capabilities; adopting the naval system of England and the military system of Germany; sending its smartest officials to Western countries to learn about their advanced industry, technology, and administrative know-how; all the while, it waited for the right chance to revenge the arrogant Slav.

## 2. Russian Threat

In addition to these bad memories regarding Russia, the Japanese viewed Russia’s expansion toward East Asia as an imminent threat. Considering that the Korean peninsula was “a dagger thrust at the heart of Japan,”<sup>83</sup> Japan realized that if the Korean Peninsula fell under the influence of Russia, there would no longer be a buffer between the two countries and that, in the worst case, Japan might become the next victim of Russia’s imperialistic expansion. Therefore, the “independence” of Korea was critical not only to secure Japanese interests in Manchuria and Korea but also to secure Japan itself.

However, contrary to Japanese wishes, the tsar continued his expansion toward the east both in Manchuria and Korea. After the Triple Intervention, China regarded Russia as a savior that defended it from Japanese aggression. In response, China allowed Russia to establish the Russo-Chinese Bank and granted it a concession to extend the Trans-Siberian Railway, which was begun in 1891, across Manchuria to Vladivostok.

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<sup>82</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 148.

<sup>83</sup> Ramon H. Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1984), 15, quoted in Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan Rising* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2007), 91.

Most important, Russia and China signed a secret alliance on June 3, 1896.<sup>84</sup> However, Russia's image as a savior of China lasted only until Russia sent troops to Port Arthur and Dalny on the Liaotung Peninsula on December 16, 1897.<sup>85</sup> In March 1898, Russia acquired the right to lease Port Arthur and Dalny for twenty-five years and to construct a Southern Manchurian Railway from the two ports. Other Western powers dashed to take advantage of the vulnerability of China in decline, i.e., to "slice the melon." This provided the catalyst for the Boxer Rebellion, which began in 1899.

The Boxer Rebellion gave Western countries, especially Russia, a good excuse to send their troops to Manchuria. Russian troops did not withdraw even after the repression of the riots. After signing the Anglo-Japanese alliance treaty in January 1902, Japan, with the support of Great Britain and the United States, demanded that Russia withdraw its troops from Manchuria. On April 4, 1902 Russia agreed to withdraw its troops in six-month intervals until the end of 1903. That summer, Russian Finance Minister Witte visited Manchuria and provided assurances that Russia would resolve this issue by "peaceful means." However, the Governor of the Liaotung Peninsula, Admiral Alekseev, cancelled the second stage of the withdrawal that had been due for completion on 8 October 1903.

In addition to Russia's approach to Manchuria, Japan was concerned about Russia's increasing influence on Korea. For instance, in 1896 Russia acquired mining rights in Kyongwon and Chongsong counties, Hamgyong province; was permitted to

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<sup>84</sup> Count Sergei Iulevich Witte, then the Russian Minister of Finance, and Li Heung-chang agreed on three principles: (1) China would grant Russia permission to construct a railway along a straight line from Chita to Vladivostok; the operation of the railway would be managed by a private organization called the Chinese Eastern Railway Corporation. (2) China would cede a strip of land sufficient for the building and operation of the railway; within the limit of the land the corporation should have complete authority of control, including the right of maintaining police. The railway might be redeemed by China after 36 years at 700 million rubles, but would pass free to her after 80 years. (3) China and Russia agreed to defend each other against any Japanese attack on China, Korea, or Russian Far Eastern possessions. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 347-348.

<sup>85</sup> While Finance Minister Sergei Witte strongly opposed seizing the Chinese territory on the basis that this action would end the relationship with China, Count Mikhail Muravev pressed the need get an ice-free port in Chinese territory. At a special conference in November 1897 to discuss the matter, Russia decided not to occupy the port. However, Muravev incited Nicholas II to grab it by offering the shrewd advice that the British Navy might take Port Arthur, which was something that the tsar feared. David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, "The Immediate Origins of the War," in John W. Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Netherlands, Leiden: Brill, 2005), 31-32.

establish a coaling station on Wolmi Island, off Inchon; and acquired timber rights in the Yalu River basin and on Ulleungdo.<sup>86</sup> In 1898, Russia was permitted to establish a coaling station on Yongdo, off Busan, and acquired an authorization to establish a Russia-Korean Bank. Even more, in May 1903, Alekseev moved troops to a port called Yongampo near the Manchuria—Korea border, on the pretext of protecting its timber rights and personnel; once there, the Russians bought land and constructed housing, and formally leased the area in July 1903.<sup>87</sup> When faced the Japanese strong protest, Russia backed down from making this area into its military base: but, Russia could use Yongampo as a trading port.<sup>88</sup> A growing anxiety among the Japanese at that time was well shown in the telegram from the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Komura, to the Japanese Minister in St. Petersburg, on July 28, 1903.

The unconditioned and permanent occupation of Manchuria by Russia would create a state of things prejudicial to the security and interests of Japan.... If Russia were established on the flank of Korea, it would be a constant menace to the separate existence of that Empire, or at least would make Russia the dominant Power in Korea. Korea is an important outpost in Japan's line of defense... Moreover, the political as well as commercial and industrial interests and influence which Japan possesses in Korea are paramount over those of other Powers. These interests and influence, Japan, having regard to her own security, cannot consent to surrender to or share with another Power.<sup>89</sup>

Under the circumstances, several meetings between Japanese high officials and military leaders concluded that they must stop Russia's encroachments; finally, on June 23, 1903 Emperor Meiji agreed that Japan should fight a war with Russia, when necessary.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> The Triple Intervention led by Russia was enough to convince Korea of the power of Russia. Korea leaned toward Russia, particularly after the Japanese-backed assassination of Queen Min, which resulted in the Korean emperor's exile to the Russian legation for almost a year from 1896 to 1897.

<sup>87</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 20.

<sup>88</sup> Ki-Baek Lee, *A New History of Korea*, trans. Edward W. Wagner and Edward J. Shultz (Seoul: Ilchogak, 1984), 307.

<sup>89</sup> Quoted in Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 154.

<sup>90</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 20.

### 3. Japan Wanted Korea Itself

In addition to the aforementioned reasons, and most importantly, Japan wanted Korea itself.<sup>91</sup> The idea of a “Korean expedition” (征韓論, in Japanese Sei-kan-ron) and advancing to the continent evolved right after the opening of Japan by the United States in 1854: Japan wanted to compensate for the losses it suffered under the terms of the unequal treaties imposed by the Western powers by conquering weak Korea and Manchuria. This idea was revived after the Meiji restoration in 1868, when Korea rejected a Japanese request to revise relations between the two countries. While the idea was under debate in Japan,<sup>92</sup> the members of the so-called “Iwakura Mission” (1871-1873) led by Iwakura Tomomi (岩倉具視) returned to Japan in September 1873.<sup>93</sup>

Iwakura and his supporters, who had seen the Western powers’ civilization, technology, and highly developed industry, argued that it was not time for conquer Korea, but rather to strengthen Japan. After strong political debate over the issue, Iwakura finally obtained an emperor’s edict not to invade Korea.<sup>94</sup> However, this did not mean that Japan had abandoned its ambitions toward Korea. After finalizing the exchange of Sakhalin and Kurile with Russia, Japan opened Korea by signing of the Treaty of Kangwha in 1876, in

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<sup>91</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 149.

<sup>92</sup> Japan also needed to 1) to shift its focus from domestic problems, especially the increasing discontent of the samurai class after the Meiji Restoration, to foreign affairs; 2) win supremacy over China in Korean affairs; 3) forestall Britain and Russia in securing a foothold near Japan; 4) avenge the Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s failed invasions of Korea in 1592. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, 334.

<sup>93</sup> Iwakura mission was the Japanese elite group’s diplomatic journey to the United States and twelve highly developed European countries to learn and experience the Western civilization and industry.

<sup>94</sup> Okubo Toshimichi (大久保 利通), a member of the Iwakura Mission, opposed “punishing Korea” for seven reasons: 1) war might lead to civil disturbances, in view of widespread popular resentment against the recent reforms entailing the loss of property and privilege for many; 2) war might cause fiscal bankruptcy; 3) war would force the abandonment of domestic programs for educational, industrial, and military modernization; 4) war would increase Japan’s trade deficit and cause general impoverishment of the nation; 5) war would make Korea and Japan easy prey for Russia, which was waiting for an opportunity to fish in troubled waters in East Asia; 6) war would reduce Japan’s ability to service its foreign debts and thereby invite interference in its internal affairs by Britain, its chief creditor; and 7) war might hamper Japan’s efforts toward treaty revision with the Western powers. The process of this political crisis in Japan over the conquering Korea is well described in Key-Hiuk Kim, *The Last Phase of the East Asian World Order: Korea, Japan, and the Chinese Empire, 1860-1882* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 178-187.

much the same way as Commodore Perry had done with Japan itself in 1854.<sup>95</sup> When Japan started its expansionist movement, Yamagata Aritomo (山縣有朋), then Japan's leading strategist, stated that:

The independence and security of the nation depend first upon the protection of the line of advantage... If we wish to maintain the nation's independence among the powers of the world at the present time, it is not enough to guard only the line of sovereignty; we must also defend the line of advantage... and within the limits of the nation's resources gradually strive for that position.<sup>96</sup>

In 1890, Korea was within the Japanese "line of advantage" and when Japan had achieved its dominant position over Korea after the Sino-Japanese war, the line of advantage extended into southern Manchuria, allowing Japan to defend its prominent influence and interests on Korea.<sup>97</sup>

Moreover, Japan also had several practical reasons to fight the war. Compared to the relatively small size of the islands of Japan (148,756 square miles), Japan's population was exploding, causing new concerns about their food supply.<sup>98</sup> Korea was of vital interest to Japan given that Japan depended heavily on Korea for additional food supplies to feed its people.<sup>99</sup> In terms of commerce and industry, Korea was crucial not only for acquiring raw materials to run Japan's fast-developing industries, but also as a market to export its manufactured goods. Moreover, Japan had spent a great deal of

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<sup>95</sup> The main contents of the treaty are: (1) recognition of Korea as an independent state on an equal footing with Japan; (2) exchange of envoys; (3) opening of three ports: Pusan, Inchon, and Wonsan; and 4) Japanese consular jurisdiction in these ports.

<sup>96</sup> Roger F. Hackett, *Yamagata Aritomo in the Rise of Modern Japan, 1838-1922* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 138, quoted in Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 91.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> About thirteen percent of Japan was cultivated and "the per capita share of arable land was less than one-half of an acre, which was even below the corresponding rate in England and less than one-half of that in China." K. Asakawa, *The Russo-Japanese Conflict: Its Causes and Issues* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), 5-7, quoted in Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 149.

<sup>99</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 151.

money to develop the infrastructure in Korea.<sup>100</sup> Japan was also deeply engaged in mining, fisheries, postal service, bank, and education.<sup>101</sup> Altogether, Japanese social, economic, military, and political interests in Korea were too extensive and vital for Japan to yield to Western powers, especially, in this case, Russia. Therefore, Japan prepared to secure its interests in Korea.

#### 4. Negotiations and Diplomacy

Even though Japan wanted to exert its influence both on Manchuria and Korea, it did not want to fight a war with Russia, preferring to compromise with it instead. The idea of *Man-kan kokan* (Manchuria for Korea or Manchuria-Korea Exchange), which would acknowledge Russia's dominant position in Manchuria in return for Russia's acknowledgement of Japan's influence in Korea, originated when Russia's influence in Korea expanded in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>102</sup> In 1896, Japan negotiated a Man-Kan kokan agreement with Russia; on April 18, 1898, both countries reached another agreement concerning the Korean issue.<sup>103</sup> In May 1901, Katsura Taro became the prime minister, who had more aggressive position to Russia than his precedent Marquis Ito Hirobumi.<sup>104</sup>

Ito privately went to St. Petersburg to bring the matter to a peaceful settlement. But, while he was conferring with the Russian ministers, Finance Minister Witte and Foreign Minister Lamsdorf, the Japanese minister in London, Hayashi Tadasu, was negotiating to form an alliance with Great Britain.<sup>105</sup> The alliance treaty between Great Britain and Japan was revealed in January 1902, and there was no further progress in

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<sup>100</sup> For example, 1) Japan completed a telegraph line from Seoul to Pusan in July 1888; 2) obtained a concession to lay railway between Seoul and Pusan in September 1898 (it was opened during the Russo-Japanese War in December 1904); 3) obtained another concession to lay a railway between Seoul and Inchon in December 1898 and opened it in July 1900. Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 151-152.

<sup>101</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 152.

<sup>102</sup> Ian H. Nish, *The Origins of the Russo-Japanese War* (London: Longman, 1985), 45.

<sup>103</sup> They agreed that "neither countries would interfere in Korea's internal administration, would send military instructors or financial advisors without prior mutual agreement, nor on Russia's part a pledge was given not to obstruct Japanese economic activity in Korea." Ki-Baek Lee, *A New History of Korea*, 306.

<sup>104</sup> In May 1904, due to a lack confidence in his administration by the Diet, Ito was removed from office, and Katsura became the new Prime Minister of Japan.

<sup>105</sup> Shumpei Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), 24-31.



negotiation with Russia. In the summer of 1903, when Russia broke its word to withdraw its troops from Manchuria, Japan again tried to negotiate with Russia. Between October 16, 1903, and January 13, 1904, the two countries exchanged their drafts for negotiation. However, it was impossible to find a compromise between them.

Meanwhile, both countries continuously strengthened their military power “half-expecting war, but not really believing it would come.”<sup>106</sup> In fact, Russia was not committed to a war, because the tsar thought that “there will be no war because I do not wish it.”<sup>107</sup> In contrast, Japan began planning for war at the end of 1903. On December 28, a Supreme War Council was established at a special cabinet meeting and, on December 30, the Japanese decided that “China must remain neutral throughout the war, while Korea would be placed under Japanese military domination.”<sup>108</sup> At this point, even Yamagata Aritomo, who was previously reluctant to fight a war, argued for sending troops to Korea. His suggestion was rejected, mainly because Navy Minister Yamamoto insisted that the navy was not ready for transportation and that sending troops to Korea at that juncture might result in a situation that was disadvantageous to Japan.<sup>109</sup> In January 1904, Japan learned that Russia was planning to reinforce its fleet in the Far East. There was a sense in Japan that, if Japan should have to fight the war, Japan ought to start it before Russia could have naval superiority. Therefore, Japan’s final proposal to Russia on January 13, 1904 was designed to earn time rather than to resolve the Manchurian-Korean problem by peaceful means.

By this point, Japan was determined to fight the war. However, had it not been for the existence of its alliances, Japan might not have made the same decision. Great Britain had been an ally of Japan since 1902, and the United States had entered into an implicit

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<sup>106</sup> Christopher Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War* (New York, 1967), 26.

<sup>107</sup> David Schmmelpenninck van der Oye, “The Immediate Origins of the War,” in John W. Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 42.

<sup>108</sup> Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 99.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 99-100. Indeed, the Japanese navy was waiting for the new two armored cruisers, the *Kasuga* and the *Nissin*, they had purchased just before the outbreak of the war. When the cruisers reached to Singapore, the Japanese navy agreed to open hostility to Russia. Two cruisers finally reached to Yokosuka on February 16, 1904. Donald Keene, *Emperor of Japan: Meiji and His World, 1852-1912* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 605; *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated*, No. 1 (1904), 98.

alliance to Japan when it declared the “open door” policy, which was directed at Russia’s expansion in China. Japan also wanted President Roosevelt to act as a mediator when “they were not sure they could win, could not afford to lose, and felt compelled to wage.”<sup>110</sup> President Roosevelt did not disappoint the Japanese, as was evidenced by his letter to his friend Cecil Spring-Rice, on July 24, 1905:

As soon as this war broke out, I notified Germany and France in the most polite and discreet fashion that in event of a combination against Japan to try to do what Russia, Germany, and France did to her in 1894, I should promptly side with Japan and proceed to whatever length was necessary on her behalf. I of course knew that your government would act in the same way, and I thought it best that I should have no consultation with your people before announcing my own purpose.<sup>111</sup>

## **B. BEGINNING OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR**

### **1. Comparative Strength of Russia and Japan**

#### *a. Navy*

The Russian Navy was larger than the Japanese. However, it had a critical weak point: it was divided between the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, and the Pacific.<sup>112</sup> The Pacific Squadron was further divided by the Korean Peninsula, with the Port Arthur fleet to the west of it and the Vladivostok to the east.<sup>113</sup> In contrast, the Japanese navy possessed a big advantage in that it would be fighting in the vicinity of its naval base. The Russian Pacific Squadron had seven battleships, seven cruisers, twenty-five destroyers

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<sup>110</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 20.

<sup>111</sup> Tyler Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1925), 2.

<sup>112</sup> The Japanese Navy minutely took this into account. The Japanese calculation was like this: “When we remember that Russia is always bound to keep a part of its fleet in Europe waters, while its Black Sea fleet is unable to pass through the Dardanelles, it will be easily seen that in actual Naval Strength in the Far East the two countries were very evenly balanced. Japan’s proximity to her naval base gave her further advantage over her rival.” *Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated*, No.1, April 1904 (Tokyo: Kinkodo Co., 1904), 73.

<sup>113</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 31.

and twenty-seven smaller ships before the outbreak of the war.<sup>114</sup> The Japanese Navy had six battleships, ten cruisers, forty destroyers and forty smaller ships.<sup>115</sup> While the Russian Navy was superior in quantity, the Japanese Navy was superior in quality, uniformity, and speed. Port Arthur, where the main part of the Russian Fleet stationed, was old and not adequate to meet the needs of the combat fleet; this was proved during the war.<sup>116</sup> Vladivostok, where the rest of the Russian Pacific Fleet was stationed, was freezing three months a year. Japan had four naval bases; all of them were well fortified and suitable for serving their fleet.<sup>117</sup>

The Japanese navy was also superior in the quality of crew members. The Russian crews were inferior to Japan's in several perspectives; they were poorly trained; they spent little time at sea; they spent little ammunition on gunnery training; not all of them were highly motivated; some of them were not familiar with sea operation; not all of them were literate.<sup>118</sup> In contrast, the Japanese crews were intensively trained: they spent much more time at sea under British instructors; most of them had backgrounds related to sea operations; most of them were highly motivated; and most of them were literate.<sup>119</sup>

#### ***b. Army***

Russia had a standing army of more than a million men; counting the reserves (every able-bodied man was a reservist), the 345,000 Cossacks and the militia, Russia could quickly mobilize 4,500,000 soldiers. In 1900, there were some 150,000 Russian troops in the Far East, but, as a result of the treaty with China, the number was

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<sup>114</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 21.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 34-35.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>118</sup> The Baltic Fleet could not exercise for almost six months during the winter. The situation of the Black Sea Fleet, although it had an ice-free harbor, was almost the same because of the Russian bureaucracy's emphasis on "uniformity." Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 22.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

reduced, so that when diplomatic relations were severed, there were only 80,000 Russian soldiers in Siberia and Manchuria and along the Korean border.<sup>120</sup>

In the beginning of 1904, just before the war began, the Japanese maintained a standing army of 180,000 men; reserves and others brought the total to 850,000.<sup>121</sup> The Japanese army was smaller than that of Russia's, but it was concentrated in Asia which proved to be prominent advantage to Japan in the war. In overall quality, the Japanese weapons were about the same as those of the Russians. The Russians had developed a rapid-firing field piece, but not many of these had reached the Far East by the time of the opening of the war. The Japanese did not have machine guns at the beginning of the war, but adopted Hotchkiss machine guns during the war. The Russians had Maxim machine guns.<sup>122</sup>

### *c. Intelligence*

The situation of Russia might be described as one of unpreparedness and ignorance, which was caused by its arrogant conceit and underestimation of its enemy. Russia did not see the need to get information about its enemy, which it referred to as an "infantile monkey."<sup>123</sup> The Russian leadership in St. Petersburg did not pay attention to the information from the Russian legation in Tokyo. As a result, Russian leaders were ignorant about Japanese readiness and capability.

In contrast, Japan had begun to ascertain the strength of the Russians in 1892 under the direction of the Japanese Field Marshal Yamagata, who emphasized the importance of the intelligence.<sup>124</sup> Japan had solid spy networks such as Colonel Motojiro Akashi's network in Europe and Colonel Aoki's in the Far East. These networks offered exact information for timely and appropriate decision making by the Japanese leaders, while manipulating opponent movements in Russia or confusing Russian leaders by

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<sup>120</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 30-31.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-34.

<sup>123</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 21.

<sup>124</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 33.

spreading false rumor and information. Japan also recruited many double agents by paying them much more money than Russia did. Indeed, Japan was familiar with the theater of the war, Manchuria and Korea, where they fought the Sino-Japanese War.

## **2. Surprise Attack on Port Arthur**

On February 1, 1904, Field Marshall Iwao Oyama, Chief of General Staff, asked Emperor Meiji for permission to go to war, and on February 5, the Emperor agreed. On the same day, Japan severed diplomatic relations with Russia. On February 6, the Japanese Combined Fleet Commander, Admiral Togo, led the First and Second Fleets out of Sasebo harbor; the fleets consisted of six battleships, ten cruisers, thirty destroyers and forty torpedo boats.<sup>125</sup> On February 7, the Japanese seized Masampo in Southern Korea, and began landing troops. On the same day, Admiral Togo sent ten destroyers to conduct a surprise attack on Port Arthur after ascertaining that the majority of the Russian fleet was outside the harbor at Port Arthur.<sup>126</sup> He clearly knew that the result of the war would be determined by command of the sea.

Vice-Admiral Oskar Viktorovich Stark, then the commander of the Russian Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur, had wanted to be prepared for the probable Japanese attack.<sup>127</sup> However, when he asked Admiral Evgenii Ivanovici Alekseev, then the Viceroy of the Far East of Russia, for permission to have his squadron be ready for action, Alekseev denied his request. As a result, the larger ships of the squadron were laid in the roadstead outside the inner harbor and had not even put out anti-torpedo nets. Nevertheless, Vice-Admiral Stark assigned two destroyers to sweep the entrance of the harbor; he also had ordered one cruiser, the *Pallada*, to do a duty mission with her search light. The two destroyers sighted several suspicious ships sailing without lights at night, and returned to their base quickly. When they were reporting to their commander, the

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<sup>125</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 24.

<sup>126</sup> Togo also sent nine destroyers to Dalny, but there were no Russian vessels there.

<sup>127</sup> He had learned that the Japanese consul had sent his people from Port Arthur and Dalny back to Japan on a leased British steamer after relations with Russia had been severed. He thought it must have been a crucial signal of the Japanese determination for war. Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 40.

Japanese attack was launched around 0200.<sup>128</sup> The *Pallada* (6,800 tons) was the first victim because her search light gave the enemy a good target. Next, the *Retvizan* (12,900 tons) and the *Tsesarevich* (13,100 tons) were hit by Japanese torpedo attacks. The torpedo attack was not precise, but it was effective: three torpedoes out of sixteen damaged Russia's new and important battleships.<sup>129</sup> Although Togo's surprise night attack was not decisive enough to destroy the Russian Pacific Squadron, the Japanese Combined Fleet was able to establish temporary command of the sea.<sup>130</sup>

Meanwhile, Rear Admiral Uryu was escorting three transports to Inchon (then called Chemulpo) with five cruisers and eight torpedo boats. On the morning of February 8, the force met the scout ship *Chiyoda*, which had gone into the harbor earlier and now reported that the Russian cruiser *Varyag* and the gunboat the *Korietz* were in anchorage at the harbor, along with British, French, Italian and American warships.<sup>131</sup> Ascertaining that the Japanese naval force was superior to Russia's, Admiral Uryu decided to land the troops that afternoon. As the Japanese began moving toward the harbor entrance, they saw the Russian gunship, the *Korietz*, coming out of the harbor. When the captain of the *Korietz* saw the aggressively maneuvering Japanese ships to him, he opened fire to them and retreated to the harbor. This was actually the very first shot of the war.<sup>132</sup> The Japanese attack force moved into the harbor and landed its troops.<sup>133</sup> In the morning of February 9, Admiral Uryu sent an ultimatum to the Russian ships: they must steam out of the harbor before noon, or the Japanese forces would sink them at anchor. The Russian ships sailed out and fought, but the result was already settled: the Japanese quickly

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<sup>128</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 25.

<sup>129</sup> These ships were put out of action for weeks.

<sup>130</sup> John N. Westwood, *The Illustrated History of the Russo-Japanese War* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1974), 19.

<sup>131</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 47-48.

<sup>132</sup> Later the captain of the Russian ship said that, before he fired, the Japanese had fired three torpedoes at his ship, but that all of them had missed. So it is not clear who first started the hostilities.

<sup>133</sup> Even though hostilities had already started, the Pacific Squadron at Port Arthur could not have known this because the Japanese controlled the telegraph system in Korea.

defeated the Russian vessels. As a result of the surprise attacks on Port Arthur and Inchon, Japan established command of the sea in the Yellow Sea, and this situation was maintained until the end of the war.<sup>134</sup>

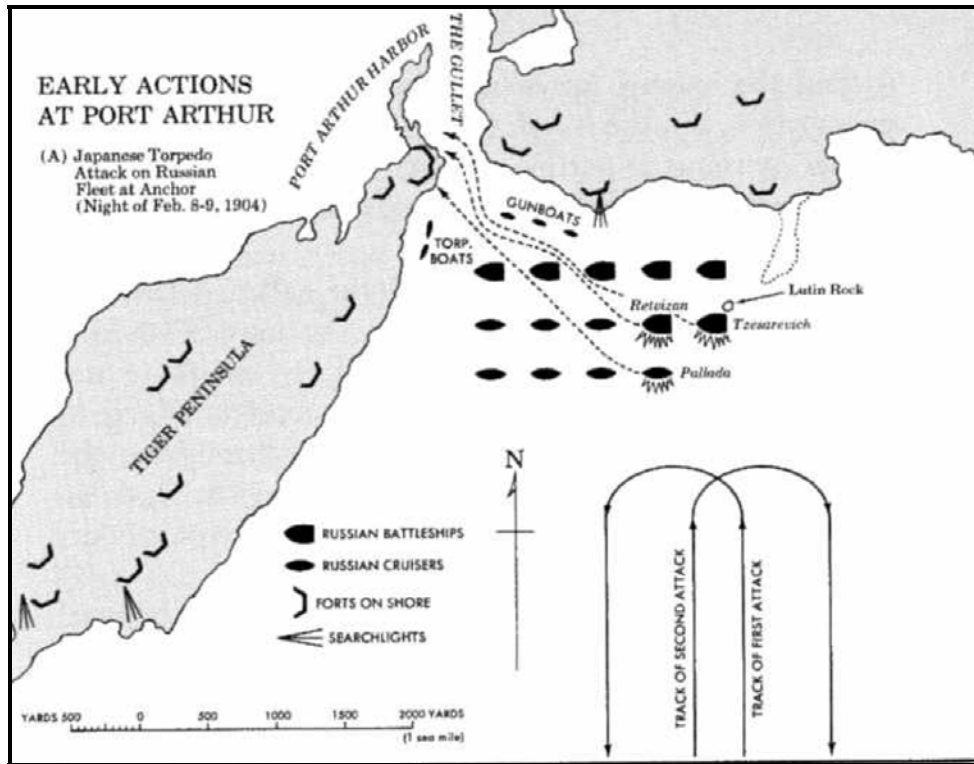


Figure 2. The Japanese Attack on Port Arthur<sup>135</sup>

<sup>134</sup> However, the Russian cruiser squadron at Vladivostok harassed the Japanese navy and Japan's line of communication until it was defeated by the Japanese Second Fleet in August 1904.

<sup>135</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, modified by author.

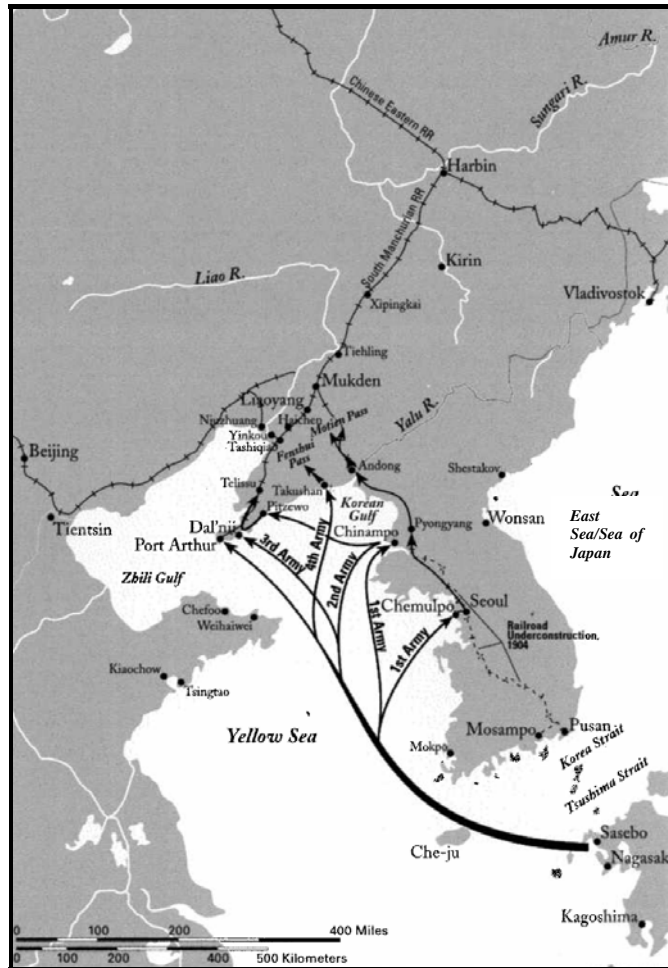


Figure 3. The Theater of the Russo-Japanese War<sup>136</sup>

### 3. The Korea-Japanese Protocol and Militarization of Korea

As soon as the Japanese troops landed at Inchon, fifteen hundred of them were sent by train to Seoul to occupy the capital.<sup>137</sup> Anticipating a war between Russia and Japan, the Korean government officially had proclaimed its neutrality on January 16, 1904. However, Japan demanded that the Korean government sign the Korean-Japanese

<sup>136</sup> Steinberg et al., “*The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*,” modified by author.

<sup>137</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 49-50.



Protocol Agreement on February 23, 1904,<sup>138</sup> while its troops surrounded the royal palace. Based on this document, Japan expanded its authority to occupy or expropriate areas deemed necessary for the stationing of troops, or those with strategic military value to guarantee the “independence and territorial integrity” of the Korean Empire (Articles 2 and 3). Most importantly, to defend Korea from dangers, Japan could “occupy such places as may be necessary from the strategic point of view, when circumstances require it.” In other words, based on the Protocol, the Japanese military had the right to reside and employ its troops in Korea and occupy and expropriate strategic points in Korean territory.<sup>139</sup> Based on this agreement, Japan expropriated totally 9, 750, 000 pyong (3.3m<sup>2</sup>/pyong) from Yongsan, Pyongyang, and Paekma (south of Wiju).<sup>140</sup> In addition, Japan started laying the Seoul-Wiju and Seoul-Busan railroads, commandeered the telegraph network, and took navigation rights on Korean rivers and in Korean coastal waters.

In the midst of the Russo-Japanese War, Japan coerced Korea into signing the Korean-Japan Agreement on August 22, 1904. By this treaty, Japan had the authority to designate diplomatic and financial “advisors” for the administration of the Korean

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<sup>138</sup> The protocol, signed by Gonsuke Hayahsi, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, and Major General Yi Jee-Yong, included the following Articles:

“Article 1. For the purpose of maintaining a permanent and unalterable friendship between Japan and Korea, and of firmly establishing peace in the East, the Imperial Government of Korea shall place full confidence in the Imperial Government of Japan and adopt the advice of the latter regarding improvements in administration.

Article 2. The Imperial Government of Japan shall, in a spirit of firm friendship, insure the safety and repose of the Imperial House of Korea.

Article 3. The Imperial Government of Japan firmly guarantees the independence and the territorial integrity of the Korean Empire.

Article 4. In case the welfare of the Imperial House of Korea, or the territorial integrity of Korea, is endangered by the aggression of a third Power, or internal disturbances, the Imperial Government of Japan shall immediately take such necessary measures as circumstances require, and in such case the Imperial Government of Korea shall give full facilities to promote the action of the Imperial Japanese Government.

Article 5. The Government of the two countries shall not, in the future, without mutual consent, conclude with a third Power such an arrangement as may contrary to the principles of the present Protocol.

Article 6. Details in connection with the present Protocol shall be arranged as the circumstances may require between the Representative of Japan and the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Korea.”

<sup>139</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 59.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 62-63.

government.<sup>141</sup> “Numerous Japanese advisors were brought in, and, step by step, the administration was Japanized.”<sup>142</sup> Consequently, Korea gradually lost its fundamental rights and authority to exist as a sovereign independent state.

Concerning the contradiction of the treaty which ensured the Japan’s right to designate appropriate “advisors” to Korea as its discretion and emphasized, at the same time, the “independence and the integrity of territory” of Korea, the Japanese Minister to Korea frankly said: “Japan is confronted by a most difficult problem—to maintain the fiction of Korean independence while practically establishing a protectorate, and yet to avoid assuming the responsibilities of a governing power.”<sup>143</sup>

While the Russian Pacific Squadron did not actively engage to the Japanese navy, the Japanese Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Gentaro Kodama, ordered the landing of the rest of the 12<sup>th</sup> infantry division at Inchon on February 16. He ordered the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Guards Divisions to land just south of Pyongyang between March 14 and 21. These divisions were grouped with the 12<sup>th</sup> division into the Japanese First Army, under General Tametoko Kuroki. After defeating minor resistance from the Russian troops in Pyoungyang, the Japanese First Army marched north to the Yalu, and, thus, Japan accomplished its first aim of the war, i.e., securing its influence and interests in Korea.

## **C. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WAR**

### **1. A Short Revived Russian Morale: The Death of Makarov**

On March 8, Vice Admiral Stepan O. Makarov, who was one of the most respected commanders in the Russian navy, was appointed to replace Vice-Admiral Oskar V. Stark, who had been in charge of the port at the time of the Japanese surprise attack. His appointment itself seemed to be enough to revive the fighting spirit and

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<sup>141</sup> The first Japanese financial advisor was Megata Tanetaro, and an American, Durham W. Stevens, was appointed as foreign affairs advisor. Moreover, Japan went beyond the agreement: it assigned several advisors in the Korean Ministry of Defense, Police, Royal House Affairs, and Education. In addition, Korean ministers to Germany, France, Japan, China, and other nations were recalled. Lee Ki-Baek, *A New History of Korea*, 308-309.

<sup>142</sup> F.A. McKenzie, *The Tragedy of Korea* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), 111.

<sup>143</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 195.

morale of the Pacific Squadron. Right after Makarov's arrival, the Russian fleet sailed out to face the Japanese fleet. On March 10, the Russian destroyers engaged in a fierce fight with Japanese flotillas outside Port Arthur; the next day, Makarov sailed out to search for the Japanese.<sup>144</sup> Although there was no outstanding outcome, it was enough to stimulate the Russian sailors' morale. As the morale of the Russian sailors revived, their performance was also enhanced. By the beginning of April, the *Retvizan* and the *Tsarevitch* were refloated, further boosting morale. The Japanese learned about this change because the Russians now fought instead of running for their harbor.

In addition to the revival of Port Arthur, the Vladivostok cruiser's vigorous operation since the outbreak of the war was enough to make the Japanese feel threatened. Furthermore, if the Russian Pacific fleets at Port Arthur and Vladivostok were to be combined, control of the sea might transfer to Russia. Admiral Togo felt an imminent need to defeat the rising morale and ability of the Russians, and so he made a plan to lure Makarov to his death.

On April 12, the Japanese laid mines at high tide in the Russian ships' usual pathways. On the morning of April 13, Japanese destroyers attacked the Russian destroyers, sinking one and damaging another. Admiral Makarov boarded his flagship, the *Petropavlovsk*, and sortied out. When the Japanese Combined Fleet's battleships approached, Admiral Makarov did not go further because, knowing that his crews needed more gunnery exercise, he wanted to be under the cover of shore batteries. However, at that time it was low tide, when Makarov ordered a return to port, his flagship, the *Petropavlovsk*, struck a mine and sank in minutes, taking with it Makarov and 662 crew members.<sup>145</sup> Half an hour later, the battleship the *Pobeda* also struck a mine, though it did not sink. With the death of Makarov, the fighting spirit of the Russians at Port Arthur also died, and his successor, Vilhelm Karlovich Vitgeft, directed by Viceroy Alekseev to take no risks, did not try to sortie out any more until June.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 72-73.

<sup>145</sup> John W. Steinberg, "The Operational Overview," in John W. Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 109; Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 28.

<sup>146</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 28.

After the death of Makarov, Russia opened a conference and decided to send its Baltic Fleet to the Far East. On April 19, they renamed the Pacific Squadron as the Russian First Squadron in the Pacific. They renamed the Russian Baltic Fleet as the Second Squadron and appointed Admiral Zinovy Petrovich Rozhdestvensky to command the Fleet. It took months for Rozhdestvensky to reshaping and preparing for their legendary 29,000 kilometers voyage. However, he could weigh anchor to the East in October 1904 only after the First Squadron, both at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, became collapsed in August, 1904. Even more, the Second Fleet received the fall of Port Arthur, their destination, en route.

## **2. Japanese Attempts to Bottle Up Port Arthur**

Since the initial phase of the war, Admiral Togo planned to block Port Arthur. The first attempt was executed on February 24 with five Japanese transports, but failed.<sup>147</sup> On March 27, the Japanese tried to block the harbor with four transports, but failed again.<sup>148</sup> Facing the inactiveness of the Russians after the death of Admiral Makarov, Admiral Togo decided to try again to bottle up the Russian fleet. On May 3, the Japanese navy executed its third attempt to block the harbor with twelve vessels. This operation was quite bolder than previous ones in February and March, considering the plan required the Japanese Second Army to land on the soil of Russian influence just sixty miles from Port Arthur.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, this mission also closely coincided with the Japanese First Army's ground battle at Yalu River, though that battle consequently started earlier than the blockade attempt.

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<sup>147</sup> One of the Japanese ships, the *Hokoku-maru*, moved closest to the harbor entrance, but she sank due to the intense fire from the shore batteries and the *Retvizan*, which was still aground in the entrance of the harbor. *Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated*, 83-86; Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 55-58.

<sup>148</sup> *Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated*, 91-93.

<sup>149</sup> The block ship operation on February 24, 1904 was for covering the disembarkation of the Twelfth Division at Inchon; that of March 27 was for the First Army's leapfrogging transportation to Chinnampo; that of May 3 was for the landing of the Second Army. David C. Evans and Mark R. Peattie, *Kaigun: Strategy, Tactics, and Technology in the Imperial Japanese Navy, 1887-1941* (Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1997), 555 (endnote 20).

In the heavy seas, eight Japanese ships out of twelve finally made their attempts to block the entrance of Port Arthur on the night of May 3. The Russians had installed two booms across the outer entrance to the harbor, Admiral Togo, assuming that the booms had been placed inside the harbor's mouth, believed that the blockage mission had succeeded when some of his ships reported that they had passed the booms.<sup>150</sup> Even though Admiral Togo could not clearly ascertain the situation of the enemy the next morning due to dense fog, he falsely reported that the blockade mission had been successful.<sup>151</sup> Based on this report, the Japanese Second Army, which had departed from a port near Pyongyang on May 3, implemented its disembarkation at Pitzewo, sixty kilometers north of Dalny in the Lioatung Peninsula, on the morning of May 5. Fortunately for the Japanese, they finished their landing without Russian interference. However, Admiral Togo still could not leave Port Arthur when he found that the mission had not been successful.

### **3. The Battle of Yalu River**

Contrary to Japanese expectations before the war, which had assumed some resistance from the Russian army, Japanese movement in Korea was relatively favorable. As a result, the Japanese army could send their troops as many as they could. General Kuroki was appointed as commander of the Japanese First Army, and his Army had landed in Korea by March 29, 1904.<sup>152</sup> In Russia, General Aleksei Nikolaevich Kuropatkin, the former War Minister of Russian, was appointed as a commander of the Russian military troops in Manchuria on February 20. When Kuroki was fighting in Pyongyang, Kuropatkin arrived in Harbin on March 27, and Liaoyang, his main Manchurian base, on March 28.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 79.

<sup>151</sup> *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated*, 250-253.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60.

<sup>153</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 61.

The gap between the belligerents was closing; however, the level of readiness between them was totally different. The Japanese were well aware of the battlefield and possessed good intelligence about their enemy, while the Russians were hurriedly being mobilized without proper information and intelligence. It took as long as six weeks to mobilize an infantry unit, and this was the first task which the Russians had to accomplish.<sup>154</sup> So Kuroki was able to reach the south bank of Yalu River without specific resistance from the Russians. Furthermore, there was another challenge to General Kuropatkin's leadership. Kuropatkin, who understood the Japanese military's potential, wanted to begin by cautiously engaging the Japanese, and wait to launch a decisive counterattack until sufficient reinforcements were in place. However, Viceroy Alekseev, heedlessly argued for an immediate confrontation and defeat of the enemy.<sup>155</sup> Meanwhile, the first major combat between the two countries' troops were waiting for them, i.e., the Battle of Yalu River.

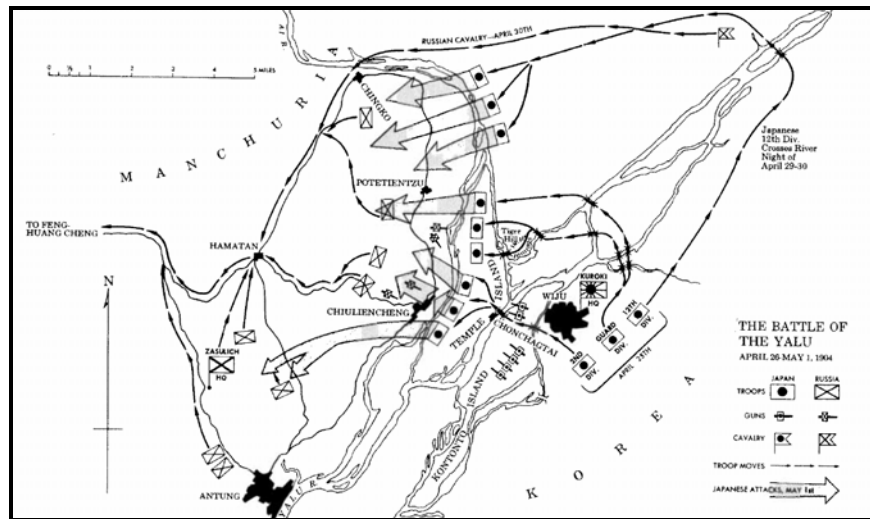


Figure 4. The Battle of Yalu River<sup>156</sup>

On the northwest bank of the Yalu River, the Russians, led by General M. I. Zasulich, numbered about 19,000. More than 42,000 Japanese led by General Kuroki

<sup>154</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*.

<sup>155</sup> John W. Steinberg, "The Operational Overview," in John W. Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005), 110.

<sup>156</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*.

were on the southeast bank.<sup>157</sup> General Kuroki decided to deceive the Russians; he pretended that the Japanese attack would be from the main channel of the Yalu River by constructing a bridge in the main channel of the river, while, behind the scenes, several portable bridges were built to prepare for the last decisive moment for bridging.<sup>158</sup> Overall, ten bridges were built under the Russians' shelling.<sup>159</sup> However, Kuroki's main attack force, the Twelfth Division, was planned to outflank the Russian's left after crossing the Yalu River thirteen miles northeast of Wiju. The Russians, on the other hand, wasted their ammunition while trying to destroy the bridge; in the process, they revealed their position to the Japanese. The Russians did not try to cover their troops, guns, or positions.

On April 26 and 27, the Japanese occupied a series of islands in the Yalu River and moved 4.7 inch Krupp Howitzers to one of the islands. On the night of April 29, the Japanese Second and Guard Divisions started crossing the Yalu River, while the Twelfth Division outflanked to north of the river to cover the other divisions' assault. On the morning of April 30, the howitzers concealed on the island silenced the inferior Russian guns.<sup>160</sup> Major General N. A. Kashitalinskii, who commanded the Russian left, had already asked Zasulich to reinforce their left, but the latter denied this request.<sup>161</sup> As a result, the Russian army was mainly concentrated on the Japanese Second and Guard Divisions side and was not prepared for the Japanese outflanking maneuver. The battle ended when the Russians retreated in the evening to the northwest. The Russians absorbed 5,000 casualties, while the Japanese had 2,000.<sup>162</sup> However, the impact of the battle was formidable: by showing its competitiveness, Japan could raise loans from Great Britain and the United States as well as upgrade its image as a world class army.<sup>163</sup> And most importantly, Japan consolidated its occupation of Korea.

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<sup>157</sup> Steinberg, "The Operational Overview," 110.

<sup>158</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 33.

<sup>159</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 65.

<sup>160</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 33-34.

<sup>161</sup> Steinberg, "The Operational Overview," 111.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 34.

#### 4. The Battle of Nanshan and Isolation of Port Arthur

On May 5, General Oku's Second Army commenced landing on the Liaotung Peninsula, specifically at Pitzewo, sixty kilometers north of Dalny, with the Japanese navy's assistance. Since it was ebb tide, the Japanese ships could not approach the shore. So the Japanese troops jumped overboard and waded waist-deep for about one kilometer. But there were no Russians at the landing place.<sup>164</sup> After defeating minor resistance from the Russian troops, General Oku's advance detachment cut off the telegraph wire and destroyed the railroad, thus severing communication between Port Arthur and the rest of Manchuria.<sup>165</sup> On May 16, the Japanese Second Army moved across the Kwantung Peninsula. Meanwhile, on May 19, General Nozu Michitsura's Fourth Army landed at Takushan on the northern reaches of the Liaotung Peninsula.<sup>166</sup>

The Japanese movement meant not only that the Port Arthur would be isolated, but that the Japanese troops were between the Russians. The Russians had about thirty thousand soldiers under Lieutenant General Stessel in Port Arthur, and another troop was in Liaoyang under General Kuropatkin. It was a time when the Russians should and could have interrupted the Japanese landing and further movement in the Liaotung Peninsula, because the Japanese were vulnerable while waiting for further reinforcements. However, the passivity of Stessel and Kuropatkin allowed the Japanese Second Army's reinforcements to arrive and its southwestern march to Nanshan to begin.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> *Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated* 2 (1904), 232.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 232-233.

<sup>166</sup> Pertti Luntinen and Bruce W. Menning, "The Russian Army at War, 1904-05," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective: World War Zero*, ed. John W. Steinberg et al., (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 239.

<sup>167</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 80-81.



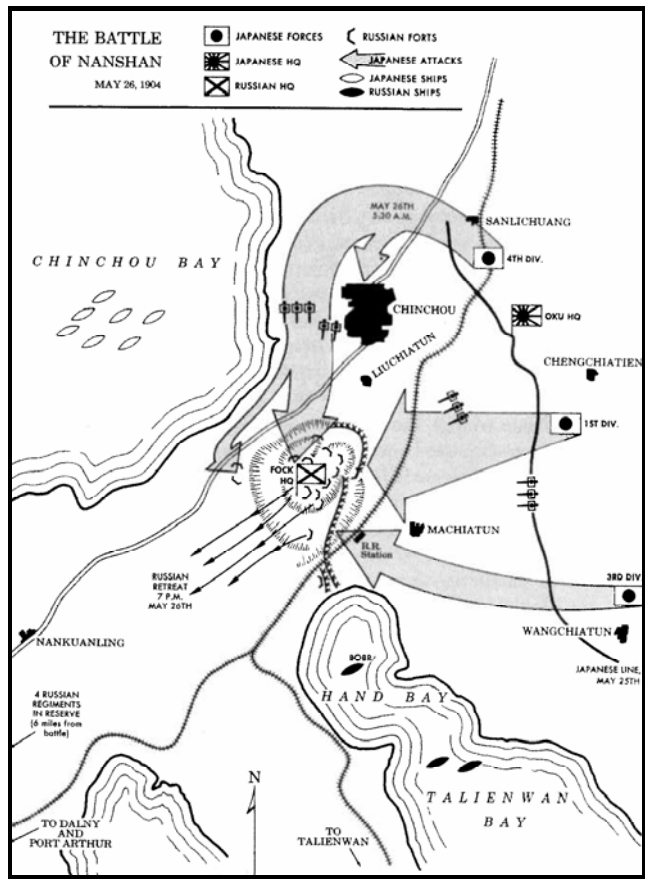


Figure 5. The Battle of Nanshan<sup>168</sup>

Nanshan is at a point where Liaotung Peninsula narrows briefly to about four miles and becomes the Kwantung peninsula. To the west of Nanshan is Chinchou Bay, Talienwan Bay is to the east, and Dalny is located twenty-five kilometers south of Nanshan.<sup>169</sup> The Japanese forces numbered about 38,000 and the Russians had about 18,000.<sup>170</sup> The Japanese navy assisted the operation by sending several gunships to Chinchou Bay, where the Russians did not expect the Japanese, while the Russians sent a gunboat to Talienwan Bay.

The Japanese started their attack on the night of May 25 with three divisions. Even under the overwhelming Japanese attacks, the Russians did not send in their reserve

<sup>168</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*.  
<sup>169</sup> Steinberg, "The Operational Overview," 112.  
<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

troops, which were six miles from the battlefield, so the actual number of troops engaged in the battle was merely 3,000. The Russian navy at Port Arthur had a dozen destroyers which they might have sent to defeat the Japanese gunboats in Chinchou Bay. But they sent some only after the Japanese left. Consequently, on the evening of May 26, the Russians retreated, and the Japanese won the battle and acquired Dalny, a precious commercial harbor. Japan lost almost 5,000 troops, while the Russians lost less than 1,000. The battle of Nanshan consolidated the isolation of Port Arthur, and capturing Dalny gave Japan a precious harbor near Port Arthur. The Japanese did not have to try amphibious landings anymore and could start their siege of Port Arthur from the land. On May 28, the Japanese navy convoyed reinforcement troops to Dalny without any Russian interference, and General Oku's Second Army turned to the north, aiming for Kuropatkin's troops in Liaoyang.<sup>171</sup>

The Japanese established and assigned the Third Army besiege Port Arthur. General Maresuke Nogi, who was the legendary conqueror of Port Arthur in 1894 during the Sino-Japanese War, was appointed to command the Third Army, and arrived at Dalny on June 6, 1904. Now, everything was set for the main battle in Manchuria. The Japanese Second, Fourth, and First Armies (roughly from the west to the east of the Manchuria) were heading for Liaoyang, while the Third Army started preparing the siege of Port Arthur.

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<sup>171</sup> Luntinen and Menning, "The Russian Army at War, 1904-05," 238.

## IV. INCORPORATION OF DOKDO BY JAPAN

### A. JAPAN AFTER THE MEIJI RESTORATION

The new Meiji leaders quickly recognized the superiority of Western technology and modern industry. Thus, rather than resist and be defeated by the West, Meiji leaders pursued “relations of amity” with Western powers, adopted the vocabulary of “Realpolitik” based on the concept of Social Darwinism, and spoke of *jakuniku-kyoshoku* (*the strong devour the weak*).<sup>172</sup> The Japanese also used every effort to “transform” its empire and people.<sup>173</sup> The Meiji government’s policy was largely influenced by the report of the “Iwakura Mission.” The Iwakura Mission was one of the most prominent Japanese efforts to “discover the source of power and wealth;”<sup>174</sup> it travelled the United States and twelve highly developed European countries.<sup>175</sup>

Instead of being overwhelmed by Western civilization, however, the members of the mission were confident that Japan could catch up to the West through careful planning. Kime Kunitake, Iwakura’s chief secretary on the embassy staff, reflected that:

Most of the countries in Europe shine with the light of civilization and abound in wealth and power. Their trade is prosperous, their technology is superior, and they greatly enjoy the pleasures and comforts of life. When one observes such conditions, one is apt to think that these countries have always been like this, but this is not the case—the wealth and prosperity one sees now in Europe dates to an appreciable degree from the period after 1800. It has taken scarcely forty years to produce such conditions... How different the Europe of today is from the Europe of forty years ago

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<sup>172</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan Rising* (New York: The Century Foundation, 2007), 78.

<sup>173</sup> In 1887, the Japanese Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru had this to say about the Meiji government’s policy: “What we must do is to transform our empire and our people, make the empire like the countries of Europe, and our people like the peoples of Europe. To put it differently, we have to establish a new, European-style empire on the edge of Asia.” Marius B. Janse, “Modernization and Foreign Policy in Meiji,” in *Political Development in Modern Japan*, ed. Robert E. Ward (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), 175.

<sup>174</sup> Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 83.

<sup>175</sup> They travelled in nine cities in the United States, followed by sojourns in England and Scotland, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Austria, and Switzerland. The Iwakura Mission had more than 100 members and their report about their experience in advanced countries was more than 2,000 pages long. *Ibid.*

can be imagined easily. There were no trains running on the land; there were no steamships operating on the water. There was no transmission of news by telegraph...Those who read this should reflect upon the lesson to be drawn for Japan.<sup>176</sup>

Another thing the Japanese learned was the role of the international law in Realpolitik. According to Henry Wheaton's classic *Elements of International Law*, which was published in 1836, international law was "limited to the civilized and Christian people in Europe or to those of European origin."<sup>177</sup> It was translated into Japanese in the mid-1860s, and accepted by the Meiji leaders. Kido Koin (木戸孝允), a prominent leader from Chosu, wrote in his diary about the characteristics of the international law:

There is an urgent need for Japan to become strong enough militarily to take a stand against the Western powers. As long as our country is lacking in military power, the law of nations is not to be trusted. When dealing with those who are weak, the strong nations often invoke public law but really calculate their own gain. Thus it seems to me that the law of nations is merely a tool for the conquest of the weak.<sup>178</sup>

After that, Meiji Japan *legally* expanded its territory. Japan incorporated Hokkaido in 1869, Okinawa in 1871, and Taiwan in 1895. Senkaku/Diaoyu Dao, which is currently occupied by Japan, and claimed both by China and Taiwan, was incorporated by Japan on January 14, 1895. The Japanese claimed that a Japanese national, Tatsushiro Koga, discovered and effectively occupied Senkaku/Diaoyu Dao in 1884, and that Japan annexed the *terra nullis* on January 14, 1895. However, in fact, the Japanese government had rejected the Okinawa Prefecture's application to incorporate Senkaku/Diaoyu Dao three times (in 1885, 1890, and 1893) because it worried that an

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<sup>176</sup> Bernard S. Silberman and Harry D. Harootunian, eds., *Modern Japanese Leadership* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1966), 357-358.

<sup>177</sup> Quoted in Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 79.

<sup>178</sup> Quoted in Masao Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them: The First Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 143, quoted in Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 79.

attempt to incorporate the island might cause a conflict with China.<sup>179</sup> But when it was clear that Japan would be the victor of the Sino-Japanese War, Japan annexed the island on the basis that the island was *terra nullius*.

Now Dokdo, which had been recognized as Korean territory both by Korea and Japan, was claimed by Japan as *terra nullius*. As was the case about a decade earlier, Japan was engaged in another war, this time with Russia, and a train of things happened which made Japan use its knowledge about and experience with international law to *legally* take Dokdo from Korea.

## **B. THE JAPANESE NAVY IN PERIL**

“Mine warfare proved to be a double edged sword.”<sup>180</sup> In April, it deprived Russia’s most energetic and competent Admiral Makarov of life and it toppled the Russians’ morale decisively. In May, a similar disaster struck the Japanese Navy. Noting that the Japanese vessels were using almost the same daily route outside Port Arthur, Captain Ivanov, the commander of the Russian minelayer the *Amur*, laid mines outside the harbor on May 14 under the cover of heavy fog. The next morning, the Japanese battleships the *Hatsuse* (15,200 ton), the *Shikishima* (14,850 ton) and the *Yashima* (12,517 ton), were patrolling off Port Arthur following their daily pattern.<sup>181</sup> First, the *Hatsuse* hit one of the Ivanov’s mines. The *Yashima* hit one a moment later. In a state of confusion, the *Hatsuse* hit a second mine and, like the *Petropavlovsk*, sank in less than ninety seconds with about 600 crews.<sup>182</sup> The *Yashima* also sank when she was being towed by other ships. As a result, the Japanese navy lost one third of its capital ships in a day.

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<sup>179</sup> Choon-Ho Park, “Oil under Troubled Waters: The Northeast Asia Sea-Bed Controversy,” in *East Asia and the Law of the Sea* 33 (Seoul: Seoul National University Press, 1893), quoted in Van Dyke, “Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary,” 214 (endnote 232).

<sup>180</sup> Steinberg, “The Operational Overview,” 113.

<sup>181</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 82.

<sup>182</sup> Rear Admiral Nashiba, the commander of *Hatsuse*, and about 200 crews were saved. He transferred to the dispatch ship *Tatsuta*, but he ran aground late in the day.

In addition, the cruiser *Yoshino*, with a crew of more than 300, sank after being hit by the cruiser *Kassuga* (7,583 ton) in a dense fog. Two days later, the destroyer *Akatsuki* struck another mine and sank. “The series of losses was the cause of much concern at Admiral Togo’s headquarters because he had absolutely no reserves in ships or men.”<sup>183</sup>

### C. THREAT OF THE RUSSIAN VLADIVOSTOK SQUADRON

Furthermore, in contrast to the passivity at Port Arthur, the Vladivostok cruiser squadron with large cruisers, the *Gromoboi*, the *Rossia* and the *Rurik*, under Vice Admiral Skrydlov had posed a serious threat since the outbreak of the war and it further increased the Japanese concerns. Consequently, after the Russian cruisers’ second mission in the late February 1904, the Japanese navy replaced the weak Third Fleet with the stronger Second Fleet under Admiral Kamimura Hikonojo to take charge in securing the Korean Strait/Tsushima Strait and East Sea/Sea of Japan.<sup>184</sup> However, while skillfully avoiding a direct engagement with the Japanese Second Fleet, the Russian cruisers disturbed the Japanese movements at sea. On March 6 Admiral Kamimura went to Vladivostok to ask a fight, but the Russians did not answer.<sup>185</sup> Instead, the Russians sailed out on April 8 and moved into Japanese waters, where they sank several Japanese freighters, including the *Kinshu-maru*, which were transporting troops and supplies to Korea.<sup>186</sup> To avenge this, Admiral Kamimura sailed to Vladivostok once again on May 12, but the Russians did not come out.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 83.

<sup>184</sup> Before the start of the war, the Japanese navy renamed its fleet from the Standing Fleet to Combined Fleet and reorganized it into three fleets. The First Fleet mainly consisted of six battleships equipped heavy guns and four protected cruisers; the Second Fleet consisted of six armored cruisers and four lesser cruisers; the Third Fleet consisted of various lesser warships and obsolescent vessels. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 81.

<sup>185</sup> *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated* 1, 86-88.

<sup>186</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 76.

<sup>187</sup> *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated* 2, 249-250.

On June 12, three Russian cruisers sortied out under the command of Vice Admiral Petr Alekseevich Bezobrazov.<sup>188</sup> They went to the Korean Strait/Tsushima Strait, attacked several Japanese transports and sank three of them, with the loss of 1,095 troops, large quantity of ammunitions, railway engines and materials, and, mostly importantly, large-caliber howitzers for the siege train at Port Arthur.<sup>189</sup> Admiral Kamimura tracked and pursued the Russian cruisers, but, again, the Russians escaped under heavy rain and darkness. At this juncture, the anxiety and discontent of the Japanese public opinion focused on Admiral Kamimura: his house in Tokyo was stoned by a mob; politicians demanded his court-martial; some sent short swords, calling for his suicide.<sup>190</sup>

On June 30, the Russians sortied out again. This time the Russian five torpedo boats entered the harbor of Gensan while the three cruisers were sighted in the offing. The torpedo boats shelled Gensan, sank several Japanese vessels, and returned without being interrupted by the Japanese.<sup>191</sup>

On July 20, the Russian cruisers under Rear Admiral Karl Petrovich Issen sortied out and boldly sailed through Tsugaru Strait and appeared in Tokyo Bay. They sank or captured and released several Western merchantmen and sank some Japanese supply vessels.<sup>192</sup> On July 30, the Russians returned to Vladivostok through the Tsugaru Strait, but, again, Admiral Kamimura missed the Russians.

The Japanese navy had already started suffering from the shortage of vessels, lost one third of its capital ships and several vessels since May 1904 and the communication of the Japanese in the East Sea/Sea of Japan was at crises. However, despite the passiveness of the Russians at Port Arthur, Admiral Togo could not neglect them and

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<sup>188</sup> Perti Luntinen and Bruce W. Menning, "The Russian Navy at War, 1904-1905," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 239.

<sup>189</sup> Total tonnage of these three ships were close to 15,000 tons and, with the loss, the fall of Port Arthur was delayed about two months. *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated 2*, 394-398; Luntinen and Menning, "The Russian Navy at War, 1904-1905," in *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 239; Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts' View on Dokdo*, 65.

<sup>190</sup> Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 108-109.

<sup>191</sup> *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated*, 404-405.

<sup>192</sup> Luntinen and Menning, "The Russian Navy at War, 1904-05," 239; *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated 4*, 493-495.

move his fleet to secure the communication line in the East Sea/Sea of Japan, where the Russian cruisers at Vladivostok became more bold and vigorous in terrifying the Japanese line of communication. In the end, as a defensive measure, Japan began building observation posts along the Korean coast line. Indeed, this job had already started since June 1904.

#### **D. JAPANESE CONSTRUCTION OF OBSERVATION POSTS<sup>193</sup>**

On May 18, 1904, three days after the catastrophe of the Japanese battleships the *Hatsuse* and the *Yoshima*, the Korean government, under Japanese pressure, announced that it would nullify all the treaties it had signed with Russia, including those regarding timber rights on the Yalu and Tumen Rivers and on Ulleungdo.<sup>194</sup> After the announcement, all the Russians in Ulleungdo were vanquished by force. When the idea of depriving Russia of its influence on Korea was first discussed in March, Ulleungdo was not included in the initial draft. However, after losing two capital battleships and other vessels, the Japanese government added Ulleungdo to the document. This was because the Japanese naval ministry wanted to compensate for its weakened naval power by locating of the Russian Vladivostok fleet's operational movements more quickly.

On June 21, 1904, the Japanese navy ordered that observation posts with radio communication facilities be built at Chukpyon in Uljin County and other strategically important points along the eastern and southern coast of Korea.<sup>195</sup> The construction at Chukpyon began on June 27, 1904, was completed on July 22, and began operation on

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<sup>193</sup> Japan must have constructed additional observational posts along its coastline, but due to the lack of source, the author only acquired the observation posts which were built in Korea.

<sup>194</sup> Japanese Diplomatic Documents, Vol. 37, Bk. 1, 382-383, 386 and 388-391, quoted in Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts' View on Dokdo*, 62-64.

<sup>195</sup> Japan Naval General Staff, ed., *Top Secret History of Naval Battles in the 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> years of Meiji (1904-1905)* (極秘明治三十七八年海戰史, Gokuhi Meiji Sanju NaNa Hachinen Kaisenshi), Part IV, Vol. 4, 236, quoted in Shin, *Korea's Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 138. The author has not personally examined this work of the Japanese navy. According to Evans and Peattie, this work consists of 147 volumes and was largely unknown even within the Japanese navy until the end of World War II. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 554.



August 10.<sup>196</sup> In addition, on July 5, 1904, the Japanese navy decided to construct two observation posts at Ulleungdo, one each at the northwest and southeast ends, and connect Chukpyon and Ulleungdo by submarine cable.<sup>197</sup>

The construction of the two observation posts on Ulleungdo was started on August 3, 1904, and completed on September 1, and operations began on the following day.<sup>198</sup> The laying of the undersea cables began on September 8 and was completed on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.<sup>199</sup> With the undersea cable, the observation post at Ulleungdo could report its observations of the Russian fleet to Japanese navy headquarters in Sasebo in Japan by way of Chukpyon.<sup>200</sup> Overall, the Japanese navy erected a total of twenty observation posts on Wonsan, Cheju, Ulsan, Cholyoungdo, Keomundo, Hongdo, and Udo, all along the Korean coast.<sup>201</sup>

As Figure 6 and Table 1 show, the Japanese navy had only two observation posts, Palgupo in southwest of Korea and Baekryungdo in the Yellow Sea. However, since the late June 1904, the number of the Japanese navy's observation posts promptly increased. It implies that the Japanese navy was seriously concerned about the command of the sea which was caused by the loss of its one third of capital ships and several warships and threatened by the Russian Vladivostok fleet; recognized the need to reinforce the Kamimura's cruiser fleet; and, thus, tried to offset these problems by early locating the Russian vessels. Furthermore, additional construction of observation posts after the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan reaffirms how the Japanese thought about the importance of those islands and how they were going to be used: the complete containment of the Russian fleet in Vladivostok, just in case.

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<sup>196</sup> Japan Naval General Staff, ed., *Top Secret History of Naval Battles in the 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> years of Meiji (1904-1905)*, 139.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 90-92.

<sup>201</sup> Japan Naval General Staff, ed., *Top Secret History of Naval Battles*, quoted in Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 90.



Figure 6. Japanese Construction of Observations Posts along Korean Coastline<sup>202</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Google Earth, <http://earth.google.com/> (accessed December 13, 2007).

Location	Comm' w/ Station	Comm' w/ Vessels	Start of Construction	Completion	Begin Operation	Personnel
Palgupo	Telephone	Flag, Flash signal, Wireless	04. 2. 15	04. 3. 28	04. 9. 20	14
Baekryungdo	Telephone	Perfection, Wireless	04. 3. 17	04. 4. 3	04. 4. 11	19
Chukpyon	Telegram	Wireless	04. 6. 27	04. 7. 22	04. 8. 10	13
Wonsan	Telephone	Flag, Flash Signal	04. 7. 5	04. 8. 3	04. 8. 3	5
Busan	Telegram	Perfection	04. 7. 17	04. 8. 2	04. 8. 2	9
Hongdo	Telegram	Perfection	04. 7. 17	04. 8. 2	04. 10. 7	8
Ulleungdo	Telephone	Perfection	04. 8. 3	04. 9. 1	04. 9. 2	7
Ulleungdo	Telegram	Perfection	04. 8. 3	04. 9. 1	04. 9. 2	7
Ulsan	Telegram	Perfection	04. 8. 27	04. 9. 20	04. 9. 21	7
Keomundo	Telegram	Perfection, Wireless	04. 8. 27	04. 9. 20	04. 9. 30	11
Jejudo	Telegram	Perfection	04. 8. 27	04. 9. 20	04. 10. 10	7
Jejudo	Telegram	Perfection, Wireless	04. 8. 27	04. 9. 20	04. 9. 30	12
Uldo	Telephone	Perfection	04. 8. 27	04. 9. 20	04. 10. 15	19
Keojedo	Telephone	Perfection, Wireless	04. 9. 5	04. 10. 18	04. 11. 29	8
Suwondan	Telegram	Perfection	05. 3. 7	05. 4. 21	05. 5. 3	7
Youngheungman	Telephone	Perfection, Wireless	05. 3. 28	05. 4. 24	05. 5. 26	11
Musudan	Telegram	Perfection, Wireless	05. 6. 7	05. 7. 13	05. 7. 20	12
Ulleungdo	Telegram	Perfection, Wireless	05. 7. 14	05. 7. 16	05. 8. 16	11
Dongwoigot		Perfection, Wireless	05. 7. 14	05. 8. 15	05. 8. 21	8
Dokdo	Telephone	Perfection	05. 7. 25	05. 8. 19	05. 8. 19	6

Table 1. Japanese Construction of Observation Posts along Korean Coastline<sup>203</sup>

<sup>203</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, modified by author.

## E. A JAPANESE FISHERMAN'S REQUEST FOR THE INCORPORATION OF DOKDO

While the Japanese navy was in a hurry to construct observation posts at strategic points along the Korean coast, including Ulleungdo, a Japanese fisherman named Nakai Yozaburo (中井養三郎) from Shimane prefecture went to Tokyo. Nakai was engaging in fisheries by using diving apparatus, which was a new concept at the time. He caught sea cucumbers off Vladivostok from 1891 to 1892 and hunted sea lions on and off the coasts of Korea in 1893. In 1903, he found that Dokdo was a lucrative habitat of sea lions. Knowing that Dokdo was Korean territory, Nakai went Tokyo to meet high-ranking Japanese officials in 1904 and to ask help with his plan to petition the Korean government, not the Japanese government, for a monopoly on fishing rights at Dokdo.

In Tokyo, Nakai met government officials through an official of the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce named Fujita Kantaro from the same hometown Oki. When Nakai explained his plan for Dokdo, Maki Bokushin, director of the Fishery Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, influenced him to think that Dokdo might not be Korean territory. So he decided to ask the Hydrographic Office in the Ministry of the Navy what the status of Dokdo was. When Nakai met Kimotsuke Kaneyuki (肝付兼行), Director of the Hydrographic office in the Ministry of the Navy, and asked the status of Dokdo, the director answered that there was no clear evidence concerning the title of Dokdo. He also added that Japan is closer to Dokdo than Korea and it would be better to incorporate Dokdo, given that there was a Japanese national, Nakai, who was engaging in business on Dokdo.<sup>204</sup> Consequently, on September 29, 1904, Nakai filed a petition entitled “Request for Territorial Incorporation of Liancourt Island and Its Lease” to three Japanese Ministries: Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs, and Agriculture and Commerce.

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<sup>204</sup> Okuhara Fukuichi, “A Story of Mr. Nakai,” in Takeshima and Matsushima (竹島及鬱陵島), quoted in Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 118-119.

When Nakai submitted the request, an official, Inoue (井上),<sup>205</sup> of the Home Ministry said that Nakai's request would be rejected, despite Nakai's urging and begging the necessity for business. Nakai recollected the time that:

The Home Ministry authorities had the opinion that the gains would be extremely small while the situation would become grave if the acquisition of a barren islet suspected of being Korean territory at this point of time (during the Russo-Japanese War) should amplify the suspicions of various foreign countries that Japan has an ambition to annex Korea. Thus, my petition was rejected.<sup>206</sup>

Thinking that he could not turn back, Nakai went to the Foreign Ministry and met the then Director of Political affairs Yamaza Enjiro (山座圓次郎).<sup>207</sup> Yamaza Enjiro's answer was totally different to that of the Home Ministry official. Nakai recollected that:

Yamaza Enjiro. . . said the incorporation was urgent particularly under the present situation, and it *is absolutely necessary and advisable to construct observation posts and install wireless or undersea cable and keep watch on the hostile warships*. Particularly in terms of diplomacy, he told me, not to worry about the Home Ministry view. He urged me in high spirits to refer the application speedily to the Foreign Ministry. In this way, Takeshima was incorporated into our country's territory.<sup>208</sup>

After completing the construction of observation posts on Ulleungdo, the Japanese navy dispatched the warship *Niitaka-maru* to survey the island of Dokdo in order to check the feasibility to install an observation post there. This occurred on September 24, 1904, five days before Nakai submitted his request to the three Japanese ministries. The *Niitaka-maru* first went to Ulleungdo, where its crewmen interviewed

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<sup>205</sup> Due to the lack of sources, further information about Inoue could not be acquired except his name.

<sup>206</sup> Nakai Yozaburo, "Summary of Business in Dokdo," submitted to the Office of Okinoshima, along with his application in 1910, quoted in Shin, *Korea's Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 142-143; Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts' View on Dokdo*, 93-95.

<sup>207</sup> Yamaza Enjiro was known as a hardliner in the Foreign Ministry in terms of foreign policy and Japanese expansion to the continent and is said to have drafted the declaration of war against Russia. Kim, *Ilbon Gunbu'ui Dokdo ChimTalsa*, 121; Northeast Asian History Foundation, *The History of Dokdo*, 20.

<sup>208</sup> Nakai Yozaburo, "Summary of Business in Dokdo," 142-143; Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts' View on Dokdo*, 93-95.

several Japanese workers who had watched Dokdo while they were laying undersea cables between Chukpyon and Ulleungdo. The operational logbook of *Niitaka-maru* wrote that:

Information from who had seen Liancodo (Dokdo) from Matsushima (Ulleungdo).

Liancodo is referred to Dokdo (獨島) by Korean and 'Liancodo' by the Japanese fishermen...There are three springs around the south of the island in point "B," these are abundant in water, thus, do not get dry whole year<sup>209</sup>...This year the fishermen in Matsushima voyaged to the island several times. On June 17, they actually had seen three Russian military ships anchoring near the island for a while and sailed to northwest.<sup>210</sup>

Here rise the following questions: "Was Dokdo ownerless at that time?" "Did the Japanese not know that Dokdo was Korean territory?" and "Did Nakai made the application for incorporation of Dokdo by himself?"

First, Dokdo was not ownerless, but was already Korean territory. Some Japanese scholars, such as Simozo Masao, have argued that Sokdo was not Dokdo, but another island, when the Korean Emperor formally incorporated it into Korean jurisdiction by promulgating Imperial Ordinance No. 41 in October 1900.<sup>211</sup> But the *Niitaka-maru's* logbook clearly shows that the Korean people knew of the existence of Dokdo, used the name Dokdo correctly, and went to the island for fishing, and furthermore, that the Japanese also knew these facts.

Second, most people related to this process knew or thought that Dokdo was Korean territory. Nakai, who thought that Dokdo was Korean territory, went to Tokyo to get some help for his petition to the Korean government, via the Japanese government, for a monopoly on fishing in Dokdo. However, Maki Bokushin, director of the Fishery

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<sup>209</sup> This report exaggerated the amount of water in Dokdo; in fact, it is really difficult to get water on the island. It implies that the captain of the ship exaggerated the fact, knowing that the Japanese navy so urgently needed to build a military facility there.

<sup>210</sup> The Operational Logbook of the *Niitaka-maru* (September 24, 1904), quoted in Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 93-94.

<sup>211</sup> Kim, *The Japanese Arguments on Dokdo*, 162-168.

Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce, influenced Nakai to change his thought to the opposite. But Maki must have known the fact that Dokdo was Korean territory, given that he wrote the preface of *Guidelines for the Fishery in Korean Sea* (韓海統漁指針) in 1903, which stated that ‘Liancodo’ was subjected to Kangwon Province, Korea. Indeed, Inoue, an official in Home Ministry, who had been well familiar with the inside story of the Home Ministry’s decision before and after the Meiji Restoration concerning the Dokdo issue, rejected Nakai’s application. In addition, Kimotsuke Kaneyuki (肝付兼行), Director of the Hydrographic Office in the Ministry of the Navy, must have known that Dokdo was Korean territory. The Hydrographic Office of the Ministry of the Navy, where he had been working for a long time, had published *The Sea Lanes of the World* (Kanei suiroshi, 1886),<sup>212</sup> and *The Korean Sea Lanes* (Chosen suiroshi, 1899),<sup>213</sup> which precisely described Dokdo as well as Ulleungdo as Korean territory. One may assume that Kimotsuke Kaneyuki might have not known the status of Dokdo when he convinced Nakai that Dokdo was not Korean territory. But he was the recipient of the report from the *Niitaka-maru*, which, at the least, should have been enough to make him suspicious about the sovereignty of Dokdo. But he did not try to check the sovereignty of Dokdo. Instead, the report, which mentioned the Russian ships’ anchoring near Dokdo, must have inspired him to promote the incorporation of Dokdo. Yamaza Enjiro, then the Director of Political Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, had worked for a long time at the Japanese legation in Korea before he took office in the Foreign Ministry. Therefore, it is highly probable that he realized Dokdo was Korean territory when he faced disputes between Korea and Japan concerning illegal Japanese fisheries and lumbering in Ulleungdo, the Korean government’s consequent redevelopment of Dokdo, and the Korean Emperor’s official jurisdiction over Ulleungdo

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<sup>212</sup> On this chart, Dokdo was marked as ‘Liancourt Rocks’ in Part IV, ‘Korean Eastern Coast (朝鮮東岸), Sang-Tae Lee, *Historical Evidence of Korean Sovereign over Dokdo* (Seoul: Kyongsaewon, 2007), 214.

<sup>213</sup> In 1899, Japan published *The Korean Sea Lanes* and *The Japanese Sea Lanes* separately. Dokdo was marked as ‘Liancourt Rocks’ in Part IV of *The Korean Sea Lanes*, *ibid.*, 215.

and Dokdo. However, his response to Nakai's application seems to have reflected the Japanese desire for a chance to use Dokdo for military purposes.

Third, it is questionable whether the idea to apply for incorporation of Dokdo was made by Nakai by himself. Kawakami Kenzo, who was an important figure when Dokdo became a diplomatic issue between the two countries, argued that the incorporation of Dokdo was merely to approve Nakai's monopolistic fishery.<sup>214</sup> However, the Japanese government did not necessarily need to incorporate Dokdo to give Nakai a monopoly in Dokdo. This is because Japanese fishermen, including Nakai, had already been enjoying a free fishery in the sea near Korea, based on the agreements of 1883 and 1889 between Korea and Japan. In addition, in July 1904, Japan expanded its fishing rights not only in the East Sea, but also in the Yellow Sea.<sup>215</sup> Moreover, the Japanese, which single-handedly controlled the Korean administration, could merely notify the Korean government that it was giving a monopoly to Nakai if it wanted to.

If the Japanese government wanted to incorporate Dokdo only for a single fisherman, it might have asked the Korean government the status of Dokdo before incorporating it; if the Korean government answered that Dokdo was Korean territory, the only thing the Japanese government could do would be to just reject Nakai's application. However, the Japanese government did not do any of the options discussed above; instead, as will be discussed later, it incorporated Dokdo secretly. This implies that the Japanese government did not want to let the Korean government know what was happening to Dokdo. It is also questionable whether Nakai prepared the petition by himself. Considering the circumstances before and after his application, it would be a reasonable conclusion that he prepared it with the help of Japanese officials.

In sum, the author concludes that the Japanese incorporated Dokdo even though they knew for a fact that Dokdo was Korean territory. When the Japanese navy was building observation posts along the Korean coastline and considering the use of Dokdo

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<sup>214</sup> Kawakami Kenzo, *A Historical and Geographical Study on Takeshima*, 208-209, quoted in Kim, *The Japanese Arguments on Dokdo*, 110-112.

<sup>215</sup> Japanese Diplomatic Documents, Vol. 37, Bk. 1, Item 7, documents Nos. 470, 473, 300-400, 403, quoted in Shin, *Korea's Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 136.



for military purposes, Nakai went to Tokyo to ask for a monopoly for catching sea lions in the vicinity of Dokdo. Maki Bokushin and Kimotsuke Kaneyuki falsely informed Nakai that Dokdo was not Korean territory and incited him to petition for incorporation of Dokdo. While Nakai was preparing for the petition, probably with help from Japanese officials, the Japanese navy sent the *Niitaka-maru* to survey Dokdo in September. An official in the Home Ministry, who knew the inside history of Dokdo, rejected Nakai's application, but Yamaza Enjiro urged Nakai to send it to the Foreign Ministry while emphasizing the strategic importance of Dokdo.

In the end, the Japanese navy's idea of using Dokdo for military purposes materialized. In November 1904, the Japanese Navy deployed a warship, the *Tsushima-maru*, to Dokdo for the purpose of surveying suitable locations for the construction of communication posts (not a communication station).<sup>216</sup> The *Tsushima-maru* arrived at Dokdo on December 20, 1904, and some officers looked around it for about three hours. They reported that they had found some appropriate places for constructing observation posts on Dokdo. They also reported their concern that the lack of water would be a problem and that water would need to be supplied from outside after the construction of observation posts.<sup>217</sup>

The Japanese navy wanted to build an observation post quickly on Dokdo. However, due to the harsh winter weather, the Japanese navy had to postpone the construction of an observation post on Dokdo until the next year; in fact, construction started in July, 1905, after the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan.

## **F. THE JAPANESE INCORPORATION OF DOKDO**

As discussed before, it was September 29, 1904 when Nakai Yozaburo petitioned for a monopoly on catching sea lions in Dokdo, and it was an Japanese official, Inoue (井上), in the Home Ministry who rejected Nakai's request. However, it was Yoshikawa

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<sup>216</sup> The Operational Logbook of *Tsushima-maru* (November 13, 1904), Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 74-75.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

Akimasa (芳川顯正), then the Japanese Home Minister, who sent a secret notice to the then Japanese Prime Minister, Katsura Taro (桂太郎), asking to hold a cabinet meeting to discuss “A Case Concerning an Uninhabited Island (*Munintoshozoku ni kansuru ken*)” in January 10, 1905.<sup>218</sup> This was at the time when Admiral Togo was staying in Tokyo (December 30, 1904 ~ February 6, 1905) while conferring with the Naval General Staff to discuss operational plan to meet the Baltic Fleet.<sup>219</sup> It was decided that the East Sea/Sea of Japan would be the final battlefield between the two countries’ navies; Ulleungdo and Dokdo lie in the middle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan.

On January 28, at a cabinet meeting of the Prime Minister, Navy Minister and eleven other ministers, the decision was made to incorporate Dokdo as Japanese territory. The written conclusion reads that:

An examination of the case concerning the uninhabited island located in lat. 37°9′30″, long. 131°55′E, 85 *ri*<sup>220</sup> northwest from Okinoshima concludes that *the island has no traces of ownership by any country...* Documents clearly attest to a man known as Nakai Yozaburo having been *emigrated* to these islands and pursued the occupation of fishing, proof according to international law of *occupation* and hence evidence of Japanese jurisdiction. Therefore, we the cabinet have filed the decision to make these islands subordinate to the Oki Islands Branch Office of Shimane Prefecture.<sup>221</sup>

On February 22, 1905, the governor of Shimane Prefecture announced “Shimane Prefectural Notice No. 40,” which placed Dokdo under the jurisdiction of the Okinoshima branch of the Shimane Prefectural Government.<sup>222</sup> For this, the Japanese government stated:

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<sup>218</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 99-100.

<sup>219</sup> R.V.C. Bodley, *Admiral Togo: The Authorized Life of Admiral of the Fleet, Marquis Heihachiro Togo, O.M.* (London: Jarrolds, 1935), 187-192.

<sup>220</sup> One *ri* is about 2.44 miles or 3,937 meters.

<sup>221</sup> Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 375-376; Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 147; North East History Foundation, *The History of Dokdo*, 22-23.

<sup>222</sup> Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 377.

In January 1905, through a Cabinet Decision, the Japanese government *reaffirmed* its intention to possess Takeshima, stipulated that the islands would come under the jurisdiction of the Okinoshima branch of the Shimane Prefectural Government, and officially named the islands as “Takeshima.”<sup>223</sup>

The Japanese statement shows that Dokdo was incorporated on the basis of “occupation” of “*terra nullius*.” It is true that Dokdo was uninhabited. But, it was common sense at that time that Dokdo belonged to Kangwon Province, Korea, and most Japanese officials who were involved in the case must have known the fact. Moreover, it is questionable when the Japanese government *affirmed* its intention to possess Dokdo before *reaffirming* it by incorporating Dokdo. In fact, Japan had never affirmed its intention to possess Dokdo, but had at least twice officially confirmed its intention of accepting Korean sovereignty over it in 1696 and 1877.<sup>224</sup> The Korean government confirmed its sovereignty over Dokdo in October 1900 by promulgating “Imperial Ordinance No. 41,” and this fact was widely announced by the government’s official gazette.

The Japanese exaggerated Nakai’s fishery in Dokdo as an occupation. It was also not true that Nakai “emigrated” to Dokdo. In fact, Nakai went to Dokdo between April and August to catch sea lions, and stayed on the island only for “ten days per each time at an interim place.”<sup>225</sup>

If Dokdo was *terra nullius* and incorporated by Japan at that time, it is also contradictory to the current Japanese government’s arguments that Dokdo is “an inherent part of the territory of Japan.”<sup>226</sup> If Dokdo was Japanese territory, why did the Japanese government argue that “*the island has no traces of ownership by any country?*”<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Japan, MOFA, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/incorporation.html> (accessed May 28, 2007).

<sup>224</sup> These were the results of the Ahn Yong-Bok Incident (Takeshima affair) in 1696 and Dajokan’s reply to the Shimane Prefecture’s inquiry whether it included Dokdo in its jurisdiction in 1877.

<sup>225</sup> Seichu, “Problems related to the Japanese Incorporation of Dokdo,” in Kim and Seichu, *The Korean-Japanese Experts’ View on Dokdo*, 250.

<sup>226</sup> Japan, MOFA, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/index.html> (accessed May 28, 2007).

<sup>227</sup> Seichu, “Problems related to the Japanese Incorporation of Dokdo,” 250.

The Japanese government further argues that:

Having received the request from Nakai, the government of Japan, hearing opinions from *Shimane Prefecture*, confirmed that there is no problem in bringing Takeshima under the jurisdiction of the Okinoshima branch and that “Takeshima” is the appropriate name for the islands. With this confirmation, the government, in January 1905, through the Cabinet decision, stipulated that the islands came under the jurisdiction of the Okinoshima branch of Shimane Prefectural Government, and that the islands were officially named as “Takeshima.” This decision was conveyed to the Governor of Shimane Prefecture by the Minister for Home Affairs.<sup>228</sup>

However, as discussed before, *there was a problem*: Japan knew that Dokdo was Korean territory. The Shimane Prefecture, where the Japanese government asked for an opinion about the issue, must have known that Dokdo was Korean territory, because this Prefecture, in 1877, had already asked to the Meiji government whether it should include Dokdo into its jurisdictional area; it had received the answer from Dajokan that the island “had nothing to do with Japan” and therefore excluded it from its jurisdiction.

Moreover, if Dokdo had not been *terra nullius* before Japan mistakenly incorporated it and Japan then found out that Dokdo was Korean inherent territory, Japan could not claim to possess Dokdo. Indeed, the Japanese government should have acknowledged its mistake and renounced its claim over Dokdo. But, Japan did not do so.

The Japanese government further argues that:

Based on the Cabinet Decision and the Ministerial Instruction from the Minister for Home Affairs, the Governor of Shimane Prefecture published in February 1905 that Takeshima was officially named as “Takeshima” and that it came under the jurisdiction of the Okinoshima branch. He also informed the Okinoshima branch to this effect. *These measures were carried in the newspapers of the day and were broadly publicized.*<sup>229</sup>

The Korean government officially affirmed its incorporation of Dokdo through its official gazette in October 1900. In contrast, the Japanese did not officially announce its

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<sup>228</sup> Japan, MOFA, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/incorporation.html> (accessed May 28, 2007).

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

incorporation of Dokdo. Instead, the fact was printed in a local newspaper, not in a governmental gazette. The “Shimane Prefectural Public Notice No. 40” was circulated inside the office, and the Japanese government did not officially announce its incorporation of Dokdo.<sup>230</sup> It was customary in Japan at that time for local governments to announce the incorporation of an island, but, in 1876, when the Japanese government incorporated Ogasawara islands, it compromised with the United States and Great Britain several times and announced its incorporation to the United States and twelve European countries.<sup>231</sup> Other examples indicating that the incorporation of Dokdo was not broadly announced can also be found in other sources. After the battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan, which will be discussed later, Ulleungdo and Dokdo became famous places when several Japanese newspapers delivered news of the victory of the East Sea/Sea of Japan.<sup>232</sup> However, the secrecy of the incorporation of Dokdo was revealed once again. These newspapers still referred Dokdo as “Liancodo,” not as “Takehima.”<sup>233</sup> Another example is found in Official Gazette No. 6777, published on September 9, 1905, entitled “The Present State of Choson (Korean) Ulleungdo.”<sup>234</sup> Based on a report by Japanese counsel Ariyoshi Akira (有吉明) at Pusan, Korea, it says that “Sea lions live in “Liancodo” south east 25 *ri* from Ulleungdo.” This report shows that even the Japanese diplomat did not know the facts about the incorporation of Dokdo.

Finally, the Korean government did not know this fact until 1906, when Japanese officials went to Ulleungdo and told a Korean official, Sim Hung-Taek, who was in charge of Ulleungdo and Dokdo, about their survey of Dokdo. He rapidly notified the central government of this absurd situation, and it was reported in the Korean Daily News on May 1, 1906.

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<sup>230</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 138.

<sup>231</sup> Van Dyke, “Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary,” 176; Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 138.

<sup>232</sup> The news of the battle was announced by *The Okinawa Daily* (大阪朝日新聞, extra edition of May 29), *The Telegram Newspaper* (電報新聞, May 31), quoted in Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 140-141.

<sup>233</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 140-141.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

Unusually strange things are happening. Ulleungdo County Chief Sim Hung-Taek reported to the Home Ministry that a party of Japanese government officials came to Ulleungdo and professed that Dokdo belonging to Ulleungdo was not Japanese territory, and took record of the topography, population and land size, etc. The Home Ministry sent a directive saying that it is strange for them to record the population of other country while on an excursion, and as their claim to Dokdo as Japanese territory is totally groundless, the story is really shocking.<sup>235</sup>

Again, the report of Sim Hung-Taek clearly shows that the Korean government had been practicing its sovereign right over Dokdo at that time. The Korean government, newspapers, and intellectuals protested that the Japanese behavior was illegal.<sup>236</sup> However, Korea could do nothing because Korea had already become a protectorate of Japan by signing the second Korean-Japanese Agreement in November 1905.

Here rises another question: Why had the Japanese secretly incorporated Dokdo?

First, knowing that Dokdo was reaffirmed as Korea territory in 1900, the Japanese government did not want the Korean government to know about the incorporation, because it worried about a strong protest from the Korean government. Second, the Japanese government did not want other countries to know of its incorporation of Dokdo. This is because, as a Japanese Home Ministry official cautioned, the incorporation of Dokdo might provoke other countries to worry that Japan might have a suspicious ambition toward Korea. If other countries, especially the United States and Great Britain, checked and pressed Japan, it could not get more loans from those countries to fight the war. Third, Japan wanted to use Dokdo secretly to observe the movement of Russian ships. If this became public, Russia, especially the Russian navy, might know of it and design a counter plan.

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<sup>235</sup> *The Korean Daily News* (Taehan Maeil Shinbo), May 1, 1906, quoted in Van Dyke, "Legal Issues Related to Sovereignty over Dokdo and Its Maritime Boundary," 76.

<sup>236</sup> Shin, *Korea's Territorial Rights to Tokdo*, 156-164.

## V. THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

### A. THE JAPANESE ADVANCE TO MUKDEN

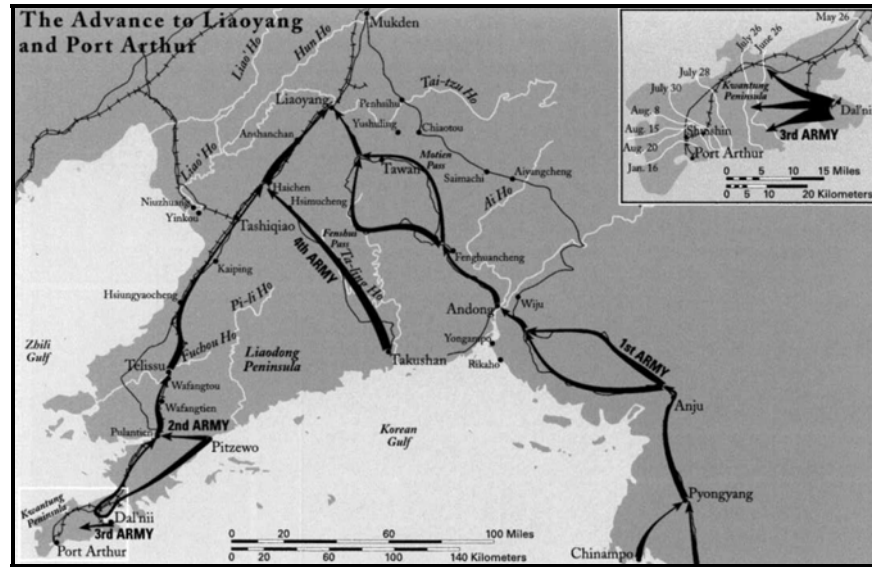


Figure 7. The Japanese Advance to Mukden and Port Arthur<sup>237</sup>

After the loss of the Battle of Nanshan, Viceroy Alekseev pressed General Kuropatkin to relieve Port Arthur. But Kuropatkin refused on the basis that Port Arthur could withstand the Japanese assault. Indeed, the General's essential concern was the "infelicitous combination" which involved "decisive defeats," "questionable battlefield performance" of his troops, and "an unexpectedly tough and highly motivated enemy" which critically undermined the Russians' morale.<sup>238</sup> Eventually, Kuropatkin followed the viceroy's order and sent in the Siberian Army Corps under Lieutenant General G.K. Shtakelberg. The Russians fought hard against the Japanese Second Army at Tellissu from June 15 to June 16, 1904, but finally lost the battle due to the lack of close

<sup>237</sup> Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

coordination between the leaders and poor intelligence regarding Japanese operational maneuvers. The Russians retreated, which further consolidated the isolation of Port Arthur.

Meanwhile, Field-Marshal Oyama Iwao (大山巖) was appointed as Commander-in-Chief to coordinate all the Japanese ground battles in Manchuria. He arrived at the Second Army's base on July 22, 1904.<sup>239</sup> In July, the Japanese army enjoyed continuous victories in small battles and advanced to Liaoyang where three Japanese armies—First, Second, and Third—combined and fought together to defeat the Russians.

At Liaoyang, General Kuropatkin prepared a three phase defense plan to meet the Japanese. Kuropatkin's plan was to gradually retreat from each highly fortified defense line while fatiguing the Japanese, and then execute a final decisive counterattack. In the first phase of battle on August 22, facing the unprecedented strong resistance from the Russians, the Japanese went into disarray and retired, but Kuropatkin merely retreated according to the plan and thus lost the first opportunity to defeat the enemy; Kuropatkin did not know that his troops outnumbered the Japanese by 158,000 to 125,000.<sup>240</sup> The second phase of battle started on August 25 and continued until the night of August 30-31. Again, not knowing his advantage in numbers, Kuropatkin retreated and lost his second opportunity to defeat the enemy and change the tide of the war.<sup>241</sup> After the second retreat, as preplanned, Kuropatkin planned to counterattack. But his plan was discovered by the Japanese: they had obtained a precious position, called Manju-yama, which the Russians had carelessly ignored during their retreat, and which enabled the Japanese to see the Russians movements. Consequently, in the third phase of the battle on September 2-3, despite Kuropatkin's strenuous efforts, the Russians finally lost the battle and retreated further north to Mukden.<sup>242</sup> The battle was highly costly to both belligerents.

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<sup>239</sup> Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 114.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-120.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.



The Russians suffered 16,000 casualties, and the Japanese, 23,000.<sup>243</sup> It was clear that the Japanese won the battle, but they failed to rout the retreating Russians, for they were also fatigued.

In contrast to the Japanese military's increasing difficulties in supporting their troops as they advanced to the north, Russia's situation improved. After facing the series of dishonorable defeats the tsar had started sending his best troops, and the opening of a railway round Lake Baikal further eased the Russians' supply difficulties. However, Kuropatkin became increasingly concerned about the worsening situation of Port Arthur, knowing that it will fall unless it was relieved by land.<sup>244</sup>

Finally, Kuropatkin launched another counterattack, and the Battle of Sha-Ho began on October 11.<sup>245</sup> In the battle, which lasted for about one week, the Russians lost about 11,000 killed or missing, 30,000 wounded, while the Japanese lost about 4,000 killed and 16,000 wounded.<sup>246</sup> Even though the Russians claimed that they won the battle, the numbers of casualties told the truth, and they could not deny that Port Arthur could not be relieved. The Japanese also knew that they had barely avoided being defeated, and that a shortage of ammunition and troops was preventing them from expanding their war result. In the end, the Russians and the Japanese, both suffering from the harsh winter and fatigued after the continuous battles did not ask to fight until the beginning of 1905.

## **B. THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE RUSSIAN FIRST SQUADRON**

The Russian First Squadron became almost as it had been before the outbreak of the war when the *Retvizan* and other damaged ships became seaworthy as of May 1904.<sup>247</sup> The loss of the *Petropavlovsk* was irrecoverable, but the Japanese loss of two capital ships, the *Hatsuse* and the *Yashima*, was enough to offset the Russian loss. Even more, in terms of the number of battleships, the Russians were superior to the Japanese

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<sup>243</sup> Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 120.

<sup>244</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 54.

<sup>245</sup> Sha-Ho was located between Port Arthur and Liaoyang, thirty-two kilometers north of Port Arthur.

<sup>246</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 57.

<sup>247</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 114.

by six to four. As long as Port Arthur was isolated and the Japanese envelopment tightened, it would have been much better for the Russians to put out to sea and seek a decisive general war, or to combine with the cruiser squadron in Vladivostok, than to wait for the destruction of the fleet without doing anything. Therefore, Admiral Alekseev, the Viceroy, had been urging Vitgeft to go to sea since June 1904.

After the three times of order from Alekseev to sortie out to sea, finally, Vitgeft weighed anchor and put out to sea on June 23, 1904.<sup>248</sup> Six tugs dragging U-shaped mine sweeps followed four destroyers with the same mission. Eight destroyers followed the sweeping ships, and four cruisers and six battleships formed the main body, with four destroyers and two gunboats behind them.<sup>249</sup> When he learned that the Russians had sortied out, Admiral Togo was surprised because his Fleet was not ready and was separated throughout the Yellow Sea.<sup>250</sup> Admiral Togo managed to assemble four battleships, eight cruisers, and a dozen destroyers to face the Russians. However, Admiral Togo was lucky, because, despite his advantage in numbers, Vitgeft turned back to Port Arthur and lost the last chance to make for Vladivostok.

After that Vitgeft denied the viceroy's orders several times<sup>251</sup> until the viceroy sent his final message which "threatened Admiral Vitgeft with court-martial and the other officers with dishonor."<sup>252</sup> In the end, Vitgeft reluctantly left Port Arthur again on August 10, 1904, just before the Japanese Third Army's general assault began. But Admiral Togo was ready this time. However, Admiral Togo did not want to risk his capital ships, because he needed to preserve his fleet to meet the Russian Second Squadron. Meanwhile, the sole purpose of Vitgeft was to flee to Vladivostok without engaging in a decisive

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<sup>248</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 114-115.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 116-117.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 119. Admiral Togo had not expected that the appearance of the *Tsarevitch* and the *Sevatospol*, and the Second Fleet under Admiral Kamimura, with four armored cruisers and four protected cruisers, were in the East Sea/Sea of Japan to track the Russian Vladivostok Squadron. Denis Warner and Peggy Warner, *The Tide at Sun Rise: A History of the Russo-Japanese War, 1904-1905* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 306.

<sup>251</sup> Vitgeft wanted to stay in Port Arthur while waiting for reinforcements from the Second Squadron in Europe, even while the Japanese tightened their envelope around Port Arthur, took two important hills from where they started shelling Port Arthur, and started damaging Russian ships.

<sup>252</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 121-122.

battle. Thanks to Togo's cautiousness and his mistake in maneuvering, the Russian First Squadron seemed to have escaped from the Japanese pursuit by mid-afternoon. But, by using his fleet's advantageous speed, Togo managed to catch up, and the battle resumed.

While each side hit the mark, and the Russians seemed to be able to hide in darkness, two subsequent twelve-inch shells hit the Russian flagship, the *Tsesarevich*. These killed Vitgeft and his staff and helmsman and it caused the *Tsesarevich* to swing into a tight one circle turn to port.<sup>253</sup> The ships following barely averted a collision, but the formation disintegrated. Admiral Ukhtomski, the second in command who was aboard the *Peresvyet*, signaled that he had taken command and the ships should follow him. But since his battleship had lost its masts, his signal was posted low and did not deliver his order to other ships clearly. Admiral Togo took advantage of the Russians' confusion and tried to drive them back to Port Arthur.

In the end, most of the separated First Squadron returned to Port Arthur on August 11. Four battleships out of the five, the *Poltava*, the *Peresviet*, the *Pobieda*, and *Retvizan*, one first class cruiser, the *Pallada*, and three of the eight destroyers returned to Port Arthur.<sup>254</sup> The Japanese navy did not sink any of the Russian ships, but the Russians would never come out to fight the Japanese again. Captain RN Viren replaced Vitgeft: after surveying his situation, including ships, guns, and ammunition, concluded not to sortie anymore, choosing instead to wait for the Second Squadron while supporting the ground troops during the Japanese siege attacks.<sup>255</sup> Consequently, he transferred 284 guns from the ships to the forts.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 125.

<sup>254</sup> The flagship of Vitgeft, the *Tsesarevich*, and three destroyers steamed to Tsingtao and was interned. Two cruisers, the *Askold* and the *Diana* went to Shanghai and Saigon and interned, respectively. Second class cruiser, the *Novik*, fought the Japanese Second Fleet and was scuttled by its crews. The *Bruni*, destroyer, was destroyed by its captain while being chased by the Japanese. A destroyer reached the Chinese port of Chefoo and was incorporated by the Japanese Navy. The only Russians to reach Vladivostok were the survivors from *Novik*, on foot, after an epic 45-day march. Ibid., 126-130; Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 46-47.

<sup>255</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 166.

<sup>256</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 47.

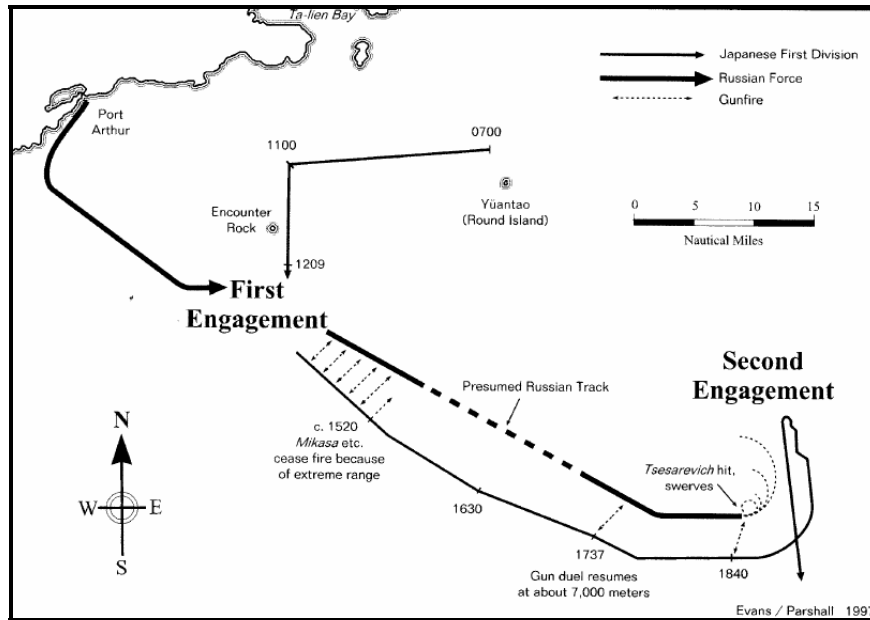


Figure 8. The Battle of the Yellow Sea<sup>257</sup>

Meanwhile, the three Russian cruisers, the *Gromoboi*, the *Rossia* and the *Rurik*, left Vladivostok on August 13 to assist their comrades at Port Arthur without knowing that their counterparts at Port Arthur had turned back. On August 14, at dawn, while they were waiting near Busan on the southeast coast of Korea for their comrades from Port Arthur, they encountered four of Kamimura's cruisers. The Russians turned back, but Kamimura chased them. Soon, two additional Japanese cruisers joined the battle. The Russian sailors showed their splendid fighting abilities and courage, but, finally, Admiral Kamimura succeeded in avenging his humiliation and dishonor for the past several months: the *Rurik* was sunk and the other two were badly damaged and barely managed to return to Vladivostok.<sup>258</sup> After two months, the two cruisers became seaworthy but, again, the *Gromoboi* ran aground on a rock and became useless. The only cruiser left, the *Rossia*, could not do anything except wait for the Russian Second Fleet.<sup>259</sup> In the end, the Russian First Squadron in the Far East became nothing; its existence posed no threat to the Japanese navy.

<sup>257</sup> Mark and Peattie, *Kaigun*.

<sup>258</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 47.

<sup>259</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 152.

### C. THE FALL OF PORT ARTHUR

General Nogi asked the Russians to surrender on August 16, but the Russians refused, and on August 19, the Japanese assault started.<sup>260</sup> However, the fortification of Port Arthur was so strong that the Japanese could not acquire good results. By August 24, Japanese casualties reached 16,000, so General Nogi stopped his assault for almost a month.<sup>261</sup> By the end of September, General Nogi received more weapons for assaulting the port, including eighteen 11-inch howitzers which could destroy any reinforced Russian fortifications with their 550-pound shells.<sup>262</sup> The howitzers were not very accurate, the Japanese could not see the results of their attack, and the continuous movement of the Russian ships made it difficult to hit them by shelling. Nogi's continuous attempt to destroy the Russians' fortified defenses failed again and again, and the possibility of the Japanese capturing the harbor before the arrival of the Russian Second Fleet did not seem high. Even more, as long as the Russian First Squadron remained intact, Admiral Togo could not leave Port Arthur and prepare to meet the Russian Second Fleet. In November, the Japanese became nervous when they learned that the Russian Squadron was passing Africa, because they still had not succeeded in occupying Port Arthur by land or by sea.<sup>263</sup> However, as of December 5, the situation changed after the Japanese captured 203-Meter Hill, known the Russians as Vysokaya (High), which was located west of Port Arthur; this provided them a clear overlook of the situation of the harbor.<sup>264</sup> The Japanese losses to get the hill were tragic,<sup>265</sup> but having the advantage of the hill clearly heightened the efficiency of the Japanese attack to Port Arthur.

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<sup>260</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 48.

<sup>261</sup> Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 122.

<sup>262</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 170; Steinberg, *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 122.

<sup>263</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 175.

<sup>264</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 59.

<sup>265</sup> The Japanese suffered 14,000 dead, while the Russians lost about over 5,000. Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 60.

When the Japanese captured 203-Metre Hill, telephone messages from its summit directed the fire of heavy siege-guns in protected places, so that the gunners made untenable a city and harbor which they could not see. The Japanese fleet added to the pandemonium of ruin. Admiral Togo... by having tiny torpedo-boats, which the Russians found it difficult to see and almost impossible to hit, lie several miles from off shore, and by wireless dispatches gave the range and a report on each shot to gunners on the battleships lying safely out of reach of the Russian forts.<sup>266</sup>

As a result, the Japanese siege guns destroyed all the Russian battleships one by one except the *Sevastopol*.<sup>267</sup> After the fall of 203-Meter Hill, Lieutenant General Baron A. M. Stessel, who was in charge of Port Arthur, opened a council of war. The majority of the Russian officers favored holding out and Stessel “ostensibly accepted the majority opinion,” for he had already notified the tsar that “the fall of Port Arthur was imminent.”<sup>268</sup> In the end, on January 1, 1905, General Stessel surrendered to General Nogi. The surrender was signed on January 2, 1905.<sup>269</sup> By this, the Japanese Third Army became free and could join the other armies in the Battle of Mukden, and Admiral Togo could start preparing to fight the Russian Second Squadron. From the Russians’ perspective, the First Squadron was completely destroyed, and the Second Squadron lost its destination; General Kuropatkin’s pressure to fight the enemy had increased.

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<sup>266</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 157.

<sup>267</sup> On December 6, the *Retvizan* was sunk, and on December 7, the *Pobieda*, the *Peresvyet*, and the *Pallada* were sunk at once. The *Poltava* had already been destroyed during the battle for 203-Meter Hill. On January 2 at night after the signing of the surrender of Port Arthur, Captain Nicholas Ittovich Essen put the *Sevastopol* to sea, scuttled it, rowed back to harbor, and surrendered with his crews. Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 179; Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 60.

<sup>268</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 60

<sup>269</sup> Later, General Stessel was sentenced to death, because, in contrast to his report before the surrender, he had had sufficient weapons and resources to defend Port Arthur. However, it might have been true that the surrender of Port Arthur was matter of time not that of willingness.

## D. THE BATTLE OF MUKDEN

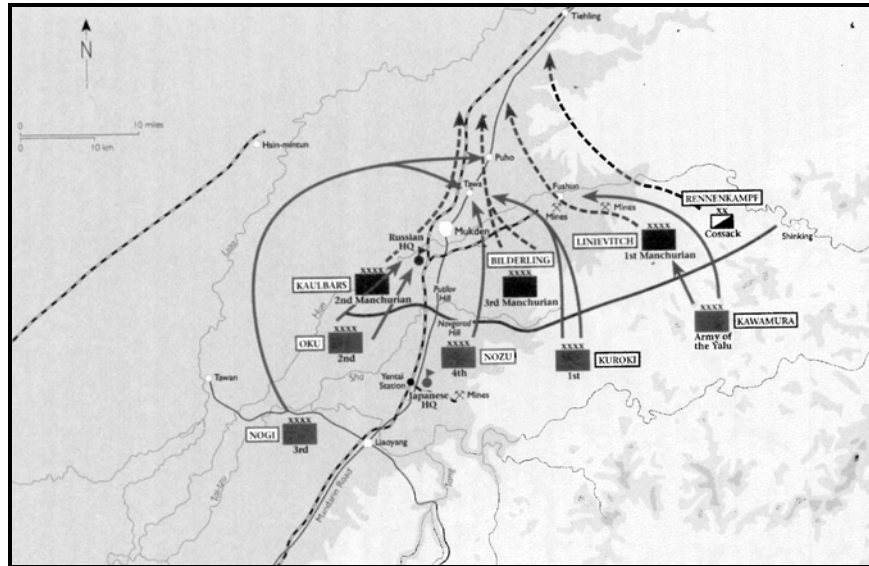


Figure 9. The Battle of Mukden<sup>270</sup>

Now the focus moves on to the last major land battle in the war. “Mukden was not only the greatest battle of the war, but was one of the greatest battles of history in which a million men engaged on a fighting-line nearly a hundred miles long and fought for seventeen successive days (February 24-March 12).”<sup>271</sup>

After relieving Port Arthur, General Nogi’s Third Army joined with other armies under Field Marshall Oyama. Meanwhile, Oyama established the Fifth Army under General Kawamura, so Japan was ready for the fight with five armies.<sup>272</sup> The west of the battle area was plains, but the east of it was mountainous. The Japanese Third, Second, Reserve, Fourth, First, and Fifth Armies were disposed in that order roughly from west to east. The Third Army was in the rear, southwest of the Second Army. Knowing that the eastern mountainous area was hard to fight and advance in, Oyama planned to distract the Russians’ attention by opening the battle with the First Army’s attack in the mountainous

<sup>270</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*.

<sup>271</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 162.

<sup>272</sup> Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 125.

area, while the Third Army was moving fast to outflank the Russian west.<sup>273</sup> On the Russian side, after the Battle of Shaho, General Kuropatkin had reorganized his army into three field armies, the First, Second, and Third Manchurian Armies, and they were arranged with the Second, Third, and First Manchurian Armies from west to east.<sup>274</sup>

The Japanese started pressing the Russians on February 17.<sup>275</sup> The Japanese were outnumbered by the Russians, but their operational plan succeeded in deceiving Kuropatkin. Thus, when the Japanese Third Army successfully outflanked the Russians' western flank on March 1, Kuropatkin did not have enough reserve to defend the west.<sup>276</sup> But the Russians succeeded in reinforcing their west on March 2, and then the Japanese advanced in the center. By March 4, the battle showed a temporary stalemate, which gave Kuropatkin the opportunity to counterattack. But his attack was so straightforward, without any deceptive maneuvers that the Japanese easily defended against it.<sup>277</sup> By March 7, Kuropatkin gave up counter-attacking and made his effort to save Mukden.<sup>278</sup> However, on March 9, under increasing pressure from the Japanese Fourth, First, and Fifth Armies' organized attack, Kuropatkin finally ordered a general retreat to Tiehling, 40 miles north of Mukden.<sup>279</sup> The Japanese armies almost enveloped the Russians, so the latter barely escaped from Mukden. The Russians reached Tiehling on March 12. In the end, Kuropatkin, thinking that his troops needed more distance from the Japanese, torched Tiehling and ordered further retreat to Hsipingkai, 200 miles to the north.<sup>280</sup> On March 16, 1905, the tsar released Kuropatkin from the Russian Far Eastern Army and replaced him by General Linevich.

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<sup>273</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 66.

<sup>274</sup> Steinberg et al., *The Russo-Japanese War in Global Perspective*, 124.

<sup>275</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 195.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*, 196-199.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, 200-202.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, 203-204.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, 204-207.



The Battle of Mukden was costly to both sides: the Japanese suffered 70, 000 casualties while the Russians had 90,000. But, again, despite the winning of the battle, the Japanese failed to rout the enemy. That was the end of the major battle in land between the two belligerents.

While the new Russian commander was “watching for an opportunity to turn the tide in Manchuria with a decisive battle,” the Japanese military leaders “first recognized how critical the situation was.”<sup>281</sup> On March 8, 1905, War Minister Seiki Terauchi had already asked the American minister in Tokyo, Lloyd C. Griscom, “quite seriously to convey to the President his opinion that the time had come when the war should cease and that he was quite ready to stop fighting,” while mentioning that “this was his opinion, not as a minister of war, but as Seiki Terauchi, a private individual.”<sup>282</sup> On March 10, President Roosevelt offered to mediate. On March 28, Kodama went to Tokyo to report the results of the Battle of Mukden, but his main objective was to ask the emperor to move toward peace.<sup>283</sup> However, it was clear that the tsar did not want to stop the war with dishonor. As of March, the Russian Army was three times larger than the Japanese<sup>284</sup> and the Second and Third Squadron was sailing to the Far East. Therefore, in order to end the war, Japan had to win the final battle in the sea, i.e., the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan.

## **E. THE BATTLE OF THE EAST SEA/SEA OF JAPAN**

After the successful siege of Port Arthur, Admiral Togo recalled most vessels in the Japanese Combined Fleet to the homeland where their crews could have enough time to relax, refit, overhaul, and exercise for the upcoming decisive battle of the war: the

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<sup>281</sup> Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 109.

<sup>282</sup> Treat, *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Japan: 1885-1905*, 238-241, quoted in Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 109.

<sup>283</sup> Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 111.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan.<sup>285</sup> In December 1904, Admiral Togo went to Tokyo and consulted with the naval general staff until February about how to meet the Russian Second Squadron. One important thing was to predict which course Rozhdestvensky's fleet would choose. The Japanese General Staff finally concluded that there would be three options for Rozhdestvensky. The first was to make for Vladivostok via the Korean Straits/Tsushima Straits. The second was to occupy Formosa and use the island as their base. The third was to sail around the Japanese east coast and reach Vladivostok from the north.<sup>286</sup> Admiral Togo and Akiyama Saneyuki, a senior staff officer who was the main designer of the battle plan, believed that the Russians would make for Vladivostok.<sup>287</sup> Consequently, Togo selected the East Sea/Sea of Japan as the battlefield and moved his base to Jinhae, on the southeast coast of Korea. Togo and Akiyama designed a seven-stage battle plan that would utilize "both daylight assaults by the heavy units of the fleet and night attacks by destroyers and torpedo boats."<sup>288</sup> Based on the plan, the Combined Fleet engaged in training, including individual and group maneuvers, communications, torpedo attacks, and, most importantly, gunnery.<sup>289</sup> In addition, the Japanese navy had already gained precious experience in Port Arthur and the Yellow Sea.

In contrast, the Russians were almost completely unprepared for the battle. The tsar, Nicholas II, decided to reinforce the Pacific Squadron only after the death of Admiral Makarov in April 1904.<sup>290</sup> On April 30, the Baltic Fleet was nominated as the

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<sup>285</sup> The Japanese navy was eager to focus on its own job: preparing for the battle in sea. For instance in March, 1905, the Japanese navy rejected the Army General Staff's request to support the army's operation to occupy Sakhalin and another operation to capture Vladivostok on the pretext that they could not support it until they had defeated the Baltic Fleet. In fact, the navy's reluctance to support the army continued even after the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan. Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 556.

<sup>286</sup> Bodley, *Admiral Togo*, 192.

<sup>287</sup> Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 112.

<sup>288</sup> The first stage was intercepting the Russian Fleet with destroyers and torpedo boats, thereby slowing down the Russians; the second stage was the engagement of main forces by launching a direct and overwhelming attack on the enemy; the middle stages were to be night attacks by destroyers and torpedo boats; and the final stage was "mopping-up" operations which would pursue the remnants of the Russians to Vladivostok, which had been blocked by Japanese mines. *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>289</sup> According to Evans and Peattie, during these exercises, one Japanese battleship expended two thousand rounds of all calibers in ten days, which was its entire practice ammunition allotment for one year. *Ibid.*, 111, 556.

<sup>290</sup> Klado, *The Battle of the Sea of Japan*, 4.

Second Squadron, and two days later, Admiral Rozhdestvensky was appointed to command it,<sup>291</sup> but he could not focus on reshaping his fleet because he also had to work as the Chief of the General Staff.<sup>292</sup> He managed to get his fleet ready for departure in months, but the Russian bureaucracy delayed the order again and again. Finally, the Second Fleet weighed anchor on October 15, 1904, when the First Squadron in the Pacific had already disintegrated in the Battle of Yellow Sea, and Port Arthur, their destination, was under siege by the Japanese.

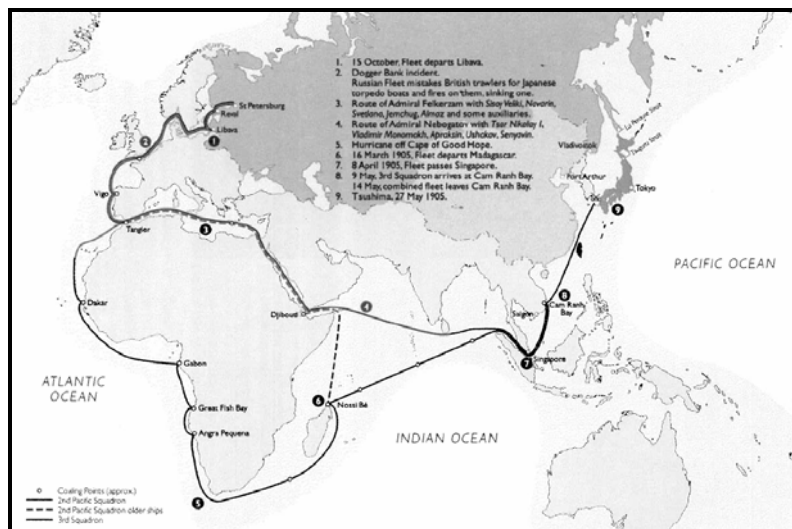


Figure 10. The Voyages of the Russian 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Squadron<sup>293</sup>

Due to the unfavorable attitude of Great Britain, Rozhdestvensky's main fleet would sail around the Cape of Good Hope, Africa. Due to the shortage of coal for the journey, despite their legendary 29,000 kilometer voyage with brand new four battleships, the Russian ships were unable to engage in sufficient maneuvering and gunnery exercises because they had to save coal and ammunition.<sup>294</sup> While Japanese spies continuously reported the Russians' position as they sailed around the globe, the Russians did not

<sup>291</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 39-40.

<sup>292</sup> Klado, *The Battle of the Sea of Japan*, 3.

<sup>293</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

know of their enemy's preparations and situation, while barely managing their fleet to make for Vladivostok. Furthermore, Rozhestvensky had to waste his precious time waiting in Indochina for the newly formed Third Squadron under the command of Admiral Nevogatov, which had left Russia on February 15. All the while, the Japanese had more time to relax, exercise, and get ready for action.<sup>295</sup>

Rozhestvensky left his colliers at Shanghai, which convinced Togo that the Russians would go through the Korean Strait/Tsushima Strait.<sup>296</sup> "The coast of Japan was lined with signal stations on promontories, islands, and mountain-tops. A wide expanse of sea was divided into small numbered squares. Swift torpedo-boats and scout ships equipped with wireless telegraph cruised far out at sea, watching night and day."<sup>297</sup> Early in the morning of May 27 under heavy fog, Rozhestvensky tried to pass through the Korean Strait/Tsushima Strait with his thirty-eight ships with all the lights of the fleet dim; however, two hospital ships turned on their bright lights according to the international agreement, and these were sighted by the Japanese scout ship the *Shinano-maru*.<sup>298</sup> Right after receiving the wireless message from the scout ship that "enemy's fleet sighted in square 203," Admiral Togo weighed anchor for the Korean Strait/Tsushima Strait and waited for the enemy.

In the afternoon, both fleets sighted each other, and around 1400, the battle began. But the victor of the battle had already been determined. Japanese gunfire was a lot more accurate than the Russians,' and the Japanese ships were too fast. Klado explained the Japanese advantage in speed:

This difference of two to four knots or so does not at first sight seem very great; but if one imagines one fleet motionless and the other moving at three knots it is evident that the swifter can place themselves in relation to

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<sup>295</sup> Indeed, Rozhestvensky did not want to wait for the Third Squadron. Most ships of the Third Squadron consisted of the remnants left after Rozhestvensky had selected better ships to build the Second Squadron. Therefore, to Rozhestvensky, the Third Squadron was another burden which slowed down his overall fleet, rather than reinforcing the fleet's firepower.

<sup>296</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 71.

<sup>297</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 164. "Each square represented 10 minutes of latitude and longitude, so that ships patrolling these waters needed only to communicate the number of the square to identify the location of an approaching enemy." Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 111.

<sup>298</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 71.

the other fleet as they please and choose whatever range suits them. Togo took every advantage of this superiority in speed and was able to deal with ship after ship of the Russian Squadrons as if he had been at target practice.<sup>299</sup>

With regard to the effectiveness of the Japanese gunnery, a Russian lieutenant recollected to Mr. George Kennan that:

At a distance of four miles the Japanese gunners seemed to hit us with almost every shot that they fired. Our men had not had practice enough to shoot accurately at such ranges. We hope that we might be able to crowd Togo's ships up toward the land on the Japan side of the strait, and so get nearer to them; but they were too fast for us. They circled around ahead of us, and knocked us to pieces at such long ranges that we were barely able to see them through the mist."<sup>300</sup>

It took only about an hour until the *Oslyabya* sank at 1510. Rozhstvensky's flagship was seriously damaged; Rozhstvensky himself was seriously wounded and, barely conscious, was moved to the destroyer *Buyny*.<sup>301</sup> When the Japanese lost their enemy for a while in the confusion, Admiral Nevogatov took over the command and led the fleet to Vladivostok. But soon the Japanese caught up with the Russians and sank the *Alexander III* at 1903 and the *Borodino* at 1920 pm. After being separated from the main body of the fleet, the *Suvorov* was also sunk at 1920. As it became dark, Admiral Togo turned the battle over to the torpedo boats and destroyers and headed directly to Ulleungdo, where he planned to fight the next day's battle as planned by Akiyama.<sup>302</sup>

On the morning of May 28, Admiral Nevogatov, onboard his flagship *Alexander I*, surrendered about twenty-eight miles southeast of Dokdo along with the *Oryol*, the *Seviani*, the *Apraxin*, and other small ships.<sup>303</sup> Toward dusk on the same day, the

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<sup>299</sup> Bodley, *Admiral Togo*, 198.

<sup>300</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 164-165.

<sup>301</sup> Later, due to engine problems on the *Buyny*, Admiral Rozhstvensky was moved to the destroyer *Bedovy*, along with hundreds of other survivors from the *Suvorov* and the *Oslyabya*. Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 73.

<sup>302</sup> Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 122.

<sup>303</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 223.

destroyer *Biedovy*, which now carried the unconscious Admiral Rozhstvensky, was captured thirty-eight miles southwest of Ulleungdo by a Japanese destroyer, the *Sazanami*.<sup>304</sup>

The results of the battle were tragic for Russia. Thirty-four Russian ships out of thirty-eight were sunk, scuttled, captured, or interned. The Russians lost 4,830 dead, about 6,000 captured including Admirals Rozhstvensky and Nevogatov, and about 2,000 interned. In contrast, the Japanese lost only three torpedo boats, with 110 men killed and 590 wounded.<sup>305</sup>

The battle allowed the Japanese navy to recognize the strategic importance of the islands once again. The observation posts at Ulleungdo were intended to sight the Russian Vladivostok Squadron in 1904, but, this time, as Akiyama's battle plan showed, Ulleungdo was also used as an important point in executing the operation. Unfortunately, the role of the observation post at Ulleungdo as well as other ones on the Korean coast could not be identified since no source could be found. However, the Japanese navy's activity even after completely annihilating the Russian navy will fill the gap caused by the secrecy of the Japanese naval war history.

The Loss of the Russian Fleet at the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan					
	Left Baltic	Sunk	Captured	Interned	To Vladivostok
Battleships	8	5	3	0	0
Cruisers	10	4	1	4	1
Destroyers	9	5	1	1	2
Coastal Monitors	3	0	3	0	0
Repair ships	1	1	0	0	0
Transports	6	3	0	3	0
Hospital ships	2	0	2	0	0

Table 2. The Loss of the Russian Fleet at the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan<sup>306</sup>

<sup>304</sup> *The Russo-Japanese War Fully Illustrated* 9 (Tokyo: Kinkodo Co, 1905), 1216, 1226.

<sup>305</sup> Evans and Peattie, *Kaigun*, 124; Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 225; Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 76.

<sup>306</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese Wa*.

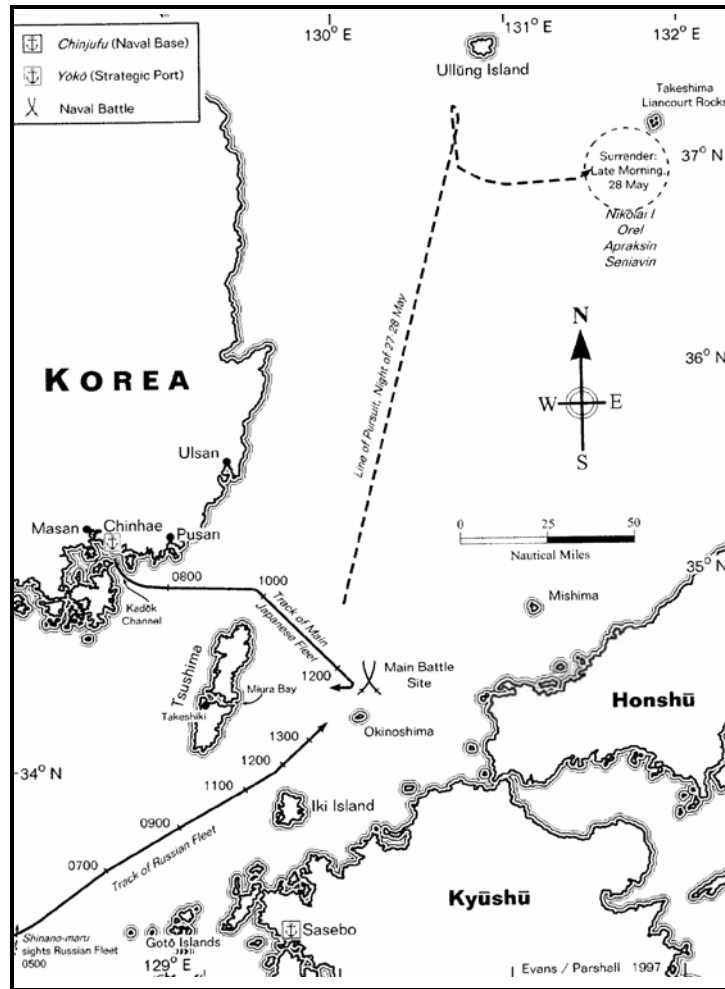


Figure 11. The Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan<sup>307</sup>

## F. DOKDO AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE EAST SEA/SEA OF JAPAN

Even after winning the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan, Japan could not relax. Indeed, both countries continued to reinforce their troops in Manchuria even after they agreed to start negotiating for peace. Under the circumstances, the Japanese navy prepared further war; Dokdo and Ulleungdo were also subject to this plan.

The only port that Russia had was Vladivostok, and these islands must have been seen to be useful for checking the probable movements of the Russian Vladivostok fleet, even though it was almost dismantled. The Japanese might have taken into account the

<sup>307</sup> Mark and Peattie, *Kaigun*.

possibility of the Russian navy receiving reinforcements by train, as Captain Klado and other Russian naval officers had urged.<sup>308</sup> At any rate, the Japanese decided to build more observation posts, this time including Dokdo.

On May 30, the Japanese General Staff made a plan to install another observation post at the north of Ulleungdo equipped with a radio communication system; to install an observation post on Dongwoigot on Korea's east coast; to lay undersea cable linking Chukpyon on Korea's east coast, Ulleungdo, Dokdo, Okinoshima and Mountain Koki in Japan; and to install an observation post in Dokdo.<sup>309</sup> The plan emphasized that the observation post in Dokdo should be hidden from the outside and available to erect a flag when necessary.

On June 12, 1905, the Japanese Ministry of Navy ordered the warship *Hashidate-maru* to survey Dokdo to judge whether constructing an observation post at Dokdo would be feasible or not.<sup>310</sup> On June 13, the *Hashidate-maru* reported that construction of an observation post would be possible on the peak of Dongdo (East Island). On June 24, 1905, the Japanese Ministry of Navy ordered the construction of an observation post on Dokdo as well as the construction of an observation post equipped with radio communication on the northern side of Ulleungdo.

On July 14, construction of the observation post on Northern Ulleungdo commenced; it was finished on July 25 and began operation on August 16. On July 25, 1905, construction of the observation post on Dokdo was started; it was completed on August 19, 1905 and started operation on the same day. However, when the Portsmouth Peace Treaty was signed on September 5, 1905, and the war was formally ended on October 15, Japan dismantled the observation posts on Ulleungdo on October 19, and Dokdo on October 24.

If the incorporation of Dokdo was for the fisherman Nakai, the Japanese government might have disposed or donated the observation post to him for his

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<sup>308</sup> Nicholas Klado, *Battle of the Sea of Japan* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906), 20-23.

<sup>309</sup> Japan Naval General Staff, ed., *Top Secret History of Naval Battles in the 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> years of Meiji*, quoted in Kim, *A Comprehensive Bibliography of Dokdo*, 378.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*



convenience while he was catching sea lions, but the Japanese navy hurriedly destroyed it right after the war ended. The plan to link Chukpyon, Ulleungdo, Dokdo, Okinoshima and Mountain Koki was later changed. Finally, Chukpyon, Ulleungdo, Dokdo, and Matsue in Shimane Prefecture in Japan were linked by undersea cable on October 9, 1905, and this facility was maintained for the rest of the colonial period. The activities of the Japanese navy imply that it incorporated Dokdo for military purposes and not for the single fisherman's fishing rights.

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## VI. THE END OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND DOKDO

### A. THE END OF THE POWER STRUGGLE

After the complete annihilation of the Russian Second and Third Squadron in the battle of the Sea of Japan, Russia and Japan started to consider the end of the war. With respect to Russia, in addition to the series of defeats on land, it had lost almost all of its fleet in the Far East. Indeed, Russia was close to bankruptcy. Its foreign loans for the war amounted to \$335,000,000 and its internal loans were \$100,000,000. The total cost of the war was nearly \$1,500,000,000.<sup>311</sup> However, the most critical reason that drove Russia to decide to end the war was not the financial distress, nor the difficulty in supplies. Rather, the domestic instability in Russia was the main cause of the tsar's decision to abandon the war. To Russia, the war was no longer as popular as it was at the beginning. Even more, the Moroccan crisis and the spread of the Russian revolutionary movement pressed Nicholas to seek peace through negotiation.<sup>312</sup>

The Japanese situation was not much better than Russia's; it was even worse, to some extent. While the Japanese military had won the most important battles, Japan could not neglect the potential of Russia. In Manchuria and the Primorski, Russia still had 559,000 soldiers and the number continued to increase. General Linevitch, who was assigned to become the commander-in-chief after Kuropatkin, was keenly waiting for the chance to revenge his predecessor's defeat at the hands of the Japanese military. Moreover, even though Russia was in a bad situation, it was clear that Russia still had enough potential to wage the war with superior resources, manpower, and money.<sup>313</sup> Japan's financial status had already passed the point of bankruptcy. That was why Japan had already been eager to end the war after the Battle of Mukden. The time had come for the two countries to end the war.

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<sup>311</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 178.

<sup>312</sup> Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, 151.

<sup>313</sup> Jukes, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 178-179.

On May 31, 1905, Prime Minister Katsura instructed Takahira Kogoro, then the Japanese minister in Washington, to formally ask US President Theodore Roosevelt to act as a mediator for the “direct negotiation” between the two belligerents.<sup>314</sup> On June 1, Takahira met with President Roosevelt and transmitted the request. The President willingly gave his consent and immediately assumed his role as a mediator. On June 8, 1905, Roosevelt urged Russia and Japan, “not only for their own sakes, but in the interest of the whole civilized world, to open direct negotiations for peace with one another.”<sup>315</sup> After invading Sakhalin, Japan formally accepted the good offices of President Roosevelt and agreed to direct negotiations for peace on June 10; this was followed by Russia’s agreement on June 12. However, before starting negotiations, Japan and the United States had still more to do in order to make clear their relative interests in the Far East.

## **B. TAFT-KATSURA MEMORANDUM**

On the morning of July 27<sup>th</sup> 1905, Japanese Count Katsura and the United States Secretary of War William Howard Taft met each other. Taft had a long confidential “conversation” with Katsura, as a “personal representative of President Roosevelt, not as a “member of the Department of State.”<sup>316</sup> Two days later, Taft communicated a long telegram concerning the meeting to Secretary of State Elihu Root. Taft reported that he discussed mainly three topics with Katsura: Philippine, Korea, and the general peace in the Far East.

First, concerning US concerns over the Philippines, Taft observed that:

Japan's only interest in the Philippines would be, in his opinion, to have these Islands governed by a strong and friendly nation like the United States, and not to have them placed either under the misrule of the natives, yet unfit for self-government, or in the hands of some unfriendly European power. Count Katsura confirmed in the strongest terms the correctness of his part's views on the point and positively stated that Japan does not

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<sup>314</sup> Shumpei Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 119.

<sup>315</sup> Roosevelt to Meyer, June 8, 1905, in Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, 196, 224.

<sup>316</sup> Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, 112.

harbor any aggressive designs whatever on the Philippines; adding that all the insinuations of the yellow peril type are nothing more or less than malicious and clumsy slanders calculated to do mischief to Japan.<sup>317</sup>

Second, in regard to the “general peace of the extreme east,” they discussed that:

... In his (Katsura) opinion, the best and in fact the only means for accomplishing the above object would be to form good understanding between the three governments of Japan, the United States and Great Britain which have common interest in upholding the principle of eminence [sic].... Secretary Taft<sup>318</sup> said that it was difficult, indeed impossible, for the President of the United States of America to enter even to any understanding amounting in effect to a confidential informal agreement, without the consent of the Senate, but that he felt sure that without any agreement at all the people of the United States were so fully in accord with the policy of Japan and Great Britain in the maintenance of peace in the far East...<sup>319</sup>

Third, regarding the Korean issue, the memorandum reads:

Count Katsura observed that Korea being the direct cause of our war with Russia, it is a matter of absolute importance to Japan that a complete solution of the peninsula question should be made as the logical consequence of the war... Secretary Taft fully admitted the justness of the Count's observations and remarked to the effect that, in his personal opinion, the establishment by Japanese troops of a suzerainty over Korea to the extent of requiring that Korea enter into no foreign treaties without the consent of Japan was the logical result of the present war and would directly contribute to permanent peace in the East. His judgment was that the President would concur in his views in this regard, although he had no authority to give assurance of this...<sup>320</sup>

After two days, Roosevelt answered Taft's telegram: “Your conversation with Count Katsura absolutely correct in every respect. Wish you would state to Katsura that I

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<sup>317</sup> Taft to Elihu Root, July 29, 1905, Roosevelt Papers, quoted in Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, 113.

<sup>318</sup> In Dennett's book, Secretary Taft is mentioned as “[The American].”

<sup>319</sup> Taft to Elihu Root, July 29, 1905, Roosevelt Paper, quoted in Dennett, *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, 113.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, 114.

confirm every word you have said.”<sup>321</sup> On August 7, 1905, Taft wrote to Katsura that President Roosevelt allowed him “to confirm in every respect” the statements they made during the conversation.”<sup>322</sup> It might be true that the Taft-Katsura memorandum was not a “secret pact” or “agreement,” but “a long telegram from the secretary of war to the secretary of state”<sup>323</sup> concerning an exchange of personal “opinions” between Taft and Katsura.<sup>324</sup> The memorandum might have not been a *quid pro quo* agreement between Japan and the United States. But it was “at least an understanding - not quite an agreement, but more than a mere exchange of views.”<sup>325</sup> One more important thing: regardless of the binding power of the “understanding,” the understanding was kept until the breakout of the World War II.

### C. THE PORTSMOUTH PEACE TREATY

On August 6, delegates from both countries - Sergei Witte and Roman Rosen for Russia, and Komura Jutaro and Takahira Kogoro for Japan - met at Portsmouth, New Hampshire in the United States. Two days later, the negotiations began. The Japanese cabinet set its final conditions for peace on June 30, Imperial sanction was conferred on July 5, and instructions for negotiation were handed to Komura the following day.<sup>326</sup> There were three “absolutely indispensable items,” including a Russian acknowledge of Japan’s complete freedom of action in Korea; the mutual withdrawal of both countries’ troops from Manchuria within a specified period; and that Russia would cede of its lease of the Liaotung Peninsula and the railway between Harbin and Port Arthur to Japan.

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<sup>321</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, July 31, 1905, in Elting E. Morison, et al., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 1293.

<sup>322</sup> Taft to Count Taro Katsura, Aug. 7, 1905, Taft Papers, quoted in Eldin Ralph Minger, “Taft's Missions to Japan: A Study in Personal Diplomacy,” *The Pacific Historical Review* 30, no. 3. (1961): 283.

<sup>323</sup> Minger, “Taft’s Missions to Japan,” 280.

<sup>324</sup> A. Raymond Esthus, “The Taft-Katsura Agreement--Reality or Myth?” *The Journal of Modern History* 31, no. 1 (1959): 46-51.

<sup>325</sup> Jongsuk Chay, “The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered,” in *The Pacific Historical Review* 37, no. 3 (1968): 326.

<sup>326</sup> Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 124.

There were also four “items not absolutely indispensable but to be secured insofar as possible,” which would require Russia to pay a war indemnity, transfer its interned vessels to Japan; cede Sakhalin, and grant fishing rights to Japan.<sup>327</sup>

The most troublesome issues, which almost caused the negotiations to break down, were the Japanese demands for war indemnity and Sakhalin.<sup>328</sup> Sergei Witte’s belligerent and friendly attitude to the journalists transferred American public sympathies from Japan to Russia, so the Japanese delegates were blamed for delaying the negotiations.<sup>329</sup> In the end, the Peace Treaty was signed on September 5, 1905. Russia acknowledged Japan’s interests in Korea:

The Imperial Russian Government, acknowledging that Japan possesses in Korea paramount political, military and economical interests, engages neither to obstruct nor interfere with measures for guidance, protection and control which the Imperial Government of Japan may find necessary to take in Korea....<sup>330</sup>

The two countries agreed to evacuate from Manchuria and return its sovereignty to China, but Japan acquired a lease for the Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur and Dalny, while Russia maintained its sphere of influence in northern Manchuria. Japan could not get indemnity, but did acquire the southern half of Sakhalin below the fiftieth parallel. The Japanese response to the treaty was such cold that it caused the Hibiya riots<sup>331</sup> and the consequent collapse of Katsura Taro’s cabinet in January 1906.

#### **D. ANNEXATION OF KOREA BY JAPAN**

Japan had defeated China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). Japan also had defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). Japan and Great Britain had

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<sup>327</sup> Okamoto, *The Japanese Oligarchy and the Russo-Japanese War*, 118, 124.

<sup>328</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 228.

<sup>329</sup> Westwood, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 126.

<sup>330</sup> Martin, *The Russo-Japanese War*, 236.

<sup>331</sup> Hibiya riot was named after the place where the demonstration first took place, the Hibiya Park. The demonstration was ignited right after the announcement of the signing the peace treaty. More than 30,000 protesters participated in the demonstration, set fires, and burned more than ten cars on the street and police boxes, which continued for three days. Martial law was declared in Tokyo and its vicinity, and was not lifted until November 29, 1905. Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, 628.

reassured their alliance by revising their former alliance treaty on 12 August 1905, just before the signing of the peace treaty with Russia.<sup>332</sup> The United States had an implicit alliance with Japan, having stated its support for Japan with regard to other western powers before the war; had consensus concerning the spheres of influence each country held in the Philippines and Korea; and mediated the peace treaty. Therefore, there was nothing to interfere with the Japanese annexation of Korea.

The second Korean-Japanese Agreement<sup>333</sup> (or the treaty of protection) was signed on November 18, 1905, by which Korea became the protectorate of Japan. When the signing of the treaty was announced, it triggered a mass demonstration by the Korean people in front of the palace; Korean newspapers ran editorials denouncing the treaty<sup>334</sup> and designating the five ministers who signed the treaty as “Ulsa Ojok (Five Bandits of 1905).” Ito Hirobumi was appointed as the first Japanese resident general in Korea on December 21, 1905, and took office on March 1, 1906. Ito gave his opinion about the treaty to representatives of the press in Seoul:

Now that the new treaty between Japan and Korea is concluded, it is believed by many Japanese even that Korea has been given to Japan, and this rash belief has caused bad feeling and misunderstanding between the two races. The most important point that I wish to impress upon you is that, although the new relations between Japan and Korea have now been definitely established by the conclusion of the protectorate treaty, the sovereignty of Korea remains as it was, in the hands of the Korean Emperor, and the imperial house of Korea and government exists as it did before. The new relations do but add to the welfare and dignity of the

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<sup>332</sup> The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was revised again on July 13, 1911 and lasted until August 17, 1923, when it was formally replaced.

<sup>333</sup> This treaty consisted of five articles as follows: (1) Japan would henceforth conduct foreign relations for Korea and, through its diplomatic and consular personnel abroad, protect Korean subjects and their interests. (2) Japan would carry out the provisions of treaties already concluded by Korea with foreign countries, but Korea would promise henceforth not to conclude international treaties without the prior consent of the Japanese government. (3) Japan would station in Korea as its representative a resident general who would be concerned exclusively with foreign affairs. He would have the privilege of audiences with the emperor. The Japanese government would station “residents” at opened ports and such other places in Korea as it deemed essential. (4) All existing agreements between Japan and Korea would remain in force, providing they did not conflict with the provisions of the present treaty. (5) Japan guaranteed it would preserve the safety and dignity of the Korean imperial household. Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, 641-642.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, 642.



Korean dynasty and the strengthening of the country. It is a great mistake to look upon the new treaty as a knell sounding the doom of Korea's existence as a kingdom.<sup>335</sup>

Emperor Kojong, who was forced to sign the treaty, sought one last hope by sending a secret letter to the leaders of nine European countries and the president of the United States<sup>336</sup> on January 29, 1906.<sup>337</sup> However, Roosevelt thought it would be "impracticable" for the US to intervene.<sup>338</sup> Nonetheless, with desperation, Kojong sent his three special envoys, Yi Sang-Yol, the former vice prime minister, Yi Ui-Joing, and Yi-Jun, to the Second International Conference on Peace at The Hague in late June 1907.

Yi Sang-Yol's address to the conference moved delegates from other countries; they sent a telegram to Seoul to verify whether Yi Sang-Yol's remarks represented the official views of the Korea government. However, the telegram was handed to Ito Hirobumi because telecommunication was under Japanese control. Ito pressed Kojong, and a message was telegraphed that the delegation was not authorized by the Korean government. With the British delegate's incitement, the Korean appeal was rejected.<sup>339</sup> Using the incident as a pretext, Ito dethroned Kojong and announced that he would be succeeded by young "feeble-minded Sunjong."<sup>340</sup> Korea became a Japanese colony on the basis of the third Korean-Japanese Agreement, which was signed on July 24. Finally, by signing the Treaty Regarding the Annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan, Korea

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<sup>335</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 197.

<sup>336</sup> Kojong and Korean officials believed that the United States would give aid to Korea on the basis of the United States-Korean Treaty of Amity and Commerce of 1882, which established formal relations between the United States and Korea. Article I of the treaty mentioned proffering "good offices" in international disputes involving the two parties.

<sup>337</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 196; Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, 642; The letter was unearthed by a Korean professor, Ki-Seok Kim of Seoul National University, in 1993, while he was conducting research in Columbia University's Rare Book and Manuscript Collection, Alexis Dudden, *Japan's Colonization of Korea: Discourse and Power* (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 7, 147-148.

<sup>338</sup> Brown, *The Mastery of the Far East*, 198. By the early spring of 1905, the Roosevelt administration had already decided not to do anything for Korea while accepting the Japanese influence there. Chay, "The Taft-Katsura Memorandum Reconsidered," 325.

<sup>339</sup> Keene, *Emperor of Japan*, 643.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

was completely annexed to Japan, disappearing as a sovereign independent state until it recovered its sovereignty when Japan unconditionally surrendered at the end of World War II in 1945.

#### **E. DOKDO AFTER THE INCORPORATION BY JAPAN**

It would be natural that Japan treated Dokdo as its territory after the island was incorporated in 1905. It would also be natural that Dokdo be treated as Japanese territory after the formal annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910. But Japan did not treat Dokdo as its territory neither after the incorporation of it, nor after the annexation of Korea. It was true that Dokdo was called Takeshima and placed under the administrative jurisdiction of Okinoshima, the Shimane Prefecture, Japan, but the Japanese regarded Takeshima as part of Korea. According to *The Japanese Sea Lanes*, which was published by the Hydrographic Bureau of the Ministry of the Japanese Navy in June 1907, two years after the incorporation of Dokdo, and which introduced the name of Takeshima (竹島, Liancourt rocks), it seems that the Japanese clearly recognized their sovereignty over Dokdo.<sup>341</sup> However, *The Korean Sea Lanes*, which published in March 1907, described Takeshima (Dokdo) more in detail.<sup>342</sup> Given that the Japanese incorporated Dokdo into their territory, they should have mentioned Dokdo only in *The Japanese Sea Lanes*: but they did not. Instead, they more precisely described Dokdo in *The Korean Sea Lanes*. It implies that the publisher of sea lanes consistently recognized Dokdo as part of Korean territory. Volume 6 of *The Japanese Sea Lanes*, which was published in 1911 after the annexation of Korea, mentioned in its preface that “this book recorded the sea lanes of the Korean coasts, but is named *the Japanese Sea Lanes Vol. 6*, because Korea has been annexed into our empire.”<sup>343</sup> This book was republished in 1920 with the same content but with a different name, *The Japanese Sea Lanes Vol. 10, Part I*. However, when the

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<sup>341</sup> Dokdo was not mentioned in the chart before Japan incorporated it. Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 151-152.

<sup>342</sup> In fact, it was a complemented version of *The Korean Sea Lanes*, which was published in 1899. Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 153-156; Sang-Tae Lee, *Historical Evidence of Korean Sovereignty over Dokdo*, 219.

<sup>343</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 165-166.

annexation of Korea was consolidated and the Japanese thought their empire would last forever, this book was renamed *The Korean Coastal Sea Lanes Book I*. In this way, the publishers of sea lanes in the Hydrographic office of the Ministry of the Japanese Navy consistently recognized Dokdo as Korean territory.

Japanese scholars also recognized Dokdo as Korean territory. For instance, *New Geography of Korea* (韓國新地理), which was published in 1908 by Dabuchi Tomohiko, mentioned Ulleungdo in Chapter V, Kangwon Province, stating that “the deserted island lying southeast 30 *ri* from this island (Ulleungdo) and located between Okinoshima is called Liancodo.”<sup>344</sup> This book also shows that the Japanese scholars recognized Dokdo as an appendage of Ulleungdo, which was part of Korean territory. A textbook published for Korean elementary school students described Dokdo as well as Ulleungdo as part of Korean territory.<sup>345</sup> A *Complete Map of Shimane Prefecture* (島根縣全圖), which was published in February 1917, included Okinoshima in a divided section but did not mention Dokdo.<sup>346</sup> Another important map is *Maps by Regions* (Chizu kuiki ichiran zu), Part I, which was published in 1935 by the Land Survey Department of the Japanese Army General Staff Office.<sup>347</sup> Based on the belief that the Japanese empire would last forever, the map’s lines were drawn according to the original owners of the territories, grouping lands into “Japan proper, Korea, Kwangtung Leased Territory (Kwangtung province), Taiwan, Sakhalin, the Kuriles, the Southwest Islands, the Bonin Islands (Ogasaware shoto) etc.”<sup>348</sup> This map drew a line on the right side of Dokdo which divided “the Korean region” from “the region of Japan proper.”<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 156-157; Sang-Tae Lee, *Historical Evidence of Korean Sovereignty over Dokdo*, 220.

<sup>345</sup> Kim, *The Plunder of Dokdo by the Japanese Military*, 170-171.

<sup>346</sup> It was the Shimane Prefecture which announced its jurisdictional authority by incorporating Dokdo in 1905 under the direction of the Home Ministry.

<sup>347</sup> When Japan surrendered in 1945, these maps were used by the Allied Forces to define Japanese territory and to restore other territories, which Japan had taken from other countries, to the original owners. Shin, *Korea’s Territorial Right to Tokdo*, 168.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

In sum, it is true that Nakai enjoyed a monopoly on catching sea lions at Dokdo from 1905-1914; the Japanese government, however, did not incorporate Dokdo for a single fisherman, but for using it for military purpose. However, after the war, the Japanese government did not need the island anymore, even hurrying to conceal the true purpose of its incorporation, and perceived Dokdo as part of Korea, as it had recognized before the war.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored Korean and Japanese recognition of Dokdo before and after the Russo-Japanese War. Before the war - in fact, since ancient history - the Korean people recognized Dokdo as Korean territory. Government documents and maps from ancient history clearly support this. The Japanese also recognized that Dokdo belonged to Korea. After the Meiji Restoration, Japanese influence on Korea became more expansive, though Japan still recognized Dokdo as Korean territory. When faced with the gradual encroachment of Japan into Korean territory, and illegal Japanese activities around Ulleungdo and Dokdo, the Korean government abolished its long-standing “vacant island policy,” and restarted the process of developing Ulleungdo. Indeed, the Korean Emperor officially reaffirmed his nation’s sovereign right over Dokdo by promulgating Imperial Ordinance No. 41 in October 1900.

The Russo-Japanese War was the result of a power struggle between Russia and Japan over Manchuria and Korea. More precisely, both countries had the same interests in Manchuria and Korea. To Japan, striving to become a modernized country, Korea was vital to its economic and industrial interests. Japan had tried to compromise with Russia over Manchuria and Korea, but Russia disregarded Japan’s concerns and continued its expansion to the east. Consequently, Japan’s leaders decided to secure their interests by military means and carefully prepared for the war while still negotiating with Russia. Consequently, Japan started the war before it lost its last chance to contend with Russia’s ever-increasing military power in the Far East.

The Japanese navy attacked Port Arthur and Chemulpo before the formal declaration of war, and thereby acquired a temporary command of the sea. As a result, the Japanese Army easily succeeded in occupying Korea. Based on the subsequent forced agreement, Japan reduced the Russians’ influence on Korea, and used Korea as military base for leaping to Manchuria. The revival of Russian morale in Port Arthur was short-lived; the well-respected Russian Admiral Stepan O. Makarov was killed, and the Japanese navy seemed to consolidate its command of the sea. However, the Russian

cruiser squadron at Vladivostok continuously threatened Japanese communication lines. The Japanese Navy dispatched its Second Fleet to defeat the Russian cruiser squadron, but the results were not good. In May 1904, the Japanese lost one third of their capital ships in a day and lost a series of other ships. Finally, the Japanese Navy started constructing observation posts along the Korean coastline to offset its weakened naval power and the Russian cruisers' threat by tracking the enemy's movements.

Meanwhile, a Japanese fisherman went to Tokyo to get a monopoly on fishing rights at Dokdo from the Korean government via the Japanese government. However, Japanese officials incited the fisherman to petition for incorporation of Dokdo instead. The Japanese government, although it knew well that Dokdo was Korean territory, secretly processed the incorporation. At the same time, the Japanese army enjoyed a series of victories in Manchuria. The Japanese army succeeded in isolating Port Arthur, and continuously pressed the Russians to the north. Meanwhile, the tsar had decided to send reinforcements to the east, but the Second Fleet did not weigh anchor until the First Squadron had disintegrated in the east. By the end of 1904, the Japanese advanced to Liaoyang, but started to suffer from the shortage of money and manpower.

The fall of Port Arthur opened a new chapter of the war. The Japanese Navy could return to home and prepare for its last decisive battle with the Russian Second Squadron. At the same time, the Japanese government quickly and secretly incorporated Dokdo into its territory. The Japanese Army now could concentrate its forces to attack Mukden, though its victory was quite costly to both belligerents. After the Battle of Mukden, the Japanese wanted to end the war, but the Russians did not want to end it with dishonor. In the end, the conclusion of the war would result from the last battle of the two navies, i.e., the Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan. The tsar's last armada, the Second Squadron, suffered from its legendary voyage from Europe to the Far East, having travelled almost halfway around the globe via Africa's Cape of Good Hope. Furthermore, it had to waste time waiting for the Third Squadron, while the Japanese Combined fleet became more confident before the upcoming battle.

The Battle of the East Sea/Sea of Japan consequently compelled the end of the war. While the Japanese wanted to end the war mainly because of a shortage of

resources, the growing revolutionary movement in Russia drove the tsar's inclination to end the war. However, expecting a prolonged war, the two belligerents continued to build up reinforcements even after having agreed to negotiate for peace. Before starting the negotiations, the United States and Japan exchanged each country's interest in the Philippines and Korea through the Taft-Katsura memorandum thereby acknowledging the Japanese influence on Korea. The Japanese navy recognized the strategic importance of Ulleungdo and Dokdo, constructing additional observation posts on the former and one on the latter. However, when the war formally ended, the Japanese hurriedly dismantled them all, by which it clearly showed that the incorporation of Dokdo was for military purposes, and not for the benefit of a lone fisherman.

After the formal annexation of Korea in 1910, the Japanese treated Dokdo as part of Korean territory, just as they had done before the war. The Japanese documents related to hydrographs, geography, and textbooks clearly showed that Japan recognized Dokdo as Korean territory.

As was discussed at the beginning of this thesis, the Dokdo issue is not so much an economic issue as it is a historical one. This historical survey should be helpful in clarifying the context of the main issues related to the Korean-Japanese territorial disputes. It is hoped that the readers of this thesis will see the dispute from a historical point of view, not from the political or economic ones, because it is the history of Dokdo that will allow this issue to be resolved. Korean and Japanese who are concerned about how the Dokdo issue may influence Korea-Japan relations in the future, and the consequences for all of East Asia, should focus on an accurate view on Dokdo's history as presented in this thesis. Resolving the dispute may, in fact, be the first step by which Korea and Japan can develop a true partnership and friendship while clearing away the century-old bad feelings between the two countries. In this regard, the territorial dispute between Korea and Japan over Dokdo/Takeshima present not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for both countries, and the major powers with a stake in Korea-Japan harmony in the 21<sup>st</sup> century—the United States, the Republic of China, and Russia.

All of these countries should be guided by: "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John, 8:32).

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