

**TITLE:** Toponymy of Korea and the United States

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**GRADES:** AP Human Geography (9-12)

**TOPIC/THEME:** Place Names, Territorial Geography.

**TIME REQUIRED:** Three/four 50-minute class periods

**BACKGROUND:** Place names often represent a location's history and culture. As areas evolve and develop, names often change along with recognized ownership or control of a region. However, these changes are not always welcomed, nor are they always globally recognized or accepted. The recognition of the problem and the controversy it entails is at the core of this lesson.

The Dokdo/Takeshima Islands and East Sea/Sea of Japan are examples of the controversies faced between two major nation-states in East Asia based around toponymy. These geographic locations are two of the controversies that embody the significant cultural, economic and political rifts between the government and peoples of South Korea and Japan. These are historical disagreements that continue to be debated today. For the South Koreans, there is a strong sense of urgency to settle the dispute and gain the recognition of the international community to their claims as well as to their long-held claim to the name of the sea located to their east as the East Sea. The Japanese believe they have a historical claim to these islands and have established a global recognition for the sea located to their west as the Sea of Japan. Additionally, there is the question of why three rock islands, which are uninhabitable, have become so controversial. One argument is because of the fishing, potential oil and other natural resources found in the immediate area. A second issue revolves around an ever increasing sense of nationalism in the region and past historical conflicts. In addition one might ask what the significance is in a simple name give on a map. The question is then; "is their more to a name than the name itself?"

**CURRICULUM CONNECTION:** Toponymy shares with the reader a historical and cultural aspect of a place or region. In addition, names can often imply or presume the power and economic influence of one nation over neighboring nations. Toponymy is a concept addressed in basic geography course work as well as Advanced Placement Human Geography.

**CONNECTION TO STUDENTS' LIVES:** Understanding the implications of names can lead students to gain an appreciation for the world around them. Students will be able to look differently at maps and the deeper meanings that can be gained through what they represent. Students will hone their critical thinking skills to connect geographic names in their local area and their meanings to expand these skills to examine global toponymy.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Students will be able to (SWBAT) define and cite examples of toponyms in the region in which they live.
2. SWBAT identify and label regional toponyms in the United States.

3. SWBAT identify controversial toponyms in two different regions of the world, North America and East Asia.
4. SWBAT analyze and evaluate the current issues of the Dokdo /Takeshima Islands.
5. SWBAT make inferences to the controversy between the East Sea and the Sea of Japan
6. SWBAT write a one page paper that supports their understanding of the debate between the two countries that is supported through research on the topic

#### **NATIONAL AND STATE STANDARDS:**

#### **OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS:**

1. Students will be able to define and cite examples of toponyms in the region in which they live.

#### **NCSS Standard: Theme I: CULTURE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

Students need to comprehend multiple perspectives that emerge from within their own culture and from the vantage points of the diverse cultural groups within that society. These understandings allow them to make sense of the actions, ideas, and products of others as well as to relate to and interact with people within their diverse society and throughout the world.

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#### **Geography for Life Standard: The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places**

We come from a place, we live in a place, and we preserve and exhibit fierce pride over places. Our sense of self is intimately entwined with that of place. Who we are is often inseparable from where we are.

#### **Oregon Standard**

HS.GE.02.01 Use a variety of geographic representations to analyze information and draw conclusions about geographic issues.

HS.GE.03 Locate and identify places, regions, and geographic features that have played prominent roles in historical or contemporary issues and events

#### **Nevada Standard**

**Content Standard G6.0 - Places & Regions** - Students understand the physical and human features of places and use this information to define and study regions and their patterns of change.

*G6.[9-12].5* Explain why **places** and **regions** are important to **cultural identity** and can serve as forces for both **unification** and **fragmentation**.

2. Students will be able to identify controversial toponyms in different areas of the world.

**NCSS Standard:** Theme I: CULTURE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Students need to comprehend multiple perspectives that emerge from within their own culture and from the vantage points of the diverse cultural groups within that society. These understandings allow them to make sense of the actions, ideas, and products of others as well as to relate to and interact with people within their diverse society and throughout the world.

**Geography for Life Standard: How Culture and Experience Influence People's Perceptions of Places and Regions**

People's perception of places and regions is not uniform. Rather, their view of a particular place or region is their interpretation of its location, extent, characteristics, and significance as influenced by their own culture and experience. It is sometimes said that there is no reality, only perception. In geography there is always a mixture of both the objective and subjective realms, and that is why the geographically informed person needs to understand both realms and needs to see how they relate to each other.

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3. Students will be able to analyze and evaluation the current issues of the Dokdo Islands/Takishima and the East Sea/Sea of Japan.

**NCSS Standard: Theme II: TIME, CONTINUITY, AND CHANGE**

Learners will be using the processes of critical historical inquiry to reconstruct and interpret the past, such as using a variety of sources and checking their credibility, validating and weighing evidence for claims, searching for causality, and distinguishing between events and developments that are significant and those that are inconsequential.

**Geography for Life Standard: How to Apply Geography to Interpret the Past**

An understanding of geography can inform an understanding of history in two important ways. First, the events of history take place within geographic contexts. Second, those events are motivated by people's perceptions, correct or otherwise, of geographic contexts. By exploring what the world was like and how it was perceived at a given place at a given time, the geographically informed person is able to interpret major historical issues.

**How to Apply Geography to Interpret the Present and Plan for the Future**

Geography is the key to nations, peoples, and individuals being able to develop a coherent understanding of the causes, meanings, and effects of the physical and human events that occur—and are likely to occur—on Earth's surface.

In a world where people are competing for territory, resources, markets, and economic positions, knowing too little about geography is a liability, which compromises the capacity of people to function successfully at home or abroad. Creating effective and lasting solutions to the world's pressing problems requires that today's students mature into adults who can make skilled and informed use of geographic knowledge, skills, and perspectives to identify possible solutions, predict their consequences, and implement the best solutions.

**Oregon Standard**

HS.GE.02.01 Use a variety of geographic representations to analyze information and draw conclusions about geographic issues.

HS.GE.03 Locate and identify places, regions, and geographic features that have played prominent roles in historical or contemporary issues and events

**Nevada Standard**

**Content Standard G6.0 - Places & Regions** - Students understand the physical and human features of places and use this information to define and study regions and their patterns of change.

G6.[9-12].5 Explain why **places** and **regions** are important to **cultural identity** and can serve as forces for both **unification** and **fragmentation**.

**Common Core Standards**

RH 1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources

RH 2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source

RH 6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics

### **MATERIALS REQUIRED:**

Class set of US map with as many place names provided as possible

Teacher background materials

Student background resources/articles and note-taking page

### **TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIAL**

In order for this lesson to be understood by the students, at the fullest, it is strongly suggested that the teacher go through all the resources and do some background reading. Without a complete understanding of the history behind this, there is going to be some information and sentiment lost in the lesson. It is important the students understand the passion behind the controversy, that it is not just political but engrained in the culture of the Korean people.

The six articles the students will read were carefully chosen for a few reasons. A few of the articles were current at the time of writing this lesson plan, thus enforcing the current status of this controversial issue. All of the articles presented represent a different point of view and different types of writing (letters to the editor, historical text, articles) so when the students are done with the activity, they will have a good perspective in which to use for their final assessment.

Please feel free to substitute any other readings. The six we have provided include questions but are not the only articles available on this subject. As you can see from the resources, there is a lot of information available.

**INTRODUCTION and EXPLORATION:** Introduce this lesson by:

#### DAY ONE

#### Naming the School Activity

- 1) On the (white) board write down your school's name / town's name or local geographic name that has some cultural, political, economic significance. For example, you might teach at a school called "Ridgeview." Ask students to brain storm ideas as to why this name was chosen and how it may or may not represent some aspect of the history, geography, or culture of the region to the people that live there. From this discussion you can introduce the term "Toponymy" and begin your discussion that a place's name is often much more than just a name.
- 2) Divide the class into two even groups. If there is an odd person, this student can be the mediator for one group and the teacher can be the mediator for the other. The teacher should pass out the scenarios. Students are to read the situation alone and write down

their own ideas about a school's name using what they know about toponymy into account. (Encourage them to come up with at least three different possibilities.) Once everyone in the group has had a chance to complete this, together they must come to a consensus on what they think the name for the new school should be. (This is where some of the controversy and discussion will come in because everyone will have a different interest represented in the name they chose.) Once both groups have decided on a name, they will present their name choice and rationale to the other group. When both sides have presented, there will be a class vote. (The hope is that the presentation will have swayed some students from one side to vote for the other side!) If a majority vote is not possible, continue with some discussion about the difficulties in choosing names and why they are important.

**PROCEDURE:** This section includes two sub-sections: The Delivery of the Contents and The Application of the Contents. This will provide detail and order the strategies used in this lesson presentation.

**THE DELIVERY OF THE CONTENT:** After the introductory activity the class will move from these local examples to the United States and then on to a couple global examples. The final lesson will be to examine an extremely controversial situation between South Korea and Japan.

#### DAY ONE, continued

After completing the warm-up activity on the school name, students will then complete the following activities:

- 1) Students will be given a map of the United States with a variety of geographic names labeled. Using this map, students will highlight names that identify with some religious meaning. The teacher may need to help guide this process if students are unfamiliar with religious or cultural names. For example, the teacher may want to start the class out by highlighting San Francisco and Los Angeles in California and help guide the students to understand the Catholic roots of the name. The teacher could then (for example) look at Brigham City in Utah as a second example. This map will lead students to identify regions of religion within the United States.
- 2) Students will then highlight a US map (in a second color) choosing to identify cultural or physical features associated with places names. For example a student could look for names associated with economics like Portland, Oregon to identify a sea port or cultural identity with a name like Seattle, Washington named after Chief Seattle. Students will need to turn in their maps at the end of class.
- 3) Students will look at the US map again to examine the border between the United States and Mexico. Discuss reasons why the river border has two different names (Rio Grande/Rio Bravo del Norte) based on the cartographers preferences. Students will then justify why maps should or could show both names.
- 4) End the lesson with checking for understanding that there is meaning in a name and they can, through some independent thought, garner some of the cultural and historic perspective of the location's name.
  - a. Students will have turned in the following:
    - i. Name the school activity with notes from their group discussions

- ii. The US map (highlighted with two colors) and their reasons for the river names.

### DAY TWO (Jigsaw)

This day will be used to expand on the previous day's lesson to students a global perspective of the same issue.

- 1) Using the provided background materials for the teacher, present the key background to the two geographic locations that are at a center of controversy between South Korea and Japan: the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands. The lesson will focus on the Islands, however there are a number of resources provided for the teachers to pursue name controversies for extension activities..
- 2) Students will then be placed in six groups of four. Each group will be given one resource to help them understand the issue in more detail and become an 'expert' on their resource. The group will then discuss their resource and take notes to use to 'teach' about their resource to the next group.
- 3) Students will then break out to independently complete their analysis questions for their resource. Students will need to bring this completed to the next class session.

### DAY THREE (or extension of day two)

- 4) Students will then be placed into four groups of six (each group will need an "expert" for each student's resource). Students will take turns teaching their resource to the group. All of the participants will need to take notes on the group's discussion to complete the activities culminating activity. (Note Taking Handout due at end of lesson along with their write-up)
- 5) After the 'experts' have met and discussed, students will be asked to write a one-page response using their notes to the question:  
*If you were the cartographer who was saddled with the difficult decision to place one name for a location on the map, which name would you use and why?"*

Support your position using the facts presented in your group by each expert and not simply your opinion. This should be completed along with the note taking assignment and brought back to the next class session.

### DAY THREE

- 1) Students will return to the last group of six from the previous days. Students will exchange their one-page response to each of their group members for evaluation. Each of the peer readers will need to circle and initial points the author made from their resource. The goal will be to have the group members identify points from the resource they presented in yesterday's last activity.
- 2) The activity will end with turning in the following:
  - 1) Notes from their resource (notes that were used to present their 'expert' opinion)

- 2) Notes from the group's resource presentations (Note page)
- 3) One-page analysis with input from group members

#### EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Students could complete a similar activity or research information on the controversy that these two states are currently dealing with concerning the naming of the East Sea or Sea of Japan.
2. Students could research the economic impact of claiming islands off their coast through the Law of the Seas agreement
3. Students could do further reading on the Philippines' position on the naming of the East Sea.
4. Students could research other controversial geographic names in the world
5. Students could research ways a cartographer can and have tried to appease all sides to these types of controversies. For example, some maps place two names on the map or put one name in lower case.

\*\* When looking for extension activities, be sure to look for places that bring about controversy today. There are many stories about how places received their names but very few have last in the controversial state that exists with the Dokdo/Takeshima Islands.

#### **THE APPLICATION OF THE CONTENT:**

When the students have completed this activity they will have a better understanding of toponymy in their own region, nationally and internationally. The purpose of understanding toponymy includes having a historical and cultural perspective. Often, we take names on maps for granted not thinking about whether or not someone else who is looking at the same map in another part of the world is seeing the same names in the same way with the same meaning. Names give a place a sense of being and cultural/historical connection to the people. Because histories involve more than one side, names that can sometimes be taken for granted are often very controversial to others.

The students will begin the activity on the local scale and progress to the international scale, including cross-curricular aspects like politics and economics. The activity includes methods of individual work, group discussion, consensus, presentation and a final written- individual analysis.

#### **ASSESSMENT:**

1. Students will be assessed on the following:
  - a. Their three rationales on what the school's name should be and a definition of toponymy.
  - b. Their highlighted United States map of place names along with their three rationales for the name of the river which separates the United States with Mexico.
  - c. Submission of their analysis of their expert group and the notes from the other groups.
  - d. Submission of their one-page analysis paper along with their notes from the group of six discussions.



**ARTICLES USED IN LESSON:**

Article: The Boston Globe, S. Korea, Japan in territorial dispute  
[http://www.boston.com/news/world/articles/2005/03/20/s\\_korea\\_japan\\_in\\_territorial\\_dispute/](http://www.boston.com/news/world/articles/2005/03/20/s_korea_japan_in_territorial_dispute/)

Article: Korea Times, Natural Gas is Key Issue  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/251\\_29572.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/251_29572.html)

Article: Korea Times, Korea reaffirmed sovereignty of Dokdo in 1900  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/05/113\\_86700.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/05/113_86700.html)

Article: Korea Times, Japan bans officials from using Korean Air (July 15, 2011)  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/117\\_90893.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/117_90893.html)

Korea Times, Letter to the editor: Row over Dokdo (July 20, 2011)  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2011/07/137\\_91197.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2011/07/137_91197.html)

Korea Times, Letter to the Editor: Indian perception of Dokdo  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2011/07/202\\_91346.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2011/07/202_91346.html)

Article: The Japan Times Online, Lawmaker defends attempt to observe disputed Takeshima isles

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110804a3.html>

**ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHER AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**

Essay, Peter Talbot  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/261\\_90315.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/261_90315.html)

Website: A collection of articles related the Korea & Japan's dispute over the islets known as Dokdo/Takeshima/Liancourt Rocks  
<http://www.dokdonews.net/>

Website: Dokdo of Korea  
<http://en.dokdo.go.kr/index.do>

Article: The Boston Globe, Dokdo or Takeshima  
[http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/02/dokdo\\_or\\_takeshima.html](http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/02/dokdo_or_takeshima.html)

Website: Historical Facts about Korea's Dokdo Islands  
<http://www.dokdo-takeshima.com/legal-study-of-the-dokdo-issue-i.html>

Article: Korea Times, Japans Claim Over Dokdo Reflects Its Colonial Mentality  
[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/251\\_30348.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/251_30348.html)

Website: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/position.html>

Website: Collection of Dokdo research

<http://dokdo-research.com/>

Article: Korea Times, Seoul Needs Proactive, Consistent Strategy

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/251\\_29972.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/251_29972.html)

Article: Korea Times, Korea reaffirmed sovereignty of Dokdo in 1900

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/05/113\\_86700.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/05/113_86700.html)

Article: Geographies of toponymic inscription: new directions in critical place-name studies

[http://myweb.ecu.edu/aldermand/pubs/alderman\\_PHG.pdf](http://myweb.ecu.edu/aldermand/pubs/alderman_PHG.pdf)

Article: Korea Times, Minister Lee condemns Japanese lawmakers' plan to visit Ulleng (July 18, 2011)

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/116\\_91067.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/116_91067.html)

Article: Korea Times, PM expresses regret over Japan's moves on Dokdo (July 20, 2011)

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/116\\_91184.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/07/116_91184.html)

Korea Times, Editorial: Offensive over Dokdo (July 20, 2011)

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2011/07/137\\_91187.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2011/07/137_91187.html)

Article: Korea Times, Korea to get tough on Japan's fresh claim to Dokdo (Aug 2, 2011)

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/08/113\\_92036.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/08/113_92036.html)

Website:

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/position.html>

Website: A Visual Study of the Dokdo (maps and images)

<http://www.dokdo-takeshima.com/a-visual-study-of-dokdo.html>

Article: Sea of Japan/East Sea Controversy for extension lesson

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20110808000690>

Journal Article: Economic Dependence and the Dokdo/Takeshima Dispute Between South Korea and Japan (really good history!)

<http://asiaquarterly.com/2006/02/03/ii-129/>

Student Note-Taking Handout

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Article #1 _____	Article #2 _____
Article #3 _____	Article #4 _____
Article #5 _____	Article #6 _____

## ARTICLE #1

**Japan bans officials from using Korean Air**

Korean Air's A380 flies over Dokdo, the cluster of islets off Korea's eastern coast, in this photo taken on June 16. After the test flight, the Japanese government instructed its employees not to fly with the Korean flagship carrier, triggering a fresh diplomatic row with South Korea. / Yonhap

**Seoul expresses regret over reaction to Dokdo flight**

By Lee Hyo-sik

The Japanese foreign ministry has instructed its employees not to fly with Korean Air in protest of the national flag carrier's test flight of its first A380 over Dokdo last month.

In reaction, Seoul urged Tokyo to retract its move, calling the act "disappointing and regrettable."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan said Thursday that in protest of Korean Air's flight path over Dokdo, which Japan calls Takeshima, it sent an email to all employees, including those stationed overseas, ordering them not to use the Korean airline for a month, beginning July 18.

"It is true that the foreign ministry ordered its workers not to fly with Korean Air for a month to protest the carrier's 'illegitimate' flight over Takeshima," an official at the Northeast Asia Division of the Japanese ministry told The Korea Times over the phone. "The ministry is considering taking further steps to make it clear that Japan has sovereignty over the islets. But we have not yet decided exactly what they would be."

The official declined to be named, given the sensitivity of the issue. The division is responsible for the ministry's policies concerning the two Koreas.

On June 16, Korean Air operated an A380 test flight for the press from Incheon International Airport to the country's easternmost islets and back. The following day, the jet made its first passenger flight, carrying travelers to Narita International Airport from Incheon.

Immediately after the test flight, the Japanese Embassy in Seoul strongly protested, expressing concerns that it could negatively affect bilateral relations between the two countries. With mounting pressure from the Liberal Democratic Party and other opposition parties to do more, the Japanese government decided to issue the flight ban.

"A Japanese Embassy official visited the airline's headquarters on July 11, to protest last month's flight over Takeshima. At the time, the official notified Korean Air of our decision that

foreign ministry employees will not board its airplanes for one month from next Monday,” the official said.

Korean Air declined to comment on the issue, given its sensitivity.

The airline only said it is not in a position to make comments on government matters.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade here issued a statement, strongly criticizing its Japanese counterpart.

“It is unfortunate for Japan’s foreign ministry to order its employees not to use Korea Air. There is nothing wrong with Korea’s flagship carrier flying over Dokdo because it is an essential part of our territory historically, geographically and internationally,” the ministry said.

It demanded that Japan’s foreign ministry immediately withdraw the flight ban.

Ministry spokesman Cho Byung-je said Japan’s claim over Dokdo deserves no consideration, adding the Korean government will take all possible measures to defend the nation’s territorial sovereignty.

“The Japanese government’s flight restrictions are virtual sanctions on a private Korean company. We are taking this very seriously. Taking the current bilateral relations into consideration, the Japanese government’s act is disappointing and very regrettable,” Cho said at a briefing.

### **Minister Lee condemns Japanese lawmakers' plan to visit Ulleung**



An aerial view of Dokdo islets in this file photo taken on July 5 / Yonhap

By Chung Min-uck

Special Affairs Minister Lee Jae-oh urged the lawmakers of Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) of Japan to call off a visit to Ulleung Island, scheduled for early next month.

Lee stated via Twitter Saturday that the LDP lawmakers have dubious reasons for visiting the island and that it is infringing on Korea's territorial sovereignty.

"If the purpose of their visit is to make the Dokdo Islets a disputed territory or claim Dokdo as their land, it is without a doubt an infringement of Korea's territorial sovereignty," said Lee.

"We will not permit their stepping on our land and visiting Ulleung Island. We will stop them by mobilizing all means possible."

The statement by Lee, regarded as one of the closest confidants to President Lee Myung-bak, came following LDP lawmaker Sindo Yoshitaka's announcement Friday that he and several LDP members will make a four-day trip to Ulleung Island from Aug. 1. He said during the press conference that they would inspect the Korean government's stance on Dokdo via the visit to the island and the Dokdo Museum there.

If the visit takes place, it would be the first time for Japan's main opposition party to send members to the island.

Ulleung Island is the closest land to the Islets, 90 kilometers to the west.

Japan's persistent sovereignty claims over Dokdo in the East Sea have long been a bone of contention in relations between Korea and Japan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade also responded to the LDP's visit, saying it would seek counter measures should the Japanese lawmakers put their words into action.

The long-time conflict over the territorial rights was stirred again Thursday when Japan's foreign ministry instructed its officials to refrain from taking Korean Air flights for official duties in protest of the airline's flight of its first Airbus A380 over Dokdo last month.

The government called for the Japanese government's withdrawal of the measure.

Concerning Japan's action over the islets, Jo Yang-hyeon, a professor at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, said "The Japanese government is having trouble in increasing its military expenditure as it faces budget problems. So claiming territorial rights has become important foreign policy for Japan."

"Also, in September last year, the Democratic Party of Japan experienced a drop in its approval rating after a lukewarm response to China's claim over the Senkaku Islands. It means that territorial disputes with the surrounding nations are closely related to domestic politics (in Japan), which lets Japanese lawmakers to be actively involved in the matter," added Jo.

The Senkaku Islands are another source of territorial dispute, this time



Article #2

**Thursday, Aug. 4, 2011**

## **Lawmaker defends attempt to observe disputed Takeshima isles**

By NATSUKO FUKUE and MASAMI ITO

Staff writers

Three Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers who were denied entry by South Korea when they tried to visit an island near disputed territory in the Sea of Japan remain undeterred, although their actions ratcheted up diplomatic tension with Seoul.

Team leader Yoshitaka Shindo said the visit to Ulleungdo, the administrative and military base overseeing the disputed rocky islets known as Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan, was made in peace, and that he hopes friendly relations between the two countries will be maintained.

"Our purpose wasn't to make a fuss," claimed Shindo, who flew back to Haneda airport with LDP colleagues Tomomi Inada and Masahisa Sato, on Monday evening after spending about nine hours at Seoul's Gimpo International Airport. "We didn't go there to claim our territorial rights."

The trio planned to spend Tuesday and Wednesday on the island. The denial of entry into South Korea "was regrettable and disappointing," he said.

Shindo claimed the lawmakers intended only to get South Korea's perspective on the disputed islets and observe what kind of research was being carried out there. "The problem of the Takeshima issue is that there's no opportunity (for the two countries) to discuss and understand differences of claims from each side."



**Disappointed: Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker Yoshitaka Shindo is interviewed Wednesday in Tokyo.**  
YOSHIAKI MIURA



South Korea decided last Friday to refuse entry to the three lawmakers on the grounds their safety could not be guaranteed and bilateral relations would be negatively affected, but the trio were undeterred.

South Korean officials reportedly told them their visit could "trigger actions that would threaten public safety" and sent them back to Japan.

"I don't understand why such a measure had to be taken," Shindo said.

The rocky, almost uninhabited, islets have long been a source of discord between Tokyo and Seoul. Japan claims the two islets and numerous reefs are part of Shimane Prefecture, while South Korea says they were returned after the Japanese occupation of the Korean Peninsula ended in 1945.

The feud came to a head in March when the education ministry approved textbooks describing Takeshima as Japanese territory, prompting Seoul to announce plans to build an ocean research base near there.

In May, South Korean opposition lawmakers, with permission from Moscow, visited Kunashiri Island, part of a disputed island chain occupied by Russia but claimed by Japan.

Then, in June, Korean Air flew a Dokdo flyby — prompting the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo to order its officials to boycott the airline.

Despite the tension, Shindo says he plans to attempt to visit Ulleungdo again. "Now I know (South Korea) won't welcome me by traveling like this time, so I hope Japan and South Korea hold a convention or symposium on the Takeshima issue there so that I can go."

Meanwhile, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano criticized the South Korean government's action, adding that Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto lodged a complaint with South Korean Ambassador to Japan Shin Kak Soo.

"It is extremely regrettable and we have used our official diplomatic channel to request that" the South Korean government take action based on a comprehensive view, Edano said Tuesday morning. "We would especially like to ask the South Korean government to react calmly in light of the importance of Japan-South Korea relations."

Edano stressed that Japan would remain firm on the issue.

"We will react calmly from a comprehensive viewpoint but we will maintain a resolute attitude against individual cases," he said.

Shindo was first elected as a Lower House lawmaker at the age of 38 in 1996. He is a grandson of Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, commander during the battle of Iwo Jima, who was portrayed in Clint Eastwood's film "Letters from Iwo Jima."



## Article #3

**Korea reaffirmed sovereignty of Dokdo in 1900**

*This is the fifth and last of a five-part series examining Korean and Japanese claims regarding Dokdo, and the cause of the territorial dispute over the rocky islets sitting midway between the two countries. — ED.*

By Yoo Mi-rim

Japan's provocation over Korea's easternmost island of Dokdo is becoming more aggressive with its authorization of 12 middle school textbooks that falsely state Dokdo as its own territory.

As some of the Japanese textbooks go as far as claiming that Korea is illegally occupying Dokdo, it will be inevitable for Japanese students to have a distorted view on the sovereignty over the rocky island.

Nevertheless, Japan's claim that Dokdo is an inherent part of its territory has proven to be untrue even by its own government documents that officially acknowledge that Ulleung Island and neighboring Dokdo in the East Sea are foreign possessions.

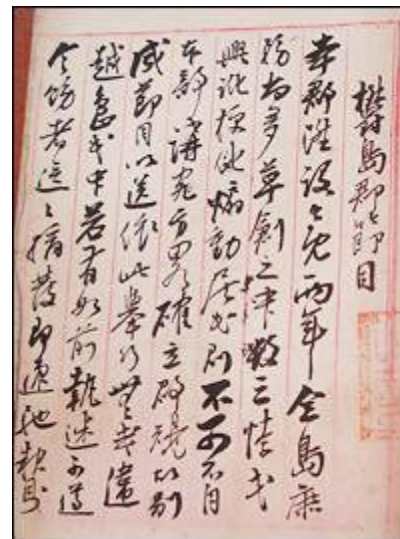
Thus, it will be as important to provide evidence that Korea had exercised its sovereignty over it before Japan illegally annexed it in the early 20th century as it is to address the fallacies of Japan's claims over Dokdo.

Japan has been reluctant to admit that Korea exercised effective control over Dokdo because this would greatly undermine the legitimacy of its decision to incorporate it into Shimane Prefecture in 1905.

Tokyo, however, does not hesitate to claim that Dokdo was terra nullius, or land belonging to no one, prior to its seizure in 1905, despite the fact that this contradicts its own argument that the East Sea island belonged to it for more than centuries.

In a nutshell, Japan denies Korea's reaffirmation of its sovereignty over Dokdo through the promulgation of Imperial Ordinance No. 41 in 1900 and the latter's effective control over the island before 1905.

Japan argues that Seokdo, which literally means rocky island and stated in the ordinance, does not refer to Dokdo.



A picture of a 1902 decree that states that anyone who secretly sells a house or land to a foreigner faces the death sentence, demonstrating Korea's strong resolve to protect its sovereignty against Japan's growing intrusion. / Courtesy of Yoo Mi-rim

But how truthful is Japan's assertion?

This article will explore why Japan's incorporation of Dokdo was illegitimate by demonstrating that Japan's seizure of the island came as a result of Japan's encroachment on Ulleung Island and how Korea reacted to Japan's invasions.

### **Japan's plundering in Edo era**

Japan's intrusion into Ulleung Island and Dokdo goes back to the Edo period (1603-1868). In 1693, An Yong-bok and other Korean fishermen clashed with Japanese fishermen in waters off Ulleung Island.

The incident led to a diplomatic dispute between Korea and Japan and ended with the Japanese feudal government of the Edo Shogunate's formal acknowledgement that two disputed islands belonged to Korea.

Following the Japanese Tottori clan's report in January 1696 that Dokdo does not belong to its territory, the shogunate issued a travel ban on its nationals to Ulleung Island and Dokdo.

Japanese fishermen temporarily stopped sailing to the two Korean islands following the announcement of the measure, but they could not overcome temptation to access the rich fishery and natural resources that Dokdo and Ulleung Island offer.

Records show their illegal intrusions continued even in the 19th Century.

Following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, an increasing number of Japanese people began to explore and settle in new islands.

Many demanded that the government incorporate Ulleung Island, which they first referred to as Takeshima and later Matsushima in confusion, into Japan's territory.

As the government carried out a nationwide land-registry and mapping project, Japanese people sought inclusion of Ulleung Island and Dokdo under the jurisdiction of Shimane Prefecture.

However, the Daijokan, or the Department of State in Japan, made it clear that they were not a part of Japan's territory in 1877.

When the Ministry of Home Affairs made an inquiry to the Daijokan, then Japan's highest decision-making body, it instructed the ministry "to keep in mind that Takeshima and another island had nothing to do with Japan."

The attached documents and map of the Ministry of Home Affairs indicate that the Daijokan referred the Ullueng Island as Takeshima and Dokdo, which lies just 90 kilometers from it, as another island.

### **Korea's response to intrusions**

Japan's plundering on Ulleung Island showed no sign of dwindling. In the early 1880s, Korea's central government became aware of the seriousness of the problem.

In response, it ordered to conduct an investigation on Ulleung Island and Dokdo and promote settlement on Ulleung Island.

Joseon, the last Korean kingdom, had emptied islands and institutionalized inspections on them for the safety of its citizens.

But with the increase in Japan's intrusions, Joseon switched its policy and encouraged more of its citizens to live on Ulleung Island.

As the government exempted new settlers from tax and gave privileges, such as the license to make ships, the number of Ulleung islanders quickly rose.

However, this did not stop the Japanese from illegally logging trees and fishing from Ulleung Island and Dokdo. As Japan's plundering worsened, the government gave more authority to the chief of Ulleung Island, Bae Gye-ju, in 1895.

Bae filed a lawsuit against Japanese who smuggled wood off his island and conducted an extensive investigation on damages incurred by Japanese trespassers along with E. Laporte, an English tax accountant working at Busan Customs Office.

Korean documents show that the population of Ulleung Island reached around 1,700 and the number of illegal Japanese migrants stood at 144 in 1900.

Given that the first 54 settlers from 16 families only came to stay on the island in 1883, its population increase was remarkably high.

In June 1900, Korean and Japanese governments carried out a joint investigation on Ulleung Island to tackle the issue.

In October 1900, the Korean government declared to the world the Imperial Ordinance No. 41 in its Gazette No. 1716, which stipulated that Ulleung Island was to have jurisdiction over Seokdo (Dokdo).

The declaration of the law was not something that came out of the blue.

It was a measure carefully drawn up based on a series of land surveys and investigations since the mid-1890s in line with the government's efforts to better protect Ulleung islanders from Japanese intrusions and uprooting.

### **Dispute over Dokdo's name**

The Imperial Ordinance No.41 is crucial evidence that supports Korea's sovereignty over Dokdo as it states that Seokdo, an interchangeable name for Dokdo, is under the jurisdiction of Ulleung County.

Some Japanese scholars say Seokdo does not refer to Dokdo, claiming that it was probably an old name for another Ulleung Island's neighboring Gwaneum Island or a general name referring to other rocky islets closer to it.

They deny the widely-accepted view in Korea that residents of Ulleungdo interchangeably used Seokdo and Dokdo as both literally mean rocky island.

Seok, or “石,” is a Chinese character for rock, while “dok” is a Korean word used in a Jeolla Province dialect to refer to rock.

In standard Korean, rock is pronounced as “dol,” instead of “dok,” while “do” refers to island.

There are also many other ways to prove that Joseon referred to Dokdo as Seokdo.

One of them is the order of island names stated in the Imperial Ordinance.

If the ordinance only mentioned Ulleung Island, one may argue that Seokdo is Gwaneum Island.

But the ordinance specifically mentioned that Ulleung Island and its two sister islands Jukdo and Seokdo fall under the jurisdiction of the Ulleung County.

Gwaneum Island lies between Jukdo and Dokdo. Therefore, if the Korean government considered Gwaneum Island as Seokdo, it would have been named before Jukdo in order of distance from Ulleung Island.

Simply put, it makes little sense that Joseon would have stated Gwaneum Island in the ordinance as it did not have much significance in drawing the territorial boundary, nor large human settlement.

Therefore, it can be concluded that Seokdo was a name for Dokdo that is located farther from Ulleung Island than Jukdo and lies on the easternmost part of the country.

A recent discovery of the Ulleung County Jeolmok, a document stating rules that the Korean central government made in 1902 for Ulleung Island, illustrates how determined Korea was to protect its sovereignty against Japan's growing intrusion.

No. 1 clause of the decree states that anyone who secretly sells a house or land to a foreigner would face the death sentence.

The Jeolmok also states that the Korean government bans illegal logging and exporting of wood from Ulleung Island by Japanese. It also demands retrieval of land and tax incentives from those returning to the mainland.

As Imperial Ordinance No. 41 placed Seokdo, now better known as Dokdo, under the jurisdiction of Ulleung County, the 1902 decree serves as invaluable evidence that Korea maintained its rule over Dokdo in the early 1900s.

*The writer is a director of the Korea-Asia Cultural Institute. She can be reached at mirim-u@hanmail.net.*



### Reading 3 Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions from your designated reading above. Remember you are the expert on this reading and you will need to share this information with the rest of your group.

- 1) What has Japan done to encourage future Japanese students to feel the Island is a Japanese territory?
  
- 2) Specifically how far back in history does this author claim Korea's control over Dokdo go and under what ?
  
- 3) Identify three specific historical examples of Japan making counter claims to their ownership of Dokdo?
  
- 4) The author believes that much of the controversy stems from the names Seokdo and Dokdo. How do the Japanese relate these names and how do Korean's relate the two names?
  
- 5) What seems to make this author a credible resource for this issue?

Article #4

Letters to the Editor

**Row over Dokdo**

Dear editor,

It is more than regrettable that Japan felt the need to react negatively to the flight over Dokdo, South Korea's easternmost islets in the East Sea.

It is almost a declaration of war. Please lower the rates of Korean Air flights between Korea and Japan. A very big drop in prices for one month will bring the flag carrier more Japanese passengers than ever before and will be a slap in the face of Japan.

It is important that Korea begins mining the seabed under Dokdo to reaffirm that the islets are part of Korea. Place the Navy strategically around the islets and let Japan whine. They cannot retaliate any further because they really do not know what to do.

Ignore Japan and go ahead with scientific mission around Dokdo. Do not let Japan's repeated claim slow you down. In time they will swallow their pride and recognize that they really can do nothing over the islets.

Romy Kerwin

Toronto, Canada

**Indian perception of Dokdo**

Dear editor,

I am not armed with the full technical knowledge or data to take sides in the debate over the Dokdo Islets regarding claims by Japan. Justice for Korea's claim can be done by historians. It is interesting to see a couple of Japanese scholars in favor of Korea.

In my humble opinion, international awareness of the dispute is nearly zero. Japan's historical distortions and invalid claims over Dokdo are the subject of a dispute that can be resolved without the participation of any third party. It is pertinent to note that North Korea, which is antagonistic to South Korea on all fronts, sides with the South over this issue.

William Roger Jones from Jeju Island told me that Koreans sometimes confuse emotional issues including Dokdo and the naming of seas. Some in my classes have stated that they will not give another penny to Japan due to the ill-timed published Korean newspaper articles concerning the above.”

Sadly, Tokyo's renewed territorial claim has flared and soured the favorable mood for bilateral ties that resulted in Korea's sympathy and aid to quake-stricken Japan.

The islets lie in rich fishing grounds also contain large gas deposits, leading to the Japan that once ruled Korea to stake a claim more than once. This is both bad economics and politics, lacking in diplomacy. Let Japan learn lessons not only from its recent tragedies; but love, not hate, a neighbor who has been otherwise considerate, sharing and caring, in resolving the issue.

Let Japan not do unto others what it does not want others to do unto Japan.

Historical distortions, including the Dokdo dispute, have contributed significantly to the shaky relationship between Japan and South Korea.

I understand that the Dokdo islets in Korea are normally known as the Liancourt Rocks. The Franco-English name of the islets derives from Le Liancourt, the name of a French whaling ship which came close to being wrecked on the rocks in 1849.

In Japanese, they are called Takeshima, literally "Bamboo Island." Records show that the Liancourt Rocks consist of two main islets and 35 smaller rocks. The total surface area of the islets is 0.18 square kilometers (46.32 acres), with the highest elevation of 169 meters (554 feet) found at an unnamed location on the west islet.

The sovereignty over the islets is unnecessarily disputed as they are currently administered by South Korea, which has its Coast Guard stationed there. Its claims extend back at least several hundred years. Two Korean citizens — an octopus fisherman and his wife — are permanent residents on the islets.

A small Korean police detachment, administrative personnel, and lighthouse staff are also stationed in non-permanent supporting positions. Japan's classification of them as part of Okinoshima in the Oki District of Shimane Prefecture is not well received by this writer.

The debate on the issue, a byproduct of Japan's 35-year colonial rule of Korea, has continuously flared between the two nations. Let the world community understand, analyze, interpret and support Korean claims to Dokdo.

M.M. Goel

Faculty of social science

Kurukshetra University



Article #5

## **S. Korea, Japan in territorial dispute Feud over islets threatens relations**

By Andrew Salmon, Globe Correspondent | March 20, 2005

SEOUL -- South Korea and Japan are embroiled in a territorial dispute that threatens to damage relations between the two countries and complicate efforts at cooperation on the North Korean nuclear crisis.

The two key US allies are squabbling over a set of islets about halfway between the nations and controlled by South Korea, known as Takeshima in Japan and Dokdo in Korea. Otherwise uninhabited, the islets have served as a garrison for the South Korea Coast Guard since 1954.

Last month, a Japanese prefectural government announced that it would promote claims to the volcanic islets, which are surrounded by rich fishing grounds; on the same day, Japan's ambassador to Seoul, Takano Toshiyuki, said the islets were "historically and legally part of Japanese territory." And Wednesday, Japan's Shimane Prefecture voted to designate a "Takeshima Day."

South Korea has responded with outrage, stoking Koreans' anger over Japan's 1910-1945 occupation of the Korean Peninsula.

Korean jet fighters were scrambled when a Japanese newspaper's chartered light aircraft approached the islets to take pictures. The media have reported civic boycotts of Japanese goods and cyber assaults on Japanese websites. The Japanese Embassy has urged its citizens in South Korea to be "extremely cautious." The embassy was the frequent site for demonstrations: Every Wednesday, former sex slaves of the Japanese Imperial Army gather; another frequent visitor is a man protesting the slaughter of Korean tigers by Japanese colonial-era big game hunters.

But last week, Japanese flag burners were out in unprecedented force. Among them, a group of former commandos, dressed in black fatigues, tried to storm the embassy. A woman and her son severed their little fingers to protest Japan's territorial claim.

Public fury also was reflected higher up. Foreign Minister Ban Ki Moon canceled a planned trip to Japan; Seoul's National Security Council said Thursday that bilateral ties were "seriously hurt."

Despite sharing democratic policies, close economic ties, and related cultures, Korean-Japanese political relations are sensitive. Koreans are taught that the brutal Japanese colonization was the darkest period in their history.

Although successive Japanese leaders have apologized for the past, Korea is periodically convulsed when right-wing organizations in Japan print textbooks whitewashing Tokyo's

imperial history, or when politicians visit Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, where war criminals are honored along with the millions killed in the war.

President Roh Moo Hyun of South Korea has called on Japan to reassess its history and pay compensation although Japan paid South Korea about \$800 million in loans, aid, and grants when the countries normalized relations in 1965. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan urged the countries to look forward, not back.

Referring to the recent dispute, Education Minister Nakayama Nariaki of Japan said Friday: "I would like the South Korean people to deal with this calmly . . . It is my hope that this will not pour cold water on the deepening of friendly relations."

But in South Korea, there has been little appeal for calm. With parliamentary elections set for next month, parties say they cannot afford to look soft. A rare dissenting message came from South Korea's famed living novelist, Yi Mun Yol, who wrote an ironic column in the leading newspaper, the Chosun Ilbo, suggesting that Seoul turn Dokdo over to North Korea for use as a missile base.

Pyongyang has backed Seoul in the islets dispute. The North is expected to try to divide the parties in the six-party nuclear talks -- a move that the US ambassador to South Korea, Christopher Hill, has warned of.

"Japan and Korea are divided over Dokdo, so of course North Korea is enjoying the situation," said Choi Jin Wook, senior research fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification. "If the Korea-Japan conflict extends to the nuclear issue, it could have a very bad impact."

And at a time that Korean celebrities are enjoying unprecedented popularity in Japan, some observers fear that the protests could shake relations with Japan the same way mass anti-American protests over the deaths of two schoolgirls killed by US soldiers in a traffic accident hurt Korean-American ties in late 2002.

"Korea doesn't behave like the world's 10th-largest economy; this is about a set of rocks," said Michael Breen, author of "The Koreans: Who They Are, What They Want, Where Their Future Lies."

"Koreans make a big deal out of historical emotion; their priorities are very puzzling."

But while foreign brows may furrow over the frenzy, Koreans remain steadfast. "It's an issue of sovereignty," Rhee Jung Ho, of the Presidential Committee on Northeast Asian Cooperation Initiative, said last week. "It's quite simple, we think."■

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## Reading 5 Questions

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions from your designated reading above. Remember you are the expert on this reading and you will need to share this information with the rest of your group.

- 1) What are the names for the Islands in Korean and in Japanese?
  
- 2) What are three examples of protests that the Koreans have engaged in against various Japanese activities? (be sure to include the women and son protest discussed in the article.)
  - 1.
  
  - 2.
  
  - 3.
  
- 3) What, if any, effect do elections in South Korea have on this issue?
  
  
- 4) Why does this author believe that North Korea has something to gain from this debate between Japan and South Korea?
  
  
- 5) Support the following statement from the information provided in the article. "Koreans make a big deal out of historical emotion; their priorities are very puzzling."



Article #6

### Natural Gas Is Key Issue

By Norman Cherkis

Less than five percent of Americans know anything about Dokdo. They have not, for all intents and purposes, ever heard of it. Fewer have any knowledge of the controversy and ``crisis" surrounding the small group of rocks that stick up inside the middle of a sea in which they have never sailed, let alone heard of.

The only Americans of non-Asian heritage directly or indirectly involved with the East Sea are:

1. Military people involved with exercises on, over or under the sea.
2. Diplomatic personnel involved in defusing ``crises" between Korea and Japan or imperial Japan's surrender at the end of World War II.
3. Toponymists (place-name specialists) interested in little-known places.
4. Producers of international gazettes, maps and atlases.
5. Contestants in international geography scholarship conferences
6. Interested people like myself who care about such things, and make it their business to find out the truth about critical places in the world having no real importance, except for their proximity to important places.

Dokdo is one of those places.

Ask a Korean American in Annandale, Virginia; Houston, Texas; San Francisco, California; or someone of Korean ancestry in Brazil; South Africa; Australia; Germany; or virtually any other place in the world, and expect to immediately receive at least a five-minute dissertation about why Dokdo belongs to Korea.

Koreans are very knowledgeable about this subject. But most only know that the territory was taken through extortion and annexation by imperial Japan a bit more than 100 years ago, and that after the end of World War II, it was supposed to be returned to its rightful owner —

Korea — under the terms of surrender by the victorious Allies.

That is all that matters, and Koreans are very emotional about the issue.

Dokdo was originally to be returned to Korea. Under the 1946 Supreme Allied Commander for the Allied Powers Instruction No. 677, Dokdo, then called "Liancourt Rocks," was specifically designated an island to be returned to Korea.

In the final peace treaty signed in San Francisco in 1961, however, Dokdo was considered insignificant and thereby omitted from the agreement.

Japan said the "sin of omission" in the treaty negated Korea's claim to the territory. Japan continues to make counter claims to the territory, even though Korea has occupied it since 1953.

Most Koreans outside of Korea (or descendents thereof) do not know of the more international significance of Dokdo: territorial claims, fishing and mineral rights.

In territorial rights, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea makes certain assumptions. If Korea is in possession of Dokdo, it will enjoy claim to the sea and seafloor territory to a line midway between Dokdo and Japan.

If Japan has ownership, Tokyo will officially change the islets' name to "Takeshima," and the seafloor boundary line will move to a line midway between the islets and Ulleung Island. The important issue is not about fishing rights because existing bilateral treaties govern fishing in the East Sea. Rather the important issue is natural gas.

Neither Korea nor Japan has major hydrocarbon energy resources. Below the East Sea area of the Pacific Ocean and indeed, most of seas in the world, however, there exists, in various locations and quantities "gas hydrates," or methane gas frozen with water, on top of and beneath the sea floor.

The existence of "frozen gas" on the seafloor has come to light over the past 35 years. When collected from the sea methane gas that has frozen around a crystal of water, will burn when touched by a flame, momentarily creating "frozen fire."

But it also evaporates into the atmosphere as soon as it reaches the melting point, leaving only a drop of fresh water in its place. It is formed by complex chemical processes, but once deposited on or in the sea floor, it could hold a partial solution to a nation's energy

dependence.

The problem, however, is that it is not yet technologically possible to extract methane hydrates in commercial quantities from the sea floor and use it as fuel.

Japan is working on such a program to extract what might be commercial quantities from the Nankai Trough on the eastern side of Honshu Island, but it will be another eight to 10 years before it will be technologically feasible to mine gas hydrates. The sea floor around Dokdo, however, shows promise based on scientific studies in the region. That is the true value of Dokdo.

The rocks themselves are worthless from a commercial perspective. They are the remains of an old volcano one million to two million years ago. Only one place on the islets is suitable for a house or group of small houses. Altogether, the islands can support about 40 people with land. But there is no farming and no fresh water, except for rainwater. The only permanent residents are lighthouse keepers, and the islands are protected by a contingent of Korean police.

Nonetheless the continuous occupation of Dokdo firmly establishes Korea as the rightful owner of the islets.

The rocks are a danger to shipping because they lie in an area where fog often occurs. The West "discovered" Dokdo in 1849 when the French whaling ship *Le Liancourt* was almost shipwrecked on them, averting disaster at the last possible moment. The ship left its legacy, however, by informing the Western world of Dokdo's existence and named it "Liancourt Rocks." That name is still used today in most Western navigational maps and charts.

The world is becoming more educated on Dokdo, albeit very slowly. As late as 1984, the U.S. Defense Mapping Agency used "Liancourt Rocks" as the primary name and included as an alternate name "Tok-To" on nautical charts. After 1984, however, the name, "Tok-To" disappeared from subsequent printings of charts in the region. Only "Liancourt Rocks" remains in print.

The reason for this is that the United States does not want to side with either Korea or Japan on the issue. "It is," sources say, "up to the disputing nations to come to an agreement on the issue. The United States does not wish to offend either of its friends, allies and major trading partners in the region by taking a position with either of the disputants, and intends to remain neutral on the issue."

About two weeks ago, a "crisis" occurred — at least in the eyes of Koreans. The U.S. Board for Geographic Names, which standardizes

place names for use on all U.S. government publications and maps, changed the name, "Tok-To," from its Korean gazetteer to the newly initiated category "undesignated sovereignty." This process was about two years in the making. The task was completed in the second week of July. Unfortunately, the first entry was by coincidence "Tok-To." Other places will be added as time permits.

These decisions were made more than two years ago to conveniently have a gazetteer section contain the names of disputed places worldwide. Moving the name of Dokdo to the new category was not a new U.S. policy statement, but rather, just computer "housekeeping" to make the gazetteer more "user-friendly."

Korea, however, mistakenly took the action to be a policy change and made the issue a cause celebre — an incident of such major proportions that the Korean ambassador to Washington filed a formal objection with the White House. This caused U.S. President George W. Bush to order the U.S. board to reverse the action made earlier. Additionally, he had the Dokdo issue placed on his agenda for discussion in a bilateral summit in Seoul Aug. 6.

It is unfortunate that an unknowing population can interpret such small events in the wrong way without knowing all of the facts. Likewise it is also unfortunate that such small events can become major crises when they are not, but are perceived as such due to emotional reactions. The U.S. position on the islets has not changed: until Korea and Japan come to an understanding about the sovereignty of Dokdo (Tok-To)/Takeshima/Liancourt Rocks, Washington will acknowledge neither side's claims to the territory.

*The writer has more than 45 years of experience in the field of marine geosciences. He presently operates his own consulting business, Five Oceans Consultants, providing services and expertise to public, private, non-profit and academic-sector organizations around the globe.*

## Reading 6 Questions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the following questions from your designated reading above. Remember you are the expert on this reading and you will need to share this information with the rest of your group.

1. Who are three of the six peoples who might know about the Dokdo Islands and why would they know about them?
2. Explain the Korean claim on the Dokdo Islands and the Japanese claim. (why does each one think they own the islands)
3. Discuss why the discovery of natural gas in the region of the islands is important to these two countries.
4. Propose a solution for sharing the natural gas claim.
5. In your opinion, based on what you have read, which country should have rights to the islands and the natural gas? Support your position.