

Truth of Dokdo -4

-Usando and Sambongdo

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1. 『Goryeosa Jiriji』(1451)

The first ancient document in Korea in which the name of 'Usando,' meaning Dokdo, was used is Goryeosa Jiriji (Historical Record of Goryeo, Geography Section). Goryeosa Jirisi was compiled during King Danjong's era, and records that Ulleungdo and Usando are 'two islands.' The original text is as follows.

There is Ulleungdo. It is in the center of the ocean on the due east direction of the Hyun (縣, district). This place was called as Usanguk during the Silla era, and was also called as Mureung or Ureung. The area width is 100-ri (length unit). ...Some say that Usan and Mureung are originally two islands that are located not far apart in distance, which can be viewed on windy and fine days.

『Goryeosa』 Volume 58, Geography Section 12, Geography, Donggae, Uljin-hyun(1451)

山從山頂向東行至海一萬餘步向西行
 一萬三千餘步向南行一萬五千餘步向
 北行八千餘步有村落基址七所有石佛
 鐵鍾石塔多生柴胡蒿本石南草然多岩
 石氏不可居透窺其議一云于山武陵
 本二島相距不遠風日清明則可望見

鬱陵島一云武陵一云羽陵地方百里智
 護王十二年來降太祖十三年其島人使
 白吉士豆獻方物毅宗十一年王聞鬱陵
 地廣土肥舊有州縣可以居民遣溟州大
 監倉金承立往視采立回奏云島中有大

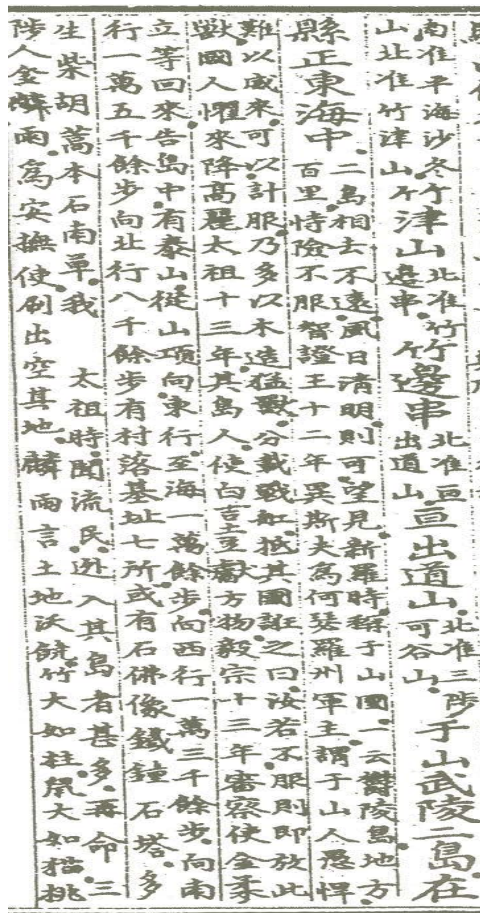
『Goryeosa』 Volume 58, Geography Section 12, Geography, Eastern Frontier, Uljin-hyun.

2. 『Sejong Sillok Jiriji』(1454)

Sejong Sillok Jiriji (Annals of King Sejong, Geography Section) was edited subsequently to Goryeosa by King Danjong in 1454. The description on Usando is more obvious compared to Goryeosa. This is understood to be because information obtained by searching nearby Ulleungdo and Dokdo during King Sejong's era were added. The original text is as follows.

Two islands called Usan and Mureun are in the center of the ocean on the due east of the Hyun (district). The distance of the two islands are not far from each other, and can be sufficiently seen on fine days. This place was called as Usanguk or Ulleungdo during the Silla era, and the area width is 100-ri.

『Sejong Sillok』 Volume 153, Geographic Section, Gangwondo, Samcheok area, Uljin-hyun (1454)



『Sejong Sillok』 Volume 153, Geography Section, Gangwondo, Samcheok area, Uljin-hyun.

The author called Ulleungdo as 'Mureungdo' in this book. Ulleungdo was referred to as 'Mureungdo' during the early Joseon era, and as this record shows, the name 'Ulleungdo' was used as a name combining 'Mureungdo' and 'Usando.'

There are several important parts in this sentence, and one is the part stating that, 'This place was called as Usanguk or Ulleungdo during the Silla era.' The subject of this sentence is 'the two islands, Usan and Mureung.' This means that, 'During the Silla era, the two islands of Usan and Mureung were called as Usanguk, or Ulleungdo.'

The fact that Ulleungdo was referred to as 'Mureungdo and Usando' during

the Joseon era means that Ulleungdo was understood based on the same concept of Usanguk ('guk' means nation). And the part stating that 'area width was 100-ri' seems to be a mention on Mureungdo. Because the area width of Usando (=Dokdo) is very small, the area width of Mureungdo could be said to represent the entire area width of Ulleungdo.

This description in the Geography Section of Sejong Sillok can be said to be a sentence integrating the understanding on the two islands obtained by the Ulleungdo search by King Taejong and King Sejong. In reality, the two islands Usan (=Dokdo) and Mureung (=Ulleungdo) are not located far from each other, and can also be seen on fine days to this day.

3. Sambongdo Search Operation

During the first year of King Seongjong (1470), the Dynasty received a tip that there were people who escaped from Yeongando (one of the names referring to Hamgyeongdo during the Joseon era) to 'Sambong-do (=Sambong Island)' to avoid compulsory labor. King Seongjong ordered to bring back the people who ran away to Mureungdo (=Ulleungdo) in 1471, thus, Sambongdo was clearly understood to be a new island, instead of indicating Ulleungdo.

The seaway of the areas around Mureungdo (=Ulleungdo) was always open at the time, and it was easy to distinguish the Mureungdo area with other islands. Thus, King Seongjong believed that Sambongdo was a new island, and was determined to search for the island at length.

In March 1472, King Seongjong appointed Jong-won Park as the 'Gyeongchagwan (public officer) of Sambongdo.' Thus, in May 1472, Jong-won Park and his party started the search for Sambongdo with four ships,

however, was not able to find the island.

Three years later, in May 1475, **Han-gyeong Kim** and people from Gyeongseong (an eup in Gyeongseong-gun, Hamgyeong North Province) reported to the royal court that they saw Sambongdo in the ocean.

Then, in June 1475, **Ja-ju Kim** from Yeongheung (an eup in Yeongheung-gun, Hamgyeong South Province) reported that he went near Sambongdo and saw approximately 30 Joseon people wearing white clothes and standing at the entrance of the island.

Based on this report, in the leap month of October 1479, the royal court allowed the search for Sambongdo to approximately 30 people desiring to enter Sambongdo in three ships. Han-gyeong Kim, the person who first stated that he personally saw Sambongdo, participated in this search. After three months, they reported that they returned from Sambongdo.

Geuk-dong Lee, the governor of Yeongando, who judged that the statement of Han-gyeong Kim was odd, reported to King Seongjong that the report by Han-gyeong Kim and others was false. The governor of Yeongando investigated Han-gyeong Kim and others, and as a result, reported that their statements were inconsistent. The investigation of Han-gyeong Kim continued based on such report, and **it appeared that the story of Sambongdo was all false.**

In February 1482, **Han-gyeong Kim was sentenced to capital punishment** and his daughter became a slave, and the 13 years of search for Sambongdo was concluded.

During the search for Sambongdo, dispatches were made to Ulleungdo several times to help manage the area. That is evidence that the royal court of Joseon distinguished the Ulleungdo area and Sambongdo.

There are people stating that **Sambongdo is Dokdo**, however, such interpretation is wrong when reading Seongjong Sillok (Annals of King

Seongjong). That is, Ulleungdo itself looks like Sambongdo (an island of three peaks) depending on the viewing angle.



Dokdo, which looks like Sambong (three peaks)