

Fishery Development around the Senkaku Islands Prior to Their Incorporation into Japanese Territory in 1895*

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1. Research Issues and Purpose of the Study

Tensions have arisen over territorial sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands between Japan and China as well as between Japan and Taiwan since the 1970s. The tense situation around the Islands continues to have a direct impact on the Japanese fishing industries. However, sufficient research focusing on fishery development around the Senkaku Islands has not sufficiently been conducted. What we have elucidated by now is mostly limited to stories related to the development from when the islands were incorporated into Japanese territory in 1895 and until the early Showa period, led by Koga Tatsushirō, a businessman from Yame, Fukuoka, and his son Zenji (the Koga family).

Furthermore, most of earlier studies relied on a *personal history* that was authored by Koga himself when he was awarded his medal of honor, meaning that they can hardly escape criticism for lacking objectivity. Some research even points out that Koga's *personal history* contains elements of exaggeration. For example, Akitoshi Hiraoka's "The Japanese Advance into the Senkaku Islands during the Meiji period and Koga Tatsushirō" (*Outlying Island Research III*; 2007) points out that many studies relating to the development of the Senkaku Islands "rely on a personal statement submitted by Koga when he received the Medal with Blue Ribbon" and that "it in many ways differ

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from the facts when it comes to Koga's actions.”¹⁾

With these research issues in mind, the author will as much as possible attempt to find objective facts involving the development of the Senkaku Island by analyzing materials left behind not by the Koga family but by those who could be regarded as third-party persons. Moreover, in order to overcome the limitations of previous analyses and studies, I have made efforts to discover new documents for analysis and evaluation. I surveyed documents at the Okinawa Prefectural Library, the Naha City Museum of History, and other locations as part of the Survey on Archives of Senkaku Islands, commissioned by the Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty in the Cabinet Secretariat, and a survey project with the Association for the Compilations of Documents and Materials on the Senkaku Islands.

This study uses primary sources confirmed through the work described above, including those previously undisclosed, with the aim of elucidating the facts involving development around the Senkaku Islands, in particular those of fishery activities, focusing especially on the decade before and after the islands' incorporation into Japanese territory in 1895 (Meiji 28).

The reason why this study focuses on the fishery development prior to the islands' incorporation into Japanese territory is to explore the background for the incorporation and critically examine some arguments that tries to put the Senkaku Islands' incorporation into Japanese territory in the context of the First Sino–Japanese War. I hope to shine new light on this controversial issue through the discovery and analysis of many new documents not touched on in previous studies, such as Materials 1–4 discussed in the main text.

This study also builds on the research of Sasaki and Kuniyoshi that elucidated the actual situation of the fishing industry around the Senkaku Islands immediately after the Second World War,²⁾ and shares the aim of clarifying the historical position of the Senkaku Islands in that period of changing international circumstances around Japan. The author would also like to state that some of the materials discovered in this study have already been publicized as part of the *Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands* (FY2015 and FY2016), commissioned by the Cabinet Secretariat.

2. Fishery Development Prior to the Incorporation into Japanese territory

1) Surveying the *Terra Nullius* of the Senkaku Islands

The Senkaku Islands is a general term for the five islands Uotsuri Island, Kita-kojima Island, Minami-kojima Island, Kuba Island, and Taishō Island as well as the three reefs Oki-no-kita-iwa Island, Oki-no-minami-iwa Island, and Tobise Island, belonging to present-day Tonoshiro-senkaku, Ishigaki City, Okinawa (as of 2018). They are located approximately 170km north-northeast from Ishigaki Island and approximately 410km west of Okinawa Main Island.

The Senkaku Islands were *terra nullius* until their incorporation into Japan. A large number of *terrae nullius* existed around the world even in late-modern period. The Senkaku Islands were one of them as well as uninhabited, with no traces of people having lived there even before early-modern period.

In terms of materials clearly documenting surveys of the Senkaku Islands, which was *terra nullius*, we have a record of the Nippon Yusen's Izumomaru that was chartered by Okinawa Prefecture in 1885 (Meiji 18).³⁾ The results of the survey, which involved “the uninhabited islands scattered between Okinawa Prefecture and Fuzhou in China,” meaning the Senkaku Islands as well, were conveyed to Lord of Foreign Affairs Inoue Kaoru by Lord of Home Affairs Yamagata Aritomo as “There are absolutely no traces of Chinese control,” thus confirming that they were *terra nullius* not belonging to any country. This became an opportunity for sharing the perception that they needed to be incorporated into Okinawa. However, in order to “avoid unnecessary complications” with China, with whom they were at odds then due to impetuous measures taken regarding the Korean peninsula, they decided to pass up on the building of a national marker.⁴⁾

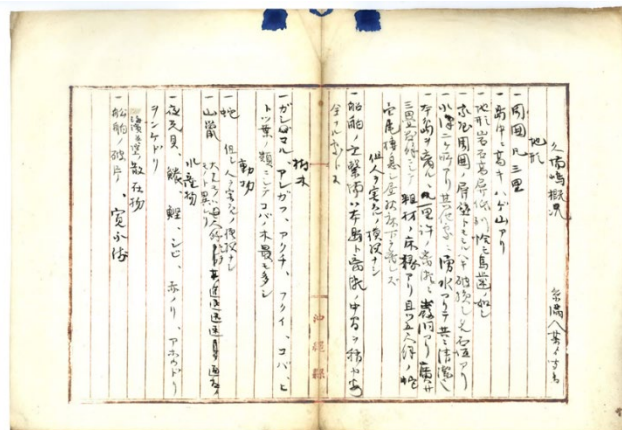
2) The Start of the Development of the Senkaku Islands

As regards economic activities around the Senkaku Islands, they started as early as 1890 (Meiji 23) when Matsumura Jinnosuke from Kagoshima hired 70 Itoman fishermen in Yaeyama for a joint fishery project, went over to Uotsuri Island, spent three months there, and successful made a fortune.⁵⁾

The authorities back in Yaeyama took an interest in the activities of Matsumura and the fishermen, submitting a request to the Okinawa Prefectural Office stating that they wanted to place Uotsuri and Kuba Islands under Yaeyama jurisdiction. In response to this, Okinawa Prefecture once

more requested the incorporation of the islands to the Meiji government (Ministry of Home Affairs).⁶ This was followed by exchanges between the Ministry of Home Affairs and Okinawa Prefecture, but I have unfortunately been unable to locate a document in which the central government accepted the request from Okinawa. It is likely that no decision was made with respect to the Senkaku Islands at this time either.

Perhaps in connection with the abovementioned exchanges with the Meiji government, interviews with the Senkaku Island fishermen were conducted by Hanawa Tadao of Okinawa Prefecture in April 1890 (Meiji 23). Looking at “Overview of Kuba Island” [Material 1] in *Documents Relating to the Yaeyama Islands*, included in the materials he left behind, collectively called the “Hanawa Tadao Documents (provisional),” we find a report that after an expedition in which fishermen chartered a steamboat and went over to Kuba Island, the number of fishermen who went to the Senkaku Islands grew to more than 70 as people from Ishigaki and Yonaguni Islands also took part in the journey, so that there were currently (as of April 1890 [Meiji 23]) building huts on the island, giving the impression of migration.⁷ Moreover, the interviews with the fishermen also produced reports to the authorities in Yaeyama and Okinawa about what types of fish were caught around Kuba and Uotsuri Islands. The abovementioned development activities of Matsumura Jinnosuke were also subject to this survey.



Material 1: *Overview of Kuba Island* (held by Okinawa Prefectural Library)

These new materials make clear that not just small-scale, private development, but the

development of the Senkaku Islands on the level of organized economic activities were already being conducted in 1890 (Meiji 23), which the administrative authorities in Okinawa Prefecture were clearly aware of.

As an administrative organization, Okinawa Prefecture was aware of civilians' activities on the Senkaku Islands, sought to persuade the Meiji government to incorporate the islands into Okinawa Prefecture, and finally took its own initiative to provisionally include them into an administrative division. The *Survey of the Daitō Islands*, thought to have been compiled by the Okinawa Prefectural Office during the Meiji period, includes a draft directive to place the Senkaku Islands (Agun Kuba Sima) under the jurisdiction of Yaeyama Islands Office, even in the absence of any formal decision to incorporate the islands to Okinawa Prefecture by the Meiji government.⁸⁾

Speaking of this draft directive, *Statistical Tables of the Okinawa Prefectural Police for Meiji 24(1891)*, a document from Okinawa Prefectural Police, include an entry dated December 11, 1891 (Meiji 24) that says “Prefectural Instruction No. 47 states that the Agun Kuba Islands are provisionally placed under the jurisdiction of the Yaeyama Islands Police Station.” This is likely an indication of substantial on-site administrative measures to exert control in the context of development activities being conducted on the Senkaku Islands.

It is well-known that after 1891 (Meiji 24), Isawa Yakita from Kumamoto Prefecture hired “Ryukyu fishermen”, went over to at Uotsuri and Kuba Islands of the Senkaku Islands, and collected marine products and captured albatross.⁹⁾ Isawa's development activities are corroborated by materials like “Castaways Return from China” in the *Kyushu Nichinichi Shimbun*, dated September 20, 1893 (Meiji 26), and four other newspaper articles.¹⁰⁾ For example, this article describes how Isawa worked together with Matsumura Jinnosuke¹¹⁾ and other mainland merchants staying in Yaeyama to develop “the Senkaku Islands” for the purpose of “harvesting land and sea products on work trips to the Senkaku Islands.”

Moreover, there is a record of Noda Tadashi and other members of the Kumamoto National Sovereignty Party,¹²⁾ who had a strong interest in mainland Asia and the south (Okinawa direction), taking charge of a group of fishermen from Amakusa, Kumamoto Prefecture and heading for “Senkaku Islands” via Kagoshima and Okinawa in 1893 (Meiji 26). An article titled “A Party of Noda, Yamazumi, and Others” in the *Kyushu Nichinichi Shimbun*, dated October 24, 1893 (Meiji

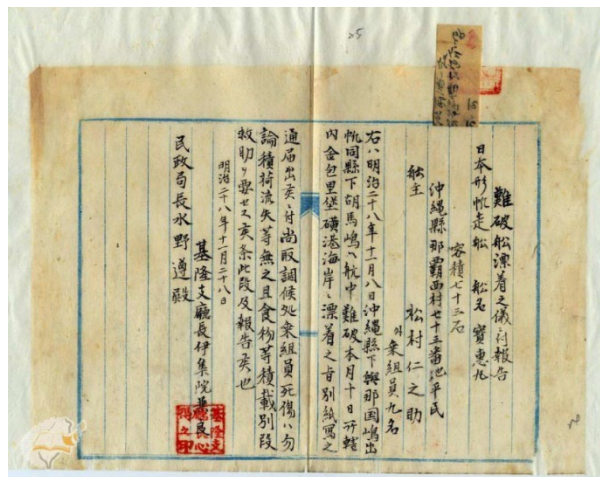
26), reports that they “departed for the uninhabited island of Uotsuri Island.”¹³⁾ At the time, the *Kyushu Nichinichi Shimbun* regularly reported about the activities of people in the Kumamoto National Sovereignty Party in mainland China and other overseas locations, and Noda’s activities that were directed toward Okinawa rather than mainland Asia were presented as a “South Sea expedition.” Moreover, the article says “According to the most recent edition of the *Ryukyu Shinpō*,” which shows that local newspapers in Okinawa were reporting about the fishing operations around the Senkaku Islands. The fishing resources around the Senkaku Islands were known to a certain extent in Kyushu and Okinawa.

3) Accidents in the Development of the Senkaku Islands

As the development of the Senkaku Islands intensified, accidents involving human life also started occurring. We see accidents caused in part due to the unreliability of ships (fishing boats) back then and strong currents (the Kuroshio Current) in the sea there. Records about the drifting accident that happened to the Isawa team in 1893 (Meiji 26), after their joining the development efforts in 1891 (Meiji 24), show that attempts were made to solve the issue through diplomatic routes and that the castaways were finally repatriated to Japan.¹⁴⁾ In dealing with this accident, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs (Mutsu Munemitsu) instructed the dispatch of a “letter of appreciation” from the Japanese Consulate-General in Shanghai to the relevant Chinese officials. The “letter of appreciation” describes how the Isawa team drifted to China after their ship was wrecked on their way from “the Yaeyama Islands” to “Koba Island” (Senkoku Islands). It appears that the Chinese received the “letter of appreciation” and passed it on to the relevant officials.¹⁵⁾

An accident occurred to the aforementioned Matsumura. In 1893 (Meiji 26), Matsumura Jinnosuke, who as pioneering the Senkaku development, took four workers whom he had hired from Yamaguchi Prefecture and collected albatross feathers on Uotsuri Island, after which he left them behind and returned to Ishigaki Island, causing a “desertion incident.” However, it appears that Matsumura had not intended to “desert” them, and so sent a boat from Ishigaki to pick them up some days later. Yet that boat was wrecked and drifted to China, which resulted in the “desertion incident.” It was fortunate that the deserted men were later rescued by some fishermen from Itoman area, Okinawa Prefecture, who went there to collect green turban snails.¹⁶⁾

Some time after this “desertion incident,” misfortune befell Matsumura Jinnosuke himself. In 1895 (Meiji 28), his own ship was wrecked as he was traveling toward the Senkaku Islands and they drifted to Jinbaoli-bo in North Taiwan, which is described in “Report on a Ship that Drifted Ashore”¹⁷⁾ (November 28, 1895 [Meiji 28]), a document reported to the newly established Government-General of Taiwan [Material 2]. This accident and document oddly enough show that the ship-owner Matsumura Jinnosuke continued his aforementioned development of the Senkaku Islands, which began in 1890 (Meiji 23), even after the islands’ incorporation into Japanese territory. That is, it was not just the Koga family that was involved in the development of the islands even after their incorporation.



Material 2: Report on a Wrecked Ship Drifted Ashore (held by the Taiwan Historica in Taiwan)

4) The Growing Need for Control and the Territorial Incorporation

Thus, this vigorous and bittersweet development of the Senkaku Islands, designed to make quick profits, was something necessitating control in the eyes of the administrative authorities and the Okinawa Prefectural Governor. In fact, the aforementioned 1890 (Meiji 23) report titled “On the Matter of the Uninhabited Kuba and Uotsuri Islands” from the Okinawa Prefectural Governor (Maruoka Kanji) to the Meiji government mentioned that the Yaeyama authorities had requested for the *terra nullius* of Uotsuri Island to promptly be “placed under our jurisdiction due to the recent need for controlling fisheries activities,” and asked for the islands’ early incorporation into Okinawa Prefecture.

As the Meiji government was slow to act, the Okinawa Prefectural Governor (Narahara Shigeru) urgently requested their response in “Memorandum on Placing Kuba and Uotsuri Islands under Okinawa Jurisdiction and Constructing a Marker” in 1893 (Meiji 26). This memorandum for territorial incorporation was the third such memorandum since the first one in 1885 (Meiji 18).

In fact, Narahara Shigeru was a government-appointed governor and so we should call his request a strong one, but once more control over fishing operations was named as a reason for the incorporation. He wrote “Recently, people are coming to the islands to attempt fishing and other activities, and because these do not infrequently involve legal control, we would like to erect markers of Prefectural jurisdiction, as we reported in detail in 1885. We therefore urgently request your guidance and hereby make a report to that effect, attaching copies of the former report and your instruction.”

The Senkaku Islands became Japanese territory two years after the above-mentioned final memorandum in 1893. On January 14, 1895 (Meiji 28). “on the Construction of a Marker,” contained in *Collection of Official Documents, Vol. 19* (Meiji 28, part 2), says “around uninhabited islands called Kuba and Uotsuri Islands, people have recently been attempting fisheries activities and other pursuits and these activities need to be controlled. We have no particular objection on this matter and, as requested by the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, the erection of markers and the incorporation of the islands into the jurisdiction of the Prefecture should be permitted.” We should note that the decision refers to fishery development as a reason for the construction of a marker.

3. Fishery Development after the Incorporation into Okinawa Prefecture

1) Koga Tatsushirō’s Participation in the Development and Concomitant Troubles

As pointed out in many previous studies, Koga leased the Senkaku Islands and commenced full-blown development after the incorporation of the islands into Okinawa Prefecture, but newly discovered materials reveal that this development project was coupled with considerable difficulties.

To begin with, Koga’s first direct participation in the development was on August 15, 1896 (Meiji 29). This was when his Request to Lease Kuba and Uotsuri Islands, which he had previously submitted was accepted and he was given a 30-year lease of four Senkaku Islands (Uotsuri, Kuba,

Minami-kojima, and Kita-kojima Islands) free of charge.

His early projects involved exporting albatross feathers and stuffed specimens of the common tern, a bird in the family Laridae. He also did not forget collecting the often highly profitable green turban and selling dried sea slugs. In 1905 (Meiji 38), Koga also embarked on pole fishing for bonito in order to secure raw material for starting a business making bonito flakes.

One problem that Koga faced was how to transport goods to and from the Senkaku Islands as the weather became extremely bad in winter. In the background was also the increase in personnel to speed up development in May 1898 (Meiji 31). Initially, the transportation of goods between the Senkaku Islands and Ishigaki Island used small fishery boats, but as the number of people involved in the development increased and the volume of products from the islands increased, a frequent problem became inconveniences associated with the storage of provisions and the transportation of products. On this matter, this study took a fresh approach by digging up and surveying the “Yokouchi Family Documents,” thereby clarifying how Koga developed his projects with the help of the Okinawa Prefectural Governor.

The “Yokouchi Family Documents” are held by the Naha City Museum of History and are composed of approximately 18,000 documents and materials left by Yokouchi Tasuku, who served as a prefectural official in Okinawa during the Meiji period. Of these, the Okinawa Prefectural Government Materials are made up of notes to and copies of prefectural office documents, containing a great number of documents that are no longer extant at the Prefectural Office due to the battle of Okinawa during WWII. These materials escaped the wartime destruction because Yokouchi Tasuku brought them with him to Hikone, mainland Japan, after his retirement.

Now, one clue to Koga’s troubles can be found in the document “On the matter of requesting a port call at Kuba Island” (January 1898 [Meiji 32]) in the “Yokouchi Family Documents.”¹⁸⁾ This document was a request from Koga to Narahara Shigeru (the Governor) to have steamboats stop at Senkaku Island ports in order to upgrade transportation capacities.

Besides this, the “Yokouchi Family Documents” also contain “Request to the President of Osaka Shosen Kaisha” (January 1898 [Meiji 32]). It shows that Narahara Shigeru asked the President of Osaka Shosen Kaisha to have steamboats call at the Senkaku Islands and that this was realized.¹⁹⁾

2) Osaka Shosen Kaisha Calling at the Senkaku Islands

Koga's request led to steamboats calling at the Senkaku Islands. This fact can be confirmed from "Request for Approval of Temporary Stops at the Port of Waheiyama Island (current Uotsuri Island) of the Senkaku Islands (Provisional)," a document that the Government-General of Taiwan received.²⁰⁾ Behind the facilitation of steamboats calling at the ports was a petition by President Nakahashi Tokugorō of Osaka Shosen Kaisha to Taiwan Governor-General Kodama Gentarō, which explained that there was a person "planning to migrate" to "Waheiyama Island, one of the Senkaku Islands," and that "developing the islands would truly promote national prosperity" [Material 3]. At the time, the Government-General of Taiwan was commissioning Osaka Shosen Kaisha to operate the regular routes between Mainland Japan and Taiwan, and now Osaka Shosen Kaisha was asking the Government-General to approve of Waheiyama Island (Uotsuri Island) as a special stop along their Taiwan route via Okinawa (Kobe⇔Keelung).

In response to this request, the Taiwan Governor General (Kodama Gentarō) approved of creating a temporal port (Kobe⇔Keelung: via Okinawa). This was written in the document "Order to Osaka Shosen Kaisha (Provisional),"²¹⁾ which asked Osaka Shosen Kaisha to submit regular reports about the route and steamboats in use, and also shows that the Government-General provided 132,000 yen (as of 1898 [Meiji 32]) to subsidize the route via Okinawa [Material 4].

Furthermore, Osaka Shosen Kaisha announced the new Senkaku route in the newspapers. An advertisement in the Kagoshima Shimbun, dated May 25 and June 28, 1899 (Meiji 32), informs us that the Sumamaru would be calling at Waheiyama Island (Uotsuri Island).

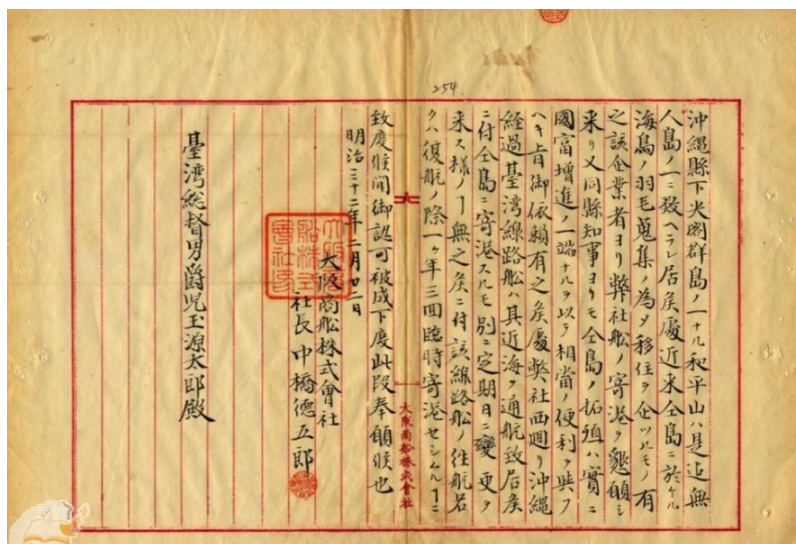
3) How the Senkaku Islands Were Perceived amid their Development

Amid this economic development, the police also moved to place the Senkaku Islands under their jurisdiction. Evidence of this was found in the "Chart [Areas under the jurisdiction of the Okinawa Prefectural Police – map and list]" from the "Yokouchi Family Documents." Among the "districts" of the Yaeyama Police Station, we find "Uninhabited Agun Kuba Sima." names of Uotsuri and Kuba Islands at the time. Moreover, the "Explanatory Notes" of the same document states that the information was "Based on the survey of December 31, 1893 (Meiji 26), the population data is that of the survey of December 31, Meiji 25." However, the material's date of

publication is unknown.

We also want to check what the perception of the Republic of China was during this development of the islands. In the winter of 1919 (Taishō 8), as development was on-going, Guo Geshun and 30 other fishermen from Hui'an County, Fujian Province were shipwrecked due to a rainstorm, which is not unusual in the East China Sea in winter, and drifted to Uotsuri Island. They were able to return to China unscathed thanks to the zealous rescue work of Ishigaki residents on Uotsuri Island. In appreciation of this, Feng Mian, the Consul of the Republic of China to Nagasaki, signed and sent a “Letter of Appreciation” (dated May 20, 1920 (Minguo 9)) to those who rescued the Chinese fishermen in the fall of the following year [Photo 5].

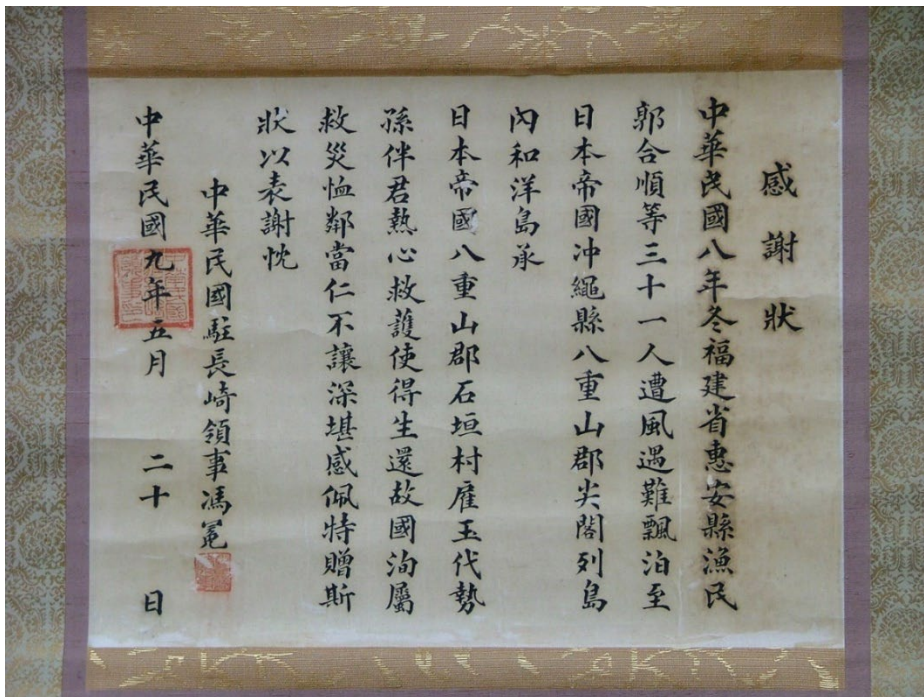
A provisional translation of the “Letter of Appreciation” would be “Guo Geshun and 30 other men were shipwrecked due to a storm and drifted to Heyang Island of the Senkaku Islands, Yaeyama County, Okinawa Prefecture, Empire of Japan. Thanks to the zealous rescue efforts of Mr. Tamayose Sonban of Ishigaki Village, Yaeyama County, Empire of Japan, they were able to return to their homeland alive.” This “Letter of Appreciation” tells us that the Republic of China was not objecting to the Japan’s incorporation and economic development of the Senkaku Islands.



Material 3: “Request for Approval of Temporary Stops at the Port of Waheyama Island of the Senkaku Islands (Provisional)” (held by the Taiwan Historica in Taiwan)



Material 4: “Order to Osaka Shosen Kaisha (Provisional)” (held by the Taiwan Historica in Taiwan)



Material 5: “Letter of Appreciation” (held by the Ishigaki City Yaeyama Museum)

4. Conclusion

This study was able to discover a number of new materials. Many of them are from Hanawa Tadao Documents (provisional) and the “Yokouchi Family Documents.” With the discovery of these materials, we could compile a simple chronology, as shown in [Table 1].

By analyzing these materials, this study allowed me to draw the following conclusions. (1) The Japanese conducted fishery-centered economic development of the Senkaku Islands before the Meiji government incorporated them into Japanese territory. (2) Okinawa Prefecture felt a strong need for control of fishery and other activities as these development activities expanded, which is why they resiliently requested the Meiji government to incorporate them into Okinawa Prefecture. (3) Finally, the Meiji government incorporated them into Japanese territory after confirming their status as *terra nullius*, also against a background of there being in no opposition from other countries against the development activities. (4) After the incorporation into Japanese territory, both Okinawa Prefecture and the Government-General of Taiwan showed willingness to assist in the development of the Senkaku Islands. (5) Qing China in no way interfered with this economic development and the Japanese developed the Senkaku Islands as Japanese territory without opposition.

The above has clarified that vigorous fishery development served as the context for the cabinet decision made after ten years of on-site surveys from 1885 (Meiji 18) by the Japanese government and Okinawa Prefecture to confirm that there were no traces of foreign (specifically Chinese) rule, thereby showing the islands to be *terra nullius*. We have also confirmed that no foreign countries, including China, objected to these vigorous development activities as well as clarified that there was no trouble associated with the incorporation of the Senkaku Islands into Japan.

Fishery Development around the Senkaku Islands Prior to Their Incorporation into Japanese Territory in 1895

Table 1. Timeline for the Senkaku Islands

	The central government	Okinawa Prefecture	Fishery and other forms of economic development (civilian)
1885 (Meiji 18)	Around July: The Ministry of Home Affairs orders Okinawa Prefecture to survey nearby uninhabited islands	September–November: Okinawa Prefecture conducts on-site surveys of the Daitō Islands and the Senkaku Islands November: Reports to the central government about constructing a national marker on the Senkaku Islands (request to incorporate the islands into the prefecture) → December: The Central government responds that constructing a national marker is unnecessary	
1889 (Meiji 22)		December: the Yaeyama Islands Office on Ishigaki Island requests Okinawa Prefecture to place the Senkaku Islands under their jurisdiction	
1890 (Meiji 23)	January: The Bureau of Prefectural Administration, the Ministry of Home Affairs Requests Okinawa Prefecture to send relevant documents	January: Okinawa Prefecture submits a request to incorporate the Senkaku Islands into Japanese territory to the Ministry of Home Affairs April: Okinawa Prefecture conducts interview survey of the fishing situation around the Senkaku Islands, led by Hanawa Tadao, a Prefecture's official	
1891 (Meiji 24)		December: Drafts directive that identifies the Daitō Islands as under the jurisdiction of the Naha Office and the Senkaku Islands (Agun Kuba Sima) as under that of the Yaeyama Islands Office December: Directives No. 46 and 47 determine that the Daitō Islands are provisionally placed under the jurisdiction of the Naha Police Station and the Senkaku Islands under that of the Yaeyama Police Station	Isawa Yakita from Kumamoto Prefecture reaches an agreement with Matsumura Jinnosuke and the others from Kagoshima Prefecture, and starts taking Itoman fishermen out to the Senkaku Islands
1892 (Meiji 25)		January: Okinawa Prefecture requests the Ministry of the Navy to conduct a survey of nearby uninhabited islands, including the Senkaku Islands → July–August: The Kaimon, a corvette, was dispatched from the Sasebo Naval Base in Nagasaki, but the Senkaku Islands are not surveyed	
1893 (Meiji 26)		September: The Okinawa Prefecture's Governor well-wishes the <i>Tonan Group</i> of Noda Tadashi and the other people from Kumamoto Prefecture as they are about to start fishing around the Senkaku Islands November: Okinawa Prefecture requests the Ministers of Home and Foreign Affairs to incorporate the Senkaku Islands into the Prefecture December: Issues a notice regarding the Itoman fishermen who disappeared after leaving for the Senkaku Islands (Agon Kuba Sima) Around the end of the year: Publishes the <i>Chart [Areas under the jurisdiction of the Okinawa Prefectural Police – map and list]</i> , listing the Senkaku Islands	The Matsumura Jinnosuke dispatches workers to the Senkaku Islands to collect albatross feathers June: Isawa Yakita heads out to the islands again to receive the workers but is shipwrecked and drifts to the Chinese coast → Protected by Chinese officials and repatriated to Nagasaki After September: The <i>Tonan Group</i> operates around the Yaeyama and Senkaku Islands to produce shark fins November: The Itoman fishermen set sail from the Senkaku Islands (Agun Kuba Sima) for Ishigaki Port but go missing
1894 (Meiji 27)	April: Bureau of Prefectural Administration, Ministry of Home Affairs inquires Okinawa Prefecture about the previous year's Senkaku incorporation request December: The Bureau of Prefectural Administration, the Ministry of Home Affairs, writes proposal for Cabinet in response to the Okinawa Prefecture request End of the year: The Minister of Home Affairs consults the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the Senkaku Islands incorporation proposal for Cabinet	Reproduces the previous year's notice about the missing Itoman fishermen in the Official Gazette May: Okinawa Prefecture responds to the inquiry of the Bureau of Prefectural Administration, Ministry of Home Affairs in April	Sasamori Gisuke, who had been traveling the Ryukyu Islands the previous year, publishes <i>Explorations of Southern Islands</i> → Contains references about such as the workers sent to Koba Island (the Senkaku Islands) and the Kumamoto people planning to fish around the Senkaku Islands
1895 (Meiji 28)	January: The Minister of Foreign Affairs responds to the Minister of Home Affairs that there are no objections to the proposal for Cabinet by the Ministry of Home Affairs January 12: The Minister of Home Affairs requests the Cabinet to discuss <i>Hibetsu</i> Proposal No. 133 (Senkaku Islands incorporation proposal) January 14: The Cabinet decides to incorporate the Senkaku Islands into Okinawa Prefecture		

	<p>January 21: The Prime Minister notifies the Minister of Home Affairs of the Cabinet decision</p> <p>January 22: The Ministry of Home Affairs drafts a response to Okinawa Prefecture</p>		<p>June: Koga Tatsushirō submits to the Yaeyama Islands Office a request to lease the Senkaku Islands addressed to the Minister of Home Affairs</p>
<p>1896 (Meiji 29)</p>	<p>March: Imperial Order No. 13 “On the County Organization of Okinawa Prefecture”</p>	<p>August: Okinawa Prefecture grants Koga Tatsushirō’s request to develop the islands → Uotsuri, Kuba, Minami-kojima, and Kita-kojima Islands are leased for 30 years free of charge</p>	<p>November: Matsumura Jinnosuke leaves Yonaguni Island for the Senkaku Islands (Kuba Island) but goes adrift → Taken in by the Keelung Governmental Branch Office in Taiwan</p>

Note) Compiled by the author.

Keywords: Senkaku Islands, fishery development, territorial incorporation, Yokouchi Family Documents, Hanawa Tadao, Osaka Shosen Kaisha

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[Notes]

- 1) Akitoshi HIRAOKA (2007), “The Japanese Advance into the Senkaku Islands during the Meiji period and Koga Tatsushirō,” Akitoshi Hiraoka, ed., *Outlying Island Research III*: 9.
- 2) Takafumi SASAKI, Makomo KUNIYOSHI (2016), Japanese fishing operations around the Senkaku Islands immediately after the end of World War II : An analysis of public materials compiled by the Fisheries Agency and Kagoshima Prefecture, *Journal of Regional Fisheries Economics*, 57-1 : 59-76
- 3) However, the Izumomaru was not chartered for the purpose of surveying the Senkaku Islands. The Izumomaru was a ship contracted (supplemented) by Okinawa Prefecture for transportation and communications with the mainland as the prefecture contains so many isolated islands.
- 4) “Confidential Letter No. 38: Reply Letter from the Lord of Foreign Affairs” of “Miscellaneous Matters Relating to the Imperial Territory” in the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan contains a slip of paper that likely a foreign affairs official wrote on. We can make out the word “complication.” Moreover, the North–South Daitō Island Survey, which was conducted around the same time as the Senkaku Island Survey, was followed by the construction of

a national marker, meaning territorial incorporation, thus showing a different response than for the Senkaku Islands.

5) Okinawa Young Men's Association (1890), *Okinawa Young Men's Magazine* (first issue): 21–22. A detailed analysis focusing on Matsumura Jinnosuke was conducted in Association for the Compilation of Documents and Materials on the Senkaku Islands (2009), *Senkaku Research*: 22. See this to reconsider the image of Koga Tatsushirō as the one who pioneered the development of the Senkaku Islands.

6) “A1. Inquiry about the Uninhabited Kuba and Uotsuri Islands” (January 13, 1890) in *Miscellaneous Matters Relating to the Imperial Territory*, held by the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

7) “Overview of Kuba Island” (Hanawa Tadao, ed.) held by the Okinawa Prefectural Library was written in 1889–1890, and is composed of “Report” (report of the interviews on the fishing situation around Kuba and Uotsuri Islands conducted by Hanawa Tadao of Okinawa Prefecture on Ishigaki Island in April 1890) and “Appendices” (letters exchanged from late 1889 through early 1890; more specifically, an inquiry by the local government office in charge of the Yaeyama Islands, expressing the wish to place the islands under the local office's jurisdiction due to the appearance of a group of fishermen going to Uotsuri and Kuba Island [a joint marine products company], as well as the response of Okinawa Prefectural Office).

8) Survey commissioned by the Cabinet Secretariat (2016), *Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands* (FY2015): 9.

9) Miyajima Mikinosuke (1900), “Kobi Island,” *Journal of the Earth Sciences*, Vol. 12, No. 143: 651. “Chapter 1. Exploration Timeline” contains a reference to Isawa.

10) Op. cit., *Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands* (FY2015): 9.

11) Besides Matsumura, the names Nagai Kiemon and Mitani Ihē are also mentioned.

12) The Kumamoto National Sovereignty Party was a political organization created by the Kumamoto politician Sassa Tomofusa to expand national sovereignty. The party leaned toward expanding to the continent and it had the support of people like Munakata Kotarō, who were active on the Korean peninsula and the Chinese mainland. We can see from the actions of Noda Tadashi and the others that the party's activities were also geared toward the southernmost parts of Japan.

- 13) Op. cit., *Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands* (FY2015): 10.
- 14) See “On the Conveyance of Gratitude to Chinese Local Officials for Their Rescue of Kumamoto Citizens Isawa Yakita and Two Others upon Drifting to China (Meiji 26),” diplomatic record held by the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. This consists of a document describing how Isawa and two others set sail from Ishigaki Island to receive the workers coming to collect albatross feathers on the Senkaku Islands, but were shipwrecked in a storm, drifted to the Chinese coast, and then returned to Nagasaki under the protection of Chinese local officials, as well as a document expressing the appreciation of the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs for the Chinese officials’ protection and repatriation of the Japanese.
- 15) Survey commissioned by the Cabinet Secretariat (2016), *Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands* (FY2015): 11.
- 16) Sasamori Gisuke (1894), *Explorations of Southern Islands*: 97–100.
- 17) This document produced by the Government-General of Taiwan in 1895 is registered as “The Drifting Ashore of Matsumura Jinnosuke and Nine Others from Naha, Okinawa Prefecture: Document Code 00004491005” in *Meiji 28, 15-Year Storage, Vol. 6* in the collection of official documents of the Government-General of Taiwan. The document is a report about how Kagoshima merchant Matsumura Jinnosuke and his team went adrift on route to Koba Island, Okinawa Prefecture (This name was for the Senkaku Island around 1893 and the name Koba Island also appears in *Explorations of Southern Islands* by Sasamori Gisuke from Aomori) and ended up in the Keelung area of Taiwan.
- 18) Survey commissioned by the Cabinet Secretariat (2017), *Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands* (FY2016): 13.
- 19) *Ibid.*, 12.
- 20) “Tables of Freight and Passengers Carried and Business Report of Nippon Yusen and Osaka Shosen Kaisha,” which is held by Taiwan Historica, is recorded as “Tables of Freight and Passengers Carried and Business Report of Nippon Yusen and Osaka Shosen Kaisha: Document Code 00004593015” in *Meiji 32, 15-Year Storage, Vol. 17*, which was created by the Government-General of Taiwan in 1899. At the time, Osaka Shosen Kaisha was contracted by the Government-General of Taiwan to operate the regular routes between mainland Japan and Taiwan.

This document is a petition by Osaka Shosen Kaisha to the Government-General to approve of Waheiyama Island (Senkaku Uotsuri Island) as a special port for one of those routes that went via Okinawa (Kobe⇔Keelung).

21) The document information is the same as for Material 3. Moreover, this is an order from the Government-General of Taiwan to Osaka Shosen Kaisha, whom they had commissioned to run the regular traffic between mainland Japan and Taiwan, that specifies the conditions of the ship operations. It also acknowledges Waheiyama Island (Uotsuri Island of the Senkaku Islands), Yonaguni Island, and Iriomote Island as special ports.

Senkaku Islands: Fisheries Development prior to Incorporation into Japan

Abstract

This article aims to elucidate economic development in the Senkaku Islands that centered on fishing for nearly a decade prior to their territorial incorporation into Japan in 1895. Analysis of primary materials discovered recently through the “Research Report on Archives of Senkaku Islands,” commissioned by the Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat, some of them still undisclosed, revealed that (1) Japan had engaged in the economic development of the Senakaku islands even before the Meiji government incorporated them into Japan; (2) during this process, Okinawa Prefecture recognized the need for control of fishery and appealed to the government for incorporation of the islands; and (3) as other countries did not raise any objection, the government determined that the islands were unclaimed and incorporated them into Japan.

Keywords: Senkaku Islands, fishery development, Yokouchi Family Documents, Tadao Hanawa, Osaka Shosen Kabushiki Kaisha