

Where is “Diaoyu Tai,” which China asserts as part of Taiwan, located?

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1 China’s claim that the Senkaku Islands are part of Taiwan

The government of the People’s Republic of China claims that “Diaoyu Dao [Note: Diaoyu Dao is the Chinese term for the Senkaku Islands] and its affiliated islands are an inseparable part of the Chinese territory.” It asserts that “the Qing court... clearly placed the islands under the jurisdiction of the local government of Taiwan.” (The State Council Information Office of the People’s Republic of China, “Diaoyu Dao, an Inherent Territory of China,” September 25, 2012.)

In fact, the Senkaku Islands did not belong to any country until 1895. The Japanese government carefully confirmed this fact before it incorporated them into Japan’s territory. Then on what basis does China claim that the Senkaku Islands are “an inseparable part of the Chinese territory?”

China cites historical books, *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* (Tai Hai Shi Cha Lu) [台海使槎录] and *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian* (Chong Zuan Fu Jian Tong Zhi) [重纂福建通志], compiled by Qing bureaucrats, as documents which show that the Qing court “clearly placed the islands under the jurisdiction of the local government of Taiwan” in the pre-modern era before the 19th century, and claims that the geographic name of “Diaoyu Tai” in these books refers to “Diaoyu Dao,” located far northeast of Taiwan (“Diaoyu Dao, an Inherent Territory of China,” Chapter I.2.)

It is true that these writings mention the geographic name of “Diaoyu Tai,” which China claims to be one of the Chinese names for Uotsuri Island (in the Senkaku Islands), and it may be argued that Qing bureaucrats at least knew of this name when the books were written. However, as explained further below, it is impossible to argue that the Qing officials had control of “Diaoyu Tai.” Furthermore, there is no doubt that “Diaoyu Tai” in these writings does not refer to the Senkaku Islands, but to a rocky hill along the coast of Taiwan Island.

This essay will examine China’s assertions, looking one by one at the specific contents and contexts quoted by China in the historical books, *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* and *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian*.

2 Qing’s strategy for the defense of Taiwan as described in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*

Let us start with *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*. The present subject is based on the first issue of Taiwanese documents which was published in 1957 compiled by Economic Research Office of the Bank of Taiwan. In this section, first, I will explain

the background behind the creation of this book, and subsequently, the part which mentions “Diaoyu Tai,” starting from the related passages prior to it. By following the contextual flow, we can naturally identify the location that the geographic name of “Diaoyu Tai” points at.

(1) *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait - A guide to governing Taiwan written by a Qing official in the 18th century*

A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait was written by Huang Shujing, a Qing bureaucrat, sometime later than 1722.

In 1683, Qing overthrew the Zheng clan, who ruled western Taiwan, and then steadily solidified control over Taiwan, where the armed confrontations over land, called xie dou, continuously happened between the Austronesian natives, the Fulao from southern Fujian Province (Minnan) and the Hakka from eastern Guangdong Province. The land disputes in Taiwan were caused by overpopulation in the underdeveloped island due to the inflow of people who had difficulties living in Fujian and Guangdong and had secretly crossed the sea in search of a new place to live. It was impossible to establish a firm rule over Taiwan without first controlling and restricting the people who secretly traveled to Taiwan.

In the meantime, major military challenges lay in Taiwan at the time. Taiwan is so distant from Beijing, the capital of the Qing Dynasty where the nomadic Manchus and Mongols held power, that the armed forces deployed there were of lesser quality. At the same time, the bitter memories of the ravages of Japanese pirates in the time of the Ming Dynasty had been shared among the bureaucrats under the imperial examination system and people in the coastal areas at that time, and there was a need to be prepared for the next possible assaults by Japanese pirates (in fact, since the beginning of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the activities of the Japanese pirates had already ceased, and Japan had limited its relationship with Qing to the comings and goings in Nagasaki. Therefore, there was a recognition, as was shown by Lan Dingyuan, an official who was involved in the rule of Fujian in the first half of the 18th century, that it would not be a trouble as far as the Japanese did not come at all).

Under these circumstances, the Zhu Yigui rebellion occurred mainly in today’s Kaohsiung and Tainan in 1721, which threatened Qing’s rule over Taiwan. This was an armed uprising by people who were angry at the increasing oppression by Qing local officials on the impoverished under the leadership of Zhu Yigui, who claimed to be a descendant of the imperial family of Ming, in order to overthrow Qing and restore Ming. Qing sent in reinforcements from Fujian Province via the Penghu Islands and managed to suppress this rebellion. However, Qing was

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confronted with an extremely challenging task of how to rule this chaotic island far from the mainland.

Therefore, Qing sent Huang Shujing, a high-ranking official who had passed the Jinshi exam in the imperial examination system, to inspect Taiwan shortly after the turmoil. These records were compiled into *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*, which includes citations from Chinese geographic and military materials referring to Taiwan after the Ming period as reference. Huang Shujing explains in detail the management of ports as a cornerstone of Taiwan's defense, and detailed descriptions is found in a part of Vol. 2 Chikan Notes: Military Preparations (Chi Kan Bi Tan Wu Bei) [赤嵌方輿紀要], in which "Diaoyu Tai" appears.

This part of the book first cites *The Essentials of Historical Geography* (Dushi Fangyu Jiyao) [讀史方輿紀要] (Material 1) about the management of the Penghu Islands during the Ming period. It points out that, to cope with Japanese and other pirates, and the possibility of Toyotomi Hideyoshi targeting Taiwan following the dispatch of his forces to Korea, Penghu Island with its calm bay mouth and Taiwan's Beigang (today's Beigang Township, Yunlin County), located southeast of Penghu Island, should be defended, which had a critical impact on the defense of the coastal areas of Fujian Province, but records that Taiwan was seized by Hongmao (the Netherlands) during the Tianqi era in the first half of the 17th century in the late Ming Dynasty.

<Material 1 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 24-25)>

In the fifth year of the Hongwu era (1395) of the Ming Dynasty, Tang Xinguo governed the sea. He suggested moving the islanders inland because he found it difficult to judge whether they were loyal or rebellious. In the 21st year (1388), all the islanders were relocated, and then the police department (xunjiansi, 巡檢司) was abolished, reducing Penghu to a wasteland. However, rogues with ambition continued to lurk on the island afterwards. Japanese pirates came and went, passing through this area to stop at the port for water. After the Jiajing and Longqing eras, Zeng Yiben and others recruited bandits here many times. In the 20th year of the Wanli era (1592), Japanese pirates invaded Korea. The sentries said that those pirates were going to invade Jilong and Danshui (澹水) next, suggesting that troops be stationed there. In the 25th year of the Wanli era (1597), guerrilla forces were deployed additionally. In the 45th year of the Wanli era (1617), additional assault and guerrilla forces were deployed again after Japanese pirates invaded Longmen Port. About 200 li around Penghu, (the geology was salty and alkaline, and the water was salty and bitter. Daily scorching heat and frequent winds made it difficult to grow crops.) ... Located in the center was Niangong Islet. Twenty li from Xi Islet was Chapan Islet, and ten li further on was Niangong Islet. The sea here was calm..... Its state resembled that of the surface of a lake, hence the name Penghu. It was large and wide enough for ships to stop(omission)In the 37th year of the Wanli era (1609), a hongmao (Dutch) ship reached Penghu, stopping there for a long time before leaving. In the second year of the Tianqi era (1622), Gao Wenlu, taking advantage of the garrison being isolated and weak, suddenly mobilized a dozen ships and occupied Penghu Island, using the mountains as castle walls and the sea as a moat. He sailed on through the wind and waves, surging with great momentum into Zhangzhou and Quanzhou and wreaking havoc there. At the time, Yu Zigao, the regional commander (zongbing), moved the hongmao to Beigang and recovered ,namely, Penghu. He also resolved to lay the foundations of castle walls in Mount Wen'ao..... sent troops to be stationed here to hold Niangong in control. However, those who made the resolution also said that Penghu was the gateway to Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, that Beigang and Penghu were mutually dependent, and that if Beigang fell, it would endanger not only Penghu, but also Zhangzhou and Quanzhou. Beigang, also known as Taiwan, is located to the southeast of Penghu; after the Tianqi era, it was occupied by the hongmao.

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Subsequently, the description in the book is followed by a quotation from Collection of Administrative Documents from Dongning (Dong Ning Zheng Shi Ji) [东宁政事集] (**Material 2**), written by Ji Qiguang, a bureaucrat at the onset of Qing's rule over Taiwan. Starting from around today's Gangshan District, Kaohsiung City in southern Taiwan, it describes as the "North Route" the names of places appearing northwise (clockwise) on the west coast and as the "South Route" those appearing southwise (counter-clockwise) on the west coast. A description about the North Route goes, "As for Jilong and Danshui, they are the northernmost islands in Taiwan, jutting out of the sea and connecting fanshe (番社, indigenous villages)." Jilong [鷓籠] and Danshui [澹水] are today's Keelung City and Tamsui District, New Taipei City, respectively. This represents that since the late 17th century, there had been a recognition among officials in charge of Taiwan that this area lay in the northernmost part of Taiwan. This book goes on to suggest that the various ports on the North Route be tied with the ports of Fujian Province facing across the Taiwan Strait to encourage Fujian merchants to trade with Taiwanese ports on the other side of the Strait, thereby to strengthen commercial and military ties with Taiwan.

Next, the book goes on to cite *On Rule of Taiwan* (Li Tai Mo Yi) [理台末议] written in 1728 by Xia Zhifang after inspecting Taiwan, describes the deployment of defense forces in Taiwan (**Material 3**). Regarding the defense on the ground, it advocates the implementation of the farmer-soldier system, in which farmers are to engage in agricultural work on a daily basis and take up arms in emergencies, from the viewpoint of cost-saving in consideration of the vastness of the land. In terms of maritime defense, it follows the well-established naval defense theory in the period of the Ming dynasty, stating "the navy avoids fighting in the open sea, and heads for ports to take up arms; therefore, the ports shall be battlefields. Accordingly, a good understanding of ports is essential for good command of the navy. The port is to the navy what the castle is to the army."

<Material 2 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 26)>

The South Route goes southward from Dagangshan down to Xiadanshui (Wandan Township, Pingtung County) and Langjiaoshe, and the North Route goes from Mugangshan up to Shangdanshui and Jilongcheng. Between them, Fongshan, Mt. Kuilei (the region of Rukai Tribe), Mt. Zhuluo (Chiayi), and Mt. Banxian (Changhua) are all critical points for defending Yefan and places that the army must defend. Xiadansui, Sulphur River (硫磺溪), Daxiantou, and Luzai Port are all on the main routes into the sea, which the navy must defend. As for Jilong and Danshui, they are the northernmost islands in Taiwan, jutting out of the sea and connecting to the fanshe (番社, indigenous villages). Houlong Port faces Nanri, which is at the mouth of Xinghua Port. Located 120 li to the north of Houlong is Zhuqian She (竹堑社) (Hsinchu County) facing Haitan Township. Located 150 li to the north of Zhuqian is Nankan She (南嵌社) facing Guanbeng, which is a port of Min'an, Fuzhou. It is 70 li from Nankan to Shangdanshui facing Beijiao; it is 300 li from Danshui to Jilong facing Shacheng and Fenghuomen. All are along the boundary of Zhejiang Province. Beyond the ocean is the way in and out for the hongmao. Because of the long distance from commanderies, waterways extended in all directions, and all it takes to get there directly is a sailing ship. The descendants of the Zheng clan deployed heavy troops in Jilong, and although they claimed it was in preparation for the hongmao, whom they had defended themselves against at a distance, they were indeed afraid that we would divide forces and assault their rear-guard from Fuxing. It only takes approximately 14 to 16 hours from Jilong to Min'an by sea, and if the ports of Min'an and Xinghua allowed the comings and goings of merchants for business, that would not only be a good source of finance, but in case of an unexpected warning, the forces in Xiamen and Penghu would also be able to act as the vanguard, while the ships in Fuzhou, Quanzhou, and Xinghua would be able to provide logistics support, coordination between the front and the back, and emergency responses.

<Material 3 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 27-28)>

The strength of Taiwan's ground and naval forces exceeds 10,000 and military expenses are extremely heavy. That is, those in Penghu and Anping account for half of it. The navy's defense missions are too critical to allow any more reductions in personnel, and Taiwan's strength accounts for half of it. The army's defense area is vast, and there is no choice but to resolve to reinforce ground forces. However, there is still a way to save money by the most convenient way which personnel engaged in logistics must pay attention to. The official manors (guan Zhuang, 官莊) already existent in Taiwan could be used as tuntian, and the ploughmen could serve as soldiers under the tuntian system. However, it would be necessary to provide training and clearly stipulate rules to be followed. Otherwise, it would be necessary to follow the ancient system of "70% for ploughing, 30% for military preparations" (Geng Qi Diao San, 耕七調三) or set up fortresses to defend under the concept of "soldiers work as farmers in peace time and act as fighters in war time" (Yu Bing Yu Nong, 寓兵於農), so that the soldiers would not only be freed from traveling far and wide, and the annual military expenses of the state would be saved.....

While the army values the power of horses, the navy values the power of ships. When faced with enemy forces, it is essential to compete for an upwind position. Without agile mobility, it is impossible to occupy an upwind position. If there is not enough weight to hold the ships, they may fall back downwind. Though this relies on manual operation, it totally depends on how good the warships are..... It is necessary to have good materials with a good balance of light and heavy ones, just like the whole-body muscles and bones in good coordination with each other, in order to achieve good mobility..... Therefore, the navy must place a great focus on shipbuilding..... Naval ships anchored in ports is analogous to ground forces camped on land. By and large the navy is not capable of fighting in the open sea, but crossing swords at ports; therefore, ports are battlefields..... Accordingly, the navy must have a good understanding of anchoring in ports, which is part of what makes sense. Naval forces attacking a port is analogous to ground forces attacking a castle.

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The viewpoints expressed in the above-mentioned quotations indicate that Huang Shujing, author of *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*, intended to raise awareness of the necessity to have a grasp of ports on the Penghu and Taiwan Islands as commercial bases and battlegrounds, and to build up the military forces there.

Moreover, Huang Shujing enumerated the following: past records of patrols around Penghu Island; criticism against the plan shortly after Qing's acquisition of Taiwan to concentrate the deployment of the arms in Penghu by shifting those in Taiwan, the deployment of naval forces in Anping (Tainan) and the instruction manual of their annual patrolling; increasing use of Takau Port (today's Kaohsiung) by civilian vessels; the expansion of the rules over the northwestern coastal areas of Taiwan during the Kangxi era; and a need to improve the quality of the military personnel deployed in Taiwan (**Material 4**).

Following these summaries of the background, the current state, challenges and others from the viewpoint of the strategy on Taiwan for the mainland Qing, a description of "Diaoyu Tai" appears in the section of the book.

<Material 4 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 30-32)>

In the Xinchou year of the Kangxi era (1721), the Ministry of War reported, "Penghu is at the throat of Taiwan, located in a critical position. The regional commander (总兵, zongbing) of Taiwan should be moved to Penghu, and the regional vice commander (副将, fujiang) of Taiwan should be stationed on land. Huang Ying, the regional commander of Jinmen, reported, "Penghu is the gateway to Taiwan. Now, there is no better strategy than the regional commander of Taiwan being transferred to Penghu and the regional vice commander being stationed in Taiwan in coordination with the navy to examine the situation from a distance and to consult to do their best." I once read about the geographical features there. Although Penghu is said to be composed of 36 islands and is located halfway between Taiwan and Xiamen, it is only a minuscule piece of land dotted with scattered islands. Except for some traces of human activities in Magong and Bazhao, all the other islands are desolate. It can be defended just by deploying the regional vice commander. However, Taiwan stretches more than 2,000 li from north to south, with no less than a million villages, fanshe and households. Mountains and deep forests are the easiest places for bandits to hide. No one can suppress them except for the regional commander. Moreover, each of the regional vice commanders and assistant regional commanders (参将, canjiang) of the Anping navy and the South and North Routes are on a par with the regional vice commander of Taiwan. Therefore, once something happens, all of them will have their own opinions, and no one can deploy them except the regional commander. If the regional commander is stationed in Penghu, he would be separated from Taiwan. Furthermore, while the ships coming and going between the two places are waiting for the wind, it would be impossible for him to rush to Taiwan even if the ground and naval forces in Taiwan are faced with an emergency. While Penghu is the gateway to Taiwan, Taiwan is indeed the heart of Penghu, the importance of its situation exceeds that of Penghu's, putting the critical points in each coastal province at stake. Therefore, please keep the regional commander stationed in Taiwan. The port of Takau in Fongshan is about six hours by sea from Lu'ermen (in west Tainan). When the north wind is strong, the port of Lu'ermen is impossible for ships to enter due to the narrowness of its routes, while the port of Takau provides easy straight access; therefore, there are many people landing there. The navy deployed two patrol ships in total to lead the defense. Xiadanshui, far away from counties and towns, is prone to bandits; therefore, it is necessary for a company commander (qianzong, 千总) to lead the defense there. These two are critical areas to defend on the South Route.

During the time of the descendants of the Zheng clan in Taiwan, the comings and goings of people were limited up to Banxian (Changhua). There have been no traces of human activities in Danshui and other places since they were incorporated into our territory. Therefore, only one centurion (baizong, 白总) was deployed in Dadu to lead the defense on the North Route; the two fanshes of Shalu and Niuma (Qingshui) were outside our territory. After the pirate Zheng Jinxin desperately escaped, the imperial court issued a notification to the effect that the bandit who collaborated with Zheng Jinxin confessed that Zheng Jinxin should be hiding somewhere in Jinshan, Huaniao, or Yushan (魚山) in Taizhou along the border of Jiangsu and Zhejiang, or in Danshui in Taiwan, Fujian, etc. At that time, the regional commander Cui Xiangguo assigned a company commander to lead the defense of Danshui. Since then, this has become the norm. Farm owners engaged in land reclamation, with a gradually increasing number of people coming and going.

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(2) References to “Diaoyu Tai” in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*

Huang Shujing goes on to describe the problem of stowaways from Fujian and Guangdong to Taiwan, which contributed to worsening public security in Taiwan (**Material 5**). Since stowaways often boarded smaller ships on the mainland side and then moved to larger ships, Huang Shujing argues that the key to solving the problems of stowaways and worsening security in Taiwan was the strengthening of port controls both on the mainland and Taiwan sides. Subsequently, in the book, the names of Taiwan's nearshore and coastal ports are enumerated according to the capacity of entry in terms of the size of ships, counter-clockwise on the South Route as well as clockwise on the North Route, starting from an area around today's Tainan and Kaohsiung (see Figure).

It is in this list of ports that the place name of “Diaoyu Tai” appears.

In it, as ports with the capacity for the entry of a large patrol ship with a keel, Luermen (west of Tainan) and Takau Port (Kaohsiung City) on the South Route, and Wengang (Taisi Township, Yunlin County), Bengang (Beigang Township, Yunlin County), Danshui [澮水] (Tamsui [淡水] District, New Taipei City), Xiaojilong (Sanzhi District, New Taipei City), and Bachimen (Keelung City) on the North Route are listed.

The largest number of ports listed there are those with the capacity for the entry of sampan boats with a shallow bottom and other smaller ships. Of those, for the South Route, ports facing the Taiwan Strait from Fongshan Dagang (Kaohsiung City) to Houwanzai (Checheng Township, Pingtung County) and inland river ports are enumerated in order; for the North Route, coastal ports from Zhuluo Mashagou (Tainan City) via the northernmost Danshui and Jilong to Hezailan (Yilan City in northeastern Taiwan), where a gradually increasing number of Han people came to settle in the 18th century, are enumerated (**Material 6**).

Subsequently, ports accessible to small-sized ships and ports accessible only to small fishing boats due to the accumulation of mud are explained for the South Route and the North Route respectively (**Material 7**), followed by a passage that includes a description of “Diaoyu Tai” (**Material 8**).

“There is an ocean behind the mountains. To the north lies a mountain called Diaoyu Tai, which can accommodate ten or so large ships; Xuebolan in Chongyao is accessible by sampan boats.”

<Material 5 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 33)> 【Stowaway problem to Taiwan】

Xiamen is on the general route for stowaways to Taiwan. There were also those who boarded small boats from small ports..... (enumeration of the names of mainland ports) They often boarded smaller fishing boats, secretly switching to larger ships..... I once submitted to the imperial court a letter to the effect that it was essential to strictly crack down on seaports first in order to clear Taiwan.

[All the ports below are listed according to the size of ships that can visit them in a counter-clockwise direction for the South Route ports and in a clockwise direction for the North Route ports starting from areas around today's Tainan] Lu'ermen (in west Tainan), Takau Port (Kaohsiung) on the South Route, Wengang (Taisi Township, Yunlin County), Bengang (Beigang Township, Yunlin County, or Hsinkang, Chiayi County), Danshui Port, Xiaojilong (Sanzhi Township), and Bachimen (fishing port of Bachimen, Keelung) on the North Route. (*Note: [] is an annotation by the author)

<Material 6 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 33)>

The rest are the ports accessible by sampan boats: Fongshan Dagang (Zuoying), Xixi (Linyuan Township, Kaohsiung City), Haogang, Naogang, Donggang (leading to Danshui), Jiateng Port (one of the eight indigenous villages in Fongshan, located around Cishan. Though there is a place called Jiatengzai in Neimen Township, Kaohsiung City, it is distant from Gaoping River.), Fangsuo Port (Linbian Township, Pingtung County; one of the eight indigenous villages in Fongshan), Dakunlu She (大崑麓社) (Dazhuang, Fangliao Township, Pingtung County), Liaogang, and Houwanzai (Houwan, Checheng Township, Pingtung County) [on the South Route]; Zhuluo Mashagou (Jiangjun District, Tainan City), Ouwang Port (Gangshan, Kaohsiung City), Budai'ao (unknown), Maogangwei (Maogangwei, Xiaying Township, Tainan City), Tiexianqiao (Tiexianqiao, Xinying District, Tainan City), Yanshuei Port (Yanshuei District, Tainan City), Jingshuei (井水) Port (Jingshuei (井水), Yanshuei District, Tainan City), Bazhang River, Houshu Port (Puzi City, Chiayi County), Huwei River Port (perhaps Taisi Township, Chiayi County; the channel of Huwei River has now been changed), Haifeng Port (Mailiao Township, Yunlin County), Erlin Port (Erlin Township, Changhua County), Sanlin Port (Fangyuan Township, Changhua County), Luzai Port (Lugang Township, Changhua County), Shuili Port (today's Taichung Port), Niuma (Qingshui District, Taichung City), Dajia (Dajia District, Taichung City), Maogan (unknown), Tunxiao (Tungshiau Township, Miaoli County), Fangli (unknown), Houlong (後壟) (Houlong (後龍) Township, Miaoli County), Zhonggang (Zhunan Township, Miaoli County), Zhuqian (Hsinchu City), Nankan (Taoyuan City), Baliben (New Taipei City), Hezailan (Zhuoshui River, Yilan County, also called Lanyang River) [on the North Route]. (*Note: [] is an annotation by the author)

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Taiwan map (related place names)

<Material 7 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 33)>

These are the ports accessible only by small sampan boats: Zhouzaiwei (the central area of Tainan City), Xigangzai (Sigang District, Tainan City), Wanli (Wanli, South District, Tainan City), Fongshan Sishu Port (Sishu, South District, Tainan City), and Wandan Port (Yuanzhong Port, Kaohsiung City) [on the South Route]; Zhuluo Haiwengjue (a dune around the estuary of Zengwen River), and Bengshan Port (Jiangshan Village, Budai Township, Chiayi County) [on the North Route]. And there are the ports accessible only to small fishing boats due to a build-up of mud: Fongshan Qihou (岐後); Fangliao, Jialiutang (Jialu, Fangshan Township, Pingtung County), Xiebiyi (Fenggang, Fangshan Township, Pingtung County), Guibi Port (Kabeyawan; Tongpu, Checheng Township, Pingtung County), Daxiufang (Daguang Village, Hengchun Township, Pingtung County), and Yufang Port [on the South Route]; Zhuluo Daizai (somewhere in Chiayi County?) and Waxiangling (near Beigang, Yunlin County?) [on the North Route].

<Material 8 (A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait, p. 33)>

[Areas of indigenous peoples out of Qing's effective control..... to the south of Yilan on the North Route; to the north of the Bashi Channel on the South Route] There is an ocean behind the mountains. To the north lies a mountain Diaoyu Tai, which can accommodate ten or so large

ships; Xuebolan in Chongyao is accessible by sampan boats.

There are shoals and dangerous reefs along the coast, and it is difficult for patrol ships with a keel to navigate. Even in areas where it is possible to navigate, there is a need to wait for the tide to calm down before entering the port, otherwise the sand is too hard and the water is too shallow, and there is no choice but to stop outside the port. There is even no place to stop at all in the case of a storm. Someone once said, "We should switch to building a few sampans. They are light and flat-bottomed, float up and down with the waves, are convenient for patrolling, and can be moored anywhere." Prefect Gao Duo said, "During the Zhu Yigui rebellion, people went back to the mainland to escape from the chaos. After Taiwan was pacified, commercial trips and trade depended on flat-bottomed boats, and there was a plethora of them coming and going in spite of monstrous waves with crashing sounds. In May of the Renyin year of the Kangxi era (1722), the navy sent a flat-bottomed boat to check out the guard posts, which was hit by strong winds and waves, lost its mast, and drifted to Huangyan, Zhejiang. All the crew and the boat were found safe and sound." This means that because flat-bottomed boats are suitable for use in inner ports, they are naturally safe and sound in the outer seas too. (*Note: [] is an annotation by the author)

(3) Where is “Diaoyu Tai” located?

The question in determining the location of Diaoyu Tai is how to interpret the descriptions of ports accessible to large ships and sampan boats, which begin with the phrase “an ocean behind the mountains” after the description enumerating ports according to the size of ships that could visit them on both the North Route and the South Route.

As noted above, Qing’s rule over Taiwan from the 18th to the mid-19th century was centered in the western half, with its sphere of influence in the eastern half extending clockwise from the west only up to the northeast Hezailan (Yilan City). To the south of the Yilan plains, there is a series of cliffs, named Qingshui Cliffs under the Japanese rule, which block traffic by land, and the only way to reach today’s Hualien City was by sea. In the area of today’s Hualien and Taitung Counties, at the time, the indigenous people and the Han immigrants who settled there were not amicable, and the area was completely out of Qing’s sphere of control. Therefore, although there might have been rare ship visits to and from the western part of Taiwan, all the bureaucrats knew about there was pure hearsay.

Taking these into consideration, the geographic names of “Diaoyu Tai” and “Xuepolan in Chongyao” were mentioned based on the limited scope of information about the ports on the east side of Taiwan’s Central Mountain Range, in other words, in the area located “Shanhou” or “Houshan” (behind mountain) from the west coast.

Of these, “Xuepolan in Chongyao” refers to the mouth of the Xiuguluan River which runs in southern Hualien County. An island called Xibulan, which sounds very similar to “Xuepolan,” is actually located around the estuary, and the estuary is large enough to be accessible to sampan boats.

In light of the context so far, “Diaoyu Tai” should refer to a place with a port that could accommodate about ten large ships, which was not far from “Xuepolan in Chongyao.” Now, such a place in the area around the estuary of the Xiuguluan River along long sandy beaches in the coastal area of southeastern Taiwan, also with a port that can accommodate more or less ten ships of the size of a patrol ship and with the pointy rock formations that matches the description of “a mountain called Diaoyu Tai” can be regarded as Sansiantai in Taitung County, a scenic tourist attraction with rock formations, and Chenggong Port, a fishing port in its immediate vicinity.

It is clearly shown in *History of Taiwan Province* (Tai Wan Sheng Tong Shi) [台湾省通史], published in 1970 under the government of the Republic of China that “Diaoyu Tai” was located in Taitung County. In its introduction of the pre-modern economic and social situation in the eastern part of Taiwan, *History of Taiwan Province* mentions “Diaoyu Tai (Taitung),” directly quoting the above-mentioned description in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* by Huang Shujing.

In conclusion, the “Diaoyu Tai” in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* is considered as Sansiantai in Taitung County.

It is clear that it does not refer to the Senkaku Islands, located even farther north than Danshui [澮水] and Jilong in the “the northernmost islands in Taiwan.” This is also corroborated by the

following descriptions in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* of geographic features along the coastline of Taiwan: “There are shoals and dangerous reefs along the coast, and it is difficult for patrol ships with a keel to navigate” and “there is a need to wait for the tide to calm down before entering the port.” *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* deals with the ports on and around Taiwan Island from the practical viewpoint of Qing bureaucrats in an effort to rule Taiwan. “Diaoyu Tai” is mentioned in this context in the book.

One additional thing to note is that *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* describes the location of Diaoyu-Tai as “north” but does not specifically describe the direction of Xuepolan in Chongyao. This does not seem contradictory at all, as it is assumed in the description to take the South Route, going around Eluanbi, the southern tip of the island, heading north along the east coast to reach Diaoyu Tai first, and continuing northward until Xuepolan in Chongyao.

3 “Diaoyu Tai” in *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian*

Now, where exactly is “Diaoyu Tai” in *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian*, another historical document that is cited by China to assert that “Diaoyu Tai” is part of Taiwan? In conclusion, it refers to Sansiantai in Taitung County because this document followed the description in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*.

(1) *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian - Chorography of Fujian Province* written in the 19th century

Recompiled General Annals of Fujian is a revision in 1871 of *General Annals of Fujian* (Fu Jian Tong Zhi) [福建通志], a book which offers a chorographical description of Fujian Province, compiled by Chen Shouqi, who served as a Qing official in the first half of the 19th century. This book was a product of the time when Western powers and Japan were exerting an expanding influence in the vicinity of Qing after the Opium War and Arrow War, and Qing was re-examining the state of its rule over the whole Taiwan region (in fact, Taiwan was separated from Fujian Province and its status was elevated to Taiwan Province in 1885). Therefore, this book offers an overview of Kavalan Subprefecture, which was established in the 19th century as a new administrative division, while providing exhaustive information on Taiwan’s chorography.

Kavalan Subprefecture was named after the people native to Kavalan, an indigenous people who had inhabited in the area of today’s Yilan County in northeastern Taiwan since old times. In the 18th century, an increasing number of Han people moved from the western coastal areas to settle around the Yilan area. However, the area was not well governed at the beginning, and became a stronghold for pirates. Repeated expropriations of land from the native Kavalans also contributed to the deterioration of public safety, which finally led to the formation of an administrative body in the 19th century.

The documents and materials published on this website were collected, researched, and prepared with advice from experts, as a part of a Government-commissioned project. The contents of this website do not reflect the views of the Government.

(2) References to “Diaoyu Tai” in *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian*

In *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian*, place names in Kavalan Subprefecture are enumerated as follows (**Material 9**).

Here, it is clearly described that the northernmost point of Kavalan Subprefecture was Sandiao Cape in today’s Gongliao District, New Taipei City, to the southeast of Jilong (Keelung). This is followed by enumerating such place names as Wushi Port, Kavalan Ying (former Hezilan, today’s Yilan), and Su’ao Port going southward along the east coast. Therefore, it is natural to consider that “Diaoyu Tai,” which appears after these place names, would be further south of Su’ao Port.

Then, where exactly was “Diaoyu Tai” located on the east coast of Taiwan? From the phrase “a thousand or so large ships”, it might have referred to today’s Hualien Port. However, Qing’s rule did not extend to Hualien County until the second half of the 19th century, and thus it is unlikely that the port had been developed to accommodate a thousand large ships. Assuming that the Chinese character “千” (meaning a thousand) is a typographical error of “十” (meaning ten), it can be reasonably inferred that “Diaoyu Tai” here refers to Sansiantai in Taitung County, as the descriptions of “Diaoyu Tai” and “Xuepolan in Chongyao” can be considered to have followed those in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait*.

4 Conclusion

The above consideration on the context in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* and the background behind which the book was written, as well as the descriptions in *History of Taiwan Province* issued under the Republic of China, it is evident that “Diaoyu Tai” in *A Tour of Duty in the Taiwan Strait* and in *Recompiled General Annals of Fujian* refers to none other than a rocky hill along the coastline of Taiwan Island and a port in its immediate vicinity.

Without examining the details of these books, China singles out several sentences which include or are around the proper noun of “Diaoyu Tai” and tries to somehow associate “Diaoyu Tai to the north of the ocean behind the mountains” with the Senkaku Islands, a group of isolated islands in the middle of the ocean. Completely ignoring the context of these books simply describing in detail the situation of coastal areas of Taiwan Island, China blatantly distorts the interpretation of the phrase “the ocean behind the mountains” to emphatically assert that the local authorities in Taiwan effectively controlled Diaoyu Tai (or Diaoyu Dao).

<Material 9 (*Recompiled General Annals of Fujian*)>

Kavalan..... Kavalan constitutes a subprefecture (ting, 厅) which, to the north, borders Sandiao and to the east faces the ocean. It is a place where unacculturated indigenous tribes (shengfan, 生番) gather and reside.

There are often bandits lurking there. Located in the west is Wushi Port, which is opposite of Gui Islet in the sea. In summer and autumn, maritime traffic to and from the port is smooth and mainland merchant ships gather here. A battery is deployed there for defense. In the 17th year of the Jiaqing era (1812), the Kavalan defense sector (ying, 营) was established. In the fourth year of the Daoguang era (1824), a brigade vice commander (dusi, 都司) was deployed and stationed in Wuwei Castle.

Su’ao Port is located at the southern part of the subprefecture with a broad port capable of accommodating large ships. It belongs to the Kavalan defense sector. In the north of the ocean behind the mountains, lies Diaoyu Tai. The port is deep enough to accommodate a thousand or so large ships. Xuebolan in Chongyao can accommodate sampan boats.