

international relations

The dispute over the Lobos Islands in the United States and its impact*

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Abstract: In the 1840s, European and American agricultural chemists confirmed through scientific experiments the great role of guano in promoting the growth of soil and crops. World agriculture entered the "Guano Era". At that time, the guano resources on the islands along the coast of Peru were very abundant. As the demand for natural fertilizers in agricultural production increased sharply, the Peruvian government quickly nationalized the guano resources. Due to Peru's monopoly on guano resources and the British control of the guano trade, the United States had to search for guano around the world to meet domestic agricultural production needs. In June 1852, American businessmen discovered rich guano resources in the Lobos Islands off the coast of Peru. As a result, the U.S. government unilaterally took over the Lobos Islands, which belonged to Peru, and denied the sovereignty of the Peruvian government. Subsequently, both parties safeguarded their respective sovereignty based on the principle of priority of discovery, which finally ended with the U.S. government recognizing Peru's jurisdiction over the Lobos Islands. After this battle for Guano Island, Peru consolidated its control over the global bird guano monopoly. The monopoly of guano resources ushered in the glorious "Guano Era", and since then it has embarked on the path of economic development based on resources. At the same time, the dispute over the Lobos Islands has produced a series of chemical reactions. On the one hand, it has paved the way for the expansion of the United States' oceans. It sent a "pioneer", and on the other hand, it also started the global "battle for Pacific Islands".

Keywords: Lobos Islands territorial dispute, priority right of discovery, maritime expansion

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In the first half of the 19th century, the decline in soil fertility was one of the major ecological problems faced by European and American countries. As a high-quality fertilizer, guano brought "good news" to agricultural production, triggering a global search for guano resources. The craze for Lobos Islands is a guano island located near the coast of Peru. In 1852, the United States and Peru had a dispute over their sovereignty. Both parties relied on the "priority of discovery". Negotiations were launched based on the principle of discovery. For the United States, occupying the Lobos Islands can alleviate the pressure of excessive guano prices on the country's agriculture. For Peru, fighting for the jurisdiction of the Lobos Islands is related to the country's economic lifeline.

Domestic academic research on the guano island issue is mainly included in some general history works, and special studies are even rarer. They mainly involve the expansion of US maritime territory under the protection of the Guano Island Act of 1856, but few scholars have paid attention to the previous dispute over the Lobos Islands. There are relatively abundant writings on the guano issue in foreign academic circles. The research results on the dispute over the Lobos Islands mainly involve loopholes in the U.S. foreign policy-making system, imperialist expansion, etc. In the final analysis, the impact of the dispute is far greater than the guano resources themselves. This article traces the origin, process and results of the Lobos Islands dispute, reveals the true purpose of the United States' competition for resources, and summarizes the consequences of this dispute for the United States, Peru, and the Pacific region. New changes

The "guano gospel" and Peru's monopoly on guano resources

During the Inca Empire, guano played a key role in the agricultural production activities of the Indians.

The English word "guano" (guano) is formed based on the pronunciation of the Spanish "huano" (guano). Guano is a sediment formed by the accumulation of seabird excrement over a long period of time. It is mainly distributed in the Pacific Ocean. On some small islands and along the coasts of South America, Africa and the Caribbean, the Chincha Islands off the coast of Peru have the largest reserves and the strongest

fertility. The Lobos Islands are composed of Lobos de Tierra and Lobos de Afuera is composed of two twin islands. It is located on the Pacific Ocean 20 to 35 miles away from the coast of Peru. It covers an area of more than 200 square kilometers. American whalers are often active here. In 1852, the guano resources on the island were discovered by European and American countries, and the Lobos Islands were given new commercial value. Although Peru claimed sovereignty over these islands for a long time, there was no fresh water, no food, no lighting, and no anchorage on the islands. Human beings generally cannot survive here for a long time.

Zheng Guangan: "Guano Island Act" and the expansion of US maritime territory, published in "World History", Issue 4, 2019, Page 30, Paul

Gootenberg, Between Silver and Guano: Commercial Policy and the State in Postindependence Peru, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989
 Paul Gootenberg, 1840-1880 Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993
 Jimmy M. Skaggs, The Great Guano Rush: Entrepreneurs and American Overseas Investments, 1840-1880 Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993
 News of the House of Gibbs and the Peruvian Guano Monopoly London: Royal Historical Society, 1981

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The resource side uses its resource advantages to monopolize guano resources and provide funds to realize the modernization of the country.

The Peruvian government has repeatedly negotiated with some contractors in an attempt to maximize revenue from the guano trade.

After negotiations in 1842, 1847 and 1849, the British company Gibbs and Sons (hereinafter referred to as "Gibbs")

Booth & Co.) gained exclusive control of the British and North American guano trade. With its people in London

As well as the potential to obtain loans for Peru in international financial markets, Gibbs Company began in 1842

He engaged in the guano trade and monopolized the global guano trade during the peak period of guano production from 1847 to 1861.

Peru delivers the guano directly to contractors like Gibbs. The guano is sold on behalf of the Peruvian government and contracted

Merchants are authorized to charge commissions and deposits (approximately 4% of total sales) and 5% of all fees.

Interest, including freight prepaid in the UK or elsewhere, Peru except for guano paid by the contractor

In addition to expenses, its main purpose is to borrow large amounts from contractors under these contracts to support Peru's modern

A large part of the money earned from selling guano was used to repay various projects under the Lima oligarchy.

Debt, a typical imperial subordination relationship gradually formed between Britain and Peru. As can be seen from Table 1,

In 1851 and 1852, Peru exported several times more guano to Britain than to the United States. Britain passed

Its strong financial power almost dominates the global guano trade.

Table 1 Exports of Peruvian guano to the United States and Britain (1851 and 1852)

1851				
	Weight/ton	Total sales revenue/USD	Spend/USD	Net income/USD
USA	10000	1000000	100000	900000
U.K.	30000	3000000	300000	2700000
total	40000	4000000	400000	3600000
1852				
USA	10000	1000000	100000	900000
U.K.	30000	3000000	300000	2700000
total	40000	4000000	400000	3600000

Source: *Journal of Latin American Studies* (1971) 3, 401-420. See also *Journal of Latin American Studies* (1971) 3, 401-420. See also *Journal of Latin American Studies* (1971) 3, 401-420.

On December 22, 1847, Peru signed a contract with the Gibbs Company, confirming that the Gibbs Company would

exclusive rights to ship guano worldwide, and the first contract to ship Peruvian guano to the United States. In this contract

After the expiration of the Treaty (December 18, 1849), the Peruvian Congress passed a law on January 25, 1850.

For a special treatment of the guano trade in Peru, see Paul Gootenberg, *Imagining Developing: Economic Ideas in*

Journal of Latin American Studies (1971) 3, 401-420. See also *Journal of Latin American Studies* (1971) 3, 401-420.

They rented out ships to load guano in the Lobos Islands under the most favorable conditions, and stated that "Parties chartering ships from them can receive full and complete protection from the U.S. government." On June 25, De Osma stated this We communicated the problem with Webster. Webster said: "The Government of the United States of America does not recognize any ownership of Peru in the above-mentioned Lobos Islands. These deserted islands were discovered by the American Captain Morel in 1828. Therefore, The U.S. government will protect all U.S. citizens who may travel to these islands to obtain guano on these islands."

Subsequently, the Peruvian official confirmed Peru's long-term ownership of the Lobos Islands based on the principles of priority discovery and possession. The Peruvian government's basis was based on the inheritance of three stages: the Inca Empire period, the Spanish rule and the Peruvian Republic period. This is The historical roots of Peru's claim to the Lobos Islands. As early as the Inca Empire, the Indians knew how to use this precious fertilizer. It was said that anyone who disturbed the birds during the breeding season would be punished with death. In 1527 Francisco Pizarro (Francisco Pizarro) discovered the Lobos Islands near the mainland during a voyage on the coast of Peru, and occupied these islands in the name of the King of Spain. At the beginning of the 19th century, the Spaniard de Alcedo (Antonio de Alcedo) proved that they are part of Peru. The Spanish government has always exercised jurisdiction over these islands and all adjacent islands. At the same time, the Spanish government prohibited all foreign ships from fishing on these islands and only allowed Spanish subjects to fish on these islands. Since the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, various treaties signed by Spain have mentioned the prohibition of fishing by foreign ships in the Spanish colonies. 5 After Peru became independent, in 1833 years 9

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Peru's evidence regarding the ownership of the Lobos Islands holds that "the sovereignty and possession of the Republic of Peru over Lobos de Tierra and Lobos de Afuera is absolute and unquestionable." But Webster Questioning the Peruvian official chain of evidence. First of all, although a fishing ban was issued during the Spanish rule, since the independence of the United States, no one has made any challenge, complaint or interference to the long-term fishing activities of American merchant ships off the coast of Peru. 1833 In September 2001, the Peruvian government promulgated a decree banning fishing, but this decree was promulgated only after Captain Morel's book was published. Secondly, the geographical dictionary compiled by de Alcedo only stated geographical basis. He does not discuss any question of rights based on "discovery, use, or political considerations." In this case, de Alcedo's geographical dictionary cannot be considered authoritative. Again, although Indians have been active since the Inca Empire On the Lobos Islands, however, American merchant ships have been active on the Peruvian coast for half a century, hunting seals and engaging in whaling in adjacent waters. In the past half century, the Peruvian Indians have undoubtedly used these islands more than the citizens of the United States. Much less. In this sense, the United States should have more ownership of the Lobos Islands than Peru. Finally, Peru emphasized its ownership of these islands according to the adjacent law. This seems to be unobjectionable, but in the 19th century The established rule of medium-term public international law (Public law) is that any coastal

A country's jurisdiction over territorial waters can extend to a distance of 1 shell or 3 nautical miles from the coast. Obviously, the distance between the Lobos Islands and the Peruvian coastline far exceeds this distance.

Webster mainly attacked the Peruvian government's rhetoric from the above four aspects and protested the interruption of the United States' fishing rights on the Lobos Islands. International law in the 19th century generally recognized that if an island is discovered by a merchant ship, The country to which it belongs has the right to obtain all resources on the island based on the principle of priority of discovery. At the same time, if the island is adjacent to the coast of a country and citizens of a country are accustomed to using the island, it should be sufficient to prove that the country has ownership of the island, and The property belongs to the state. If it turns out that the Lobos Islands are uninhabited, then the U.S. government has reason to legally occupy the Lobos Islands.

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Peruvian officials have been communicating with the U.S. Charge d'Affaires and the U.S. Secretary of State, adopting a moderate attitude and arguing hard, and repeatedly emphasizing the friendly relations between the two sides as sister republics. When Lima learned that the United States was going to send a naval fleet to the Lobos Islands, Peruvian officials Nationalist sentiment was on the rise. The Lima newspaper *Interprete del Pueblo* published an article on August 4, 1852, stating that "the ordinary means of defense are insufficient to protect the Republic from the problems now exacerbating them." The Supreme Government requests the Council of State to grant it the necessary authorization to take measures to properly discharge its primary responsibility to protect the rights and interests of its people." This article also claimed that the Council of State has put the matter on the agenda, and that the Peruvian government has made military deployments to defend against the invasion of the U.S. Navy. Peru's domestic reaction has attracted close attention from the U.S. government. The United States verified with the Peruvian Foreign Affairs Department that this Whether the article truly represented the official actions of Peru. Soon the Peruvian Foreign Minister Joaquín José de Osma clarified the contents of the newspaper to U.S. Charge d'Affaires Clay, saying that the newspaper was not an official newspaper and the Peruvian government would not Bear the responsibility for the opinions it expresses. It is clear that neither the United States nor Peru is willing to escalate this matter into an international conflict.

In the Lobos Islands dispute, U.S. agricultural interests and commercial interests were intertwined, and Webster also foresaw that sending the navy to the Lobos Islands would be beneficial to the national interest. In fact, Webster was willing to recognize Peruvian claims over the islands. ownership, but only if the Peruvian government can open the island's guano trade equally to all countries on the basis of appropriate taxation. Webster's purpose is to break the guano trade monopoly and implement what is called "fairness and impartiality" "Because at that time, equal and reasonable access to agricultural resources was crucial to the interests of American agricultural groups.

Resolution and Impact of the Trilovos Islands Dispute

Under the strong opposition of the Peruvian government and people, the U.S. government made concessions. In a letter to Captain Jewett on August 21, 1852, Webster stated that Peru had enacted a law in 1842.

“The United States government has been informed that the Peruvian government has enacted a law in 1842 which grants the United States the right to trade guano on the islands of Lobos. This law is a concession to the United States and is a recognition of the United States' right to trade guano on the islands of Lobos. The United States government is pleased to receive this information and is confident that the United States will continue to have a friendly relationship with Peru.”

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The order prohibits foreign ships from loading guano on the islands off the coast of Peru. Therefore, the U.S. government will not provide any military support to Jewett. If a conflict occurs, the government will not be responsible. Although Webster withdrew the naval fleet, it did not provide any military support to the Peruvian government. Expressing recognition of Peru's ownership of the Lobos Islands, on the same day he wrote a letter to Peru's Charge d'Affaires de Osma, still raising the above-mentioned four questions about Peru's ownership.

Alfred Benson was the owner of the merchant ship "Nightingale". To a certain extent, the Lobos Islands dispute in 1852 was a plan jointly planned by him and Secretary of State Webster to compete for Guano Islands internationally. When Jewett wrote that letter to the Secretary of State on June 5, he was fully aware of Peru's jurisdiction over the Lobos Islands; otherwise, they would not have thought it necessary to request armed protection from the United States government to test their claims. It is speculated that Webster was once an experienced farmer and an avid guano consumer. As American scholar Kenneth E. Shewmaker said: "Webster cannot be regarded as a scam victim because he knew the location of the islands and took the initiative to provide naval protection to Jewett." 3 If this coincidental plan succeeds, the United States can sell the guano from the Lobos Islands at a low price. Break Peru's monopoly on guano resources.

The Peruvian government was very worried about the expansion of the dispute between the United States and Peru, and tried to try its best to calm the dispute. When Peru's domestic attitude towards the United States was unfriendly, Peruvian officials adopted a milder attitude. Peru's foreign minister stated that the government did not control the public The legal basis for the media, but he will do his best to urge his people to calm down. The issue of the ownership of the Lobos Islands is extremely important to the Peruvian government. As Clay said: "If we deny that this government has ownership of the Lobos Islands, Sovereignty, when its foreign credit is destroyed, Lobos guano flowing into the market at a lower price, will effectively prevent Chincha guano sales. Bankruptcy of a country is bound to follow, and even may be the country

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It seems completely unreasonable today. At that time, a large amount of evidence showed that the Peruvian Indians had been active in the Lobos Islands for a long time in order to obtain bird eggs, seals and guano, but the United States embarked on a barbaric imperialist adventure and attacked the United States. For the time being, the issue of Peruvian sovereignty seemed irrelevant. This dispute actually became a prelude to the United States' maritime expansion. This was the first time that the United States government tried to take an area that was not adjacent to the United States as its own.

The direct cause of the dispute in the Lobos Islands is the competition for guano resources, but its subsequent impact goes beyond that. Although the plan to occupy the Lobos Islands failed, the U.S. government continues to work hard to find cheaper guano for domestic consumers. Supply. Over the next few years, U.S. activity in the Caribbean and throughout the Pacific in search of guano resources continued unabated. It was clear that once the guano resources were exhausted, the islands would lose their commercial and agricultural value. However, As the strategic importance of some of these islands became increasingly apparent, the United States quickly took steps to prevent its ownership from being shaken. When the United States discovered abundant guano on a remote, uninhabited Pacific island in 1855, the U.S. Congress immediately passed the Guano Islands Act. Act» to incorporate the found Guano Islands into the Union. As global interest in the Pacific surged again in the 1930s, the United States reaffirmed its interest in Baker and Jarvis Islands, as well as Holland Island, Johns Island, Atolls and sovereignty over Palmyra Island and Kingman Reef. These Pacific islands were occupied under the protection of the Guano Island Act. Therefore, it can be said that at the end of the continental expansion of "Manifest Destiny", The United States is also accumulating efforts to prepare for maritime expansion, and the Lobos Islands dispute is, to a certain extent, an important exploration of the United States' maritime expansion.

With the birth of synthetic fertilizers in 1913 and the depletion of Peruvian guano resources, the "guano fever" of the mid-19th century has long ceased to exist. The guano islands found overseas did not bring a large amount of high-quality natural fertilizers to European and American countries. Some The content of phosphorus and potassium in island guano is not high, and its fertilizer function is not strong. For example, the United States soon abrogated the "Galapagos Islands Guano Treaty" because no large amounts of guano were found in the Galapagos Islands. The territorial claim made by the United States under the Guano Island Act of 1856 is not only an important milestone in the history of U.S. imperialism, but also an important milestone in the rise of remote islands in global geopolitics. From the late 19th century At first, these islands became coal stations, submarine telegraph cable relay stations, and later became air force bases. Many islands played an important role in Pacific transportation stations. In addition to the United States, Britain was not far behind and annexed the Curiamuria Islands. Although this

郑光安:《〈Guano Island Act〉与美国的海洋领土扩张》,载《世界历史》,2019年第4期,第39-40页。
Zheng Guangan: « 'Guano Island Act' and the expansion of US maritime territory », published in «World History», Issue 4, 2019, pp. 39-40.

The guano resources on these islands were nearly exhausted. In the second half of the 19th century, the United Kingdom also claimed to occupy Kiritimati Island and the Malden Islands in the Central Pacific. (lands), annexed some guano islands near Namibia. At that time, occupying guano islands became a common way for a country to declare itself a colonial power. France, Japan, Mexico, Germany, and Australia all joined the fight for Pacific islands. By World War I, almost every island was theoretically a are all subject to some distant imperial government.

Four Conclusions

Judging from the motivations of the Lobos Islands dispute, the United States is trying to take possession of the Guano Islands that belong to Peru. This is a test of the United States' maritime expansion and has a strong imperialist nature. Judging from the process of the dispute, Peru The government provided a complete chain of evidence, confirming that the Lobos Islands belonged to Peru during the three historical periods of the Inca Empire, Spanish colonization, and the Republic of Peru. This is the historical root of the Republic of Peru's exercise of ownership. Since independence, the Peruvian government has targeted the Guano Islands. The various decrees promulgated are the legal basis for Peru to exercise ownership of the Lobos Islands. Judging from the outcome of the dispute, the peaceful settlement of the dispute has provided a stable international environment for Peru to monopolize guano resources, but this has also led Peru to the direction of The economic development model relied on borrowing for development and fell into the trap of the "resource curse". Judging from the subsequent impact of the controversy, the entire "guano era" initiated the global territorial and economic expansion in the Pacific region. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Pacific All the small islands on the island have been carved up. Peru's rich guano resources have supplied the world's agricultural production for about 40 years. After guano became a bulk commodity in international trade, imperialist countries placed great emphasis on the huge economic value brought by guano. The United States promulgated the "Guano Island Act" and took the lead in using legislation to legalize the right to discover Guano Islands. Imperialist countries soon joined the battle for Pacific islands. Today's maritime territorial disputes in the international community are more dominated by major powers. The game of geopolitics, but the international actions and even armed conflicts using territorial disputes as an excuse to compete for economic resources are still not over. To a certain extent, the competition for unknown ocean resources is the key to the game of geopolitics.

(Editor Huang Nian)

^yChristmas Island (Kiritimati Island) is also called Kiritimati Islands and Kiribati Christmas Island. It was discovered by the British navigator James Cook on December 24, 1777. It was on Christmas Eve at this time, so it was named Christmas Island. ^y 1888 It became a British colony in 1999 and is now part of the Republic of Kiribati.