

【Material】

Hostilities Prior to War Declarations As Reported in American and British Newspapers

1. Chino-Japanese War

Teruto Okamura

I. Introduction

When the Japanese navy planes made an assault on Pearl Harbor on December 8th (7th, U.S. time), 1941, there was a loud outcry raised on the part of the assault victims against Japan's hostile act prior to a declaration of war. The aftereffects of the event is still lingering in the Americans' image of the Japanese¹⁾. Newspapers have played a major role in forming public opinions and images of nations. In the Pearl Harbor case an attempt has already been made by this author to contrast the gap between reality and reports for an analytical review of its impacts²⁾.

This documentation is intended to serve as the first of the forthcoming serial to complement and augment the aforementioned research. News reports, editorials, and letters to the editor, concerning hostilities prior to a declaration of war at the time of the Chino-Japanese War in July, 1894 have been collected from one American (*the New York Times*) and two British (*the Times* and *the Daily Telegraph*) newspapers. Some of the articles quoted (from *the Times*) have been documented in other source books³⁾, but in order to provide a more comprehensive perspective of newspaper reporting of the event, they are included in the present documentation effort.

II. The New York Times

[Tuesday, July 31, 1894]

CHINA AND JAPAN

It is not at all likely that any “grave” international complication will arise over the fact that a vessel sunk by a Japanese cruiser, with nearly all on board, was a chartered transport flying the British flag. That could only happen if the British Government were anxious to pick a quarrel with the Japanese Government. The British Government has shown no such disposition, and did not show it in the House of Commons yesterday, when, questions were put to it by Tory members of which the obvious object was rather to put the Liberal Government in the wrong than to cause justice to be done. For this purpose China and the Chinese were praised by the critics of the Government, and Japan and the Japanese were disparaged.

It seems to be true that there had been no formal declaration of war before the Japanese opened fire upon the Chinese squadron escorting the Chinese transports laden with Chinese troops, of which transports the Kow-Shung was one. But even as to this we have no certainty. It is to be borne in mind that we have no detailed Japanese account of the encounter. All that we have are official and unofficial Chinese versions, intended to influence the opinion of Europe and America. A little suppressio veri is a very venial offense in Oriental diplomacy. If the Japanese Government had notified the Chinese Government that any attempt to reinforce the Chinese troops threatening to occupy Corea would be treated as an act of war, we should not be likely to hear of that notification from Chinese sources.

Whether such a notification was or was not given, it is plain that the attempted reinforcement was an act of war, intended to give China a better chance of declaring or of beginning war under more favorable auspices than China would otherwise have had. It is an

old saying that "the aggressor in a war is not the first who uses force, but the first who renders the use of war necessary." The attempted reinforcement of the Chinese troops in Asia was, to all intents and purposes, an act of war. It would not have been wise or dignified or conciliatory or anything else but simply silly for the Japanese to await the successful issue of the attempt before interfering with it, and then to encounter itself with protest. The sending of transports laden with Chinese soldiers and escorted by Chinese men-of-war to the probable theatre of war was an act which had no meaning whatever with reference to any other purpose than the purpose of defeating Japan by force. Everybody engaged in the expedition, Chinese or foreigners, was perfectly aware of the risk he was running. The Kow-shung may have been "flying the British flag," but she was a chartered vessel in the Chinese service and engaged in an expedition hostile to Japan.

There can scarcely be a question about the direction American sympathies would take in case of a conflict over Corea between China and Japan. The recent history of the two countries indicates plainly enough that the desire of China is to close all the countries over which China may claim suzerainty, as well as the Chinese Empire itself, to commerce and to Western civilization, and that the aim of Japan is to open theirs to the influences of the civilization, and that such will be the effect of Japanese victory. While no public statement of its position in the conflict that has now been fairly begun can be said to have been made by either power, and while it may be quite true that the real cause of the war is the inveterate enmity between the two nations, no such statement is needed to determine the sympathies of the enlightened and progressive nations of the world. It is enough to know that the victory of China would be followed by an enforcement of the Chinese policy of exclusion and stagnation, and the victory of Japan by the enforcement of the Japanese policy of commerce and of progress.

London, July 31. —The Daily News says: "The British flag story rests on Chinese authority. If it proves true it may have exceedingly awkward consequences for Japan. Doubtless China has received a very serious blow. The Japan seem inclined to regard a declaration of war as a pure formality on a par with the suzerainty of Corea." The Morning Post says: "We must content ourselves for the present with Sir Edward Grey's qualified statement, until the conflicting evidence be cleared by unimpeachable details. The existing explanation of the Kow-Ching affair is of the flimsiest character and certainly does not supply any justification of Japanese action. If it is true that the British flag was deliberately fired on before war was declared awkward complications may easily arise." The Daily Graphic says, in a leader on the Chinese-Japanese conflict: "Inasmuch as war has not been declared, it is impossible to doubt that the sinking of the Kow Shung is an outrage for which the promptest and fullest reparation must be exacted by the Earl of Kimberley. China was acting entirely within her rights, and the owners of the Kow Shung were equally justified in carrying troops. The Japanese seem to have acted with perfectly fiendish brutality. The British blood has been spilled. Japan will have to foresake her Corean venture until she has given full satisfaction for this gratuitous outrage." The Daily Chronicle says: If the telegraph account of the sinking of the Kow Shung be true a more abominable and coldblooded butchery never was perpetuated. The proper place for the Japanese officers would not be the quarterdeck, but the yardarm. We must decline to believe this account until it is officially confirmed."

[Wednesday, August 1, 1894]

THE WAR IN THE EAST

The naval battle reported to have been fought between China and

Japan confirms the showing made by the previous attack of the Japanese upon the transports conveying Chinese troops for service in Korea and upon the men-of-war convoying these transports. It shows, that is to say, a much higher degree of naval efficiency on the part of the Japanese than upon the part of the Chinese. We should expect this as part of the superior "modernity" of the more progressive nation. In ships and material of war there appears to have been no great disparity. The Chinese officials are much too enlightened not to know that a modern battleship is a more efficient engine of destruction than a war junk, and they have accordingly supplied themselves with modern battleships and cruisers from British dockyards. They have also attempted to introduce the modern naval tactics according to which these ships are handled and fought. But here evidently and quite inevitably they have less successful. Neither are the Chinese officials themselves capable of concealing or waiving their jealousy of the foreign officers, nor is the hatred of "foreign devils" which pervades all classes of people auspicious for the efficiency of a squadron manned by Chinese and officered by Europeans. The Japanese, on the other hand, have apparently fought their vessels and handled the big guns, the Gatlings, and the torpedo tubes after the most approved European models.

The advantage in sea power appears to be distinctly on the side of the Japanese, and there is nothing improbable in the prediction cabled from Shanghai that no Chinese man-of-war will hereafter venture to take the sea. This means that the occupation of the Chinese suzerainty cannot be effected from the water. The only alternative is a march of the Chinese Army down the Korean peninsula, an expedition which has no parallel in modern European warfare, being a long and circuitous march over a range of mountains and through a country almost destitute of highways, in which the invading troops will have to establish bases of supplies under difficulties quite unknown in the warfare of civilized countries. These

things make it evident that if the Japanese maintain the superiority they have indicated at sea, and the Chinese are determined to drive the Japanese out of Corea, as they have the power to do with their immensely superior resources of numbers and money, the war will be a long war. The same natural barriers that have made it possible for Corea to maintain itself as "a hermit nation" will make appallingly difficult for an invader to occupy the peninsula by land, even with the consent and co-operation of its inhabitants.

Nevertheless, the most disastrous effects of the war must fall upon the weaker combatant, and the more our sympathies are with Japan the more deplorable must the war appear to be. So far as the actual responsibility for hostilities goes, the official statement yesterday published on the part of Japan bears out the view we have already expressed and is quite consistent with all the known facts. China had notified Japan to evacuate Corea, under threat of an advance by sea and a landing of the Chinese force. Japan had notified China that such an advance would be regarded as a "menace"; in other words, that it would be resisted. The advance was made, nevertheless, and the resistance occurred. There seems to be no sound reason why any subjects of a neutral nation who had risked either their lives or their property in a movement against Japan should invoke their Governments to save them from the consequences.

[Thursday, August 2, 1894]

JAPAN HAS DECLARED WAR

THE FORMAL PROCLAMATION WAS MADE YESTERDAY
Announcement Made by the Japanese Military to the Foreign Representatives—A Warning Already Sent Out by Great Britain
to Merchant Vessels—British Officers, in China's Service, in a Peculiar plight.

LONDON, Aug. 1, —The Earl of Kimberley, minister of Foreign Affairs, received a dispatch this morning from Hugh Fraser, British Minister in Tokio, announcing the declaration of war. He was visited this afternoon by the Japanese Minister, who personally communicated to him a similar announcement of the declaration.

Lord Kimberley, immediately upon receipt of notice from the Japanese Government that war had been declared, wired all British representatives abroad to warn Captains of merchant vessels of the fact, in order that they might form their cargoes accordingly. Any contraband of war comprised in cargoes will be handled at the risk of the owners or charterers of vessels.

The Government will hold a Cabinet meeting within the next two days to consider the attitude of Great Britain to the Korean question. Despite the explanation and apology of the Japanese for the Kow-Shing affair, the greatest indignation is still felt by shipowners and other persons interested in the Eastern trade. They insist that the Government must press Japan for ample compensation and for assurances of better faith in the future. All stories of Japanese cruelty are regarded in shipping circles as true, and the Japanese are denounced as cowardly and bloodthirsty.

[Friday, August 3, 1894]

CHINESE ACCEPT THE WAR EMPEROR ISSUES A MANIFESTO ANSWERING JAPAN'S NOTE

He Declares that the Issue Has Been Thrust upon Him and He Orders His Commanders to "Root These Pestilential Japanese from Their Lairs" —Council of War in Tien-Tsin—The Viceroy Confident of Victory in the End.

Tien-Tsin, Aug. 2, —The Emperor of China has issued a mani-

festo in response to Japan's declaration of war. The manifesto declares that the Emperor accepts the war which Japan has thrust upon him and orders the Viceroy and Commanders of the imperial forces to "root these pestilential Japanese from their lairs."

The Emperor throws the whole blame for the shedding of blood upon the Japanese, who he asserts, are fighting in an unjust cause.

The Emperor has expressed a desire to come to Tien-Tsin in order to be near the centre of interest, but Viceroy Li Hung Chang is opposed to the movement on the ground that Tsien-Tsin does not afford suitable accommodations for his Majesty.

A council of war was held to-day. Afterward the Viceroy told the representatives of European powers that he was confident of the ultimate defeat of the Japanese. He had no fears of an attack upon Taku, as the garrison there had been strongly reinforced.

III. The Times

[Monday, July 30, 1894]

Although no information has reached us up to the present that war has been declared between the two chief Asiatic Powers of the Far East, it is only too certain that a serious encounter between the naval forces of China and Japan took place on Friday. The accounts received from Chinese and from Japanese sources vary considerably in detail, but they agree in stating that the Japanese were the assailants, that they had the best of the encounter, and that they sank one of the transports conveying troops from Taku to Korea.

—(irrelevant part omitted)—

The naval action of Friday is important, because it is a distinct act of war and because it illustrates the temper of one at least of the

combatants. It is plain, however, that as a strategical measure the Japanese attack has failed to accomplish its object. The telegram from Shanghai, which gives the Chinese version of the incident states that six of the seven transports escorted by the Chen-Yuen and her consorts escaped and a later despatch adds that intelligence of their safe arrival in Korea has been received. If this information be correct, the bulk of the Chinese troops forwarded by sea are now on Korean soil, while a Tokio telegram of yesterday's date alleges that the mainbody of the Chinese army crossed the northwestern frontier of Korea on Wednesday. It will be well, perhaps, to await confirmation of this assertion from Chinese sources, as it may possibly be intended in some way to excuse the action of the Japanese fleet a couple of days later. That action and, indeed, the whole attitude of Japan in this dispute certainly require some more convincing justification than that which has been advanced "on high authority" in behalf of Count Ito's Government. It is, indeed, a matter for some satisfaction that the Japanese should realize as the publication of this document shows they do realize, the importance of securing the moral approbation of Europe in conflict which they seem determined to provoke. But if they are to obtain that support they must prove by more convincing arguments than any they have yet produced that they are not wantonly disturbing the peace of the Far East in the interests of their national ambitions, or to subserve the purposes of their party chiefs. We are assured that the attack made by the Japanese ships on the Chinese transports was preceded by "severe provocation" on the part of the latter. In the eyes of civilised races a good deal of provocation is, indeed, needed to explain such an act. It may have been given. We may hereafter learn in what the provocation lay which irresistibly impelled the Japanese commander to take upon himself the responsibility of breaking the peace between two great States and sending several hundreds of men incapable of defending themselves to their death. But until we hear both stories as

to the nature of this provocation most of us will refuse to accept the mere assertion of the Japanese that it was sufficient to excuse the conduct of their sailors. The long manifesto in which it is sought to defend the general attitude of Japan contains nothing new. It is a travesty of the documents which European Powers have occasionally put forward in the moments of embarrassment. But while it is sufficiently amusing to hear the apologies of the MIKADO's Government solemnly assuring the world that Japan has been affording it a model of calm and meekness in the face of the provocative and defiant attitude of China, it is impossible to read the smooth protest without perceiving that it leaves the merits of the case pretty much where they were. The gist of the whole matter is that Japan is bent on reducing the historical suzerainty of China over Corea to the condition of a purely ceremonial relation, and China is resolved to resist the attempt. The one really hopeful element in the situation is that war, so far as is known has not yet been formally declared. That leaves the door open for the influence of the Great Powers in the interests of peace and of that commerce which depends on peace. It is satisfactory to know that up to Saturday, at all events, negotiations between the two countries had not been broken off. It is clear, however that every day adds to the tension of the situation, and that if the Powers are determined to prevent a long and dangerous war they must convince both China and Japan that there are contingencies in which they would proceed to something more than mere exhortations and admonitions. The incidents of Friday do not necessarily mean war, but if similar incidents should happen too often the accepted time for pacific mediation will have gone by.

[Friday, August 3, 1894]

A telegram from our Correspondent at Tokio makes several interesting announcements. By the admission of the Japanese

authorities, the Chinese have succeeded in landing some 5,000 troops in Korea; and it must be remembered that in addition to these a very much larger force is reported to be advancing by land. On the Japanese side we have no account of the presence of more than the 9,000 land troops which were assembled in Soul before the outbreak of hostilities. As to the naval forces, with whom the next developments rest, our Correspondent reports that the whole of the fleet—by which he evidently means the Japanese fleet—is assembled close to Asan, and that “a decisive naval battle is imminent.” This despatch was dated on Wednesday; but according to a Shanghai telegram the steamer Wuchang had seen the Chinese fleet at anchor off Wei-hai-wei on the evening of Tuesday. Wei-hai-wei is the Chinese naval station, near Chefoo, on the west coast of the Korean sea, and quite 200 miles from Asan. The main body of the Chinese ships are probably still there, and if there is to be an immediate engagement off Asan it will be between the Japanese cruisers, the Naniwa and her companions, and the advanced squadron of the Chinese. It can hardly be expected, therefore, that the naval battle will be decisive, for each country has a number of ships in reserve; but it may very well be of capital importance either as confirming the first Japanese successes or as showing that, when the enemy is an ironclad and not a defenceless transport, the task of the Japanese Admiral is harder than he had supposed.

From both sides we have now received fuller accounts of the sinking of Kowshing. The Japanese Government officially announced that it has received the signed affidavits of the captain and chief officers of the ill-fated vessel, and it publishes a summary of them. Assuming that the documents are genuine, their importance is great, though it is impossible to base a final judgment upon a mere summary. In matters of law, even of international law, much depends upon details, and a summary like this naturally omits many details that may prove to be of importance. But, with this reserva-

tion, we may admit that the affidavits put the conduct of the Japanese Commander in a somewhat different light from that in which it appeared from the first accounts. The Shanghai account stated that the Japanese boarded the transport and ordered her to proceed to Japan; that the captain of the transport refused; that the Japanese officers then withdrew, and immediately they had returned to their own ship the Japanese opened fire with the machine-guns in their tops, clearing the Kowshing's decks; and that they then fired two torpedoes, which took effect. Detailed accounts followed of the massacre of the Chinese, when in the water, by means of the Japanese quick-firing guns. The accounts given in the affidavits differ from this in several ways. It states that the order was given to the captain of the Kowshing to follow the Naniwa; that he replied, "We are in your power "; but that afterwards he informed the Japanese officer that the Chinese generals would not allow him to follow. Then the Japanese officer returned on board his ship, and the Naniwa signaled to the captain, "Quit the ship immediately." This the captain would not allow him to do; and the torpedo was discharged. The captain and other Europeans then jumped overboard, were fired at by the Chinese when in the water, but were rescued by a Japanese boat, and kindly treated. It thus appears—assuming once more that the summary fairly expresses the contents of a genuine affidavit—that the Japanese did make some attempt, first to induce the transport to surrender and next to save the lives of the Europeans on board; for the chief officer declares that "the second visit of the Japanese officer was with the view of transferring the Europeans to the man-of-war before the firing began; but these good intentions were frustrated by the Chinese." Nothing, however, can alter the fact that the sinking of the transport was a horrible business, though, according to Professor Westlake, who writes to us on the subject this morning, it may conceivably be defended on grounds of international law. And one thing comes out more clearly than ever from the officers' affidavits;

namely that the excuse put forward by the Japanese Government—that the Japanese commander did not know that the Kowshing was a British ship—is absolutely unsupported. The officer had examined the ship's papers, and the position had been fully explained to him. He had the opportunity of reporting all the facts to his captain; and we must assume that he did so. The captain fired his torpedoes well knowing that the ship which was carrying the soldiers whom he regarded as enemies was a British ship.

[Friday, August 3, 1894]

The Sinking of the Kowshing

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir, —It is far from being as yet possible to form a definitive opinion on the conduct of the Japanese cruiser Naniwa in sinking the Chinese transport Kowshing while under the British flag, but, since the flag is concerned, the occurrence is of a nature to produce an excited state of feeling in this country, and it may be useful to give some indication of what points are clear, and to what points the inquiries which it is necessary to make ought to be directed.

First the Kowshing appears to have been British owned and to have been rightfully flying the British flag, but it is equally clear that she was acting as a transport in the Chinese service. If to this it shall be found possible to add that the service was a belligerent one, nothing is more certain than that she was not entitled to any protection from the British flag and ownership. Lord Stowell condemned the *Orozembo*, a neutral (American) vessel, carrying three belligerent (Dutch) military officers, on the ground that "a vessel hired by the enemy for the conveyance of military persons is to (be) considered as a transport subject to condemnation" (6, Ch. Rob. 433). If three officers were sufficient to let in this doctrine, much more are 1,700 men with their proportion of officers.

Secondly, I hold it as equally certain that the Japanese were not

precluded from taking the service as a belligerent one by the mere fact that war had not been declared. To begin war without a declaration is a bad habit, which has nevertheless found its way for centuries past into the practice of nations, and which cannot be considered to be already excluded from that practice by the small number of better examples which have been set during the second half of the present century. It is true that the commencement of war *de facto* is only valid in international law as between the parties to the war so commenced, neutrals being entitled to notice before they can be made liable to the peculiar responsibilities which a state of war imposes on them. But the Kowshing was not acting as a neutral breaking a blockade or carrying contraband of war. She was a transport in Chinese service, and therefore, a belligerent, if China was a belligerent, just as a similar employment identified the Orozembo with the belligerent Dutch.

But, thirdly, the Japanese could not make the Kowshing a belligerent by attacking her. In order to justify themselves against her neutral owners and the neutrals whom she carried, they must show either that war had already been commenced *de facto* between China and Japan by acts of hostility committed elsewhere, or that the Chinese fleet, of which the Kowshing formed a part, was engaged in a service the completion of which Japan could not be expected to permit. The former alternative might be satisfactory either by acts of hostility committed between China and Japan in Korea or by acts of hostility committed by between Korea and Japan in the course of a line of action in which Korea was receiving the support of China. The justification might probably be sustained on the ground of the latter alternative, by showing that the reinforcements on board the fleet in question were being poured into Korea for the purpose of dislodging the Japanese from a position which they claimed to be entitled to hold there.

Fourthly, however, the case as between England and Japan may

not be decided by our admitting, if we should be bound to admit, that Japan had a right to treat the Kowshing as a belligerent. What if it should appear that she might have been captured instead of being sunk, or that she might have been pursued so as to prevent her landing in Korea the troops which she had on board, or that, if she had landed them in any part of the Korean peninsula which she could have reached, the military damage to be apprehended from her doing so would have been slight? Here are a series of suggestions as to matters of fact, on which we are as yet entirely without the information needed for giving answers. And it must be confessed that if the answers were unfavourable to Japan, we should be breaking rather new ground in holding that we had a right to complain. That war must be conducted, even as between the belligerents themselves, on the principle that suffering must not be inflicted which is out of all proportion to the military advantage to be gained by it, is what none would deny. A belligerent towards whom that principle was violated would have the right to use measures of retorsion or to exact an indemnity at the peace if he was able. But between states enjoying European civilization war is so seldom stained by a disregard of that principle that precedents are wanting for a neutral government's making a claim on behalf of its subjects who have suffered from a violation of it, when by their conduct they have identified themselves with one of the belligerent parties. On principle, however, it would seem that the claim might be made, and the recognition of the neutral's right might be a useful restraint on the excess to which the terrible means of destruction now existing must operate as a temptation.

Fifthly, we are told that the Chinese troops on board the Kowshing would not allow her to be surrendered. It cannot be maintained that this at all affected the right of the Japanese to destroy her, if, in consequence of her not being surrendered, it really was a matter of military necessity to do so. The Europeans who undertake the duty

of commanding or transporting Chinese must stand or fall with them.

Yours faithfully

J. WESTLAKE

Chelsea, August 2

[Tuesday, August 7, 1894]

The Sinking of the Kowshing

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir—The words of soberness and truth were spoken with reference to the sinking of the Kowshing in the letter from Professor Westlake which you printed on Friday last. Ignorance dies hard or, after the appearance of that letter and of your remarks upon it, one might have expected that leading articles would be less lavishly garnished with such phrases as “act of piracy,” “war without declaration,” “insult to the British flag,” “condign punishment of the Japanese commander.” But these flowers of speech continue to blossom; and now that the facts of the case seem to be established beyond reasonable doubt by the telegrams of this morning, I should be glad to be allowed to state shortly what I believe will the verdict of international law upon what has occurred.

If the visiting, and eventual sinking, of the Kowshing occurred in time of peace, or in time of war before she had notice that war had broken out, a gross outrage has taken place. But the facts are otherwise.

In the first place, a state of war existed. It is trite knowledge, and has been over and over affirmed by Courts, both English and American, that a war may legally commence with a hostile act on one side, not preceded by declaration. How frequently this has occurred in practice may be seen from a glance at an historical statement prepared for the War Office by Colonel Maurice *a propos* of the objections to a Channel tunnel. Whether or no hostilities had previ-

ously occurred upon the mainland, I hold that the acts of the Japanese commander in boarding the Kowshing and threatening her with violence in case of disobedience to his orders were acts of war.

In the second place, the Kowshing had notice of the existence of a war, at any rate from the moment when she received the orders of the Japanese commander.

The Kowshing, therefore, before the first torpedo was fired, was, and knew that she was, a neutral ship engaged in the transport service of a belligerent. (Her flying the British flag, whether as a *ruse de guerre* or otherwise, is wholly immaterial.) Her liabilities, as such ship, were two-fold:—

1. Regarded as an isolated vessel, she was liable to be stopped, visited, and taken in for adjudication by a Japanese Prize Court. If, as was the fact, it was practically impossible for a Japanese prize crew to be placed on board of her, the Japanese Commander was within his rights in using any amount of force necessary to compel her to obey his orders.

2. As one of a fleet of transports and man-of-war engaged in carrying reinforcements to the Chinese troops on the mainland, the Kowshing was clearly part of a hostile expedition, or one which might be treated as hostile, which the Japanese were entitled, by the use of all needful force, to prevent from reaching its destination.

The force employed seems to have been in excess of what might lawfully be used, either for the arrest of an enemy's neutral transport or for barring the progress of a hostile expedition. The rescued officers also having been set at liberty in due course, I am unable to see that any violation of the rights of neutrals has occurred. No apology is due to our Government, nor have the owners of the Kowshing, or the relatives of any of her European officers who may have been lost, any claim for compensation. I have said nothing about the violation by the Japanese of the usage of civilised warfare (not of the Geneva Convention, which has no bearing upon the

question), which would be involved by their having fired upon the Chinese troops in the water; not upon only because the evidence upon this point is as yet insufficient, but also because the grievance, if established, would affect only the rights of the belligerents, *inter se*, not the rights of neutrals, with which alone this letter is concerned. I have also confined my observations to the legal aspects of the question, leaving to others to test the conduct of the Japanese commander by the rules of chivalrous dealing or of humanity.

Your obedient servant
T.E. HOLLAND
A'thenaem Club Aug.6

IV. The Daily Telegraph

[Saturday, July 28, 1894]

CHINA AND JAPAN
REPORTED DECLARATION OF WAR
KING OF COREA A PRISONER
RUMOURED NAVAL FIGHT
CHINESE TRANSPORT SUNK
(REUTER'S AGENCY)

SHANGHAI, July 27, (9.40 A.M.)

A telegram from a high authority in Tientsin reached here lastnight stating that the prospects of the maintenance of peace between China and Japan were more favourable.

This morning, however, news was received to the effect that war had been declared.

It is rumoured that several Chinese warships are in trouble; but information is scarce and meagre.

Telegraphic communication with Corea is interrupted.

TIENTSIN, July 27

Hostilities have commenced between China and Japan, and more collisions are hourly expected, although war has not yet been officially declared, either at Tokio or Pekin.

It is believed in Government circles here that such declaration will not be made for several days to come, and that in the event of the pourparlers, which are still in progress, resulting amicably, the collisions that have already taken place will be mutually disallowed; otherwise they will be held to constitute a *casus belli*.

The first overt act on the Japanese side was the firing upon and sinking by a Japanese gunboat of the transport Kowshing, bound for Corea, belonging to Messrs. Matheson, of London, and chartered by the Chinese Government for conveying troops to Corea.

It is reported here that the Kowshing went down with all on board. A number of trading boats owned by Chinese companies that have been intimately connected with Messrs. Matheson's boats in the coasting trade have been taken over by Messrs. Matheson, and will hereafter fly the British flag.

[Tuesday, July 31, 1894]

Reuter's Agency is informed that a telegram was received at the Chinese Legation late last night confirming the intelligence that a collision had taken place between some Japanese men-of-war and the Chinese ships escorting the second or smaller division of the troops despatched from Taku to Corea on the 20th inst. The troops were destined for the reinforcement of the Chinese post at Asan, and the collision took place near the entrance to Prince Jerome Gulf, the inlet on which Ashan is situated. According to the telegram, the Japanese were the first to open fire, the Chinese fleet having been instructed not to fire unless previously attacked or unless the landing of the troops was opposed. The number of ships engaged on each side is

not stated but the result of the action was that one of the Japanese ships was disabled by the Chen-Yuen, while the Chinese chartered transport, Kow-shing, which was flying the British flag at the time, was fired upon by the Japanese, and sunk with all on board.

No mention is made of the reported capture by the Japanese of the Chinese warship Tsao Kiang. it is pointed out that the engagement took place without any declaration of war having been made, and while negotiations were still in progress. The Ministers of the two countries still remain at their respective posts.

Rueter's Agency learns that Captain von Hanneken, who is reported to have been among those killed on board the Kow Shing during the engagement off Yasan, was formerly an officer in the German Army. For the past twenty-five years he held an important position in the Chinese service.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY TELEGRAPH"

Sir — War has evidently broken out between China and Japan over that wretched country Corea. The press are continually writing that it is caused by Japan wanting to try her army and navy, like a child with her new toys. it is folly to write in this way, for Japan does not want war; she simply wants to protect her large interests in the Hermit kingdom, of which more anon. In the meantime it may interest your readers to know what Japan has accomplished since the restoration of the Mikado, now more than a quarter of a century ago. She has a constitutional Government, each department of which is well organised in every respect; a splendidly equipped army and navy, patriotic and brave; free compulsory education of a high standard, universities and medical schools, hospitals throughout the country conducted on European principles, postal and mail services to all parts of the empire at lower rates than here, telegraph lines to every point, railways yearly increasing, civil and criminal courts with good codes of law and efficient judges, a mint that keeps up to its original

standard, a lighthouse service which has thoroughly lighted her dangerous coasts, fleets of vessels trading to all parts of the country and abroad — in fact, the whole of the trade with Corea is carried in Japanese bottoms. Her trade has grown enormously in these years; and it is left to one of her medical men to discover the bacillus of the plague in Hong Kong, whither he was sent by his enlightened Government to investigate this dreadful disease.

In all these tasks she has set herself to do she has not, like most Eastern nations, just acquired a veneer, but she has carried them to a successful issue with no retrograde motion, and it is evident that she means to continue in the same course.

Japan opened up Corea to trade, and as there are a large number of Japanese established there she cannot let the kingdom fall into chaos through the incapacity and misrule of the Corean Government; and she also knows that if it is left to China to remedy matters they will remain as they are or become worse so far as she is concerned.

Ask anybody who knows China well what she has done for herself and her people in the same time. — I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F.M.I.

[Thursday, August 2, 1894]

CHINA AND JAPAN
WAR DECLARED
FIGHTING IN COREA
REPULSE OF THE JAPANESE
AN APOLOGY TO ENGLAND
(REUTER'S AGENCY)

TOKIO, July 31

The Japanese Government have declared to the foreign representatives here that a state of war exists between Japan and China. This notification is regarded as equivalent to a declaration of war.

TOKIO, Agu.1

With regard to the sinking of the transport Kow-Shing, the Japanese Government have instructed the Japanese Minister in London to express to the British Foreign Office their regret that it was not until after the engagement that the Japanese commander ascertained that the Kow-Shing was a British ship.

It is now known that the captain of the transport was among those saved, and that he, together with many others, was rescued by the boats from the Japanese cruiser Naniwa.

[Friday, August 3, 1894]

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT. BERLIN, AUG.2

As the sinking of the Kow-Shing took place before the declaration of war, Japan has, in the eyes of all competent persons in Germany, committed an offence against International law which will have to be atoned for. I have had a conversation to-day on this subject with a personage whose opinion in this country is authoritative, and he assured me that if it should be established that the transport Kow-Shing was really carrying the British flag he could not conceive that the Japanese Government could give a satisfactory explanation of their outrageous conduct. It was absurd to say that the flag was not noticed if it was flying, and the company had a perfect right to convey troops or anything else for the Chinese Government before a declaration of war had been made. He supposed that Japan would not only have to pay a high indemnity for her criminal rashness, but would also be called upon by England to atone in some other way either formal or material.

I am informed that the Japanese Government, in preparation for this war, sent last year several general staff officers to inspect the coast line of Corea. It may be interesting to recall the fact that a number of Japanese officers have for some years past been going

through a careful course of instruction in Germany with German regiments. Amongst them were three captains, belonging respectively to the infantry, cavalry, and field artillery, and a colonel who displayed a great knowledge of his professional work whilst here, and is now said to be commanding the Japanese troops in Korea.

[References]

- (1) Okamura, Teruto, The Rift between Reality and Reporting: FRD and Pearl Harbor. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, No.7 (1994), pp.48-49
- (2) *ibid.*, pp.73-75
- (3) *Gaikoku Shimbun ni miru Nihon* (Japan as described in Foreign Newspapers) vol.2, Tokyo: Mainichi Communications, 1990, pp. 493-507

The articles quoted here from the *New York Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* are transcribed from the microfilms produced by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A., and by the British Library Newspaper Library, London, U.K. respectively. The articles from the *Times* are quoted from *Gaikoku Shimbun ni miru Nihon*.