Piotr Olender

Sino-Japanese Naval War

1894-1895

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SINO-JAPANESE NAVAL WAR

1894-1895

STRATUS

Chinese names index (in the Wade-Giles and pinyin transcription)

Amoy (town) – present day Xiamen
Antung (town, Manchuria) – Andong
Chaopeitsui (fort, Weihaiwei) – Zhaobeizui
Changhaokoutse (town, Shantung) – Zhanghaogouze
Changfungse (town near Weihaiwei) – Zhangfungse
Changkouai (Changhutai; town in Manchuria) – Zhangouai
Chefoo (Chihfu; town, Shantung) – Zhifu
Chekiang (Chechiang; province) – Zhejiang
Ch'ing (dynasty) – Quin
Chihli (province) – Zhili
Chiuliench'eng (town, Mandżuria) – Jiuliancheng
Chihsutai (Fort, Weihaiwei) – Zhisudai
Ch'un (Ch'un Ch'ing; Grand Prince) – Chun
Chungkou (bay near Weihaiwei) – Zhungou
Cinampo (Chinampo, Chinnampo; bay) – Jinnambo
Fang Pai-ch'ien (Cpt) – Fang Baiqian
Fenghuangch'eng (town, Manchuria) – Fenghuangcheng
Fengtao (Pungdo, Phungdo; island) – Fengdao
Foochow (town, Fukien) – Fuzhou
Fuchou (town, Manchuria) – Fuzhou
Fukien (province) – Fujian
Foulingtse (town near Weihaiwei) – Foulingze
Haich'eng (town, Manchuria) – Haicheng
Haich'uan (island, Fukien) – Haiquan
Haiyang (island, the Yellow Sea) – Haiyang
Hanchou (town, Chekiang) – Hanzhou
Hsiehchiaoso (fort, Weihaiwei) – Xiejiaosou
Hsien Feng (Emperor) – Xianfeng
Hsinchiang (East Turkestan; province) – Xinjiang
Hsiuyan (town, Manchuria) – Xiuyan
Hsiyu (island, the Pescadores) – Xiyou
Huang (island and fort, Weihaiwei) – Huang
Huangtuya (fort, Weihaiwei) – Huangduya
Hoanpu (harbour) – Heanbu
Huayuank'ou (town, bay, South Manchuria) – Huayuankou
Hunho (Hun; river, Manchuria) – Hunhe
Hushan (town in Manchuria) – Hushan
Hushan (town near Weihaiwei) – Hushan
I K'o-t'ang (General) – Yi Ketang
Jih (island and fort, Weihaiwei) – Ri
Jungch'eng (bay and town, Shantung) – Rongcheng
Kaip'ing (town, Manchuria) – Gaiping
Kanchou (Canton, town) – Ganzhou
Kangwangchai (town, Mandżuria) – Ganwangzhai
Keelung (town, Taiwan) – Jilong
Keitoutsai (town, Shantung) – Geidouzai
Keming (island, Shantung) – Geming
Kiangsu (Chiangsu; province) – Jiangsu
Kinchou (town, Mandżuria) – Kinzhou
K'ufangting (fort, Weihaiwei) – Kufangding
Koupei (fort, Weihaiwei) – Goubei
Kungpe (fort, the Pescadores) – Gongbe
Kushanhao (town, Shantung) – Gushanhao
Kwangtung (Kuangtung; province) – Guangdong
Kwangsi (Kuangsi; province) – Guangxi
Laotaokou (town near Weihaiwei) – Laodaogou
Li Hung-chang (politician) – Li Hongzhang
Liaoho (Liao; river, Manchuria) – Liaohe
Liaoyang (town, Manchuria) – Liaoyang
Lichangchiao (bay, the Pescadores) – Lizhangjiao
Liu K'u-i (Governor General of Liangchiang) – Liu Kuyi
Liukung (island and fort, Weihaiwei) – Liugong
Lukeitsui (fort, Weihaiwei) – Lugeizui
Lungmaotsui (fort, Weihaiwei) – Longmaozui
Lu Yung-fu (General) – Lu Yongfu
Makung (town, the Pescadores) – Magong
Motienling (town, Manchuria) – Modianling
Motienling (fort, Weihaiwei) – Modianling
Mu Ta-cheng (General) – Mu Dazheng
Mukden (town, Manchuria) – Mukden
Nankin (town, Kiangsu) – Nanjing
Nanyang (fleet) – Nanyang
Nieh Shih-ch'eng (General) – Nie Shicheng
Ningpo (town) – Ningbo
Niuchuang (town, Manchuria) – Niuzhuang
Paiting (fort, Weihaiwei) – Paiding
Panchiatai (town, Manchuria) – Banjiadai
Paohua (town, Shantung) – Baohua
Peiho (Pei; river, Chihli) – Beihe
Peishantsui (fort, Weihaiwei) – Beishantsui
Peiyang (fleet) – Beiyang
Peking (Pekin, Peiching; the capital of China, Chihli) – Beijing
P'enghu (island, the Pescadores) – Penghu
Pochihyasu (town near Weihaiwei, Shantung) – Bozhiyasu
Saimachi (town, Mandżuria) – Saimaji
Santiaochiao (cape Taiwan) – Sandiaojiao
Shanghai (town, Kiangsu) – Shanghai
Shantung (province) – Shandong
Shanhaikuan (town, Chihli) – Shanhaiguan
Shihkaoho (town, Shantung) – Shigaohe
Sikiang (river) – Xi Jiang
Sumucheng (Hsiumucheng; town, Manchuria) – Sumuzheng (Xiumuzheng)
Sung Ch'inga (General) – Sung Quing
Swatou (Shantou, Suatao; town, Kwangtung) – Shandou
Tai Ping (Eternal Happiness) – Dai Bing
Taipei (town, Taiwan) – Taibei
Taiwan (island) – Taiwan
Taku (harbour, Chihli) – Dagu
Takushan (town, Manchuria) – Dagushan
Tamsui (town, Taiwan) – Tamsui (Huwei)
Tang Ching-sung (Governor of Taiwan) – Dang Jingsong
Tayang (river, Manchuria) – Dayang
T'ienchuangt'ai (town, Manchuria) – Tianzhuangtai
Tientsin (town, Manchuria) –Tianjin
Tengchou (town, Manchuria) – Dengzhou
Tsaohokou (town, Manchuria) – Zaohegou
Tseng Kuo-fan (politician) – Zeng Guofan
Tso Tsung-t'ang (politician) – Zuo Zongtang
Ts'u Hsi (widow Empress) – Cu Xi
Tsuichiafang (town, Manchuria) – Zuijiafang
Tukou (bay, Weihaiwei) – Dugou
Tungchou (town and harbour, Shantung) – Dongzhou
Tunghungshao (fort, Weihaiwei) – Donghongshao
tzu ch'iang (Self-Strengthening Policy) – zi quiang
Weihaiwei (bay and harbour, Shantung) – Weihaiwei
Wusung (town) – Wusong
Wuchiu (island, Fukien) – Wujiu
Yangheatun (town near Weihaiwei)
Yangtze (river) – Yangzi
Yant'ai (town, Shantung) – Yantai
Yeh Chih-chao (General) – Ye Zhichao
Yungfangling (fort, Weihaiwei) – Yongfangling
Yingk'ou (town, Manchuria) – Yingkou
Yinshankou (bay, Shantung) – Yinshangou

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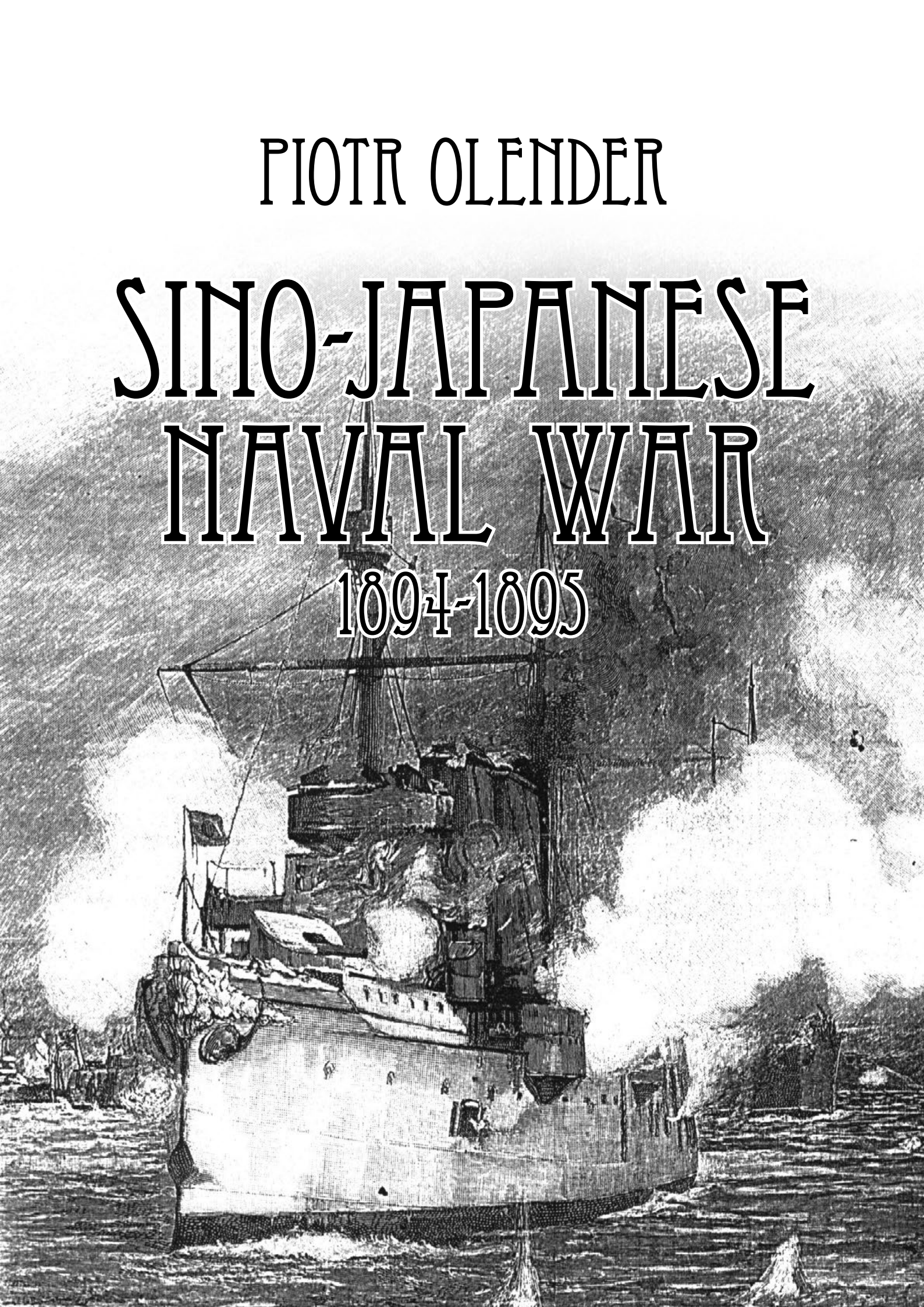

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Introduction

In the mid 19th century, China and Japan, with their populations of 400 and 44–45 million people respectively, were the largest countries in the Far East. Despite their differences, they shared numerous similarities. Both were fairly well-developed feudal states where social and economic conditions were comparable to those of medieval Europe. In both countries, the emperor, surrounded by the aura of divinity, held supreme power. In reality, that power was limited by the influence of local feudal lords and officials. Finally, both countries adopted policies of isolationism, locking themselves away from the outside world in the belief of their own superiority and perfection. Both China and Japan had contact with European countries in the 16th century and had even traded with them, but these relationships were limited and subject to severe restrictions.

That state of affairs continued until the mid-19th century, when the Western powers finally forced both countries to become more open to the outside world. Thus, they disturbed the peace Japan and China had enjoyed for centuries and forced their leaders to act in response to the new developments. Both countries chose to go in completely different directions, which had a considerable effect on their subsequent histories. The conflict that erupted between China and Japan in 1894 demonstrated which of those roads had been the more successful.

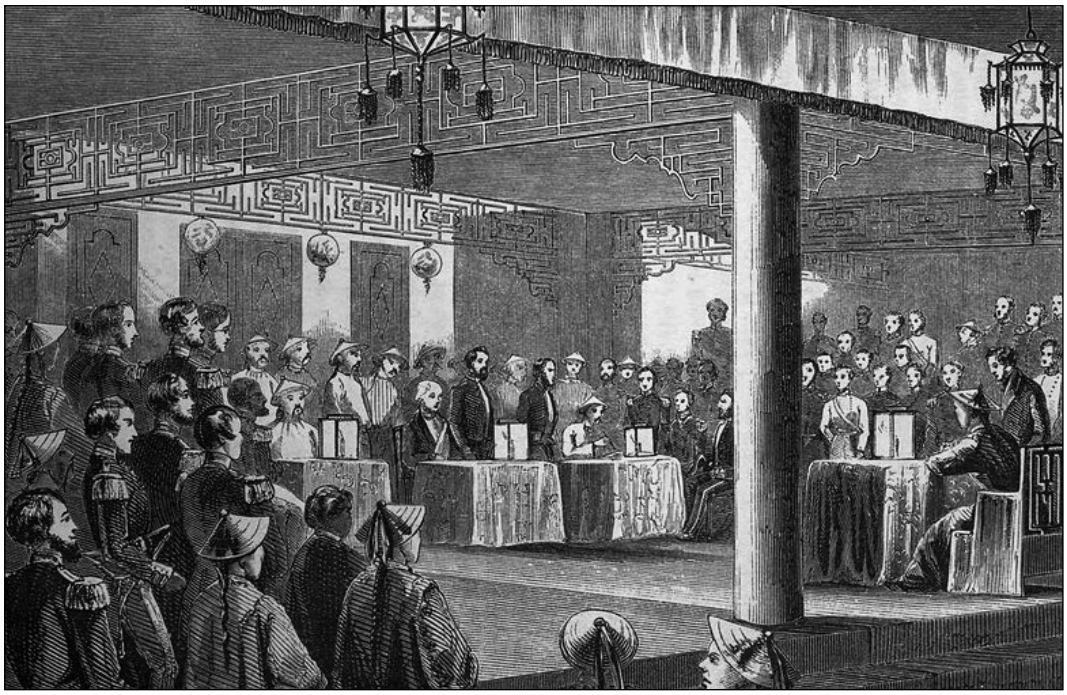
01 China and Japan in the second half of the 19th century

China was unquestionably the largest and most populous country in Asia. In the mid-17th century, it was conquered by the Manchurians and as result, power fell into the hands of the new Manchurian Ch'ing Dynasty. The Manchurians adopted Chinese administrative systems and quickly became sinicised themselves, though they tried to preserve their dissimilarity and reserved the most important government offices for themselves. (Native Chinese citizens were still allowed to pursue their careers in government under certain conditions). Under Manchurian rule, China entered a period of relative stability, economic revival and rapid population growth, with over 360 million citizens at the beginning of the 19th century. Therefore, China could have been considered the richest and most powerful country in the world and indeed, this was exactly as it perceived itself. However, the beginnings of a future crisis were lurking under the façade of splendour.

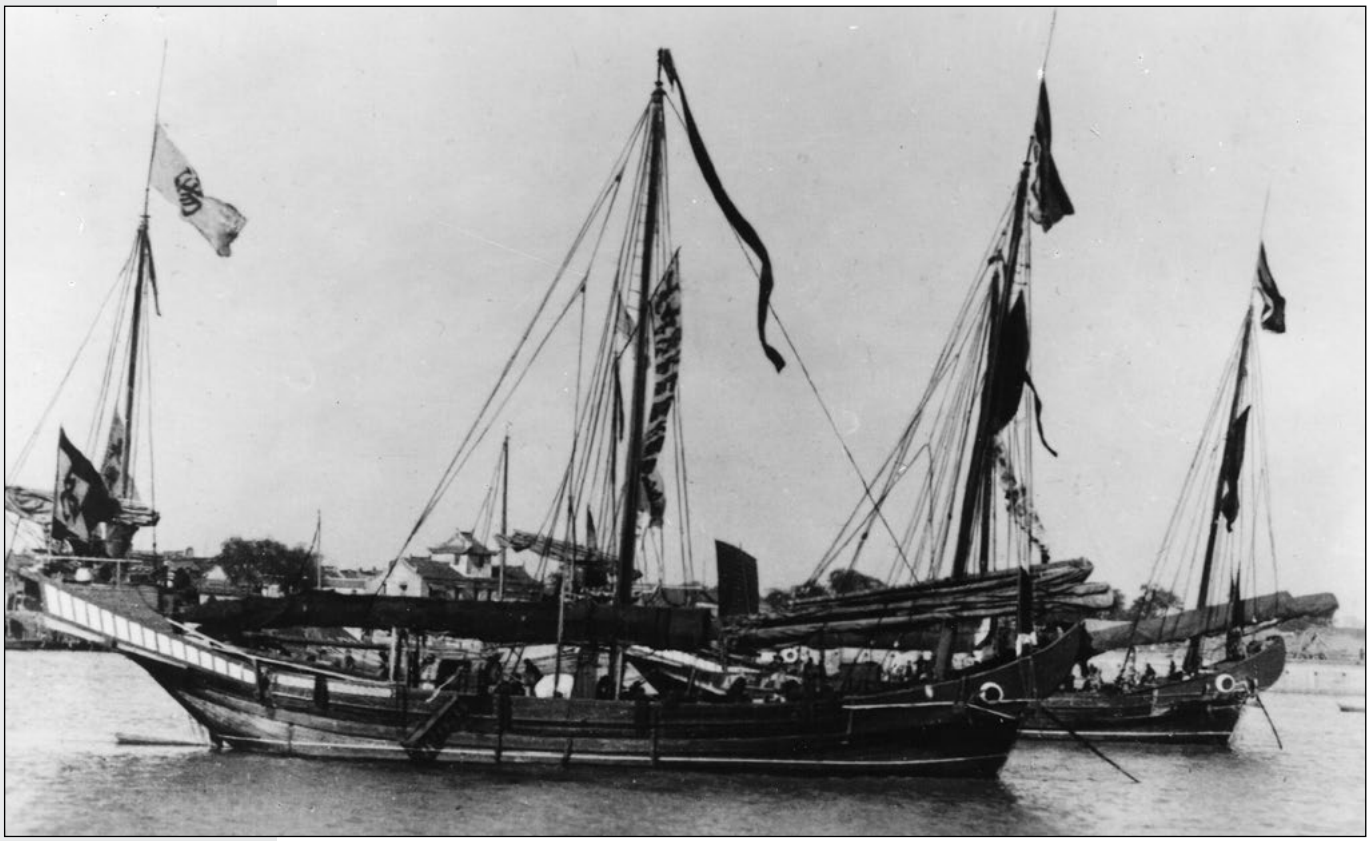
The rapidly growing population caused ever increasing shortages of land, as the cultivable acreage actually decreased slightly during this period. At the same time the Ch'ing administration was so corrupt and ineffectual that the country had begun to descend into stagnation. Despite this, at the beginning of the 19th century, China could still be perceived from the outside as a real power. It was completely self-sufficient economically, which allowed the Chinese authorities to follow a path of isolationism (which was intended, among other things, to keep the ruling dynasty in power). However, for various reasons, limited trade exchange was permitted with European countries at the harbour of Canton (Kanchou).

Initially, the trade with the Spanish Philippines was seen as most important, but from the mid 18th century there was a shift towards India, which was controlled at the time by the British East India Company. China was generally not interested in European commodities, though there was some desire for Indian cotton. Therefore, in exchange for the stream of exported tea, silk, pottery and other goods, the Middle Country received silver, which worked well for the Chinese economy.

Only when India-produced opium entered into the exchange did the balance of the foreign trade reverse. The Chinese domestic market proved exceedingly receptive to the drug and as a result, at the beginning of the 19th century the foreign trade balance began to level. In the



Signing of the Treaty of Tientsin, which ended the Second Opium War, in 1858.



Chinese war junks. Similar vessels were the core of Chinese naval forces in the Opium War period (performing police and auxiliary duties until the 1880s!) Facing modern navies of European powers they had no chance of victory.

1830s, because of opium, the value of Chinese imports exceeded the annual value of exports by approximately 10 million taels[1].

That situation inevitably triggered a reaction by the Chinese authorities. Apart from the harmful effects of opium on the human body (around 1840 the number of opium addicts in China was estimated at two million), the trade deficit was distinctly undesirable for the Middle Country. The outflow of silver abroad also increased its domastic price in comparison to copper coins used by peasants for current payments. At the beginning of the 19th century the price of a silver tael had been equal to 1,000 copper coins, a figure which rose to 1,500 in the second half of the third decade, while a decade later it rose to 2,000! The rise in value had a colossal impact on the situation of Chinese peasantry. They paid taxes in silver, so the aforementioned 'copper inflation' increased their real financial burden. This all took its toll on the internal situation of the country, escalating already-commonplace social unrest caused by increasing land pressure as well as corruption and abuse of power.

Attempts to stop the opium trade led to British military intervention in 1840 and the so-called First Opium War. This conflict exposed Chinese military weakness, revealing Chinese forces as unable to face the better-armed and trained enemy. The war concluded by the signing in 1842 of the Treaty of Nankin, which was favourable to the British, who apart from gaining control of Hong Kong and receiving significant reparations, opened five Chinese treaty ports for their trade. Taking advantage of a weakened China, similar treaties were signed by the United States in 1843 and France in 1844.

The cumulative effect of the increasing economic crisis and military failures was the outbreak of one of the largest peasant uprisings in the history of China. The Taiping rebellion was named for the title of the country ('Tai Ping', or Eternal Happiness) created by the insurgents. The rebellion escalated in the beginning of the 1850s, additionally revealing the weakness of the country. Being aware of the reasons

1 The tael, also known as liang, was a Chinese weight measurement used for weighing precious metals, and which also functioned as currency. There were a variety of taels, the most popular being the kuping tael and haigun tael – the former weighed 37.3 grams and the latter 37.8 grams of pure sliver. Moreover, there were copper coins in circulation, 1,000 of which were initially an equivalent of one silver tael and a large number of silver Spanish pesos (equivalent of eight reales, also known as Mexican dollars) minted in Mexico, which found their way to China as a result of the trade with Manila. From 1889 they were used as a pattern for the Chinese' own silver coins (yuan) which were equivalent to 0.72 tael. Larger amounts of money were still traditionally counted in taels (the author uses kuping taels).

behind the outbreak of the rebellion, the central authorities again tried to regulate points of dispute with Western powers and limit the ever expanding opium trade. However, the effect of those actions was the Second Opium War in 1856. On this occasion, Great Britain was joined by France and, within two years, they had forced China to surrender again. The treaty of Tientsin, signed in 1858, required not only subsequent reparation payments for the victors, but the Chinese government had also to increase the number of open treaty ports to eleven and grant foreigners further privileges. An attempt to violate the provisions of the treaty led a year later to the outbreak of the Third Opium War, which ended with the capture of Peking by intervention forces and another defeat sealed with the signing of the Convention of Peking in 1860.

The Opium Wars broke the former Chinese policy of isolationism and forced the Ch'ing authorities to cooperate with western powers. At the price of profound concessions, the Ch'ing authorities won Western help to deal with the Taipings. The rebellion was finally put down in 1864 at enormous cost in material and population terms (estimated at up to 15–20 million Chinese lives), but in the southern provinces, near the border with Birma, Laos and Vietnam, the Taipings survived until the mid 1870s.

The Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion significantly influenced the situation in China. First of all, the events exposed the military weakness of the central government, which was unable either to establish order within the country, or to protect its borders against foreign invasion. Therefore, local militias and armies formed by individual governors became more important, as they were responsible for putting down the Taiping Rebellion. As a result, local leaders grew in power and although they were still not independent from the central government, they managed to gain significant autonomy based on their own armed forces and local taxes. Thus, two main camps came into being: the Huai coterie led by Li Hung-chang, dominating the northern part of the country, and the Hunan coterie led by Tseng Kuo-fan and Tso Tsung-t'ang (who competed with each other, meaning their coterie was not as cohesive as Li's) which dominated the south. Both parties competed for favours of the Peking court, where Ts'u Hsi, the widow of Emperor Hsien Feng (who had died in 1861) played the leading role.

In the new situation, the main objective of the Chinese authorities was to bring back the conditions which had existed before the Taiping Rebellion. However, that proved impossible, due to the growing influence of the Western powers. As a result in 1860, despite the reluctance of the most conservative circles gathered around Ts'u Hsi's court, pro-Western parties managed to force through the so-called 'Self-Strengthening Policy' (tzu ch'iang). In principle this was limited exclusively to reforms of the military. Units were to be organised and trained in the European way and armed with modern weapons, a modern navy and a suitable native armament industry were to be created, while western science and militarily useful technologies were adopted. There were no plans to reform the existing social and economic systems, or the political one, which was considered ideal.

Empress Ts'u Hsi, widow of Emperor Hsien Feng who died in 1861 (due to which she is often called the Widow Empress). For nearly the next fifty years she ruled China, and was, arguably, largely responsible for the crisis of the state.

The last Shogun – Tokugawa Yoshinobu.

As a result of that state of affairs, at the end of 19th century China plunged into deeper and deeper crisis. Central government was weak, while in the provinces local leaders grew stronger. The country was devastated by war, while an influx of cheap European and American goods ruined indigenous industry. Although Europeans had no further territorial claims, in taking advantage of extraterritorial privileges and their own legal jurisdiction, they had a destructive impact on the country, creating within its borders practically independent enclaves. All those developments led to a deep crisis in the existing socio-political system. It was time for reforms that had to be much more thorough than the 'Self-Strengthening Policy', but the central government neither wanted them, nor was capable of implementing their introduction. The crisis deepened and, by the eve of the outbreak of the war with Japan, China remained a weak country of enormous, yet unrealised, potential.

Developments took a different turn in Japan. The country, similarly to China, was a feudal monarchy, yet it was ruled by a native dynasty. The Emperor, worshipped as a god, was only a nominal ruler as the actual power was in the hands of the highest military leader – the shogun. His vassals were powerful territorial lords (*daimyos*), who in turn had their own vassals. Therefore, Japan was specifically a diarchy (*bakufu*), where the nominal power was held by the emperor (*tenno*, *mikado*), while the actual power was in the hands of the shogun, a senior to his feudal princes (*daimyos*). Samurais, warrior-noblemen, were the privileged class. In the 19th century merchants grew more important, although formally their social status remained relatively low. The burden of maintaining the entire state apparatus and the *daimyos* was on the shoulders of free peasantry, who leased the land they cultivated.

Initially, Japanese authorities, similarly to those in China, adhered to isolationism, not allowing any contact with the outside world apart from in exceptional circumstances[2]. Then, in March 1854, an American naval squadron under the command of Commodore Matthew C. Perry arrived at Yokohama (then known as Kanagawa) and forced Japanese authorities to sign the 'Japan–US Treaty of Peace and Amity'[3]. This opened ports for American trade and granted their merchants the most-favoured nation status as well as allowing the American consul to reside at Shimoda.

It was the first treaty signed by Japan with a foreign nation, but as it soon turned out, it was not the last. In October 1854, the Japanese were forced to sign a similar treaty with Great Britain, in February 1855 with Russia and in January 1856, on their own initiative, with the Netherlands[4]. The series of political treaties was only a prelude to the main goal, which

2 The situation had lasted since 1600, when Jejasu Tokugawa took power. Considering European influence as harmful, he expelled foreigners and simultaneously began to persecute native Christians (at that time there were several hundred thousand in Japan). The policy of isolationism was also continued by Tokugawa's successors. Only the Dutch were permitted to sustain limited trade relations through a small trading post on Dejima Island at the entrance to the harbour of Nagasaki.

3 European countries had begun their attempts to establish diplomatic relations with Japan much earlier, since 1846, though none were successful. It was Perry who succeeded first. In fact, he had been to Japan for the first time in 1853. After presenting the shogun with a proposal of a political treaty, he sailed back announcing his return in the following year to ratify the treaty.

4 The treaty with the Netherlands was, according to the shogun's idea, to enable the Japanese to oppose the expansion of the remaining European countries and the United States by providing information about the opponent's potential and giving examples for the planned reforms.

was establishing extended trade relations. Negotiations continued for a relatively long time, but ultimately in 1858, Japan signed commercial treaties consecutively with the USA, the Netherlands, Russia, Great Britain and France.

Signing treaties with five countries in a short period of time stirred public opinion, especially, since the privileges which the foreigners were granted were soon clearly evident. In addition to samurais, whose positions were potentially endangered by foreigners, merchants and craftsmen, threatened by competition of cheaper and better foreign goods, started to show their dissatisfaction. The tension rose, manifesting itself through the hostile and unfriendly attitude of the Japanese towards the 'barbarians' from overseas.

The problems of the foreigners soon became one of the elements of the struggle between the emperor and the shogun, where power was at stake. Subsequent shoguns were inclined to make concessions to the foreigners, while the feudal lords, who were under pressure from extremist samurais, showed reluctance towards such a policy (the most hostile toward the foreigners were the powerful princes of the Choshu and Satsuma clans). The imperial court policy could be considered balanced. The emperor expressed his regret over the unfortunate turn of events and obliged the shogun to expel the 'barbarians' from the country when the first opportunity presented itself. Simultaneously, he recognised the need to tolerate them for the time being. That attitude allowed the emperor to gain more and more supporters in the struggle with the shogunate.

Meanwhile, the growing aversion of the Japanese towards foreigners had by 1860 resulted in serious anti-foreign riots, which increased in 1863, especially in the regions controlled by the Satsuma clan. Additionally, in June of the same year, the Choshu clan blocked the Straits of Shimonoseki, which was on a number of important navigation routes. Those events led to intervention by the Western powers. First, in August 1863, a British squadron bombarded Kagoshima forcing the Satsuma clan to yield. A year later, a joint naval force from Great Britain, France, the Netherlands and the United States lifted the blockade of the Strait of Shimonoseki[5].

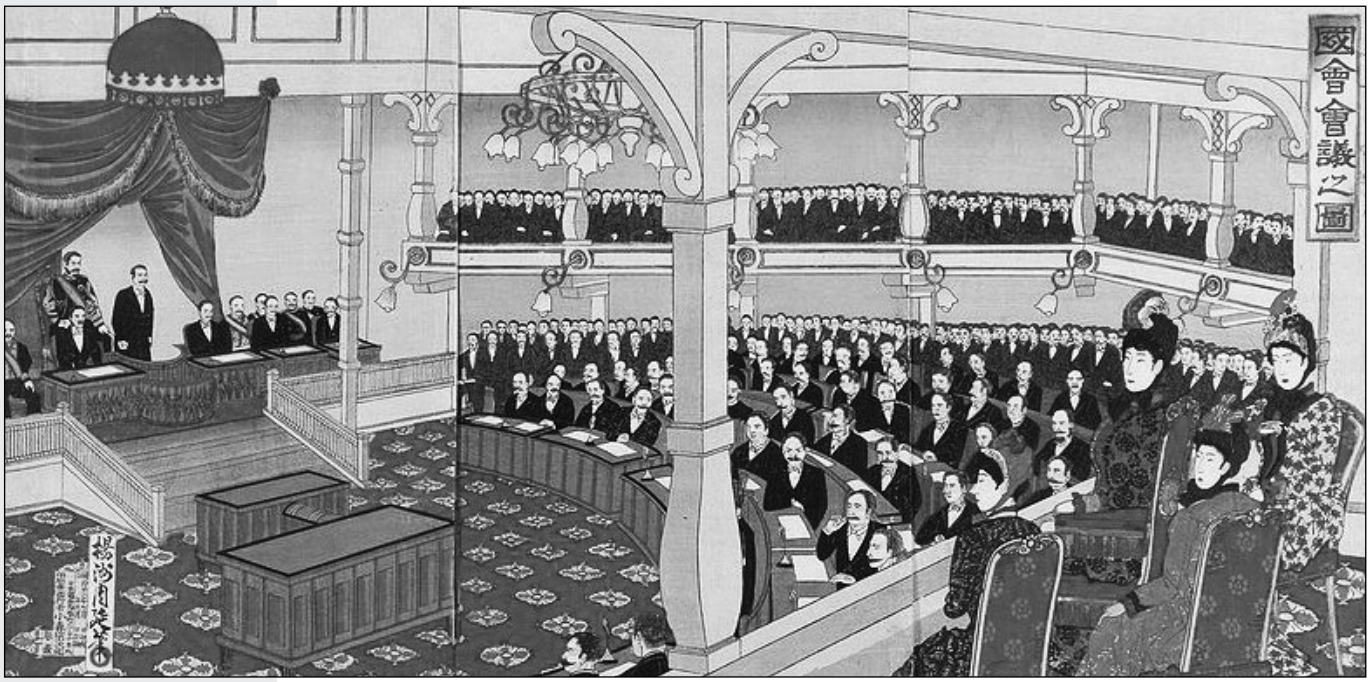
The young Emperor Mutsuhito, the initiator of the Meiji Restoration (named after his posthumous name, also used to describe the entire period of his rule).

Those operations had serious political implications. Mainly, the anti-foreign Japanese clans gained first-hand experience of the military might of the European countries, which made a powerful and lasting impression. The effect was so strong that groups that had previously opposed contact with Western countries dramatically changed their attitude towards the problem of foreigners and relationships with other nations. They transformed from their enemies to their supporters, with the former greatest opponents, the Satsuma and Choshu clans in the lead. Most importantly, the change came along with the realisation of the need for thorough reforms, which represented Japan's only chance to equal the strangers from overseas, both militarily and economically[6].

As a result the Japanese internal balance of power also changed. The emperor, who so far had looked for allies in his struggle with the

5 W.L. Clowes, The Royal Navy: A history from the Earliest Times to the Death of Queen Victoria. vol. VII, London 1903, pp. 190–208; E.A. Falk, Togo and Rise of Japanese Sea Power, New York 1936, pp. 36–55; P. Olender, Wojny morskie 1860–1883, Warszawa 2004, pp. 235–246; P.P. Wieczorkiewicz, Historia wojen morskich. Wiek pary (vol. II), Londyn 1995, pp. 135–136.

6 G.A. Ballard, The Influence of the Sea on the Political History of Japan, London 1921, p. 117.



Print showing the first session of the Japanese parliament in 1889. Along with the proclamation of the constitution, this moment can be considered as the point which cemented the new, reformed Japanese state.

shogunate among 'anti-foreign' clans, suddenly found support in the clans inclined towards the development of foreign contact, which was perceived as a chance for modernising the state. In those conditions the 15-year-old Emperor Mutsuhito[7], who ascended the throne in January 1867, began his revolution (also known as Meiji Restoration) which brought about the fall of the shogunate[8]. Thus, the Emperor acquired absolute power and the current atmosphere favoured the anticipated reforms.

The reforms began with dismantling of the feudal system and introduction of the modern decentralised bureaucratic apparatus. In 1871 all feudal domains returned to the state and state privileges were revoked making all citizens equal before the law. Administrative reforms turned former feudal domains (*han*) into 261 prefectures (*ken*) controlled by state-appointed officials[9]. Later, in 1871–1872, agrarian reforms were introduced, which consolidated the actual state of land use by chartering deeds of ownership. That, in turn, allowed for a cadastre (a statement of the quantity and value of land or property) to be prepared, and a uniform land tax of 1/33 of the land value to be introduced. (The initial tax value proved too steep, and after 1876 it was reduced to 2.5 per cent). This replaced the previous system in which peasants gave away half of their crops. Initially, the new cadastre tax provided 80 per cent of budget revenue and although this was not enough to cover all the government's expenses, it still provided regular revenues which stabilised the budget. Later, in 1873, the army was reformed, introducing universal conscription (in contrast to previous feudal service). Thus, the foundations for the modern Japanese state were laid.

However, those changes were not introduced without conflict. Despite the beneficial agrarian reforms, peasants revolted, as they now had to bear the enormous expenses of state reorganisation and the creation of new structures. The samurai, who saw making all estates equal and creation of conscript army as a blow aimed at their very existence, also revolted. After the largest and final samurai Satsuma Rebellion, led by Saigo Takamori, was suppressed in 1877, the internal situation of Japan slowly stabilised. Finally, the period of socio-political reforms was concluded in 1889 with the signing of a constitution.

7 He is also known under his posthumous name Meiji, which describes the entire period of his rule.

8 Initially, the last shogun, Yoshinobu, surrendered without a fight, but after a time he changed his mind, only to be finally defeated in the autumn of 1868. Then, the commander of the shogunate navy Admiral Enomoto refused to deliver his warships to the imperial forces and tried to establish a separate state at Hakodate on Hokkaido. However, his rebellion was also defeated by forces loyal to the emperor.

9 Until then, apart from 273 hans, there were 21 prefectures and three townships (fu – Kyoto, Edo and Osaka). The status of prefectures and townships was given to lands taken over directly from the shogun and controlled by the emperor. After four months another administrative reform created 72 new prefectures, leaving the aforementioned townships, M. Łuczko, Ito Hirobumi and Yamagata Aritomo. Czołowi politycy Japonii okresu Meiji (1868–1912), Warszawa 2006, pp. 34, 46.

According to that document, the monarch was the foundation of the entire Japanese statehood. He held supreme power, which was exercised in his name by a government appointed by and responsible to him alone. Legislative power was held by bicameral parliament (the *Diet*), but its role was limited – the emperor had the right to veto its decisions and could issue decree-laws.

The socio-political reforms were accompanied by economic changes. These included the aforementioned agrarian reforms, which were the foundation of the new private land ownership. Simultaneously, the authorities took serious interest in the industrialisation of the country. Since private capital was weak, industrialisation was financed predominantly by treasury resources. After the treasury reforms, most of those resources came from taxes paid by peasants, who carried the substantial part of the burden of industrialisation on their shoulders. Industrial infrastructure, including the armaments industry, was completely obsolete. Therefore, the industrialisation of Japan had to be started from scratch, and all industrial infrastructure was nationalised in the 1870s. Thanks to considerable financial outlay by the state, progress was soon made. Newly built factories were almost instantly privatised by selling them to private owners for prices much lower than their actual value. Nevertheless, that strategy proved cost-effective in the long run. The losses recovered themselves in the form of taxes and profit from the turnover of aggregate sales[10]. Only some mines, shipyards and factories of military importance remained state-owned.

Violent social, political and economic transformations in Japan soon turned its attention towards colonial expansion, in a fashion similar to that of the European powers, for two fundamental reasons. Firstly, especially important in the initial period of the Meiji Restoration, was the need to employ the mass of samurais, whose basis for existence was effectively eradicated by the introduction of the reforms. Following the dismantling of the feudal system, large numbers of 'unemployed' samurais became a politically uncertain element, agitating to bring back the pre-1868 state of affairs. The second reason was the necessity to find the source of cheap raw materials, of which Japan had almost none, and a market for the ever growing number of goods manufactured by native industry, which could still not compete with similar European or American products.

Following the events of the first half of 1870s and Saigo Takamori's Rebellion, the samurai gradually gravitated towards the modern army and found roles there. Thus, they were won over to support the plans of the new central government. Their aggressive attitude, already suitably channelled, made them supporters of military expansion to the continent.

10 Initially, the Japanese government tried to run its own industrial plants, treating them as a sort of 'business incubators', but that policy was too expensive (the majority of national factories were unprofitable). Therefore, in 1880, a privatisation law was passed, which stipulated the sale of national industrial plants to private owners under favourable conditions.

02 | Genesis of the conflict

Grand Prince Hungson Taewon'gun, from 1882 one of the most influential people in Korea, and the leader of the conservative camp.

The lands to which the Japanese political circles turned their attention were the Ryukyu Islands, Taiwan and Korea. The Ryukyu Islands, which had been a Chinese vassal state, were captured by Japan as early as 1872. Two years later Japan sent an armed expedition to Taiwan in retaliation for the murder of Ryukyan fishermen by Taiwanese pirates (they were in fact aborigines who sometimes also engaged in piracy). Around 4,000 soldiers and sailors took part in the punitive expedition to Taiwan, which ended in Japanese diplomatic success. China recognised Japanese intervention as valid and paid considerable compensation[1]. Thus, a precedent was set where the Ryukyu Islands were recognised as Japanese territory, which allowed for their incorporation into the Japanese nation in 1879.

Korea, which became the next target for Japanese expansion, was similar to China and Japan in the pre-1868 period, a feudal state ruled by a king with the support of the landed class. Being a Chinese vassalage, Korea also adopted a policy of isolationism, but it was much more restrictive than in China or Japan. As a result, the country became almost inaccessible to any foreigners, who, should they find their way into the country, were either killed or forced to spend the rest of their days there.

The first breach in the Korean isolationist policy was made by French missionaries, who managed to convert a certain number of Koreans in Peking to Christianity. At the end of the 18th century, with the help of those converts, they managed to sneak into the 'Forbidden Country' (as Korea was sometimes named at that time). Their activities brought about the adoption of Christianity by many Koreans, but also alarmed local authorities and triggered a wave of persecution, which cost at least several thousands of lives. Consequently, these developments led to the first foreign intervention, by the French government, which tried to force the Korean authorities to introduce a policy of religious tolerance. At the end of 1866, a French squadron under the command of Rear Admiral Roze attacked Korean fortifications at Kanghwa, trying to force Korean authorities to take part in talks[2]. Despite the military success, the French failed to achieve the main goal of the expedition and lacking sufficient resources to force the issue, they left discouraged. An American attempt to open the country in 1871, led by Rear Admiral Rodgers, also failed. Similarly to the French, the Americans possessed insufficient force and despite the military success they finally left, disheartened, without achieving the intended political goals[3].

Unexpectedly, the Japanese succeeded where both the French and the Americans had failed. Admittedly, the 1872 attempt to establish diplomatic relations with Korea failed and the envoys sent to Seoul were treated offensively, but the situation soon changed. In September 1875, the Japanese gunboat *Unyo* was fired upon near Kanghwa Island, while taking on fresh water. As a response, in the next year, the Japanese

1 Treaties & Conventions between China and Foreign States. vol. II, Shanghai 1917, pp. 508–509.

2 The French squadron consisted of the frigate *Guerrière*, corvettes *Laplace* and *Primauguet*, sidewheel avisos *Déroulède* and *Kien Chan*, as well as gunboats *Tardif* and *Brethon*. Embarked on board those warships were about 600 soldiers. 'Vladimir', The China-Japan War., London 1896, p. 38; J.M. Roche, Dictionnaire des bâtiments de la Flotte de guerre française de Colbert à nos jours. Tome I (1671–1870), 2005, pp. 85, 147, 234, 271, 274, 361, 431.

3 Moreover, the American expedition was supposed to lead to signing of an agreement concerning the protection of sea navigation and treatment of castaways (in 1866, an American schooner *General Sherman* was wrecked near the coast of Korea and upon reaching the shore, her crew was slaughtered by the Koreans). The expeditionary force consisted of frigate *Colorado*, corvettes *Alaska* and *Benicia*, sidewheel gunboat *Monocacy* and gunboat *Palos*. 'Vladimir', op.cit., p. 41; H.A. Gosnell, The Navy in Corea, TAN No 2/1947; P. Olender, Wojny morskie 1860–1882, Warszawa 2005, pp. 381–384.

sent two warships and three transports with 800 troops on board, to Korea . After arriving at Chemulpo on February 22, 1876, the expedition forced Korean authorities to sign a treaty which opened Korea to Japanese trade. Soon thereafter similar treaties were signed by the Koreans with European powers and the USA. However, these countries were not interested in economic penetration of the country, which was generally considered poor and economically unattractive. Korea drew attention only from Japan and China, still considered as their sovereign by the Korean authorities.

The opening of Korea to the outside world triggered sharp political conflicts. In 1864, after King Ch'olchong's death, the Yi Dynasty, which had been in power since 1392, came to an end. As a result of courtly intrigues, the juvenile King Kojong was put on the throne and the regency, in his name, was assumed by his father, Grand Prince Hungson Taewon'gun (until 1873, when the young monarch took over on reaching the age of 21). Simultaneously, two opposing parties emerged: conservatives, opposed to any reforms and supported by Prince Hungson and the influential King Kojong's wife Queen Min Myongsong; and progressives, supporting all reforms that would transform Korea in the manner of Western countries and Japan[4]. The progressive party was supported by the Japanese, while the conservative one had Chinese backing, which turned internal Korean conflicts into international ones and reflected the Sino-Japanese struggle for the sphere of influence. The rivalry started in 1876 with the signing of the Treaty of Kangwha when Japan recognised Korea as a fully independent country, which undermined Chinese control over the rulers in Seoul.

For the next couple of years, a relative balance was maintained between the two Korean parties. The Chinese, busy suppressing the rebellion in East Turkestan (Hsinchiang), were not interested in inflaming the conflict in Korea, while the Japanese were still not ready for a war. The first confrontation took place in July 1882, when regular Korean troops stationed at Seoul mutinied due to the deterioration of food rations. Subsequently, Grand Prince Hungson incited the soldiers against Queen Min and her supporters as well as the Japanese, suggesting that the diminished rations were the result of prevailing corruption and the increased price of rice due to its export to Japan. As a result, the mob attacked the Japanese diplomatic mission in Seoul, demolishing it and killing a few Japanese (the majority managed to break through to the harbour, where they found shelter on board the British gunboat *Flying Fish*, which later transported them to Nagasaki).

Korean King Kojong, who ruled from 1864, photographed with his son Sunjong (seen here in 1890).

The events of July caused a strong Chinese reaction. Three warships were sent to Chemulpo along with troops, which soon restored order. Although the rebellion in East Turkestan had already been suppressed, at that time China did not wish for war with Japan as the conflict with France over Tonkin was escalating[5]. Consequently, Grand Prince Hungson was blamed for provoking the unrest, arrested and sent to China. On 30 August, an agreement was signed at Chemulpo, according to which the Korean government promised to apologise to Japan and pay substantial compensation. Simultaneously, the authorities agreed for Chinese and Japanese troops to be stationed on Korean territory to protect their respective diplomatic missions. Soon thereafter an additional commercial treaty, favourable to both China and Japan was signed[6].

Chinese intervention, seemingly favourable to the Japanese, strengthened the position of Queen Min's faction. Under those circumstances, the progressive party had no prospects of accomplishing its goals, and consequently opted for a coup with the help of the supporting Japanese. In December 1884, taking advantage of the ongoing Sino-French war triggering the

4 That did not stop Grand Prince Hungson and the ambitious Queen Min rivalling each other for power and influence, using all possible intrigues, even organising attempts on the other's life

5 See: P. Olender, Sino-French Naval War 1884–1885, Sandomierz 2012

6 S.C.M. Paine, The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, New York, 2003, pp. 54–55.

Present day photograph of one of the Korean Royal Palace pavilions in Seoul.

withdrawal of Chinese troops stationed at Seoul, a group of rebels led by Kim Ok-kyun attacked the royal palace. A banquet was being held hosting the most important Korean notables and military leaders – all of them supporters of the conservative party. Kim Ok-kyun managed to take control of the palace and killed some of the conservative ministers and leaders, but the immediate intervention of Chinese troops stationed at Seoul promptly restored order and forced the rebels to flee. At the same time the Chinese units clashed with the Japanese, who once again had to escape the Korean capital, fighting their way to the sea. Thus, the Chinese managed to bring the situation under control, but as the war with France was still in progress, they were concerned to maintain peace with Japan. Therefore, in January, an agreement was signed at Seoul in which the Korean authorities promised to apologise to Japan and pay appropriate compensation. On 18 April 1885, the Tientsin Convention was signed between China and Japan, in which both parties committed themselves to withdraw their forces from Korea and notify each other of any moves in the region[7]. That meant turning Korea into shared Sino-Japanese protectorate, which represented a huge success for Japan.

However, the agreements concluded at Tientsin could not ensure lasting peace, since the status of Korea was not fully resolved and the existing status quo was satisfactory for neither China nor for Japan. Consequently, the political and economic rivalry between those countries continued, with China gradually gaining an advantage in both[8]. In that situation, in order not to lose Korea completely, Japan had to undertake more decisive steps.

7 Ibidem, pp. 58–59; Tobohashi K., Diplomaticheskaya istorya japono-kitayskoy voyny, Moskva 1956, p. 31.

8 The pro-Chinese policy of the Korean authorities was partly responsible for that state of affairs (for examples see: Izvlecheniya iz donesenij Generalnago Shtaba Polkovnika Vogaka, SGTSMA vol. 60 (1895), pp. 4–5). The scale of Japanese interest in Korea is best illustrated by the fact that in 1891 there were 184 foreign companies operating in the country and as many as 169 were Japanese. Moreover, there were 1,501 ships of over 358 tons calling at Korean ports in the same year, while as many as 1,355 vessels over 311 tons were Japanese (Ibidem, p. 4).

The outbreak in March 1894 of the so-called Tonghak Rebellion in the south of the country served as excuse for the Japanese. The Tonghak movement started in the 1860s and was strongly religious, in common with the Chinese Taiping movement. Like the latter, it had anti-foreign and anti-feudal undertones. Since 1865, it had operated underground, but in the coming years its influence spread and by the beginning of 1890s its followers were a force to be reckoned with. Tonghak riots took place almost annually until 1893, when the movement officially asked King Kojong to legalise it. Since the Korean authorities were unwilling to change their position on the matter, in the spring of 1894, the Tonghak began their rebellion which soon spread throughout the country, threatening the capital itself. Consequently, Seoul pleaded for Chinese intervention. With some reluctance, and fearing the potential Japanese reaction, the Peking government finally decided to send troops, which landed at Asan in June 1894. In accordance with the Tientsin Convention, the Chinese made sure to inform the Japanese about their actions. Japan, in turn, immediately sent an army brigade to Chemulpo[9].

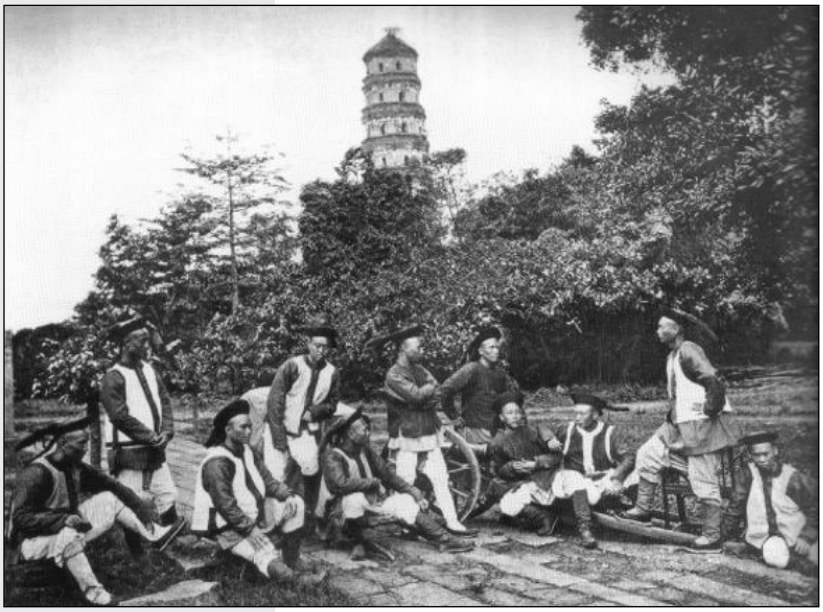
The threat of Chinese and Japanese intervention made the Tonghak leaders agree to a truce and ceasefire, even before the arrival of the Chinese troops. Therefore, the excuse for foreign intervention was gone. The Chinese were ready to pull out their forces on condition that the Japanese would do the same. Japan, however, was clearly procrastinating over the evacuation of the troops from Chemulpo, having from the outset regarded the Tonghak Rebellion as an excellent excuse for intervention. The Peking government, unprepared for a war with Japan, still hoped the mediation of foreign powers (mainly Russia, but also Great Britain and the United States) would prevent it, but these hopes were futile. The United States took a clearly pro-Japanese stance, while Japanese diplomacy ensured the neutrality of the remaining two countries. At that moment, the Japanese government decided that the fate of Korea should be decided through military action.

9 Precisely on June 7, 1894, the Chinese Ambassador in Tokyo Wang Fung-tsao forwarded the information to the Japanese authorities. Still on the same day, the Japanese Charge d'Affairs in Tientsin Komura Jutaro informed the Tsungli Yamen, that the Japanese would also send troops to Korea. Inouye J., A Concise History of the War between Japan and China, Tokyo 1895, s. 11–12.

03 Comparative strength of belligerents and their war plans

China

In the decade of the Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion, the Chinese army differed considerably from European-style forces. The differences were not so much in the armament or equipment, but mainly in the organisation and command system, adapted from the existing political system.



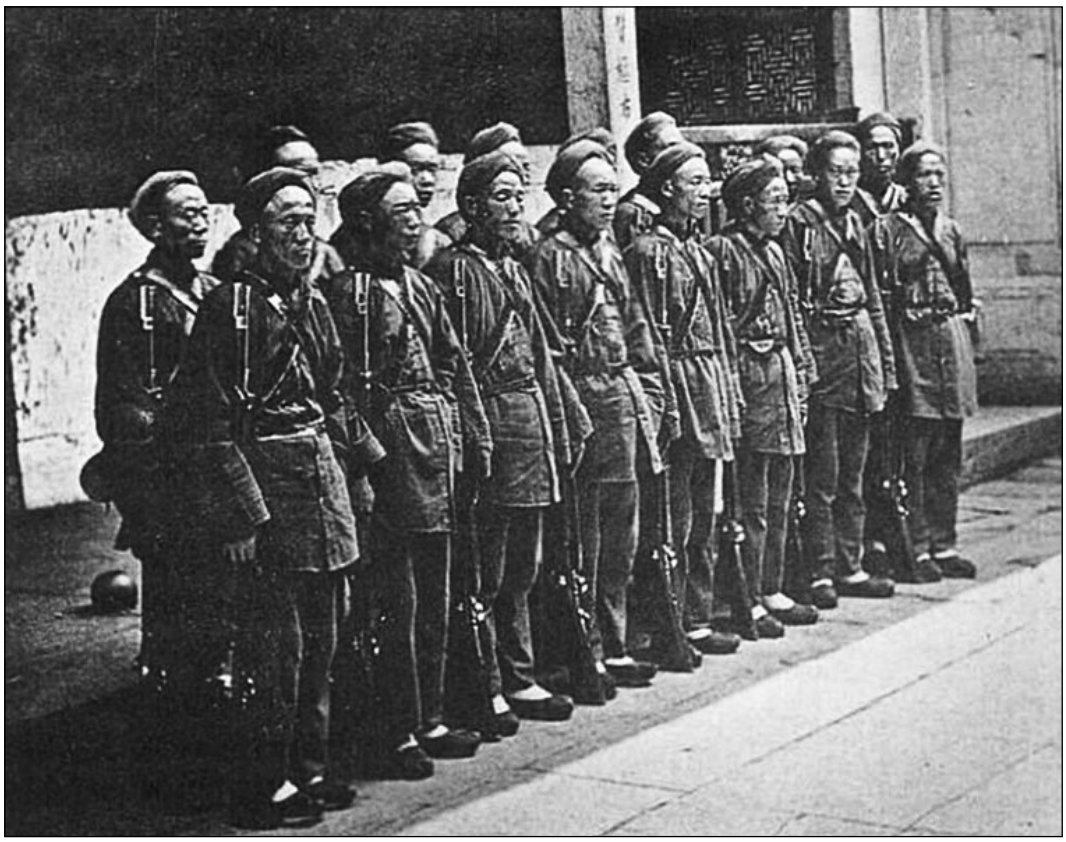
Chinese soldiers of the Eight Banners Army units.

The Chinese army was essentially divided into separate formations and only some of those were under the control of the central government. The rest remained under the orders of provincial authorities, a fact which seriously hindered the ability of the force to be placed under a single command and sometimes even prevented it altogether. Thus, the optimal use of the country's military potential was practically impossible. Dependence of particular units on provincial authorities was the result of the paternalistic structure of the army, where the officer corps was selected on the basis of personal loyalty. Consequently, in the Chinese armed forces, personal dependence on a specific commander was dominant, unlike modern European armies which could rely on strict subordination to orders. At the same time, command over larger military units was given to officials who had undergone little or no military training[1]. This was the result of the low social status accorded to people devoted to military service, which had not previously been considered an honourable profession.

This all amounted to low combat effectiveness in the Chinese army, despite its considerable numerical strength and sometimes even good weaponry. Even the Chinese, who were convinced of their civilisational superiority, and generally despised any achievements of the 'barbarian nations', were compelled to acknowledge the fact. To remedy this, in 1861, the 'Self-Strengthening Policy' was introduced, which was mainly limited to providing the army with modern equipment purchased overseas or manufactured locally, organising new Western-style units, building a modern navy, and creating the necessary armament industry base and infrastructure for a modern armed force. The introduction of those reforms was intended to equalise the technological differences between the Chinese army and those of the European nations. That, according to their supporters, would allow for the possibility of defending the Middle Country against aggressive actions by the European powers. Chinese policy-makers saw their weakness only in the military aspect, completely ignoring those of the political, social and economic systems.

Implementation of the 'Self-Strengthening Policy' encountered serious difficulties from the very beginning. Interestingly, these problems were not financial. People were the problem – mainly imperial officials, a majority of whom were unable to break free from the previous cultural and behavioural norms. Consequently, the sums allocated to reforms were mostly wasted due to prevailing corruption, incompetence and lack of organisation. Paternalistic relations in the army were also often difficult to overcome.

1 Müller, P. Simanskiy, Yaponsko-Kitayskaya vojna 1894–1895, St. Peterburg 1896, p. 13. The fact that the line between civil and military Chinese officials was blurred was a different story.



Chinese soldiers of the reformed units.

The new units were usually created by reforming the old ones, keeping their composition intact. As a result, despite new armament and regulations, the old personal connections and habits were retained, which seriously reduced the reform's efficiency. However, it would not be true to state that the 'Self-Strengthening Policy' was without success.The combat effectiveness of the Chinese army was increased, but mainly because of the introduction of modern armament and Western-style training (and the extent of the latter was usually insufficient). Discipline, morale and logistics, on the other hand, still left much to be desired. In comparison to the effort required to implement it, the results of the 'Self-Strengthening Policy' can be considered unsatisfactory[2].

On the eve of the outbreak of the war with Japan the Chinese army was divided into four basic military units and irregular militia forces. Theoretically, its core was the Manchu Eight Banners Army which officially consisted of approximately 250,000 soldiers. In practice, however, there were no more than 100,000 troops. The Manchu Eight Banners Army was complemented by the exclusively Chinese Green Standard Army, which in theory had one million troops, though in practice its strength was no more than 600,000 soldiers (and may have been as low as 450–470,000). The troops of the Eight Banner Army were stationed mainly in the capital province of Chihli, Manchuria and Eastern Turkestan (in the latter there were no more than 15–16,000), while those of the Green Standard Army were stationed at various provinces where they mainly performed police duties. The banner units were traditionally reinforced by local militias performing vital duties in the defensive system of Tibet, Mongolia and Manchuria, which were theoretically numerous, but in reality numbered no more than 300,000 troops. Contrary to appearances, these were not worthless units – some of them were quite well-armed and trained, exceeding even the banner units in combat effectiveness, though this was by no means true of all of the militias.

Officer of the Ch'ing Army.

Based on experiences of the Opium Wars and the Taiping Rebellion, new units, armed and trained in the Western style, were

2 For more information about the 'Self-Strengthening Policy' see: K. Gawlikowski, Chiny wobec Europy. Reformy wojskowe XIX wieku, Wrocław 1979.

Li Hung-chang – one of the foremost Chinese politicians of the final period of the 19th century, supporter of the Self-Strengthening Movement, Viceroy of the metropolitan province of Chihli and Commander in Chief of the Chinese Northern Military Forces. The creator and the head of the Peiyang Fleet.

created. Thus, a new unit, named the Brave Army, composed of local volunteers, came into being. Since its elements were generally under the control of local authorities, the so-called Trained Army was founded to keep the balance, as it remained under the control of the central government. Both of these armies, along with some non-permanent, militia-style units undoubtedly constituted the most valuable component of the Chinese army, although as far as combat effectiveness was concerned, they were still not up to the standards of European-style forces. On the eve of the outbreak of the war with Japan, the numerical strength of the Brave Army was estimated at approximately 120,000, while that of the Trained Army numbered no more than 100,000 troops. Thus, the imperial armed forces had a total of about 1.2–1.3 million troops[3]. In the area where future military operations would take place (the territory of the capital province Chihli, Manchuria, Shantung province) the government had roughly 350–360,000 troops at its disposal, including approximately 125,000 serving in reformed units[4]. However, at a later time, the figure could be increased by about 145,000 recruits called to arms (mainly to serve in the reformed units) shortly after the outbreak of war[5].

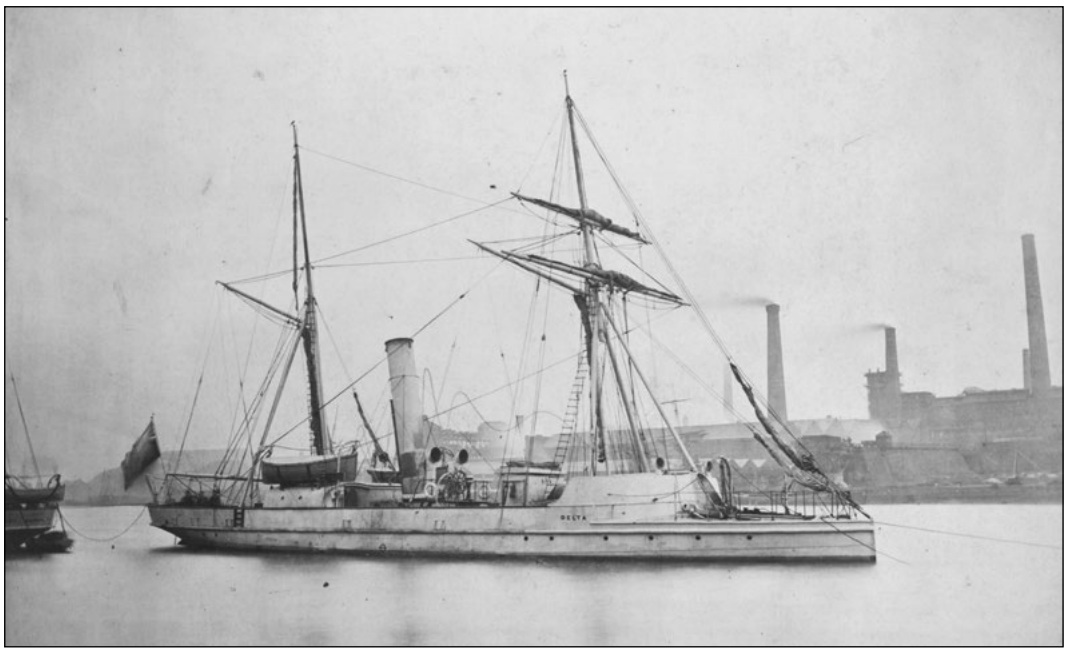
The basic tactical unit in the Chinese army was a detachment similar in size to the battalion of European armies. (In theory each detachment had 500 men, though on average it was generally 350 for infantry and 250 for cavalry). Up to a dozen of such 'battalions' formed an independent corps, which as far as numerical strength was concerned, was usually equal to a European-style brigade or a weak division. Only at that level of organisation were the Chinese troops equipped with artillery, the numerical strength of which (similarly to that of the corps) was not precisely specified. Chinese troops used a variety of firearms, which could differ even within the same unit. Infantry used mainly modern Mauser, Remington, Snider, Martini-Henry, Chassepot and Maxim rifles of various patterns. However, old flintlocks could also be found (especially the long chinkai rifles, operated by two soldiers). Apart from firearms, the banner armies still used traditional 'cold steel' weapons. The reformed cavalry units were generally armed with Mauser rifles and sabres, while the banner army units had cold steel weapons and bows.

Chinese artillery units were relatively numerous and armed with diverse range of equipment. The most modern guns in their arsenal were their 75mm Krupp field and mountain pieces and the 88mm guns of the same manufacturer. Moreover, the Chinese had a considerable number of various 67 to 76mm British pattern guns, both muzzle and breechloaders, as well as 88mm Krupp field mortars and 8cm mountain and field pieces with muzzles made of hardened bronze, manufactured at the Nankin armaments factory. That arsenal was supplemented by a number of mitrailleuses, Hotchkiss revolver guns and multi-barrel Nordenfelt naval machine-guns on field carriages. Also in use, mainly in forts, were a large number of obsolete smoothbore guns of various gauges. Despite the number of weapons, artillery was not a strong point of the Chinese army, which was unable to effectively use its advantages (which was generally the case with modern firearms of all kinds), mainly dispersing the guns along their positions.

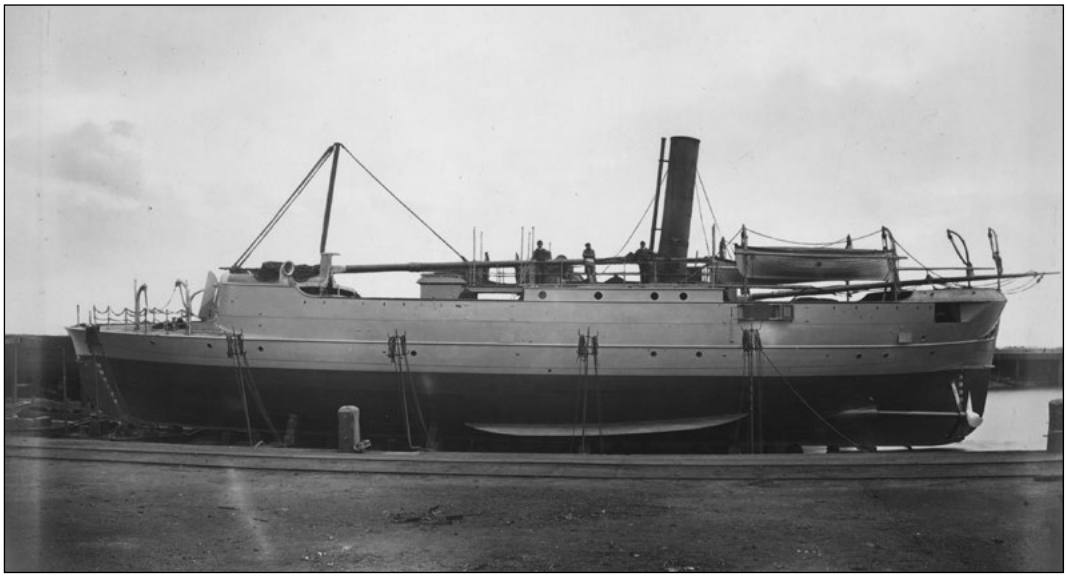
3 Ibidem, pp. 49–50, 57, 113, 'Vladimir', op.cit., pp. 70–74; Müller, P. Simanskiy, op.cit., pp. 15–18. K. Gawlikowski (op.cit., p. 113) estimates the number of Brave Army troops in 1890 at 125,000, and the Trained Army at 230–240,000 (p. 127); 'Vladimir' (op.cit., pp. 73–74), on the other hand, gives the following figures: almost 276,000 for the Eight Banners Army, roughly 600,000 for the Green Standard Army, under 97,000 for the Brave Army and only 12,000 for the Trained Army (which is almost certainly an understatement). According to N.W.H. Du Boulay (An Epitome of the Chino-Japanese War, 1894–1895, London 1896, pp. 9–10) the numerical strength of the Eight Banners Army on the eve of the outbreak of the war with Japan was 325,000 (definitely an overstatement), Green Standard Army 357,000, Brave Army and Trained army a total of almost 409,000. (probably including some militia units – the reformed units themselves were officially rated as non-permanent units). Still, B. Putyata gives a total of 1.25 million troops for the entire Chinese army (in 1889), including 230,000 Manchu troops, 785,000 Chinese militia, 55,000 others, as well as 185,000 Mongolian and Tibetan militia units (Putyata B., Kitaj: Geograficheskiy ocherk. Naseleniye. Gossudarstvennyy byudzhet i vneshnyaya torgovlya. Vooruzhennyya sily. Russko-kitajskya granica, SGTSMA, vol. 59 (1895), p. 151). Considering the nature of the Chinese army, it is hard to determine its precise numerical strength. The figures given by the author are felt to be the closest to the real numbers on the eve of the outbreak of the war.

4 Du Boulay, op.cit., pp. 10–11.

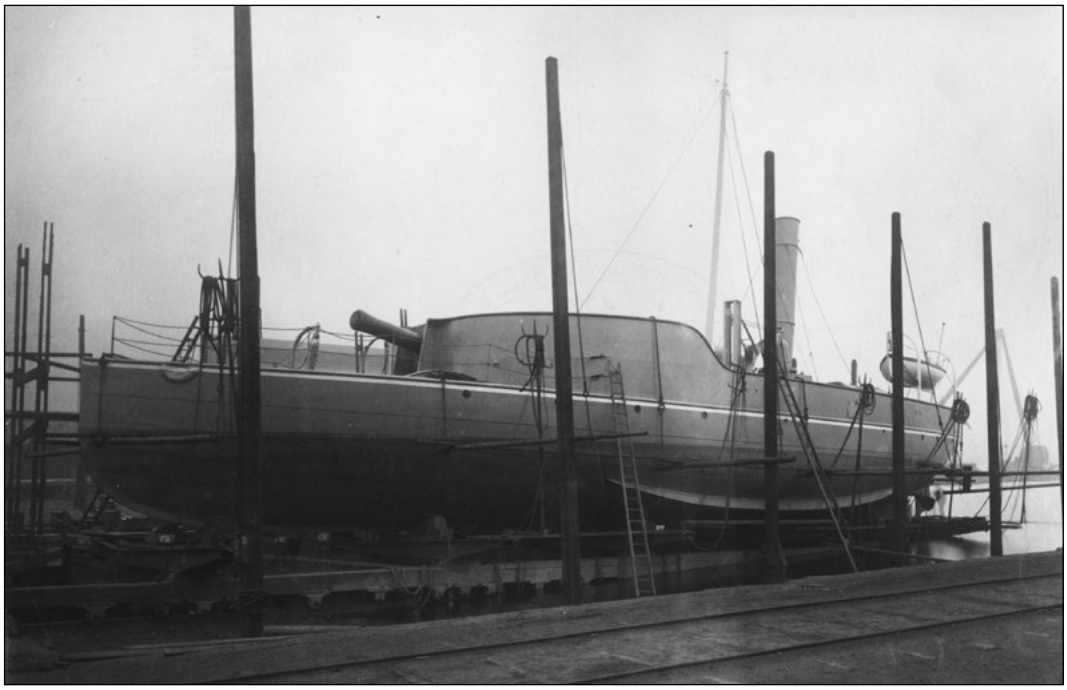
5 History of the War between Japan and China., vol.I, Tokyo 1904, Appendix IV, p.3; 'Vladimir', op.cit., p. 74.



Chinese gunboat Ts'e Tien *(ex* Delta*). Similar vessels armed with one large-calibre gun were to be an important component of the coastal defence of the most important Chinese harbours.*



Chinese gunboat of the Chen Tung *class on a slipway.*



Another Chinese gunboat of the same class on a slipway. The muzzle of the 279mm gun, her main armament, is visible.

A similar vessel seen from the stern.

Definitely the weakest point of the Chinese army was its training and the morale of its soldiers, which was considerably lower than in European-style armies. Admittedly, there were situations in which Chinese soldiers could attack or defend with the utmost dedication, displaying bravery and fortitude. However, more often they lacked perseverance in combat and broke down after initial failures, quickly panicking or becoming discouraged and losing faith in victory. In combat they preferred defence to attack in the belief that victory could only be achieved by defensive actions which would gradually exhaust enemy forces. Consequently, the Chinese army was usually rather passive in the field, lacking determination and quickly allowing the active enemy to seize the initiative. Combined with poor leadership and inefficient logistics, it was obvious that despite numerical strength, it could not be considered a dangerous enemy for modern European-style armed force of comparable size.

Defeats suffered by the Chinese during the Opium Wars led them to realise the need to possess a modern navy. The first attempt to create one, undertaken in 1861 (the so-called Lay-Osborne[6] flotilla composed of eight steamers), misfired due to issues around jurisdiction[7]. Consequently, creation of the navy became the responsibility of individual governors of coastal provinces and thus, in the 1860s, separate provincial fleets were created in Canton (Kwangtung province), Foochow (Fukien province and Taiwan) and Woosung near Shanghai (Chekiang province and Kiangsu). Although quite large, the navy thus created was not adapted for the military needs of the entire empire and mainly served the local feudal-military coteries.

Li Hung-chang, who since 1870 had been a Viceroy of the capital province Chihli and one of the leading Chinese politicians of that period, tried to change the situation. After the Taiwan crisis of 1874, he took advantage of his good relationship with the Court and called for reorganisation of the Chinese navy, and the creation of three fleets controlled by the central government, composed of six large and 10 smaller warships each at Tientsin, Woosung and Amoy[8]. The idea was not realised, but a year later Chinese territory was divided into two military districts: northern Peiyang and southern Nanyang[9]. Li Hung-chang and his Huai coterie took control over the former, while the latter (which was formally created later) fell under the control of the Hunan coterie. Simultaneously, a naval defence fund was legislated for, which would receive 40 percent of maritime customs tariffs, amounting to approximately four million taels annually[10].

Those actions led to creation of the uniform Peiyang Fleet subordinate to the central government (in practice to Li Hung-chang and

6 It was named after Horatio Nelson Lay (Inspector General of the Imperial Maritime Customs Service), who acted as a middleman in the purchase of the warships, and Sherard Osborne (Captain RN), who was to command the flotilla.

7 R.N.J. Wright, The Chinese Steam Navy 1862–1945, London 2000, pp. 15–17.

8 J.L.Rawlinson, China's Struggle for Naval Development 1839–1895., Cambridge, Mass. 1967, p. 64.

9 In effect a part of the Peiyang District was 'separated' and in the following years it naturally transformed into the southern Nanyang District. Because of the manner of its genesis, the district did not possess the integrity of the Peiyang District and differed from it as far as specifics and structure were concerned.

10 J.L.Rawlinson, op. cit., p. 71. For the sake of comparison, each of the German-built *Ting Yuan* class battleships cost about 1.7 million taels.