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The Tatsu Maru Incident and The Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908:
A Study of Conflicting Interpretations

Sin-kiong Wong (黃賢強)

I. Introduction

On February 5, 1908, a group of Cantonese customs officials and
navy officers seized a Japanese ship, the Tatsu Maru, in the waters
outside Macao. The result was a months-long negotiation between
the Chinese government and its Japanese counterpart. A direct conse-
quence—the Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908—not only had an effect
on Sino-Japanese relations, but produced internal crises in Ch'ing China.

Soon after the Tatsu Maru departed from Kobe the Chinese
government received secret information indicating that it was carrying
contraband arms and ammunition. The informant alleged that although
the rifles and ammunition were conveyed to a firm in Macao, they
were really to be transferred into the hands of Chinese revolutionaries,
who were plotting to overthrow the Ch'ing regime. The central
government in Peking ordered the Cantonese authorities to keep a close
eye on the ship.

*This article has benefited from the proof reading of distinguished Professor Emeritus Robert H. Ferrell and valuable comments of Professor George M. Wilson of Indiana University.

1. The official name of the ship was "the Daini Tatsu Maru" (二辰丸), but usually be abbreviated as "The Tatsu Maru" (辰丸). All documents identified the ganzi of "Tatsu" as辰, except in the memoirs of Japanese Minister Hayashi who
used the ganzi 龍, see Hayashi Gonzuke, Waga shichiju-nen no kataru (Tokyo, 1935), pp.273-78.

2. The Japan Weekly Mail (thereafter JWM), February 15, 1908, p.196.

3. Yuan Shih-k'ai was suspected to be responsible for the whole incident. He had been attempting to demonstrate his own
competence to deal with the provincial insurgents, and he
was therefore prepared to take a strong step when his intel-
ligence agents in Kobe cabled about the shipment of arms
and ammunition to Macao. Yuan then sent instructions to
Viceroy Chang of Canton, whose daughter was married to Yuan's
son, to inspect the ship. See, JWM, March 21, 1908, p.315.

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At dawn on February 5 the ship dropped anchor a few miles outside Macao. Chinese officials identified the location of the ship within the territorial waters of China. At about half past two that afternoon, as the Chinese officials witnessed the ship unloading its cargo, a Cantonese gunboat approached. The commander and his associates then boarded the Tatsu Maru. During the investigation, the Chinese controversially hauled down the Japanese flag and replaced it by the Ch'ing ensign. They discovered 1,500 rifles and 40,000 rounds of ammunition, justifying capture. They towed the ship to Whampoa, a port near Canton, and placed it under custody.

The Japan Shipowners Union, which listed the Tatsu Maru, responded by holding a special meeting in Tokyo, and passed a resolution that seizure of the Tatsu Maru was illegal and urged the Japanese government to demand immediate release. The Japanese government did protest the seizure and demanded release of ship and cargo, as well as a formal apology, payment of an indemnity, and punishment of Chinese officials involved. The Japanese argued that the Tatsu Maru had gone through the proper legal procedures, with an export permit from the Kobe Harbor Office and Customs House, and had obtained an import certificate from Macao authorities.

Japan’s Foreign Ministry authorized the Japanese Minister in China, Hayashi Gonsuke, and Consul Ueno at Canton to take charge of negotiations. Japan repeatedly rejected Chinese proposals for arbitration and compromise. On March 13, 1908, with a threat of military action, Japan submitted a five-point solution. The Chinese government accepted, two days later, including payment to Japan of 21,400 yen and remuneration for the arms. In return Japan agreed in principle to a stricter enforcement of regulations controlling the traffic in arms and munitions.

The Chinese people, particularly residents of Canton, were angered about the result. They regarded it as humiliating. They called for a boycott against Japanese goods—the first anti-Japanese boycott in Chinese history. Chinese merchants, particularly those in port cities, also overseas Chinese, supported the boycott.

4. North China Herald (thereafter NCH), February 14, 1908, p.339; but according to Tung-fang tsa-tzu (thereafter TFFT), there were 94 boxes of rifles and 40 boxes of ammunition, see 5 (1908): 8-14; Another report showed that there were 750 rifles and 40,000 ammunition, see JWM, February 15, 1908, p.166.
5. JWM, February 15, 1908, p.166.

The Chinese and Japanese differed in interpretation of where and what happened. They had different opinions about the best way to end the crisis. Their arguments focused on whether seizure took place in Chinese territorial waters or in Portuguese waters; what was the motive of Chinese officials who replaced the Japanese flag; whether a joint investigation was the best solution; and finally, how deeply was the incident involved in a moral-legal controversy?

The direct consequence of the Tatsu Maru Incident—the Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908—was controversial. Using a boycott as a weapon against Japanese aggression involved a chicken-and-egg problem. In the Chinese perspective, it was nonviolent resistance and a defensive measure. The Japanese viewed it as economic warfare. It may have brought the Japanese military actions of the 1930s.

The boycott of 1908 showed increasing tensions between the Chinese central government and provincial authorities, and escalated conflicts between reformers and revolutionaries. The central government suppressed the boycott; the Cantonese government tolerated it. K'ang Yu-wel’s faction of reformers agitated the boycott; Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionaries discouraged it.

II. Conflicting Interpretations on Controversial Issues

1. Where did it happen?

The ship was anchored in the waters between China and Macao. According to the Chinese explanation, it was in Chinese territorial waters. The exact site, identified by a chronometer, was between east longitude 113 37' 30" and north latitude 22 8' 10". The ship had stayed for eight hours before Chinese officials took action to seize it. The Chinese acted when they witnessed the ship unloading arms and ammunition. They detained the ship in accord with Article V of the Commercial Treaty between Japan and China, on the ground that the ship was unloading cargo in Chinese territorial waters without permission of authorities.

A Chinese magazine even described the captain of the Tatsu Maru as initially arguing that the ship was in Macao's territorial waters. But after checking the chronometer the captain realized the ship was indeed in Chinese territorial waters.

Because the waters of Macao Harbor were shallow, scarcely reaching two fathoms, it was reasonable to believe that the unloading
of the ship's cargo took place in deeper waters. A Cantonese coolie who was hired to unload the arms from the ship to a smaller boat so testified in support of the Chinese accusation.9

While the Japanese explained that weather on February 5 was not good for approaching Macao, the Chinese observed that weather was in fact favorable. Moreover, the ship anchored at a distance and for more than eight hours, which suggested some special purpose.10 It did not approach Macao port even when the tide reached its highest level. The Chinese suspected that the Japanese were waiting until nightfall to transport the arms and ammunition. So they decided to act.

The Chinese discovered that the Tatsu Maru violated its shipping contract. According to the contract signed by a British company and the ship owner, the ship was supposed to transport coal to Hong Kong. No other destination was allowed except in case of emergency. But the ship violated the contract, passed Hong Kong without unloading, and headed for Macao. The Chinese concluded that the ship carried arms and ammunition, prohibited by Hong Kong's Customs.

The Japanese government believed the exact spot where the ship was seized was two miles east of the Portuguese island of Caro, and was in east longitude 113 38' 20" and in north latitude 22 9' 45".11 It was in the Portuguese territorial waters. Japan argued that arms and ammunition were bought by a merchant in Macao and conveyed to Macao openly. And since the ship was not smuggling arms and ammunition and was not in Chinese territorial waters, Article V of the Commercial Treaty could not apply. Moreover, according to testimony of the captain, Chinese navy officers, not customs officials, seized the ship. This warlike measure could not be justified by the Commercial Treaty.

Japan claimed there was no unloading of cargo from the ship. Even if the Japanese had done so, they were preparing to transport cargo to Macao.12 It was not the business of China. Similarly, in response to the accusation of violating the shipping contract, the Japanese argued it was business between ship owners and British company, and had nothing to do with the Ch'ing government.13

10. JWM, February 22, 1908, p.196.
11. JWM, March 14, 1908, p.282.
12. CCWCSL, chuan 211, pp.1-4.
13. Ibid., chuan 212, pp.3-5.

The key question lies in the position of the ship when seized. Had it been within Portuguese territorial waters, the Chinese government would have had no legitimate reason to seize it. If it was in Chinese territorial waters, whether the ship did unload its cargo became important. Only if the ship was in Chinese territorial waters and unloading cargo, could China justify its seizure.

Since there were different testimonies, documentation supported conflicting opinions and it was hard to know the exact site of capture. But both sides had their weaknesses. Some arguments for the Chinese side are contradictory: since the Chinese suspected the ship was waiting until dark to smuggle the arms and ammunition, they acted in mid-afternoon and claimed the ship was in process of unloading. But the Japanese explanation lacked consistency in stating that the ship did not discharge cargo. While Minister Hayashi insisted there was no unloading, another Japanese source indicates there might have been a preparation for unloading.14

2. Why did the Chinese replace Japanese Flag?

When the Chinese boarded the Tatsu Maru and searched for illegal cargo, they replaced the Japanese flag with the Chinese. To the Japanese the detaining of the ship might have been the outcome of mistaken identity, but there was no excuse for the conduct of the Chinese who ordered the tearing down of the Japanese flag.15 Japan considered the act unjustifiable and an insult. Japanese Foreign Minister Okuma ordered Minister Hayashi to restore the honor of the Japanese flag.16

Chinese interpretation of this episode emphasized that the replacement was actually a protection of Japanese dignity, rather than an insult. When Chinese officials were investigating, there were two Portuguese gunboats circling around the Tatsu Maru. Macao authorities believed the ship was located in its territorial waters. Both the Portuguese and the Chinese wished to maintain sovereignty. The situation was tense. The Chinese thought the two Portuguese gunboats would attack. A naval war between China and Portugal seemed imminent. To secure safety of the Tatsu Maru, the Chinese captain ordered replacement of flag.17 The purpose was to make clear that the conflict was between the Portuguese and Chinese, not Japanese. A magazine even suggested that the captain of the Tatsu Maru did not oppose the changing of the flag when he realized that Portuguese

15. JWM, February 22, p.196.
16. NCN, March 13, 1908, p.595.
17. TJFTT, 5 (1908): 8-14; CCWCSL, chuan 210, pp.3-5.
gunboats were likely to attack.\textsuperscript{18}

Chinese arguments are problematic. First, if the Portuguese gunboats were going to attack the Chinese, they would attack the Chinese gunboats instead of the \textit{Tatsu Maru}. Second, it was unrealistic to assume that if war broke out, the Chinese would be able to take over the \textit{Tatsu Maru} and use it to fight the Portuguese. In fact, replacing the Japanese flag with the Chinese would have only encouraged the Portuguese to attack the \textit{Tatsu Maru} and created greater risk to the ship. 

Surprisingly, the Japanese did not argue with the Chinese on these grounds, but emphasized only the humiliation of national pride.

In short, Chinese explanations of the replacement of the flag are less convincing. The Chinese government indeed realized its weakness and was willing to separate the flag problem from other issues. It even implied that the Chinese commander might have made a mistake in ordering the flag to be replaced. The Peking government did not mind sacrificing an official for better settlement of the problem. China’s intention was to differentiate the flag issue from that of smuggling and using Chinese territorial waters.

\textbf{3. How to investigate:}

Under Japanese pressure, China was ready to apologize for the flag’s replacement and even agree to release the ship in March 1908. But it insisted on detaining the arms and ammunition pending further investigation. There are different views about who initiated the proposals of inviting an intermediary and of conducting a joint investigation. Most Chinese sources believed China was seeking an intermediary, preferring a Briton, either the Royal Navy commander in Canton or the Inspector-General of Customs, Sir Robert Hart.\textsuperscript{19} But a Japanese source suggested that China considered the United States as the better choice.\textsuperscript{20} A British source even suggested that Japan might possibly appeal to London or Washington to act as a mediator.\textsuperscript{21} But this assumption did not have sufficient documentation. A more dependable source is the memoirs of Minister Hayashi, in which he revealed that a Briton did persuade him to make a settlement with China but the minister rejected the idea.\textsuperscript{22}

\begin{itemize}
\item 20. \textit{JNN}, March 14, 1908, p.283.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{4. How to arrange the arms and ammunition:}

After China agreed to apologize for mistreatment of the Japanese flag, and held a ceremony to salute the Japanese flag, the next issue to be settled was how to manage the returning of the ship and its cargo. In the negotiation, China focused on not only the illegality of the shipment, including violation of the shipping contract and the Commercial Treaty, but the legitimacy of seizure, justified by international law.\textsuperscript{27} China preferred to separate the arms and ammunition issue from seizure of the ship. China would release the ship on condition that the Japanese should offer guarantee bonds, and the arms and ammunition should be detained in Canton, pending investigation.\textsuperscript{28}

Japan was intransigent, rejecting several Chinese proposals for

\begin{itemize}
\item 23. \textit{NCN}, March 6, 1908, p.532.
\item 24. Ibid., March 13, 1908, p.592.
\item 25. \textit{JNN}, February 22, 1908, p.196.
\item 26. CWCISL, chuan 210, pp.3-4.
\item 27. \textit{TPPP}, 5 (1908): 8-14.
\item 28. \textit{NCN}, March 13, 1908, p.649.
\end{itemize}
settled. Japan even threatened to rescue the ship and cargo by force unless China satisfied Japan's demands. The Chinese Minister in Tokyo, Li Chia-chu, sent a telegram back home to confirm the widespread rumor of possible military action. But Li added that the domestic crisis in Japan was the driving force behind Japanese uncompromising attitudes. Any military action would be an excuse to solve the internal crisis in Japan, instead of solving the Tatsu Maru case.

The Chinese people, especially the Cantonese, were concerned about the military threat. They stood behind viceroy Chang, the highest-ranked government official. They claimed that if a Sino-Japanese war was inevitable, any outcome would be better than unconditional release of ship and cargo. But before Japan deployed military force, the Chinese government agreed to pay 21,400 yen, for purchasing the arms and ammunition.

There have been different interpretations of this final settlement. Some sources suggest that the Japanese government forced China to buy the arms and ammunition. Others believe the Chinese government was eager to buy them, though the price was higher than market price. The latter interpretation sounds reasonable because the Ch'ing government did not want the arms and ammunition released. Release would mean they would be sold to Chinese merchants, and eventually be turned over to revolutionaries organizing anti-Manchu uprisings.

5. Moral-legal controversy:

During the negotiation on settlement of the incident, China constantly reminded Japan of the moral aspect. China took morality into account to justify its seizure of the Tatsu Maru. The Ch'ing government, under the suggestion of Viceroy Chang, made connections between the incident and uprisings in South China, especially in Liang-kwang provinces.

After establishment of the Tung-meng-hui, a revolutionary organization organized by Sun Yat-sen in 1905, attempts to overthrow the Ch'ing government happened more frequently. Weapons were supplied primarily from Japan. It was reasonable to have the Ch'ing government believe the arms and ammunition carried in the Tatsu Maru, though purchased by a Macao merchant, would be sold to revolutionaries. The Ch'ing government argued that the shipment included more than 1,500 rifles, outnumbering the needs of Macao's garrison, composed of no more than two hundred soldiers. Seizure of the ship and confiscation of arms and ammunition was part of the plan to control unrest in South China. China expected that Japan as a friendly power would assist in preventing supplies of arms and ammunition from reaching the revolutionaries.

Japan made distinctions between the moral and legal aspects of the incident. But the Japanese government sympathized with the domestic problems of the Ch'ing government, and realized that re-exportation of arms and ammunition to Chinese revolutionaries was always possible. It eventually agreed to exercise stricter control over export of arms, and was willing to give moral support to China. Minister Hayashi had notified China in late March that Japan prohibited the export of arms to Macao, unless there was evidence they were not destined for revolutionaries and carried a certification from the Macao government. But this could work only with cooperation of the Macao government. Finally, the Macao government agreed to cooperate, and issued a regulation to govern the exportation of arms. It would notify the Chinese government in advance of any arms exported from Macao.

Hayashi's memoirs provided new insight about the shipment of arms. He recalled that the Japanese government was, in fact, involved in sale and export of arms and ammunition. Most of the arms were out-of-date, ready to be replaced by the Japanese Army.

Public opinion in Japan, although it supported Japanese government demands, supported the restriction of arms exports. Even a pro-Japanese weekly newspaper commented that in view of chronic unrest in South China, it would be a friendly act on the part of the Japanese government to give the Chinese government an opportunity to state whether exportation of these munitions was in order. Another newspaper suggested that issuing regulations for control of arms shipments to China "would be eminently friendly to China and would earn the applause of civilized nations."

China was in a weak position. In 1908 the Ch'ing government

33. CCWCSL, chuan 211, pp.2-4.
35. JWM, February 22, 1908, p.196.
36. NCH, March 13, 1908, p.595.
37. Ibid., March 27, 1908, p.725.
38. CCWCSL, chuan 213, pp.25-26.
40. NCH, March 13, 1908, p.603.
41. JWM, March 14, 1908, p.282.
was unwillingly on the brink of collapse. Japan, on the other hand, had defeated the Russian Empire three years before, and become the most powerful country in the East. It was not surprising that China eventually submitted to Japan's terms in the settlement of the Tatsu Maru Incident. The outcome of the incident thus represented a logical development of Sino-Japanese relations since the mid-nineteenth century.

III. The Anti-Japanese Boycott

A boycott as a weapon to resist foreign aggression was new in 1908. The only example was the Anti-American Boycott of 1905, a response to American discriminatory policies toward Chinese immigration. There are some connections between the Anti-American China's sovereignty, and the Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908. The Cantonese people found the device of boycott so useful in the 1905 that they were inclined to use it again.

Both boycott movements had other similarities. The origins of the boycotts lay in the reaction of the Chinese people, led by Chinese merchants in treaty ports, against foreign onslaughts. The two boycotts lasted about a year and failed for similar reasons: foreign pressure and suppression from the central government. Both boycotts helped the rise of Chinese nationalism.

There were also differences between the two boycotts. The Anti-American boycott was caused by prejudice against overseas Chinese; the Anti-Japanese boycott was a reaction to an insult to China's sovereignty. The Anti-American boycott broke out before settlement between China and the United States of a new immigration treaty, for the purpose of pressuring both countries to conclude a favorable treaty for Chinese immigrants. The Anti-Japanese boycott happened after final settlement of the Tatsu Maru Incident. Participants of the boycott of 1908 did not hope their actions would make any change in the final settlement, but expressed anger to the Peking government and retaliated against Japanese businesses in China.

1. Who were the instigators?

42. Some cases of resisting to buy foreign goods had taken place prior to the twentieth century, but the first anti-foreign boycott in a modern sense was the Anti-American boycott of 1905, see Remer, Chinese Boycott, chaps. 1-3.

43. JNM, March 14, 1908, p.284.

44. Kikuchi Takahara, Chugoku shinzo undo no kihon kozo (Tokyo, 1974), pp.11-96.


46. Ibid.

47. JNM, April 25, 1908, p.450.


50. Ibid., April 24, 1908, p.218.

51. Ibid., May 11, 1908, p.325.

52. JNM, April 18, 1908, p.432.


Tatsu Maru Incident and Anti-Japanese Boycott

There have been different explanations of who initiated the boycott. The Japanese identified Cantonese merchants, especially members of the Cantonese Associations of Self-Government, and navy commanders of Canton, officials of Cantonese Customs, and Hong Kong residents. Others blamed the sympathetic attitude of Viceroy Chang, and the reformers of Kang's faction. Chinese students who returned from Japan also inflamed the agitation against Japanese goods by editing papers or writing articles.

The boycott happened soon after the Cantonese people learned that the central government in Peking had accepted all Japan's terms. The Cantonese people were irritated about what they regarded as Peking's spineless attitude. They closed shops and markets, prepared to riot, and launched a boycott.

Some sources, including a newspaper circulated in Japan, suggested that foreign firms, in which even those of Britain were included, were suspected as being behind-the-scenes supporters of the boycott. All goods, such as Japanese tobacco, which could be replaced by other foreign goods suffered. The Anti-Japanese boycott theoretically benefited Westerners. But an English newspaper based in Shanghai denied the allegation and argued that it was hard to imagine that the Cantonese would "take their cue" from outsiders "so obviously self-interested."

The anti-Japanese boycott movement started in Canton and Hong Kong, and soon spread to Shanghai. Because Shanghai is the biggest commercial city in China, the effect of the boycott on Japanese businesses in Shanghai was significant. The boycott became so serious that the Japanese Consul-General in Shanghai had to ask the Peking government to suppress it.

Coastal cities in China joined the boycott movement. The boycott movement spread into Kwangsi province, where it worried the Japanese Minister. Chinese communities in the United States,
Southeast Asia, Australia, and even in Japan joined. The most serious episode of the boycott movement took place in Hong Kong in early November 1908. Hong Kong residents attacked stores that sold Japanese goods and caused a riot. The Hong Kong authorities suppressed the so-called November Riot and expelled several Chinese merchants and journalists alleged to be instigators. Like the boycott of 1905, that of 1908 was transformed into a nationwide movement of nationalism.

2. Responses to the Boycott:

The official response of China toward the boycott movement was divided between action of the central government and provincial authorities. Failing to understand the significance of the boycott and surrendering to foreign pressure, the central government outlawed the boycott. It requested that provincial governments cooperate in suppressing the boycott movement. In response to a telegram by a Cantonese merchant, Chen Chi-chien, who challenged the policy of the central government, the Foreign Ministry in Peking explained that Chen's claim was unconvincing. Cantonese merchants lacked evidence to support the boycott and persuade foreigners to assist them. The central government condemned boycott advocates as troublemakers, and accused Chinese merchants of violating the law.

Provincial governments reluctantly enforced the order from the central government. In a reply to Peking in early April, Viceroy Chang argued that the central government could prevent the Chinese people from boycotting Japanese goods but could not prohibit people from buying only Chinese products. In order to avoid intervention from the central government, boycott advocates had wisely changed their slogans from boycotting Japanese goods to promoting native industry, consuming only Chinese products. Private sectors in China, especially publishers, endorsed the boycott. Newspapers covered the boycott movement in detail.

The Japanese response to the boycott was also clear. Japanese diplomats in China consistently protested the boycott, by means of both diplomatic channels and military posturing. Japan complained about Viceroy Chang's acquiescence to the boycott, and condemned the Reformers of Kang's faction for agitating the boycott. Japanese newspapers tried to discourage the boycott movement by reporting its negative side of the boycott movement, suggesting that the boycott did not receive support from the Chinese people. A pro-Japanese English newspaper stated that the Cantonese Associations of Self-Government, identified as the center of the boycott movement, "failed to gain support for their actions among their fellow provincials in important quarters abroad." The newspaper also disclosed that overseas Chinese and Chinese merchants in Japan had been opposed to the movement from the beginning. According to the newspaper, over one hundred Cantonese residents in Tokyo "have passed a resolution holding the Peking Government responsible for the incident of the Tatsu Mara, and declaring that the boycott is not only misapplied, but is detrimental to the relations of China and Japan."

An English account stated that the Japanese government had proceeded to a more conciliatory attitude toward the boycott movement in Canton, and ordered recall of the Japanese Consul-General in that city, who had refused to consider the arbitration of the Tatsu Mara Incident.

The boycott had a considerable effect. Some Japanese businesses were hurt. The shipping industry of Japan suffered most. During the months after the boycott movement, many Japanese ships sailed with no Chinese passengers nor Chinese cargo.

Still, an English account has argued, based on trade statistics of both China and Japan, that the economic effect of the boycott was slight, the overall result of the boycott was not impressive.

3. Why did the boycott fail?

Failure, according to a Chinese source, was caused by suppression from the central government and frustration of Chinese merchants. The boycott was a double-edged knife, and hurt both Japanese businesses in China and the interests of Chinese merchants. Some Chinese merchants could not afford to lose their businesses and money, and reordered and imported Japanese goods. A Chinese newspaper suggested that lack of military power and disunity of the Chinese people
were the main factors in failure. The boycott movement of 1908 inherited some of the weaknesses of the Anti-American Boycott of 1905. Some merchants acted individually, concerned for their own interests. The Anti-Japanese boycott perhaps had more effect on Japan than the Anti-American boycott had on the United States, because American trade with China only accounted for a very small portion of its trade. The Japanese economy, on the other hand, relied heavily on trade with China, which was the source of raw materials and a market for Japanese products.

The direct cause of the boycott of 1908 was a response to the Chinese apology to the Tatsu Maru Incident, but the boycott movement generated many complications. One argument suggested that the boycott demonstrated the growth of provincialism or regionalism: the Cantonese government tolerated the boycott movement in order to disgrace the central government. Others have indicated that the boycott supported nationalism.

IV. Conclusion

Since both the Chinese and Japanese drew their versions of the Tatsu Maru Incident from different evidence and documents, a standard account of the incident hardly exists. But the consequence of the incident was much more important than the incident.

The case of the Tatsu Maru exposed serious domestic problems in China in the final years of the late Ch'ing. First of all, the central-provincial conflicts escalated to a new level during the negotiation with Japan. While the central government began to appease Japan in early March 1908, the provincial government in Canton, under leadership of Viceroy Chang, insisted on no compromise. The concerns of the Peking government were foreign relations and the weakness of its military power, but the Cantonese government was concerned about the feeling of residents and unrest in its administrative region. Viceroy Chang might not have had enough influence on the final decision of the central government, but he tolerated the Anti-Japanese boycott, which not only affected Japanese economic interests in China, but created a nonviolent resistance against the central authority in Peking.

Second, the Tatsu Maru Incident revealed the intensive conflicts between reformers and revolutionaries in China. While the reformers supported the Ch'ing's determinism to control arms smuggling, the revolutionaries welcomed transport of arms and ammunition, and blamed the Manchu government for handling the case badly. The confrontation intensified after the boycott began. Reformers participated in the boycott movement, but revolutionaries discouraged it, afraid that the boycott would affect their weapons supply from Japan.

Finally, the boycott as a weapon against foreign hostility involved a controversial debate in Sino-Japanese relations. In the Chinese perspective a boycott is a nonviolent resistance and defensive measure. Japanese, on the other hand, viewed it as economic warfare, a stimulus of Japanese military actions. Scholars who support the Japanese perspective argue that anti-Japanese boycotts in China, which had their origins in the 1908 boycott and were influenced by the increasing affluence in following decades, should be blamed for the Japanese occupation of China in the 1930s.

In conclusion, the Tatsu Maru Incident and its direct consequence—the Anti-Japanese Boycott of 1908— not only became a battlefield for central and provincial leaders, as well as for reformers and the revolutionaries, but was a turning point in Sino-Japanese relations during the first half of the twentieth century.

70. *NCU*, May 11, 1908, p.325.
71. Kikuchi, *Chugoku minekoku undo*, p.82.
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The Philosophy and Religion of Sung Mou-ch'eng, a Late Ming Poet-Essayist

Wong Yuk (王穎)

As a descendant of Chao K'uang-yin 翁匡胤, Sung Mou-ch'eng 宋懋渓 (Yu-ch'ing 幼清, Tzu-yüan 契源, 自源) was a native of Huat'ing 敦亭. In 1612, he obtained the chih-jen 聘人 degree.

His father Sung Yao-yü 善僑 disliked flattering seniors, and depriated turtle's art of self-preservation because tortoise cannot escape from tiger-teeth: "How can it use early cowardice and recession? Human destiny, being determined, can never be shunned with prudence and silence. Influenced by this soft determinism, Yu-ch'ing opined, "One may strive to become an official, but heaven actually controls one's success and failure." In the failure to get a decent job, who is more bitter than my father! Adapting himself to an unworthy official job, he offended the premier and then died of depression and melancholy in an alien province. Ancient superior men, whether officials or not, mainly established their minds in learning. Putting people and things in correct positions and nourishing them, those superior men were capable of criticizing heaven and earth without going outdoors. Nowadays, superior men behaved strangely: gaining a degree through luck, they demanded fields and houses incessantly." According to Chuang Tzu, Mou-ch'eng mockingly called the latter "superior men in human standard, but inferior men in heavenly standard" and deemed them shameful. Tzu-yüan's mother objectively condemned Yii Jang 彦讓 in lacquering his body and swallowing charcoal to avenge Chih Po's 智伯 death upon the murderer Shang Tzu 攤子. Yii Jang's heart was too harsh: his social attitude, excessively narrow. Consequently, he offended both heaven and humans. Apart from historical insight, Yu-ch'ing's mother moved her relatives deeply with her kindness and propriety. Concerning Mou-ch'eng's uncle, Confucianism and Taoism were cited with Buddhism, which disclosed his criticism and syncretism of "three teachings." 三教:

From Chuang Chou I heard that nourishing life was unreliable: nourishing inside was liable to harming outside, while nourishing (preparing) outside was apt to hurt inside...not enslaving my will, I nourish my will by fitness. For me, life and death are going and return, poverty and wealthiness are dream and wakening, worthiness and stupidity are electricity and shadow. How

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