

The Mutan Village Incident: It's significance for East Asian geopolitics

從東亞國際情勢的觀點談「牡丹社事件」

Lin Cheng-rong, Associate Professor Department of History

Tam-kang University

林呈蓉／淡江大學歷史系副教授

事件的發端

爲了解決長久以來台灣海域上的外籍受難船隻屢遭島上原住民侵犯的問題，1874 年 5 月，日本派員三千六百人在陸軍中將西鄉從道指揮下出兵台灣。在懲治島上原住民之後，重新與之交睦，並賜予日章旗及印章，以爲日後交流之標記。

Roots of the incident

For the declared purpose of resolving the long-standing problem of Taiwan aboriginal attacks upon Japanese seamen stranded in Taiwan territorial waters, in May of 1874, Japan sent a contingent of 3600 soldiers to Taiwan under the command of army Lt. Gen. Saigo Tsugumichi. Following the punitive expedition against the aborigines, the Japanese established friendly relationships with them, presenting them with Japanese ceremonial banners and seals for use in subsequent official communications.

日本軍出師的具體名義，先是以 1871 年 12 月，一艘從那霸出發的宮古島船在歸返途中遭逢暴風雨侵襲，漂流至台灣南部東岸八瑤灣附近，倖存上岸台灣島的六十六名乘員中，有五十四名竟被島上原住民高士佛社、牡丹社人所殺害；

Japan's pretext for sending this Japanese expeditionary force was as follows:

First, in December 1871, a Miyako Island boat sailing from Naha encountered a storm at sea on its return voyage. It was cast onto the southeastern coast of Taiwan near Payao Bay. Of the 66 crewmen who were so fortunate as to land there, 54 were killed by aborigines from Kaoshihfo and Mutan villages.

接著，1873 年 3 月又有日本小田縣（今岡山縣）的船頭佐藤利八等四人，在出海貿易途中，亦遭暴風雨侵襲而漂流至台灣東部馬武窟附近，衣物遭台灣原住民所掠奪。

Subsequently, in March of 1873, while on a trading voyage four seamen including ship's captain Sato Rihachi from Oda Prefecture (present-day Okayama Prefecture) were also blown by a storm to the vicinity of Mawuku in eastern Taiwan, where aborigines made off with their clothing.

雖然日本方面曾試圖訴諸外交途徑來謀求解決之道，但是一如過去歐美遭難船之經驗，清國方面總以「化外之地、化外之民」為由來推諉責任。於是，日本乃在「清國無法處理此等情事」的認知前提下，出兵台灣，懲治島上的原住民。

Although the Japanese authorities at first sought to resolve this problem through diplomatic channels, nevertheless, as in earlier instances of European and American ships stranded in Taiwan, the Qing authorities continued to deny responsibility, based on the principle that “those are uncivilized people on the outer fringes of civilization.” Consequently, under the premise that “the Qing Empire is unable to deal with this sort of affair,” Japan sent troops to Taiwan for punitive action against the island's aborigines.



Shihmen in the Hengchun region, where, on May 22, 1874, Japanese troops engaged in armed conflict with the aborigines.

1874 年 5 月 22 日，日軍在恆春附近的石門與原住民發生激戰

值得玩味的是：1871 年 12 月牡丹社事件發生當時，日本方面為何沒有馬上派兵懲治原住民？而長久以來主張對台灣具有主權的清帝國在此一事件中，到底扮演著如何的角色？

Worth pondering are the questions, (a) why didn't the Japanese immediately send a punitive expedition against the Aborigines after the December 1871 Mutan Village Incident; and (b) exactly what role was played in this incident by the Qing government, which had long claimed suzerainty over Taiwan?

台灣海域上的受難船漂流至島上而遭原住民迫害，此次並非頭一遭。1867 年 3 月美籍受難船所引發的羅發號（Rover）事件就是另一個活生生的案例。歐美列強爲了此類事件，屢屢向清帝國政府尋求解決之道，然而一直都不得要領。羅發號事件之後，美國駐廈門領事李仙得（Charles W. Le Gendre）在求助無門的情況下，乃毅然直抵台灣與原住民酋長卓杞篤（Tauketok）見面，並相互達成了船難救助協議。換言之，至少從這類情事上，充分表現出島上二元政權的屬性。李仙得也基於這樣的事態而提出其「蕃地無主論」的看法，甚至寫了一本書《Is Aboriginal Formosa a Part of the Chinese Empire?》（台灣原住民地區是中華帝國的一部份嗎？），成爲日後日本的台灣出兵行爲之理論依據。

This 1871 incident was by no means the first instance of seamen stranded in Taiwan being attacked by aborigines. The Rover Incident in March of 1867, involving a shipwrecked vessel of American registry, is a prominent case in point. The Euro-American hegemony had repeatedly sought resolution of the problem from the Qing government without their eliciting any substantive official action. In the aftermath of the Rover Incident, and in the absence of any alternate avenue of redress, the American consul to Xiamen, Charles W. Le Gendre, boldly traveled directly to Taiwan and met with aborigine chief Tauketok, with whom he negotiated a nautical disaster relief agreement. In other words, judging at least from this sort of event, the Rover Incident clearly revealed a sort of dual-jurisdiction situation. Moreover, based on this sort of circumstance, Le Gendre enunciated his theory holding that “barbarians’ lands have no owners,” and even wrote a book entitled *Is Aboriginal Formosa a Part of the Chinese Empire?* The book contributed to Japan’s theoretical justification for its later military actions in Taiwan.

國際媒體的報導

當 1871 年船難問題再度發生時，西方媒體則做了如下的報導。

New York Times 1872 年 10 月 24 日 來自舊金山的消息說「數名的日本人船員在台灣遭遇船難，並被原住民所吞食。琉球王派遣使節前往江戶 [今東京]，試圖在報復措施上求取援助」；

上海發行的 North China Herald 同日也轉載了 Japan Gazette 的消息說「最近從薩摩縣 [今鹿兒島縣] 送來了台灣食人事件的

International news media reports

When the 1871 shipwreck incident occurred, Western media published the following reports:

The October 24, 1872 issue of the *New York Times* carried a report from a San Francisco source stating, “A number of Japanese seamen shipwrecked in Taiwan were cannibalized by its aborigines. The King of Okinawa sent an emissary to Edo [present-day Tokyo] in an attempt to secure assistance regarding measures for retaliation.”

On the same date, Shanghai’s *North China Herald* reprinted a *Japan Gazette* report, stating, “Recent reports from Satsuma Prefecture [present-day Kagoshima] of a

報告，令日本的政府高官感到非常戰慄。被認為是隸屬於薩摩侯所管的琉球諸島，有數艘戎克船漂流至台灣的海岸邊。根據送到日本的消息是，戎克船上的乘員被島人所吞食．．．。此外，日本方面則有所苦情，即日本對琉球的領有權等相關疑問。然而，在我們的印象中則以為，日本對琉球的領有權應該是被國際所承認的」。

cannibalization incident in Taiwan has horrified high-level Japanese authorities. A number of junk boats claiming to be under the jurisdiction of the Ryukyu Islands ruled by the Duke of Satsuma drifted onto the coast of Taiwan. According to Japanese news sources, the seamen of these junk boats were cannibalized by the island inhabitants... In this connection, the Japanese authorities are additionally facing problems with regard to their territorial claims on the Ryukyu Archipelago and related questions. It is our impression, however, that Japan's claims to suzerainty over the archipelago are internationally recognized."

從上述的兩則報導中可以確知歐美人士對於台灣原住民存有許多畏怖與誤解；另一方面，琉球船的台灣遭難事件，從肇事責任的歸屬開始所牽引出的不只是台灣，還包括了琉球的主權問題。

From the above-quoted two reports, we can clearly see that (a) Westerners lots of fears and misunderstandings concerning Taiwan's aborigines; and (b) the matter of assigning responsibility for the harm done to Okinawan seamen brought up the question of sovereignty not only over Taiwan but over Okinawa as well.

歐美強權的立場

但是出乎意料地，當出兵台灣的政策被確立的同時，卻遭致以英、美為首等列強之干涉。其主要的原因在於，位居十九世紀世界強權的英國極度擔心，清、日之間的紛爭可能會對英國資本在東亞地區的經濟活動有所影響，進而傷害了英國商民在該地區的經濟利益。在英國的威勢下，以美國為首的歐美國家對日本的出兵行為，採取警戒態度，批評這樣的行為是違反萬國公法，並強調以安全保障為由所訴諸之武力干涉，將不會被國際社會所承認。此時，美國的駐日公使一職已改由 John A.

Policy positions of European and American powers

Unexpectedly, however, at the same time the decision was made to send an expeditionary force to Taiwan, it met with the intervention of Western powers led by England and the United States. Its main reason was the concern of the nineteenth-century British hegemonic power regarding the influence which the conflict between the Qing and Japanese governments might have on British financial activities in East Asia, and the possible damage to the economic interests of British traders in the region. Under the paramount influence of British power, but primarily through the immediate agency of the American government, Western countries adopted an attitude of grave concern with regard to Japan's mobilization

Bingham 擔任，新任公使對於日本的台灣遠征行為改採強硬姿態，並追隨英國的做法，禁止任何美國人與美籍船參與此項出兵計畫。

of military force, criticizing such action as a violation of international laws governing intergovernmental relations, and emphasizing that an armed intervention in the name of national security would not be tolerated by the international community. At the time, John A. Bingham, who had just been newly appointed as ambassador to Japan, took a rigid stance in opposition to Japan's deployment of an armed force to Taiwan and, following Britain's lead, prohibited American citizens or ships from taking part in such activity.

值此之際，列強對於問題思考的邏輯則在於，日本的台灣出兵行為就好比「他國突然派遣三千名軍隊上陸北海道」的道理一樣缺乏說服力。縱然李仙得所抱持的「蕃地無主論」在地理根據上有其正當性，而清國也的確無法明確主張自己的「領有權」；但是也沒有任何證據顯示清國已經放棄了其對東部台灣的權益關係，倘若有他國企圖要征服「蕃地」，則清國自可在安全保障的理由下訴諸武力，而這種行為將會被國際社會所接受。當時的國際輿論，基本上仍在「台灣乃屬中國版圖」的認知下做評論，這樣的結果著實令日本外交界感到意外與震驚。

The governing logic underlying Western powers' consideration of the circumstances of that moment was that Japan's rationale for sending an expeditionary force to Taiwan was no more convincing than any rationale for "another country suddenly sending 3000 troops to Hokkaido." Even assuming that there was some validity to Le Gendre's barbarian-land-no-ownership theory, and that the Qing government had no grounds for asserting its sovereignty, it was nevertheless likewise true that there was no evidence to show that the Qing government had renounced its claim to sovereignty over eastern Taiwan. If another country had designs on the conquest of this "barbarian land," then the Qing government could similarly cite its national security as a pretext for mounting a military response. This would be deemed acceptable in the eyes of the international community. Regardless, the international consensus of the time was critical of Japan, based on its identification of Taiwan as a territory of China. This outcome indeed bewildered and stunned the Japanese diplomatic community.

事件的終結

在英、美等強權壓力下，日本雖然仍出兵

Resolution of the incident

Although, Japan, in defiance of British and American pressure,

台灣，並懲治了肇事的原住民，而且清國也派遣萬人大軍抵台與之對峙，但是清、日之間雙方並沒有直接發生衝突。在英國駐清公使威妥瑪（Thomas, Wade）的斡旋下，1874 年 10 月 31 日雙方簽下了一份北京專約，以由清國提出補償金來交換日本的撤兵，避免了戰爭情事的發生。其條約內容重點如下：

1. 清國政府必須承認日本的出兵台灣是「保民義舉」。
2. 清國政府提出五十萬兩為賠償金，其中十萬兩是受難家屬的撫卹金，另四十萬兩則是買回日本在蕃地所建設之道路與建物的所有權。

deployed troops to Taiwan and took punitive action against the aborigines involved in the Mutan Village Incident, and although the Qing government deployed 10,000 troops to Taiwan to counter them, no direct conflict between Qing and Japanese troops occurred. Through the arbitration of Thomas Wade, British ambassador to the Qing court, a treaty was signed by the two sides on October 31, 1874, whereby the Qing government paid reparations in return for the withdrawal of Japanese troops, thereby averting war. The treaty's main stipulations included:

- Qing government acknowledgement that the Japanese deployment of troops had been for the purpose of protecting of its nationals;
- Qing government compensation in the amount of 500,000 taels of gold, including 100,000 taels as consolation payments to the families of the deceased, and 400,000 taels for the purchase of ownership rights to roads and buildings constructed by the Japanese in the "barbarian land."



After the Mutan Village Incident, the Qing court acknowledged that the Japanese troops were acting for the purpose of “protecting their nationals,” and that the Ryukyus were Japanese territory. In 1871 Japan constructed a cenotaph to memorialize the Ryukyu residents who gave their lives.

牡丹社事件後，清廷承認日本出兵是「保民義舉」，無異是承認琉球是日本領土。事後日本仍替 1871 年罹難的琉球居民設立墓碑。

對於這樣的結果，英國駐日公使巴夏禮

Remarking critically on this outcome, British ambassador to

(Harry S. Parkes) 評論說「被侵略者卻必須交付償金的道理，令人感到費解。日本實無收受償金的資格」。根據申報 1874 年 11 月 9、10 兩日之社論所述，清政府方面倒是很釋懷地認為「使日本先行派兵征伐生蕃，的確是一大失策。但是做一點讓步，以五十萬兩的金額迴避戰事，免除了數年份的損失，而得以大事化小，小事化無，亦不失為上策。相對地，我國對於台灣所具有之統治責任則得以彰顯，進而禁止外國之妄舉。日本為此也花費了三、四百萬兩，今後勢必會堅戒類此之愚行」。

Japan Harry S. Parkes stated, “The proposition that a victim of invasion should have to pay reparations is incomprehensible! Japan certainly has no right to receive any compensation.” According to *Shen Pao* newspaper editorials published on October 9-10, 1874, the Qing government nevertheless very reassuringly opined that “Allowing Japan to send troops to attack the barbarians was indeed a major mistake. However, the negligible concession of using the sum of 500,000 gold taels to avert war and multi-year losses, rendering major problems small and small ones nonexistent, cannot be denied as a superior strategy. At the same time, our country’s sovereign responsibility for Taiwan has become manifest, serving to forestall further foreign aggression. For this Japan spent 3-4 million taels of gold, for which reason it will certainly refrain from such unwise action in the future.”

承如申報社論所述，為了懲治台灣原住民而實際花費了近約七百七十萬兩的公帑，對當時已瀕臨破產邊緣的日本新政府財政而言，整個事件幕後的黑手岩倉具視・大久保利通陣營，幾乎可以「罪萬萬」而被申請處分。

True to what the *Shen Pao* editorials said, given the fact that the actual expenditure for the punitive expedition against the Taiwan aborigines amounted to 7,700,000 taels of state treasury, from the point of view of the nearly bankrupt finance ministry of the new Japanese government of the time, the instigators behind the whole incident, Iwakura Tomomi and Okubo Toshimichi and their cliques might well have been indicted for a long list of charges.

但是「鹿死誰手」仍未知曉。北京會談的結果，根據條約內容，出現了「台灣生蕃」加害「日本國屬民等」、日本出兵的目的是「保民義舉」等用語；此外清國政府所支給的「撫卹金」是由日本政府轉交受難者遺族，此等行徑自然表示清國已同意「遭難的琉球人可以被解釋為是日本國民」。於是，日本對琉球的統治權逐漸受到國際社

There nonetheless remained some ambiguity as to who ended up being the final beneficiary in this incident. As the result of the Beijing conference which resolved the incident, there appeared in the final treaty such language as, “Taiwan savages did harm to Japanese nationals” and acknowledgement that the aim of Japan’s expeditionary force was “to protect and obtain justice for its people.” This, together with the fact that the consolation money paid by the Qing government was disbursed

會所認同，而清國對琉球宗主權之主張的理論根據相對地變得薄弱起來。日本藉由如此之情勢，自然了斷了琉球與清國之間的從屬關係，日本的「琉球併合」政策乃得以逐步推動。

to the families of the deceased through the auspices of the Japanese government, was tantamount to the Qing government's admission that the Ryukyu Islander castaways could be regarded as Japanese citizens. Hence, Japan's sovereignty over the Ryukyus gradually came to be recognized by the international community, while conversely the theoretical basis for the Qing Dynasty claim of traditional sovereignty over the Ryukyus was weakened. Given these circumstances, Japan had of course broken the dominion relationship between the Ryukyus and the Qing Dynasty, giving a major impetus to Japan's policy of merger with the Ryukyus.

牡丹社事件的發生，帶給清國政府的暗示是「清帝國已經失去其扮演東亞國際社會中心的角色地位」，以及從此埋下了日・清對立的宿怨關係。

The Mutan Village Incident brought with it an inkling for the Qing government that the Qing Empire had already lost its stature as the lead character on the East Asian international stage, while at the same time planting the seeds for a longer-term grudge-bearing enmity between Japan and China.

Compiled and edited by Ann Lin / Translated by James Decker.

林玫君編輯／曹篤明翻譯



Certificate of appreciation awarded aboriginals allies who helped the Japanese military in their quelling of the Mutan villagers in 1874.

1874 年日本牡丹社討伐軍「賜予」原住民日章旗