

China, cont'd

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In 1840, British authorities, acting on behalf of British merchants and on the behalf of British missionaries, likewise deployed force against the Chinese state. And they deployed force, after all, in a series of military actions — none of them very specific, none of them very large. A series of shellings, for example, by British gunboats of the ports along the China coast; a series of landings from time to time of British sailors and soldiers at various port cities; a series of military actions that we call collectively the First Opium War between 1840 and 1842.

And we know pretty concretely why it is that British authorities chose to challenge the Chinese state that way. Very concretely, they were replying to that effort on the part of Chinese authorities, especially Commissioner Lin [Tse-hsü], to impose a real ban upon the opium trade — in other words, to make opium trade; in other words, to make opium a real contraband and to permit it into the China market. But in a very much more general way, what the British were concerned about, of course, was to widen the entire terms of trade with China: to draw China, if you please, into the international circuit of trade. In other words, to make the conditions of trade much more favorable for Westerners and to extend the amount of trading that actually could be done within the framework of this great Chinese mainland.

Now, essentially, the Chinese state responded to this First Opium War with a very desultory defense. It is true that in the south of China, in those provinces to the south of the Yangtze River, you do get the Chinese gentry — those who are who are really the old Confucian ruling class — you do get them organizing militias in these various provinces in order to try to mount a resistance. But in the Chinese court itself at Peking, there was no such great interest in making a very sustained attack against the British, and that for two very good reasons. In the first place: that the conciliators, rather than the intransigent bureaucrats, were in control in Peking; in other words, the ones who thought that the Chinese state couldn't possibly contend with the superior military technology of the West. And, in the second place, because there is a very deep sensitivity, in Peking, to the idea that the Manchu government was already under attack; that it already was very weak; and that, should it engage a long war, it surely would undermine its own staying power within terms of the interior crisis that had been developing within China. The result is that the Chinese state capitulated and made in 1842, with the British government, the Treaty of Nanking.

And the Treaty of Nanking is terribly important. It is important because, after all, it establishes the Western presence in China. It is the treaty, after all, which defines that the West shall reside in China and shall have an economic presence there. But important in two other ways that you must underscore and remember: important because the Treaty of Nanking is an imposed treaty. In other words, it is imposed by force, and that will always be the methodology by which the presence of the West will be defined and, in fact, expanded. And all other times when those treaties are to be changed and when the terms are to be made more favorable, it will be done under the iron fist of force.

And, in the second place, because that Treaty of Nanking is only one link in a chain: it is a link in a chain that we call the treaty system. Because almost immediately after the British got their treaty in 1842, the United States got the Treaty of Whampoa, and the French got the Treaty of Wanghia in 1844. [*Here Goldberg mixes up the Sino-French Treaty of Whampoa and the Sino-American Treaty of Wanghia, both signed in 1844*]. In other words, you get a kind of interlocking system of treaties in which all of the commercial powers of the West now get the same privileges and rights that the British deride out of their Treaty of Nanking. And that for a very good reason, because in all of these treaties is inscribed what we call the most favored nation treatment: a clause in all of these treaties that says that every commercial power of the West, which is trading in China, shall trade there on the basis of the most favored conditions that are extended to any other trading power. So that what one country gets, all of them get by this principle of the most favored nation treatment.

Now, essentially, the British got some things especially for themselves because they had been the belligerent power. And so the British annexed Hong Kong, the island of Hong Kong in the Canton River at the mouth of Canton; and, in the second place, got a \$21 million indemnity for losses that they had presumably suffered in this First Opium War. For the rest, the terms of the Treaty of Nanking are the same ones in the entire treaty system. And I want you to remember them, because they tell you something about what the imperial nexus is as it is established here in the middle of the nineteenth century.

You get, in the first place, what are called treaty ports. In other words, whereas Canton had been the one port that had been open to Western trade, now, by this treaty system of the 1840s, five ports are open: Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and finally Shanghai. Shanghai, at the very mouth of the Yangtze River which means that you will be able to penetrate into those central provinces of China. And, consequently, there are now five ports in which British and foreign merchants can trade freely, can reside, and, in which, the Western powers will have consular representation.

In the second place, what we have called the *Cohong*, that monopoly of Chinese merchants which handled the trade exclusively in Canton, and which had set such very unfavorable

conditions — setting the terms of how much would be traded, what prices would be paid — the *Cohong* is abolished. And now, the foreigners are to trade openly with any Chinese merchants who wish to trade.

In the third place, and note it well, you get in this treaty system what is called treaty tariff, which mean that the West imposes the terms of the tariff. It takes away from China the sovereign right to impose her own tariff, and says, in this treaty system, that tariff on Western goods will now be 5% *ad valorem* — in other words, just a 5% addition to the value of these goods, which is virtually no tariff at all. And I want you to think of what that means in terms of competition with Chinese artisan goods: that Western goods will now flood in and, consequently, undermine those traditional artisan industries of China.

In the fourth place, there is the principle of what is called extraterritoriality. And the principle of extraterritoriality, a terrible blow at the very concept of sovereignty, because the Westerners always complained that they did not want to be tried in China should they have litigations with Chinese under Chinese law. They said that Chinese law was inexplicable; that it was not codified; that it used torture by way of punishment. And they wanted, then, if they had any litigation, to be tried under their own law. What extraterritoriality says is that, in the treaty ports where the West had their concessions or their living quarters, that they will establish courts in which their residents or nationals will be tried under their law. Something unheard of from the point of view of the sovereignty of any other power. And not only that, but extraterritoriality also meant that, within those concessions, the Westerners would have the right to establish their own schools — foreign language schools — which meant that the missionaries, of course, would get in. And it meant, in the second place, that they were able to buy real estate or real property which they did in large quantities in these treaty ports. And the fifth point of this treaty system is that the Western powers shall have the right to station gunboats in the ports of these particular open cities, and that they shall be able to deploy force whenever their trading interests are threatened.

Now, all of that is quite a system to impose on the great sovereign country of China in the 1840s. And I want you to remember that there are certain spinoffs to the system: that is, it isn't just these terms, but think of the spinoff. Think of the fact, in the first place, that the Western powers get, in all the coastal cities that are decreed to be open cities for trade, they get what are called the concessions. And the concessions are residential areas — the famous foreign concessions. And in those concessions, in an ad hoc, empirical way, they begin really to become Western enclaves. In other words, they have their own institutions, their own law; they govern themselves.

Now, in part, that came in the 1850s because, interior-wise, China was upset by tremendous popular uprisings and, consequently, Chinese administration broke down. So that in the city of Shanghai, for example, you get in September of 1853, the uprising of a secret society called the Society of the Small Knife. And that Society of the Small Knife took over the city of Shanghai. It

was a very traditional secret society that wanted to overthrow the Manchu and bring back the Ming. But the result was that the Chinese viceroy in the city of Shanghai had to flee. And, in the British concession, the British simply took over the functions of administration. And then in 1854, when the viceroy came back to Shanghai, the British forced the Chinese to sign an agreement that provided that in their concession they would have their own elected municipal council, elected by the British residents there. And they would maintain their own police, and they would maintain their own voluntary army, and they would collect their own taxes. And then every other foreign power got that in every other open city. What you are talking about is creating, really, Western islands within the eastern coastal zones of China already by the 1850s.

Consider a second spinoff, and that is what we call Western control over customs. And again, in the 1850s, the custom service broke down because of internal disruption. And so the West began to collect its own 5% *ad valorem* on its goods and turn it over to the Chinese, until in 1854 they got the agreement from the Chinese government that the whole damn customs service would be in the hands of foreigners. Incredible! Incredible! That the West is collecting its own customs that it is paying and, presumably, turning them over to the Chinese.

Or consider a third spinoff, a little bit more difficult to explain: something that I call the creation of the exogenous zones, or for want of a better term, the creation of a kind of imperialist city. It's hard to explain. What we're talking about is that the cities of the coast, the open cities — not only in the concession areas, but as cities — cease, really, to be Chinese. They aren't Western either: they're bastard cities; they're imperialistic cities; they're cities in which the Western tradesmen are really the powerhouses, the wealthy people. In the city of Shanghai, which now replaced Canton as the major trading city of China for the West, in Shanghai, in those international concessions, you get those great companies like Denton Company or Jardine Matheson or Russell & Company, and their heads are absolute powerhouses. They have the wealth. They come almost to control the city.

Or consider the fact that you get a breakdown of all traditional Chinese institutional patterns, a fever of land speculation in the city of Shanghai: an acre of urban real estate in Shanghai cost £50 in 1852; it cost £10,000 in 1862. And you can imagine the kind of British that are really getting wealthy. And, along with that, that whole buffer area of what we call the comprador bourgeoisie in other words, those Chinese who are the clients, who are the hangers-on of the Westerners, who are the business agents for their commercial houses or their middlemen, or their coolies or their "boys," as they call them. And, consequently, a whole range of Chinese who no longer have loyalty to anything but the opportunism of getting on within the framework of Western trade.

You know, as I have traveled around the world, I have seen those kinds of imperialistic cities. And it really is something because, you see, it's that non-culture. You scratch people, whether

they're from the West or the East, and you can't tell what they are. You can't anymore find what the original stuff was; it's all bastardized. It's like one great huge America: it all has no substance to it from that point of view. Everything is disconnected. I remember when I was in the city of Bangkok, and Bangkok, after all, should be essentially not only a Thai city but a Chinese city, and a very lovely one. You walk around and you see those damnable American shopping centers, and you see those supermarkets. And the first day I was in Bangkok, I was staying in a hotel called the Rama Hotel. And so I walked outside immediately, and I saw a neon sign across the street — in the center of Thai culture — I see a sign saying the Tip-Top Club. And so I went across and I went into it, you see, and on the jukebox were all of these horrible American pop songs with Thai words, and people sitting around in a perfectly degenerate American style. So I finally pulled out a newspaper (it was an English language newspaper) and begin to read, just to sort of calm my mind. And somebody came over to me, seeing me read an American newspaper — it was the international edition of the *Herald Tribune*, which follows you everywhere around the world — And consequently, this Thai man came up to me and said, in this kind of pidgin English, "Are you happy?" And I looked flushed and stuttered, "Well, well... what do you have in mind?" I was having difficulty getting settled into that question. I said, "No, no, basically I have a tragic sense; I'm not happy." And he said, "No, no: what you need to make you happy?" And I said, "Probably more than you can ever offer." And he pulled out a little card, you see, because there had been so many Americans there, and he left it with me. On one side was a telephone number that I could call. On the other side was really what is the paradigm of these bastardized cultures: it was simple a little sign or legend that said, "We can get you anything." And you call this phone number. I saved it, incidentally, just in case I prematurely arrive at the point of extremity.

But suffice it to say, that you get that there, you get it in Taipei: in Taipei, where you find that Chinese culture superimposed upon Taiwanese culture really begins to disappear completely under the aegis of the American flag. Well, Shanghai really is the first paradigm of that — is the first place that you get that very classic kind of exogenous zone, of a zone that really doesn't belong anywhere and that begins to undermine what is the essential base or essential stock of any civilization or any culture. All of that coming out of the first treaty system.

Well, how did it work? Economically, of course, there were gains for the West: that is, the trade in the open ports and in the hinterland increased. And then you get that coastal trade, as it's called, and that especially in the hands of Great Britain — using those steamships to put out of commission, as it were, the boatmen in the interior river trade inside China because this exterior stream trade was very much more efficient thing. You get a flourishing opium trade because, even though opium isn't legalized until 1860 by the Treaty of Peking, nonetheless no Chinese official is going to stop that contraband trade at that point. And, finally, you get a very flourishing trade in coolies — one of the least enlightening parts of the whole story.

The coolie, of course, the exploited, unskilled worker; the displaced peasant in China, or the lumpenproletarian worker. And gathered together in the city of Amoy or the city of Macao, either gathered by force or by seduction, and, consequently, sent off to work on the plantations of Cuba or Peru or Australia. A terrible, terrible, part of the whole thing. The people that gathered the coolies together got wealthy, and the people who shipped them got wealthy, and the people who exploited them as slaves on the plantations got wealthy. And the Chinese died like flies until that time in 1860, when finally the British had to make an agreement with the Chinese government that they would contract coolie labor only for a five-year period, and then under certain conditions and certain terms.

And yet the Westerners were not satisfied with that. And what they missed out of that first treaty system was, first of all, the extent of trade. They still couldn't get deep into that big vast interior of China. And, consequently, those Manchester textiles lowered in price — going around the Suez Canal now and, consequently, shortening the distance — those Manchester textiles still could not displace those interior Chinese textiles, those artisan crafts, unless they could get other treaty ports on the interior of the Chinese rivers. And, in the second place, the Westerners wanted diplomatic recognition in Peking. They were sick and tired of having to deal with high and arrogant mandarins in the port cities. They wanted legations in Peking; they wanted to be able to change the terms of their treaties whenever they chose. And the British and the French together made a *démarche* in 1854, and they asked Peking for the right to revise the treaties, and they were turned down. Because, at this point, the intransigents are once again the majority in the Chinese court. And they turned down the West. But it's hopeless. In the first place because, at Peking, in the court, there is no coherent strategy of how to deal with the West. In the second place because, by the 1850s, China is torn by internal revolution and internal rebellion. And in the third place, because everybody is panicked that a war with the West will mean the end of the regime. And so all that the Western powers need is a pretext: a pretext for making the Second Opium War, the war between 1857 and 1860.

Oh, a pretext! Plenty of pretext. In 1856, there was a French priest, Père [Auguste] Chapdelaine, who was killed because he happened to be wandering around in the interior provinces in China. And consequently, the death of Père Chapdelaine was one of the causes for shelling Canton in 1857, then occupying that city in 1858, forcing the so-called Treaty of Tientsin (on the Yellow River) in 1858. But, you see, what these Western powers wanted was Peking. They wanted to go to that capital; to humiliate that capital; and to show the Chinese that they had to insert China into their own economic schema.

And so the expedition went to Peking, and it went in 1859 and 1860. The Western expeditionary force got there in 1860. They saw that beautiful, lovely Summer Palace that the Chinese emperors had used. They sacked and pillaged that palace and then burned it to the ground, leaving Victor Hugo to say in a celebrated line that "Two bandits, France and Great Britain, have

arrived in the cathedral of Asia and desecrated it." But that was muscle! And they got their treaties. And who could resist? And in Peking, in the court, the idea on the part of the mandarins was, "Well, you can't fight the West. They have superior technology." And, secondly, there is there interior revolution, and perhaps, the West will help — will help a restored imperial regime to suppress its internal revolution.

And so the second treaty system...

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... on the Yellow River so that now the Westerners could get into the interior, into the very bowels of China. In the second place, the opium trade legalized. In third place, all internal tariffs on Western goods to be suppressed. In the fourth place, that there was permanent legation in Peking. The ambassadors would be there and put their pressure on. Oh, great.

And the Russians moved at the same time. But the Russians moved in their own way. And don't think that the Chinese don't remember. And the Russians moved while all of this trading imperialism was going on. And you know about Russian imperialism: it's big, landed, atavistic imperialism. And it moves like a kind of glacier. And, consequently, what happens is that in that in that northeastern part of China, in the area to the north of the Amur River and in the area east of the Ussuri River, the Russians begin to occupy vast zones of Chinese territory. And so they make what they call the Amur Region out of the territory north of the Amur River, and they make the so-called Maritime Province [Primorsky Krai] out of the area east of the Ussuri River, and they found the city there of Vladivostok. And all of these great takings are then crystallized and recognized by the Chinese in the Sino-Russian treaty of November of 1860.

And what does it all mean? Humiliation, an attack on sovereignty, the presence of the West. Can China last? Or will it go the way of colony? But more than that, something that we have already noted. And here it gets explosive. And what we have said is that this impact of the West is conjunctural. It comes at a very time when there is an interior crisis and the two of them began to fuse. And there is a terrific explosion. Look: in the 1850s and '60s, China is in an immense interior revolution. In the year 1860, every single one of the eighteen provinces of China had some kind of rebellion or some kind of a revolution. Most of those came out of the secret societies or out of peasant jacquerie and were very traditional. It was the idea of improving conditions, of getting back to some kind of traditional norm — in other words, they were revolts inside the structure of the old regime.

But look: you also get the Taiping Rebellion, that Taiping Rebellion which ultimately will be the greatest of these internal revolutionary movements. And these you get something that is socially and politically different. You get the personalization of a new state, a state with a capital at

Nanking called the *T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo*, the Heavenly Kingdom of Eternal Peace. And you are talking about breaking the framework of traditional Chinese society and establishing something else. And you begin to see the very shadowy links with the Chinese communist movement.

And the context for these uprisings shouldn't surprise us. It is that the mandate is ruptured: the Mandate of Heaven no longer is being fulfilled by the Manchu government. And so you get a deterioration of the public services. Look, that in the years 1852 and '53, the dikes along the Yellow River, right at the frontier of Shandong province, burst and literally inundated a vast zone of the Shandong province, impoverishing or starving out all of those Chinese peasants. Look at the fact that the granaries are no longer full, that in the years of the late 1840s and early '50s there is starvation in China, and these emergency storehouses have no grain. But consider, most of all, what the Chinese people see vis-à-vis the relationship of their state to the outside. What they see is humiliation; what they see is that their mandarins, their army, no longer can contain the West. And especially in the south of China, in the area south of the Yangtze — in that territory where there had been the establishment of some popular militia, where there had been a resistance, where the hostility to the Manchus was the greatest — you get a proverb circulating around. And note it well, a proverb of the 1850s vis-à-vis China and the West that reads, "The people are afraid of the mandarins. The mandarins are afraid of the foreign devils. But the foreign devils are afraid of the people." Which means that, ultimately, it will be a popular movement; it must be a popular movement that will deal with this imperialism.

And it is in the south that there will be this rebellion, and the greatest form of it the Taiping Rebellion. And I must talk to you about that because that Taiping Rebellion plays into a lot of the thinking, and even a lot of the strategy, that comes much later in the Chinese communist movement, as we will see. And that Taiping Rebellion grows in the southwest of China. It grows in the extreme southwest in the province of Kwangsi, and that is a very poor, very backward, agricultural province. And it is a rebellion that ultimately will consume millions of Chinese between the period 1850 and 1864. And it's extremely interesting: Kwangsi is the hinterland of Canton. It is a southwestern province, very poor, very rural, but still somewhat within the zone of the city of Canton.

And note that well, because you then have two forces at work. You have, first of all, the tremendous economic and social climate of a peasantry that has those traditional, utopian, dreamlike memories of a time when there was rural equality. Now, this is a crucial point because scholars like [Jean] Chesneaux and scholars like Joseph Needham in that great work on "science and civilization in ancient China" have underscored the fact that before there is the real organization and crystallization in China of this hierarchical, organic society, that there is at least the evidence or the dream of an egalitarian society. And that, if Confucianism crystallizes and rationalizes something that is unequal and hierarchical, that there always is a sort of countercurrent, a countercurrent that gets crystallized in antiquity in the thought of the Taoists.

And here is Needham, for example, telling us how Taoists pull together in their poems and in their writings so much of this early peasant thinking or early peasant institutionalization, this oral tradition of a primitive collectivism. And so you get, for example, in the *Chuang Tzu*, which dates out of the fourth century BC, this text. Listen to it well: "Anciently the people had a constant nature. They weave themselves clothes and till the ground for food. This was what we call the virtue of the common life. In the age of perfect virtue, men lived in common with birds and beasts and formed one family with all creatures. What could they know of such distinctions as princes and villains? All living without knowledge, they kept their natural virtue. This was what we call the state 'pure simplistic.' In that state the people retained their constant nature. But when the saintly men appeared, cringing and fawning in the imposition of benevolence, jostling and tiptoeing in the enforcing of righteousness, then men begin, everywhere, to be suspicious. With extravagant offices and gesticulation ceremonies, men and women began to be separated from one another."

Or, in that famous Chapter 14 of the *Tao Te Ching*, which is the great Taoist poem: "Governing the country, the Confucians say, needs rectification; command of soldiers in the field, they say, requires strategy. But the appearance of all under heaven can only be won by those who have no private ends in mind. How do we know that this is so? By looking at the facts." Now, listen to this, and see if this isn't to be tacked up on your wall:

"The more taboos there are, the more powerful the people will be. The more contrivances for private profit there are, the more benighted the whole land will grow. The more cunning craftsmen there are, the more monstrous their invention will be. The more laws are promulgated, the more bandits will abound. Therefore, the sages have said, 'If we have nothing for private ends and contrary to nature, the people will be spontaneously transformed. If we love calmness of mind, the people will set themselves in order. If we take no action for private, egoistic ends, the people will grow prosperous. If we have no personal ambitions, the people will spontaneously achieve cooperatively simplicity.'"

Well, all that's pretty utopian. But the point is that it's circulated around in the villages. And when you get a lot of these Chinese peasant uprisings — as you get in Kwangsi, for example, in this period of the nineteenth century — you get all of these old traditions of an egalitarianism. It becomes, in that sense, very socially radical.

But that province, I say, is also within the ambit of Canton. And in Canton you see the influence of the West. And, consequently, you see the power of the steamship — you see the power of invention! And, consequently, you want to know what the secret of that power is. And the whole Taiping Rebellion, originating in Kwangsi, is a fusion of the archaic and the modern. A fusion of that kind of primitive peasant simplicity and that desire to know what it is that makes the West invincible.

And you get that combination, or that fusion, in the founder of this Taiping Rebellion. The one who became the Celestial King, someone called Hung Hsiu-ch'üan. And Hung Hsiu-ch'üan — who really is within the framework of Chinese social history, certainly a power from the point of view of what he was able to organize — is a simple schoolteacher in Kwangsi and comes from a very poor peasant family. But don't think he's primitive or simple. He's a terribly complex, tense, neurotic guy. And he goes off, after all, to Canton, and in Canton he sees all of these strange Western inventions. And he's intrigued by what the Chinese call the *yang-wu*: in other words, with what is Western and what is the secret of that power. And then Hung gets involved with certain Protestant missionaries whom he finds in Canton, and they give him a Bible, not even knowing what some very complex, strange, neurotic Kwangsi schoolteacher may find in that Bible. And, consequently, he begins to read it. And then he finds an explanation, if you please, for some of the reverie, some of the dreams, some of the kinds of imaginings he has.

And you know what he finds? That he has the mission! Because it can be even a yellow man. That he has the mission to liberate his people. And he goes back to Kwangsi, and he begins to organize among his people. And the first disciples, only six of them, five of them are absolutely poverty stricken — a coal miner, a butcher worker, a wood cutter, two unemployed canal workers — and one gentry, one gentry who really wants to fight against the Manchus. And always, you see, within the framework of the Taiping movement, there will be a mass base: in other words, a base of the really *déclassé*, of the ones that are totally alienated from any proper economic role but also some of those who are of the ruling class and who want to use this movement to fight against the central government.

By 1845, the movement has grown and they've formed a society called the Society of the Adoration of God, or the Society of the Worshipers of God. And from there begins to get thousands of disciples until finally, by 1850, when it reaches in Kwangsi to the tune of hundreds of thousands of disciples, they found what they call the *T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo*, which is the Heavenly Kingdom of Eternal Peace. By April of 1852, they have formed an army, and those Taiping armies penetrate the frontier of Kwangsi and begin to flow north like some kind of terrific wave. And, by March of 1853, they have reached the city of Nanking. And it is in that city of Nanking that they establish once and for all their capital, their capital of another dynasty, of another state. Wow! It's way beyond those traditional ruptures of the mandate.

Because, you see, in the Taiping there is a combination of three forces, a combination of social revolution of, really, a traditional peasant variety. Wherever the Taiping armies moved, they got peasant support. And for a good reason: because they took unscrupulous landlords, they took usurers, and they hung them. And, consequently, they gave land away to the poor peasants or to the landless, and also they distributed whatever goods they had, and they never took from the poor. And in addition to that, they went into the administrative centers, the so-called yamen, and

they burned the tax records, and so the peasantry didn't have to pay the land tax. And so the peasants supported them and liked them.

And there was also the national revolution. And the national revolution is what attracted to the Taiping some members of the ruling class, those that really wanted to oust the Manchus and restore a proper kind of mandate. And that is important because, if you are going to rule over as vast a territory as the Taiping state did, then you must have people with some education also who can administer — who can, like the merchants did, manufacture the cannon for the armies of the Taiping. And consequently, that nation theme is important.

But also modernism, also modernism. And note it well, because you cannot enclose China anymore in traditionalism. And in the Taiping, what differentiates it is an appreciation for modernism. In 1859, it is a cousin of Hung Hsiu-ch'üan who becomes the prime minister. His name is Hung Jen-kan, and he makes a certain number of proposals — and note this well, in 1859, the prime minister of the Taiping state — and he's talking about updating education, of making it much more Western, of giving certain inventions that can strengthen the Chinese state. And so he says in these proposals of 1859: "The promotion of facilities of communication is aimed at convenience and speed: if someone can make a locomotive, such as those made in foreign countries, which are capable of seven or eight thousand leagues in a day and a night, let him be permitted to make that locomotive. The promotion of ships, which should be solid, nimble, and fast: whether five, steam, human energy or wind is to be used for power should be decided by the inventor. At present, there is a steamship which can run more than 2,000 leagues within a day and night and which a great merchant can use to transport passengers."

This is magnificent, you see, you begin to get these Chinese revolutionaries, basically, seeing that the technology is crucially important — that even if it creates new social forces, or new social relations, it will break through the stagnation of Chinese society. "The promotion of banks: if a rich man wants to open a bank, he shall report and deposit deeds, etc. The promotion of patents for inventing utensils and for various arts. The promotion of hidden treasures: if there are people who discover gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, coal, salt, amber, oyster, shell, jade, precious stones, and other materials, they shall be required to report this to the government, and it shall be exploited and worked. The promotion of a post service to transmit state documents, post offices to circulate all kinds of private letters." It ends with demands for schools. with demands for hospitals. You see there is another dimension to this Taiping rebellion.

Now, between the utopian and the reality, there is a gap. You must remember that all through the existence of the *T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo*, of the Heavenly Kingdom of External Peace, the government of that revolutionary state was at war. You must understand, in the second place, that there were never even fixed frontiers or fixed boundaries to what was Taiping territory. It changed all the time, so that some of the regulations, some of the communal rules that were put

on the books, never were activated. In 1853 you got an agrarian law — a magnificent agrarian law which is a sort of model of a new kind of Chinese collectivism — which says that all the land belongs to the community and shall be redivided according to the number in each Chinese family for the use of the Chinese peasantry: "They shall use as much as they need for their own subsistence and give all surplus into the state granaries, into the state warehouses for redistribution." That the Chinese artisans, by another proclamation of 1853, shall be organized into what were called Heavenly Brigades, and that they shall manufacture artisan goods and give those goods, again, into state warehouses where they shall be distributed to each according to his need, if you please. The design for government, very simple: there should be one administrator for every certain number of Chinese families, that administrator to be elected in some kind of a hierarchy, going up to the Celestial King.

But look: you never could put that into effect. You couldn't put that into effect in the 1850s and '60s because of civil war. What you can say, and the best you can say about the Taiping Rebellion, is that it showed a tendency, or a trend, toward great sympathy for the suffering of the Chinese mores: that their burdens, the burdens imposed by the state and the landlords, were lightened; that very frequently they were not required to pay state taxes in the areas that the Taiping controlled. But you couldn't really make this Heavenly Kingdom at that time.

And then it collapsed. And the collapse is terribly interesting to us. It collapses totally by 1864, and the reasons you must try to understand. That, first of all, there is internal dissension in the leadership of the Taiping government. Hung Hsiu-ch'üan really had exhausted his resources. He became a bit of a megalomaniac by the 1850s; he began to distrust people; he created so many *wang*, as they were called, or kingships, in which there were administrators appointed by himself who became sort of vested interests (kind of like what later would become warlords). In the second place, you get no coordination between the Taiping Rebellion and all these other rebellions going on in China. And you get no coordination because there's no common denominator. Because most of these rebellions of secret societies really come out of very simple, archaic notions, and have no notion of creating a wholly new kind of dynasty.

But two factors are crucial. One is that the Manchu state benefits from the reconciliation with the Chinese gentry. That is crucial to understanding the rest of the nineteenth century in Chinese history: that there is a reconciliation between what is called the central Chinese gentry and the Manchu state. They had hated each other. To the Chinese gentry, Manchus were corrupt and foreigners. But in the face of a potential social revolution, they did organize their armies in the provinces of China. They did organize their militia. They came to the support of the Manchu state and ultimately penetrated that Manchu state, and became responsible for what is called the T'ung-chih (or Restoration) of the 1860s and '70s, as we will see.

But a second fact, and that is that the Manchu state — and note it well — could count on the support of the Westerners. The Westerners, for a little while in the civil war, thought that maybe they could deal with the Taiping; maybe they could deal with the revolutionary movement; maybe their terms of trade would get better. But, you see, all of that changed after the Tientsin, Peking treaties, 1858 and '60. Because by then, the Westerners got magnificent terms from a weak Chinese government! And that's what they wanted. All of the choices that the West makes — the British, the Americans, the French; especially the Americans — all of the choices that they make in the twentieth century — Yüan Shi-k'ai over Sun Yat-sen in 1912, Chiang Kai-shek over the Chinese Communists — all of them are rooted and anchored in this one perception: that you get more by a weak national government than an integral national government, which, after all, after may change the terms of your presence, and even ultimately boot you out.

Now, how much the West helped is subject to a certain kind of debate. Because, if you look at it statistically, the West gave very little by way of loans, let us say, to the Manchu government in the period between 1583 and '73. There were twenty-one short-term loans in that period that came to about 7 million tael, but it took 300 million tael, really, to fight that war against the Taiping Rebellion and to suppress that internal subversion. So there isn't much by way of these loans. In the second place, arms yes; the West did give certain arms to the Manchu army, but not very many. As far as actual military participation, about 5,000 Western soldiers fought with the imperial armies, with the Manchu armies. The most important part, of course — it's a fascinating subchapter of this whole history — the most important part being the so-called Ever Victorious Army, which was formed by an American freebooter. You see, those were the days when there really were opportunities. And consequently, it is [Charles] Frederick Moore from Salem, Massachusetts — good witch that he was — who came to China and organized a group of adventurers and made this so-called Ever Victorious Army, which helped to defend Shanghai against the Taiping armies.

The point is that, quantitatively, it isn't very much. The importance of the Western help in suppressing the internal revolution in China is that is enough of it to come at crucial moments to make some difference. There were times when the money, times when the modern weaponry helped. But beyond that, there is something psychological: that every time the West helped, there was the idea that the power of the West was behind the Manchu government. And that, especially imposing when you get weapons like the kind of weapons that the West was using: really good guns, let us say, as against the sticks and the noisemakers and the knives that the Chinese are using. And consequently, a certain power of mystique begins to attend to the Manchu cause.

And so you defeat the revolution. And you ask the fundamental question. And it is the question you ask about your own society. It is the question you ask about what happens if there are deep

contradictions in a society — if it is in rebellion — how does a ruling class, how does a state cope with those contradictions and with that rebellion?

And in China, on that answer hinges everything. Because there is in that period between 1862 and '74 what is known as the T'ung-chih, the T'ung-chih which is the Restoration. And the T'ung-chih is named after the new Chinese emperor, a little boy of five who ascends to the throne in 1862 — and his name is T'ung-chih, and that whole period of the Restoration is given that particular name. And what the Restoration means is very concrete in Confucian terminology. In Confucian terminology, you see, there is an eternal recurrence with dynasties: that is, there isn't progress in the Western sense. The notion of history is that dynasties are born, they reach their maturity, then they decline and fall. And what restoration means something very concrete: it's a moment of respite, a period of respite in that time between maturity and fall — when, you for a moment, really retard the decline, when you make for some kind of restoration of the system or restoration of that particular ruling class. So that what you're talking about is a respite by the old Chinese ruling class, the Manchu government, and the Chinese gentry. Concretely, you see, what you get — to put it in non-Confucian terms — you get the very best example in all of modern Chinese history of very intelligent, very honorable conservatives trying to solve the contradictions of Chinese society, trying to restore their power without having to go beyond the framework of a traditional Chinese society and economy. It was futile in the period of the 1860s and '70s. You can imagine what it is when Chiang Kai-shek tries it in the twentieth century. Then it is over, and poof! Then it really is absurdity, sublime. And, consequently, you have in the T'ung-chih an important example.

Basically, what it is is the reintegration into the Chinese state of this Chinese gentry. No longer do Manchu officials dominate. These very good, strong Confucian scholars, these men of integrity, these men who want to save a traditional China, they now go into the central administration, and they dominate the provincial administration of China. They're people like Tseng Kuo-fan, for example, who really was the organizer of victory over the Taiping. They're just very tough Confucian scholars. And what they do is to try to restore China on its traditional basis by improving every service within the framework of society. Look: their ideology is an agrarian ideology. After they suppress the rebellion, after they bring internal order, their idea is to restore a prosperous agricultural society; to stress frugality, that frugality which will make that agricultural society work given the cast population of China; to stress honesty, so that the administrators, the mandarins, the local officials, will keep the canals and dikes up; to stress, if you please, a certain amount of even enlightenment; to bring new lands into cultivation; to bring certain kinds of tax relief to the peasantry; to do anything, if you please, to keep that agrarian economy functioning, and to prevent a mercantile, industrial economy from penetrating China, which releases new technology but also releases new social order. That is what the T'ung-chih is about.

And, within its framework, the T'ung-chih is a success. Agriculture was restored. But, you see, the whole success is a success of the Chinese ruling class. That gentry gets larger, from a million to a million and a half; it agglomerates more land; it keeps the merchants out of key positions; it buttresses its own power. But I tell you that it cannot solve the Chinese problem. They're honest, they're integral. Tseng Kuo-fan, for example, one of the real Confucian scholars of the nineteenth century — administrator, general, economist, a brilliant character — but, you see, the framework is too narrow. Anything to prevent that hierarchical society from being upset. And so already, by the end of the 1870s, there are floods and famines that cannot be contained. In 1879 in the province of Shansi, 5 million died of flood and famine in that one province. And so you get that basic contradiction of landlord and peasant deepening, because the T'ung-chih can't possibly pose the question of land if that whole regime is, after all, being run by and in the interest of this Chinese gentry landed class. And it's honest, and it restores Confucianism. And, you see, the whole thing was summed up very well by Li Ta-chao, one of the founders of the Chinese Communist movement, writing in 1920. Listen to this brilliant text — and he's talking about really the T'ung-chih in the nineteenth century, but he's also talking about Chiang Kai-shek, and every effort to contain China...

[*audio cuts out*]

... there is what is called the *yang-wu*: there is the interest in modernization in the Chinese state. You have it in the 1860s in the form of what is called strengthening, which is the position of the Chinese mandarin scholars of building certain forges, of trying to get a state armaments industry, by using some of the techniques of the West. You get it in the 1870s by a certain state subsidy for mining — even for the textile industry — a little bit of that kind of state subsidy. But all during that period of the T'ung-chih, if you take the years 1853 down to 1885, the Chinese state is spending no more than 2% of its national budget on state subsidy for industry, compared to the 15% that the Japanese are spending in the Meiji, in that kind of attempt really to make a state-subsidized industrial base for this Asiatic society.

In the final analysis, it will be the West that will come in and transform the economy of China. In the final analysis, there will be no national bourgeoisie; the state won't permit it to exist. In the final analysis, if you must transform China from outside the traditional structure, there will not be a bourgeois revolution, but something that goes beyond that. You see the whole boomerang of the response to these contradictions and rebellions in the nineteenth century. The boomerang is that the state could not, within that framework of Confucian traditionalism, release the forces — couldn't afford to release the forces — that really would strengthen and modernize China. Somebody else would have to do that. And we know who that was. [*applause*]