

Foreign Devils and God-Worshippers: Western Mercenaries and Cross-Cultural Realism During the Taiping Rebellion

A Monograph

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Abstract

Foreign Devils and God-Worshippers: Western Mercenaries and Cross-Cultural Realism During the Taiping Rebellion, by MAJ Carl J. Danko, US Army, 47 pages.

The most destructive war of the 19th century was the Taiping Rebellion in China (1851-1864). This rebellion claimed the lives of between twenty and twenty-five million people, nearly forty times the number of deaths that occurred in its contemporary, the American Civil War (1861-1865). The war was fought along cultural and ideological divisions between the Manchu dominated Qing Dynasty and the Christian inspired Taiping Movement. This monograph examines the experiences of Western mercenary, and native Chinese commanders in service to the Qing Dynasty of China during this major conflict. The American adventurer Frederick Townsend Ward, British officer Charles George Gordon, and their Chinese superior, Li Hongzhang, were instrumental in the introduction of Western equipment and tactics to the Qing military. Integrating these new technologies required navigating the schism between Western and Chinese cultures. The modern concepts of Cross Cultural Competency and cultural realism provide a lens to investigate the abilities of these men to cross this divide. These men played a key role in forming the modernized army which eventually led to battlefield and the preservation of the Qing Dynasty. Their experiences suggest that pragmatic necessity may supersede cultural sensitivity in advisory and multinational operations.

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Acronyms

3C	Cross-Cultural Competence
ADP	Army Doctrine Publication
ADRP	Army Doctrine Reference Publication
CQS	Cultural Intelligence Scale
DoD	Department of Defense
FM	Field Manual
KSAAs	Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Attitudes

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Introduction

With any reference to civil war in China, many Westerners likely envision the struggle between Mao Zedong's Red Army and Jiang Jieshi's (Ch'iang Kai-Shek) Goumindong which culminated in the communist victory of 1949.¹ However, this was not the first, or even the most significant internal conflict in Chinese history. Mao's writing refers to the study of previous civil wars and rebellions as part of the foundation of his thought and methods. Of greatest concern to Mao was the period of Chinese history since the Opium War (1837-1842) until the final victory of the Chinese Communist Party over the Nationalists, a time often referred to as the century of humiliation.² The most destructive conflict of this period was the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864) which in many ways was tied to the outcome of the earlier, Opium War.³ This rebellion claimed the lives of between twenty and twenty-five million people, nearly forty times the number of deaths that occurred in its contemporary, the American Civil War (1861-1865).⁴ Despite the Taiping Rebellion's place as the largest civil war in history and the most destructive war of any type in the 19th century, it is mostly unknown to Western audiences.⁵ However, in the middle 19th century, trade with China was a significant and growing concern for many Western governments, in particular Britain, the United States, and France. The Western powers were

¹ Throughout this document pinyin is the preferred Romanization system. The only exceptions are those cases where the traditional or Wade-Giles Romanization is more recognizable, and in quotations from historical sources where the original rendering is retained and pinyin supplied in brackets.

² Mao Tse-Tung, *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung* (Foreign Languages Press, 1968), 197; Bruce A. Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare, 1795-1989*, Warfare and History (London: Routledge, 2001), 13.

³ Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 35.

⁴ Stephen R Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom: China, the West, and the Epic Story of the Taiping Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), xxiii–xxiv; Maochun Yu, "The Taiping Rebellion: A Military Assessment of Revolution and Counterrevolution," in *A Military History of China*, ed. David Andrew Graff and Robin D. S. Higham, Updated ed (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 135.

⁵ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, xxiii.

deeply concerned with the outcome of this conflict and played a significant hand in its progress and final resolution.

Into this were thrown two men with very different cultural perspectives and backgrounds—the American adventurer, Frederick Townsend Ward and the British officer, Charles George Gordon. Both men commanded the same Westernized unit in close succession, both were in the service of a foreign government, and both needed to be able to lead a multinational force in a complex cultural and political environment. Their experiences suggest that possession of the skills to navigate the multifaceted ecosystem of culture, politics, and conflict may correlate to overall military success. However, simply placating the sensitivities of multinational partners cannot supersede the military and tactical competence required to win on the battlefield. A more important aspect of their success may be the willingness of the Qing Dynasty to pragmatically tolerate differences in culture, particularly to gain Western military knowledge, into their existing world view in an example of cultural realism.⁶

The “Ever-Victorious Army” was founded in 1860 by Ward as the “Shanghai Foreign-Arms Corps” and was a multinational mercenary force of Western officers and mostly Filipino soldiers.⁷ Fighting on behalf of the Qing Emperor, it evolved over the next four years into a larger and more Chinese unit that was instrumental in the defense of the strategic port city of Shanghai. Due more to Ward’s political maneuverings than the great success of the Corps, it was granted its more illustrious name in 1862, only months before Ward himself was killed in battle against the Taipings.⁸ Command of the Ever-Victorious Army later passed to Gordon who, while officially an employee of the Qing government was in reality only temporarily detailed to the Chinese from

⁶ Patrick Porter, *Military Orientalism: Eastern War through Western Eyes*, Critical War Studies Series (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 18.

⁷ Richard J. Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins: The Ever-Victorious Army in Nineteenth Century China* (Millwood, NY: Kto Press, 1978), 29.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 62, 107.

the British service.⁹ Gordon rode the success of the Ever-Victorious Army into a renowned career in the British service at the conclusion of the war. Together these men became the face of foreign intervention during the war.

The Taiping Rebellion was fought largely along cultural, ethnic, and religious lines. The reigning Qing Dynasty was the product of a Manchu invasion and overthrow of the ethnically Han Ming Dynasty.¹⁰ Though the Manchu dynasty became to a certain extent Sinicized, there remained the view that they were not truly Chinese, particularly among the Han majority in the core of the empire. The Manchus themselves considered the Han, and other ethnic groups, to be weak and unworthy.¹¹ On top of this simmering relationship was thrust the introduction of Christianity by Western missionaries.

The leader of the Taiping movement, Hong Xiuquan, believed himself to be both a prophet and the brother of Jesus Christ. As a distinctly Chinese view of Christianity mingled with Confucian social structures, the Taiping movement and government failed to get universal support from either the Chinese population or the Western powers. This is particularly so in the case of the foreign governments, as the Heavenly Kingdom established by Hong was totally opposed to the opium trade on which the West based much of its profits in China.¹² As much for this reason as for any other, the Western powers cast their lot with the Qing. Ward, Gordon, and many others both officially, as representatives of their countries, and otherwise helped the Qing to maintain control of the country, and thus the “Mandate of Heaven.”

The Mandate of Heaven, or the belief that a higher power enabled a capable and upstanding family or group to rule, until proved unworthy, was just one of the unique cultural

⁹ Ibid., 122.

¹⁰ Paul Lococo, “The Qing Empire,” in *A Military History of China*, ed. David Andrew Graff and Robin D. S. Higham (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 115–16.

¹¹ Richard J. Smith, *The Qing Dynasty and Traditional Chinese Culture* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 169.

¹² Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 37, 39.

aspects that Ward and Gordon needed to understand in their positions within the Confucian hierarchy of the Qing government.¹³ While cultural sensitivity was not a hallmark of 19th century thinking or international relations for the West, or for China, Ward and Gordon needed to exercise a certain set of cultural skills to be successful in their roles as commanders of a multicultural force and as servants of a very culturally conscious government. In other words, they needed what the United States Department of Defense currently refers to as Cross-Cultural Competence.

Cross-Cultural Competence, or 3C, is “the set procedural knowledge, skills, and abilities which promote successful operations any cultures.”¹⁴ Unlike regional competences, which are the specific requirements such as language and religious knowledge tied to certain cultural context, cultural competence is the general ability to learn the unique cultural environment in which one is located and the ability to adapt and utilize knowledge from one cultural context in such a way as to be useful to others in a new context.¹⁵ While modern interest in the topic has been driven by the United States’ involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, the ability to operate effectively in different cultural contexts has been a historical requirement anytime an individual, or an army, crosses a border into another culturally distinct region.¹⁶ Cultural competence is particularly critical in light of historical and recent multinational operations and advisory missions.

During the Vietnam War the US Army and Navy jointly developed the Personal Response Program which was used most effectively by US Marine Corps combined-action

¹³ Smith, *The Qing Dynasty and Traditional Chinese Culture*, 23.

¹⁴ Robert Greene Sands, “Why Cross-Cultural Competence?,” in *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First-Century Military: Culture, the Flipside of COIN*, ed. Robert Greene Sands and Allison Greene-Sands (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 17.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Allison Abbe, “The Historical Development of Cross-Cultural Competence,” in *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First-Century Military: Culture, the Flipside of COIN*, ed. Robert Greene Sands and Allison Greene-Sands (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 32.

platoons to develop sensitivity to the cultural concerns of the Vietnamese people.¹⁷ At about the same time, in 1967, the US Army adopted the Troop Community Relations program in Korea to help alleviate culture shock in US soldiers while increasing their regard for the culture of Korean society and help them to build effective relationships.¹⁸ The need for cultural awareness at the organizational level is driven by the specific political requirements of the force in question. Conquerors bent on the suppression or annihilation of an enemy people may believe there is little need for such niceties. At least until they are faced with a simmering insurgency or guerrilla conflict.

A generalized ability to understand cultural context is an important concept, and may have contributed to success in any number of wars, rebellions, and police actions in the past. Perhaps the most famous example of culturally competent advisor is that of T.E. Lawrence and his contribution to the campaigns against the Ottoman Empire in the First World War. Lawrence used his knowledge of Arab culture to translate traditional Bedouin fighting methods into effective tools in a modern war.¹⁹ A more recent example is related by retired French officer, Colonel Henri Boré, who discusses the success of French cultural training for junior officers in preparation for smaller scale peace keeping and counterinsurgency operations in Africa.²⁰

The challenge is to discover how the display of cross-cultural competence by Ward and Gordon while in command of the Ever-Victorious Army during the Taiping Rebellion correlated to their success as multinational military leaders. It seems obvious to assume that some semblance of cultural competence is a requisite for success in multinational operations, however

¹⁷ Allison Abbe and Melissa Gouge, "Cultural Training for Military Personnel: Revisiting the Vietnam Era," *Military Review* 92, no. 4 (August 2012): 14.

¹⁸ Abbe and Gouge, "Cultural Training for Military Personnel," 14.

¹⁹ Linda J. Tarver, "In Wisdom's House: T. E. Lawrence in the Near East," *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 3 (1978): 603.

²⁰ Henri Boré, "Cultural Awareness and Irregular Warfare: French Army Experience in Africa," *Military Review* 86, no. 4 (August 2006): 109.

military competence and the attainment of tactical victories may be more valuable to a foreign government or individual than strict obedience to cultural norms. Ward is remembered for the renouncing of his United States citizenship, declaring loyalty to the Qing Emperor, and marriage to a Chinese woman, while experiencing only limited success on the battlefield despite his efforts to conform to these norms. These behaviors could characterize an unusual amount of commitment to the cause of the Qing government, or a very shrewd understanding of how to advance in that culture.²¹ Both required a high degree cultural awareness.

In the case of Gordon there was the more pragmatic approach of a soldier whose motivations are likely to be as much in line with the wishes of his home country than they were with those of his foreign employer.²² How he walked the thin line between the two could be instructive to multinational operations today.

Based on their ability to lead successfully in complex cultural milieu, each man undoubtedly needed something that is recognized as cultural competence today. One of their primary challenges was to integrate Western methods of warfare into the Chinese system in manner which preserved the effectiveness of the new techniques and arms without unduly upsetting the cultural sensitivities of their Chinese overseers and financiers.²³ This seems to embody the desired ability within the Army's concept of Cross-Cultural Competence to translate ideas from one culture to another. However, it must be noted that to what extent these skills contributed to both battlefield success or the personal and professional advancement of Ward and Gordon is difficult to prove in a causative sense. More useful is an examination the traits exhibited by Ward and Gordon through the lens of recent research in Cross-Cultural Competence

²¹ Caleb Carr, *The Devil Soldier: The Story of Frederick Townsend Ward* (New York: Random House, 1992), 151, 210, 213.

²² Andrew Wilson, *The Ever-Victorious Army: A History of the Chinese Campaign Under Lt-Col C. G. Gordon, CB, RE, and of the Suppression of the Tai-Ping Rebellion* (1868; repr., San Francisco: William Blackwood and sons and Chinese Materials Center, 1977), 125–26; Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 123.

²³ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 98.

and attempt to ascertain what any possible advantages gained through their exercise of culturally competent type behaviors correlated to the men's success as commanders.

Cross-Cultural Competence is still rather young as a field of study. In the United States Military, cultural competence has gained significant interest only since the country's experience in the most recent conflicts, though its understanding and application is preceded, and in some cases based upon, research conducted in civilian sector.²⁴ While many instruments have been developed to measure cultural competence or similar attributes, their assessed validity has not been established to the satisfaction of all researchers for quantitative study. Specifically, the need for self-reference in some instruments makes it difficult to assess actual behavior and many are not efficient for use in large scale testing.²⁵ However, in the context of this purely qualitative historical study, several models provide a useful framework to analyze the cultural competence of Ward and Gordon. Of particular note is the Cultural Intelligence Scale or CQS developed by van Dyne et al.²⁶ The CQS provides a four-variable model focusing on metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral aspects.²⁷ The major limitation of the CQS is that it is a self-assessment; it is designed to measure the beliefs of the individuals who respond to it.²⁸ Another model created by Reid et al. was developed specifically for and funded within the Department of Defense (DoD) as a proposed Cross-Cultural Competence developmental sequence. It focuses on behavioral aspects that are more easily observed and measured while considering the unique

²⁴ Abbe, "Historical Development of Cross-Cultural Competence," 32; Marinus Van Driel and William K. Gabrenya, "Instrumentation Challenges in Developing Cross-Cultural Competence Models," in *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First-Century Military: Culture, the Flipside of COIN*, ed. Robert Greene Sands and Allison Greene-Sands (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 149–51.

²⁵ Van Driel and Gabrenya, "Challenges in Developing 3C Models," 160–61.

²⁶ Linn Van Dyne, Soon Ang, and Christine Koh, "Development and Validation of the CQS: The Cultural Intelligence Scale," in *Handbook of Cultural Intelligence: Theory, Measurement, and Applications*, ed. Soon Ang and Linn Van Dyne (Armonk, GB: Routledge, 2009), 16.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁸ Van Driel and Gabrenya, "Challenges in Developing 3C Models," 155.

aspects of a military context.²⁹ This model focuses on six core competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, cultural learning, cultural perspective taking, intercultural interaction, and cultural reasoning.³⁰ One can never know exactly what either Ward or Gordon was thinking at the time in a metacognitive or cognitive sense, or what truly motivated them. However just like the individuals who interacted with them over 150 years ago, one can analyze their behavior, which for the modern reader has been captured in the historical record. The expressed beliefs and actions of the men provide the window to be able to make assumptions about how they viewed their circumstances. Additionally, behavior is perhaps the most important aspect as it represents the instance where a cultural interaction succeeds or fails. What one truly believes is less important than what another perceives.

What an individual perceives or chooses to believe can be closely tied to his or her circumstances. Here theorists propose the idea that culture is more mutable and flexible than we tend to accept.³¹ This is contrary to the previous notion of strategic culture which uses history, literature and religious concepts as a loose script for strategic decision makers to guide their preferences. Instead it is suggested that decision makers can reinterpret their cultural lineage to justify any number of decisions which may not be predictable to an outsider.³² Additionally, cultures can change in dialogue with one another, picking and choosing new concepts as required for survival. In this way culture, when viewed through the lens of cultural realism, starts to resemble the realpolitik in its highly pragmatic character.³³ In the case of the mercenaries and foreign powers working with the Qing Dynasty this suggests that the acceptance of assistance,

²⁹ Patrice Reid et al., “A Developmental Model for Cross-Cultural Competence,” in *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First-Century Military: Culture, the Flipside of COIN*, ed. Robert Greene Sands and Allison Greene-Sands (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 44–45.

³⁰ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C, 47.

³¹ Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 5–6.

³² Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 16.

³³ Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 31.

including some cases cultural artifacts such as weapons, Western drill, and foreign commanders, may have had little to do with the cultural competence of the commanders. It may be that the existential threat faced by the Qing led their leaders to be far more accepting of “barbarian” assistance and even cultural influence than otherwise expected.

Cross-Cultural Competence and Cultural Realism

I was sent among these Arabs as a stranger, unable to think their thoughts or subscribe to their beliefs, but charged by duty to lead them forward and to develop to the highest any movement of theirs profitable to England in her war. If I could not assume their character, I could at least conceal my own, and pass among them without evident friction, neither a discord nor a critic but an unnoticed influence.

—T.E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*

Lawrence provides a compelling summation of the aim of cultural competence in a military context. He expresses a careful balance of concern for the perceptions of multinational partners while striving to keep the objectives of his own nation in mind. His aim in his cultural expression was not to impress upon his partners his desire to be like them but simply to minimize the negative effects of his alien nature on operations.³⁴ It is also interesting to note that, with cultural realism, Lawrence does not lose sight of his purpose, to ensure that operations of the Arab forces were in alignment with the objectives of his home country, England.³⁵ These are important considerations in multinational and advisory missions.

In the United States, the DoD and Army both recognize the importance of understanding culture and its impacts on operations. In the Army’s doctrine alone it is mentioned in no fewer than forty-eight separate doctrinal publication and similar documents. The most relevant discussions are found in FM 3-24, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, and particularly FM 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* describes Cross-Cultural Competence directly. FM

³⁴ T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph* (New York: Anchor Books, 1991), 30.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

3.24.2 identifies Cross-Cultural Competence as one of two components of cultural capability, the other being regional competence.³⁶ The DoD recently adopted a broader definition of cultural capability as “The skills and knowledge that enable personnel to adapt and function effectively in any culture to achieve mission success. It includes culture-general capabilities that promote effective development and use of regional expertise.”³⁷ Cross-Cultural Competence is described in FM 3-24.2 as “general cultural knowledge, skills, and attributes” which form the foundation for any cultural interaction.³⁸ Regional competence is the “culture-specific knowledge, skills, and attributes that pertain to a given country or region.”³⁹ The combined relative levels of competence in each category help determine an individual’s overall cultural proficiency in regards to a given culture.⁴⁰ Some research such as that conducted by Alison Abbe has included language proficiency as the third and most specific element of cultural capability.⁴¹

DoD-conducted research across multiple services generally describes Cross-Cultural Competence as a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes (KSAAs), and occasionally motivations, which allow an individual to effectively accomplish a mission in any cultural environment.⁴² The exact set of KSAAs discussed varies, but Reid et al. have conducted a comprehensive review and distilled down several of the most commonly referenced and used KSSAs for use in their developmental sequence.⁴³ From a list of seventy-two referenced aspects

³⁶ Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2009), 1–24.

³⁷ Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 5160.41E, “Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Program (DLRECP),” August 2015, 14.

³⁸ Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, 1–24.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Abbe, “Historical Development of Cross-Cultural Competence,” 35.

⁴² Sands, “Why Cross-Cultural Competence?,” 19.

⁴³ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 45.

they settled on six that seemed both most relevant to the military experience and ones that could be observed in behavior.⁴⁴

Their research was also strongly informed by prior research conducted by McCloskey et al. in their work to develop a model for Cross-Cultural Competence for use at the tactical level.⁴⁵ In Reid's 3C developmental model, Cross-Cultural Competence is broken down into the previously mentioned six core competencies, with each of these being composed of two to seven overlapping secondary competencies which are further refined with observable indicators presented at the baseline, intermediate and advanced levels.⁴⁶

The core-competence of *self-awareness* is defined as the “discovery of one’s cultural values, attitudes, biases and personality styles [...] to provide a better understanding of one’s ‘identity’ and is composed of: self-discovery, and self-directed learning. *Self-regulation* is described as the use of metacognitive knowledge to recognize problems and use self-correcting strategies and actions during interaction and is made up of: self-monitoring, reflection and feedback, emotion regulation, and managing attitudes. *Cultural learning* is the ability to “acquire and retain culturally specific facts, norms, traditions [...] to inform the application of cultural general concepts” and is composed of: self-directed learning, cultural knowledge, learning through observation, language proficiency, and cognitive complexity. *Cultural perspective taking* is ability to look at the world from the perspective of people from other cultures and is made up of: suspending judgement, cognitive flexibility, cognitive complexity, and sensemaking. *Intercultural interaction* is the ability to adjust communication behavior based on the cultural context to get the desired result and is made up of seven secondary competencies: self-monitoring, cognitive complexity, verbal and nonverbal communication, language proficiency,

⁴⁴ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 45.

⁴⁵ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 45; Michael J. McCloskey et al., “Assessing the Development of Cross-Cultural Competence in Soldiers,” November 2010; Michael J. McCloskey et al., “A Developmental Model of Cross-Cultural Competence at the Tactical Level,” November 2010, 20.

⁴⁶ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 47.

communication planning, trust building, and negotiation skill. Finally, *cultural reasoning* is the ability to understand the underlying contexts of an interaction and adjusting behavior to avoid disruption when it fails to meet expectations and is composed of three secondary competencies: suspending judgement, cognitive complexity, and sensemaking.⁴⁷

Table 1. Developmental Model for Cross-Cultural Competence.

	SECONDARY COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS ASSOCIATED WITH SECONDARY COMPETENCIES		
		Baseline (101)	Intermediate (201)	Advanced (301)
Cultural Reasoning	<i>Suspending Judgment</i>			Suspends Judgment
	<i>Cognitive Complexity</i>			Evaluates cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models
	<i>Sensemaking</i>			Evaluates cultural explanations of behaviors
Intercultural Interaction	<i>Self-Monitoring</i>		Develops self-monitoring skills	Applies self-monitoring skills
	<i>Cognitive Complexity</i>		Refines cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models	Applies cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models
	<i>Verbal & Nonverbal Communication</i>		Evaluates verbal & nonverbal cues in cross-cultural contexts	Manages the use of verbal & nonverbal cues in cross-cultural contexts
	<i>Language Proficiency</i>		Develops survival language skills	Develops language proficiency
	<i>Communication Planning</i>		Understands the elements required for communication planning	Engages in communication planning
	<i>Trust Building</i>		Develops trust building tactics	Demonstrates trust building tactics
	<i>Negotiation Skills</i>		Understands the elements required for negotiations	Demonstrates negotiation skills
		<i>Suspending Judgment</i>	Suspends Judgment	Suspends Judgment
Cultural Perspective-Taking	<i>Cognitive Flexibility</i>	Perceives the differences in cultural viewpoints	Evaluates the motives behind cultural viewpoints	Adjusts frame of reference based on cultural contexts
	<i>Cognitive Complexity</i>	Develops cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models	Refines cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models	Applies cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models
	<i>Sensemaking</i>	Recognizes the existence of other worldviews	Develops cultural explanations of behaviors	Applies cultural explanations of behaviors

⁴⁷ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 53–54, 56–57.

Table 1. Developmental Model for Cross-Cultural Competence.

	SECONDARY COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS ASSOCIATED WITH SECONDARY COMPETENCIES		
		Baseline (101)	Intermediate (201)	Advanced (301)
Cultural Learning	<i>Self-Directed Learning</i>	Perceives the various cultural elements	Develops the understanding of others cultures	Advances the understanding of other cultures
	<i>Cultural Knowledge</i>	Acquires cultural knowledge	Refines cultural knowledge	Applies cultural knowledge
	<i>Learns through Observation</i>	Identifies sources and gathers information from situational cues	Interprets observed information based on situational cues	Advances and updates own learning through situational cues
	<i>Language Proficiency</i>	Learns rules about survival language and expressing nonverbal behaviors	Refines one's knowledge of survival language	Advances and understanding of sociolinguistics
	<i>Cognitive Complexity</i>	Develops cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models	Refines cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models	Applies cultural scripts based on cross-cultural mental models
Self-Regulation	<i>Self-Monitoring</i>	Recognizes the importance of self-monitoring	Develops self-monitoring skills	Applies self-monitoring skills
	<i>Reflection & Feedback</i>	Engages in reflection & feedback	Engages in reflection & feedback	Engages in reflection & feedback
	<i>Emotion Regulation</i>	Perceives and understands emotions	Develops emotion regulation strategies	Applies emotion regulation strategies
	<i>Managing Attitudes</i>	Recognizes the diversity in cultural attitudes	Understands attitudes toward cultures	Manages attitudes toward cultures
Self-Awareness	<i>Self-Discovery</i>	Understands the factors that shapes one's worldview	Refines understanding of the factors that shape one's worldview	Advances the understanding of the factors that shape one's worldview
	<i>Self-Directed Learning</i>	Understands self in cultural and cross-cultural contexts	Refines concept of self in cultural and cross-cultural contexts	Advances the understanding of one's own culture

Source: Adapted from Patrice Reid et al., "A Developmental Model for Cross-Cultural Competence," in *Cross-Cultural Competence for a Twenty-First-Century Military: Culture, the Flipside of COIN*, ed. Robert Greene Sands and Allison Greene-Sands (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 55-57.

In the civilian literature the most easily applied instrument for assessing the cross-cultural competence is the Culture Intelligence Scale (CQS) developed by Van Dyne et al.⁴⁸ They broadly categorize cultural intelligence as a specific type of intelligence relation to other such as

⁴⁸ Van Dyne, Nag, and Kho, "Development and Validation of the CQS: The Cultural Intelligence Scale."

academic, or emotional intelligence and define it as “ability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings.”⁴⁹ While using terminology very similar to the definitions of 3C, Van Dyne breaks down its components somewhat differently.

Cultural intelligence is divided into four basic categories: *Metacognitive CQ*, *Cognitive CQ*, *Motivational CQ*, and *Behavior CQ*. *Metacognitive CQ* is how self-aware an individual is of their own prior assumptions and abilities when entering a cultural interaction and allows thinking critically and reflecting in action to facilitate a better interaction in the future. *Cognitive CQ* is the aspect most similar to regional competence described earlier as it deals with actual knowledge of customs and procedures within cultures, though also cultural similarities that may exist across many cultures. *Motivational CQ* concerns the confidence that is contributed to the cultural interaction from an individual’s desire to be part of it. This is part of what allows an individual to overcome some aspects of culture shock, and while the authors attribute this mostly to an intrinsic motivation and desire to be exposed to and learn from other cultures, it could also be a motivation driven by necessity. The last aspect of cultural intelligence is *Behavioral CQ* which relates to the actual actions of an individual, both in what they say and how they say it, as well as nonverbal cues expressed during interaction.⁵⁰ This is perhaps the most important aspect as it will be what others judge and the part that can be best seen in the documentation of events in history.

Reid’s Developmental Model will be the most useful model as a lens to view Ward’s and Gordon’s relative performance at Cross-Cultural Competence. As it was specifically developed for use by the military it best captures the unique aspects of cultural interactions in a military context. However, it has not been fully validated in a comprehensive study. The Developmental Model focuses on behavioral indicators that can be observed by an outside party. But even these are largely subjective. For instance, under *cultural awareness* the behavioral indicator for the

⁴⁹ Van Dyne, Nag, and Kho, “Development and Validation of the CQS,” 16.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

secondary competence of *self-discovery* at the intermediate level is “refines understanding of the factors that shape one’s worldview.”⁵¹ This is difficult to accurately assess from observation without some other form of report from the individuals themselves.

The primary strength of the CQS is that it is a developed and validated instrument.⁵² The CQS is a self-reporting instrument that has correlated to later cross-cultural judgment, problem solving as well overall job performance and whether an individual experienced culture shock.⁵³ The CQS uses a Likert scale from one to seven, with one being “strongly disagree” and seven “strongly agree.” It then asks a series of twenty questions, four to six of which each corresponded to the four variables of CQ.⁵⁴ These are specifically oriented towards an individual answering the questionnaire and with the assumption that this person is also being truthful.

Regarding historical figures, it is at best possible to broadly infer the metacognitive, cognitive, and motivational from actual behavior, and in some cases, where available, their more private correspondence with others. Ultimately it is not possible to know what an individual is thinking which is the advantage of the behavior oriented developmental Model.

While Cross-Cultural Competence provided a good measure and way forward for how an individual should think and be prepared to act in a cross-cultural context it only provides half of the story. How cross-cultural efforts are received is dependent on the other parties involved. Here the theory of cultural realism provides a compelling vision of cultural integration and accommodation.

Cultural realism regarding military and strategic culture is put forward by Alastair Iain Johnston in his book *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History*.

⁵¹ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 57.

⁵² David Matsumoto and Hyosung C. Hwang, “Assessing Cross-Cultural Competence: A Review of Available Tests,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, July 1, 2013, 856.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Van Dyne, Ang, and Koh, “Development and Validation of the CQS,” 20.

He describes a culture not as static, or easily partitioned from others, but open to changes from outside when deemed necessary by strategic leaders.⁵⁵ Johnston analyses the strategic culture of the earlier Ming Dynasty and looks specifically at how strategic preferences in the Ming were shaped by *Seven Military Classics*, of which Sun Zi's (Sun Tzu) *Art of Warfare* is best known. He assesses the classics to determine to what extent they favor accommodation versus either defensive or offensive strategies.⁵⁶

Johnston splits strategic culture into two main groups. The first are the overarching symbolic strategies, which are the sum of such things as history and literature which may guide initial strategic preferences. The second are the operational strategies, which are the actual behaviors of decision makers and what they choose to do in later situations. Operational strategies may or may not directly reflect the symbolic culture and may change depending on circumstances and necessity, though these changes can be reinterpreted and justified through the symbolic culture.⁵⁷

Johnston then looks at the military history of the Ming to see if these preferences were played out in the records of actions by strategic decision makers. What he finds is that there is a preference for offensive strategies rather than defensive or accommodation in both the *Seven Military Classics*, an example of symbolic strategic culture, and the historical record which documents the operational culture of Ming Chinese. He notes that this conflicts with the Western notion that Chinese strategies favor a more subtle or diplomatic approach.

Johnston believes that this idea stems from a misinterpretation of Sun Zi and a gravitation towards a few popular quotes, such as the concept of "not fighting and subduing the enemy."⁵⁸ He counters that the concept does not stem from a preference for diplomatic or non-violent

⁵⁵ Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 31; Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 16,18.

⁵⁶ Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 40–44, 143–54.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 37–38.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 99.

approaches, but from necessity. Accommodation should be used when one is weaker than an enemy to buy time until a position of advantage or greater strength can be attained.⁵⁹ The more important concept identified by Johnston, and suggested in both the symbolic and the operational record, is that of *quan bian*, or ultimate flexibility.

Johnston describes *quan bian* as, “given that constant change is the key characteristic of conflict situations, a strategist must be prepared to adapt to dangers and opportunities as they suddenly appear [and] not be restricted, constrained by, or wedded to self-imposed a priori political, military, or moral limits on strategic choices.”⁶⁰ Based on this, Johnston suggests that Ming decision makers were expected to be extremely pragmatic and choose strategies based on their likelihood of contributing to victory. He concludes that, “the essence of strategic choice ... is not ‘not fighting and subduing the enemy’ but ‘respond flexibly to the enemy and thus create conditions for victory.’”⁶¹ Cultural realism therefore appears very like political realism in that it is focused on self-interest and success above any other concern. However, Johnston admits that his study is limited by the fact that it is only concerned with a single time in a single country.⁶² The validity of the cultural realism concept is expanded in the later work of Patrick Porter.

Porter uses Cultural realism to advance an analysis of Western tendencies to view Eastern culture simply through the lens of the “other” and failing to appreciate that apparently alien cultures are, in fact, rapidly adapting to new strategic contexts in dialogue with other cultures, including those of the West. In his book, *Military Orientalism: Eastern War Through Western Eyes*, he analyses four cases of Western observations of foreign military cultures from the Mongols to Hezbollah, and describes how a failure to understand the adaptive nature of culture led to flawed assumptions about their strategic and military aims and effectiveness.

⁵⁹ Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 102–3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, 258.

His argument also builds upon work of Johnston and Brian McAllister Linn's *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War*, which emphasizes an organizational culture in addition to the symbolic and operational strategies described in *Cultural Realism*.⁶³ Porter is interested in how culture adapts in war situations as "culture 'in motion' ... changes within the mutual hostility of wartime."⁶⁴ He believes that culture changes as part of a dialogue that sees new operational strategies and cultures emerge from interactions with the strategies of the enemy and other actors in the environment. Also in this interaction, he draws on cultural realism directly to say that "[w]hen conflicts arise between culture and calculations about the utility of action, culture can be remade to serve utility."⁶⁵ The third element of his argument focuses on the actual observer, who must be able to divorce themselves of their own identified cultural biases to be able to accurately appraise the strategic cultures of others. It is this lack of reflection that has often caused observers and military practitioners to be caught off guard when an adversary acts in a way contrary to what was anticipated based on assumptions about the link between culture and behavior.⁶⁶

Porter's explanation of cultural realism is:

Culture is an ambiguous repertoire of competing ideas that can be selected, instrumentalised, and manipulated, instead of a clear script for action. At war, even actors regarded as conservatives may use their culture strategically, *remaking their worlds to fit their needs*. Warfare has a discipline of its own that often forces its participants to remake their culture. Those with the will and capacity can make choices, compromise or violate taboos or values for reasons of utility, *acting despite tradition not because of it*.⁶⁷

Additionally, he states that for a strategic decision maker to alter strategy through culture he or she needs *time* for the change to happen; *motive*, in the form of pressure from the conflict,

⁶³ Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 16; Brian McAllister Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2007); Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 17.

⁶⁴ Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 15.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 18; emphasis added.

to justify the change; *capacity* and the resources to make the change; and perhaps most importantly, *skillful leadership*, which can recognize how to do all the above.⁶⁸

He concludes that cultural knowledge, even through the lens of cultural realism, is not a fool proof way to understand an enemy or an ally. It can help decision makers to interpret others, but only if they are conscious of existing biases and attentive to how the other is changing in relation to themselves and the system of the conflict. He cautions that recently revived interest in culture can have the negative effect of reinforcing old and untrue assumptions about the threat. If these things are kept in mind, culture can be used to increase understanding of the enemy and oneself in meaningful ways.⁶⁹

History Through the Lenses of Cultural Competence and Cultural Realism

The cross-cultural performance of Ward and Gordon can be viewed best through the lens provided in the Developmental Model. However, many of the secondary competencies and associated indicators are difficult to observe without firsthand access to the person in question, particularly at the baseline and intermediate level where the indicators are often qualified by verbs such as: recognizes, perceives, develops, and refines.⁷⁰ The advanced level is where clear and observable behavior is reliably exhibited. Here the words ‘applies, advances, manages, and engages’ provide the cues that allow for examination of a historical figure.⁷¹ However, even here many of the behavior indicators will be unlikely to have been recorded. Therefore, only certain secondary competencies need to be seen to determine relative strengths in the primary competencies. Within *cultural reasoning*, the indicator of suspending judgement is the only historically observable variable. For *intercultural interaction*, the management of verbal and

⁶⁸ Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 19.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 197–98.

⁷⁰ Reid et al., “Developmental Model for 3C,” 56–58.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

nonverbal cues, engagement in combined planning and demonstration of trust building tactics and negotiating skills can be seen. *Cultural perspective taking* is perhaps the most difficult to see, but again, suspension of judgment and ability to apply cultural scripts and cultural explanations of behavior is information that may be available. *Cultural learning* is perhaps the competency most easily inferred from behavior, as it can be seen over time in more refined reactions and attempts to avoid previous mistakes. Applying and advancing cultural knowledge through self-directed learning and based on observation should be implied through historically documented actions. It should be noted that many of these aspects in cultural learning will have their indicators shown through the regionally specific knowledge and skills of Ward and Gordon, but in these cases, as in language proficiency, the regional competence implies the foundational cultural competencies.⁷² Two aspects of *self-regulation* are also more easily observed. *Emotional regulation* and the management of attitude toward the other culture will be apparent in how each man reacts in exchanges with individuals from other cultures. *Self-awareness* is perhaps the least easily inferred, but again, the self-directed learning aspect may be seen over time and imply awareness through the ability to affect changes in behaviors. Additionally, some of the aspects of the CQS help flesh out the competencies.

Broadly, the *Metacognitive CQ* questions can help one understand aspects of self-awareness, cultural perspective taking, and cultural reasoning. The *Cognitive CQ* questions are related directly to cultural learning and cultural knowledge and help highlight what may be the most relevant aspects of a culture that need to be known to navigate the society successfully, particularly the legal system and cultural values and religious beliefs. *Motivational CQ* can be loosely tied to self-regulation, particularly as it relates to emotional regulation and the management of stress. Finally, all the *Behavior CQ* questioning can inform verbal and nonverbal communication and language proficiency within intercultural interaction, though the nuance of

⁷² Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency*, 1–24.

verbalization—such as variance of tone and pauses—are unlikely to be found in the historical record. However, these are only relevant to cross-cultural competence, which is the positive application of cultural knowledge in an interaction. A crucial aspect of any cultural interaction is how is it likely to be received by the other party. Here cultural realism provides relevant insights into cultural dialogue.

Porter describes cultural realism as “culture in motion” and that it can be selectively altered based on the conditions of the conflict. This concept offers a possible flipside to cross-cultural competence.⁷³ If the symbolic aspects of a culture are mutable in order justify an operational strategy, then assumptions about culture must also be subject to modification. Cultural realism suggests that during war cultures can adapt based on circumstances and issues of practicality may outweigh any initial cultural aversion or preference. Therefore, the success of Ward and Gordon in cross-cultural situation may correlate to their cross-cultural abilities, but may be equally correlated to circumstances that require them to act in a culturally conscious way. Their motives are more self-serving than one might like to admit. Ward was heavily motivated by profit and legal protections while Gordon was concerned with his reputation and future career in the British Army. Additionally, their cross-cultural success, may correlate to the needs of the Chinese with whom they are working. The Qing leaders were faced with an existential threat not just to the current government, but the entire Confucian-Mencian system and world view. This threat left them willing to make additional concessions to “barbarians” than might otherwise have been the case.

Interesting insights to this aspect are evident in the writing of Li Hongzhang and his reports of his dealings with both Ward and Gordon. Li was the regional military and provincial leader most directly responsible for the activities of Ever-Victorious Army and nominal superior to Ward and Gordon. The discussions between Li and his superiors and other members of the

⁷³ Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 15, 18.

Qing ruling class display a clear appreciation for culture and discussions about what is acceptable when working with foreigners, given the gravity of the situation during the Taiping Rebellion. Considering the concept of *quan bian*, Li displays a great deal of flexibility through his interactions with foreigners.⁷⁴ He was both accepting of the necessity of new technologies and practices from the West but also was willing to work with foreigners and not hold their sometimes-inadequate cultural competence against them. As did all wars before and since, the Taiping Rebellion had its “own discipline” and forced the parties involved to adapt at many levels if they hoped to survive.⁷⁵

The Taiping Rebellion Prior to the Founding of the Ever-Victorious Army



Figure 1. Areas of Fighting in the Taiping Rebellion. Map by Steven R. Platt and David Merrill. Stephen R Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom: China, the West, and the Epic Story of the Taiping Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), xxxiii.

⁷⁴ Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, 102.

⁷⁵ Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 18.

The conditions that led to the Taiping Rebellion can be tied directly to the preceding Sino-British “Opium War” fought by the Qing Dynasty and the British Empire over trade rights from 1839-1842. While often characterized as rooted in the opium trade the British were more interested in overall free trade, of which opium was a significant aspect. Of perhaps equal importance was the domestic question of the Manchu controlled Qing government in Beijing and its ability to dictate to whom the southern Han merchants could trade with. Historians such as Bruce Elleman suggest that this war, perhaps one of the first to pit an industrialized Western power against China, also represented the beginning of the break down in Manchu power and rising discontent of the Han people.⁷⁶

The overall poor performance of the Qing military, both by Han forces and the more elite Manchu Bannermen, contributed to the growing belief that the Qing “Mandate of Heaven” was waning. The Qing also failed to recognize that warfare had changed and did not try to understand their enemy as anything other than foreign pirates, supposedly in direct contradiction to Sun Zi’s admonition to have an accurate conception of the nature of the threat.⁷⁷

The war ended with the Treaty of Nanjing, which granted trading rights to the British, ceded to them Hong Kong, and opened the so-called “Treaty Ports” of Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai. Britain was also granted the status of “most-favored-nation,” through which it hoped to limit other foreign competition. Critically, these actions also opened the south of China to increased foreign interaction, which led to the permeation of Western ideas and the Christian religion into predominantly Han regions and contributed to the eventual rise of the Taiping movement.⁷⁸ The presence of Christian missionaries helped spark the ideological fire which consumed Qing ruled China in the decades that followed.

⁷⁶ Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 13–15.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 27–28; Sun Zi and Roger T. Ames, *Sun-Tzu: The Art of Warfare: The First English Translation Incorporating the Recently Discovered Yin-Ch’üeh-Shan Texts*, 1st ed, Classics of Ancient China (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), 113.

⁷⁸ Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 31–32.

Hong Xiuquan, the founder and eventual “Heavenly King” of the Taiping, used a Christian pamphlet from an unknown missionary to explain the visions he had witnessed over several years. The visions began after Hong had failed the Imperial examinations, which were required for entry in the Qing administration, for the third and final time in 1837. Based on his interpretation of the visions he concluded that he was the younger brother of Jesus Christ and had been commanded by God to expunge China of the demons of the traditional Chinese ideologies of Confucianism and Buddhism. Along with his converted cousin, Hong Rengan, he founded the “Society of God Worshippers,” whose crusade eventually expanded to include the political aspect of resistance to the ruling, and alien, Manchus. Through the late 1840s and into 1851, the society expanded through thousands of new converts until on January 11, 1851 Hong Xiuquan declared the founding of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and himself its ruler and “Heavenly King of China.”⁷⁹ Rengan returned later with a more detailed Christian training and became one of his cousin’s most trusted lieutenants and prime minister, and was given the title of Shield King.⁸⁰

While Hong Xiuquan and his followers began fighting and amassing territory one small town and rural area at a time, Hong Rengan left for Hong Kong. Here he met Theodore Hamburg, a Swedish, Lutheran missionary. Hamburg, excited that a Christian rebellion had formed in the country’s interior, took Rengan under his wing and continued his indoctrination in the Christian faith. He also transcribed the story of Hong Xiuquan as told by his cousin.⁸¹

By 1853 the Taipings had conquered the cities of Wuchang and Nanjing, the latter of which became the capital of the Heavenly Kingdom. To counter the growing threat the Qing Dynasty dispatched its armies, both the Manchu led banner armies and the less capable, predominantly Han, Green Standard Armies.⁸² However, these forces struggled to contain the

⁷⁹ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 14–18.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 115–19.

more mobile Taiping forces. Additionally, as these units concentrated and left their garrisons they opened a power vacuum in which bandits and criminals could operate freely. The central Qing government soon sought unconventional solutions as order broke down in the provinces disrupted by the Taiping.⁸³ For this the government turned to the provincial leaders and their militias.

In 1853 Zeng Goufan was ordered by the Emperor to take charge of the militias in Hunan province.⁸⁴ This act was the first to see a significant shift from a centrally controlled Qing government based in Beijing to a provincially focused strategy. This decentralization led to a more responsive counter to the Taiping, as well as a vector for the increased ability to modernize military forces.⁸⁵ As the central government loosened control, local leaders could integrate Western drill and equipment into regional forces. Zeng Goufan in Hunan was the first to begin this practice as he developed the Hunan Army. The integration of foreign techniques expanded with Zeng's student, Li Hongzhang, in his command of the Anhui Army. The Anhui Army was the Chinese element most closely allied with Ward and Gordon's Ever-Victorious Army and other Western forces.⁸⁶ However, any foreign assistance to the Qing was not guaranteed and there remained the possibility that the then neutral Western powers might intervene on behalf of the supposedly Christian Taiping rebels.

The British were initially content with the conditions afforded them in the Treaty of Nanjing, but soon sought fuller recognition by the Qing (no diplomatic posting was allowed in capital of Beijing) and additional treaty ports farther inland along the rivers. Additionally, the Qing government had managed to curtail some of the concessions while holding to the letter of

⁸³ John Millin Selby, *The Paper Dragon: An Account of the China Wars, 1840-1900* (New York: Praeger, 1968), 97–98; Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 118.

⁸⁴ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 116.

⁸⁵ Smith, *The Qing Dynasty and Traditional Chinese Culture*, 389.

⁸⁶ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 55–56.

the agreement.⁸⁷ Events soon transpired to give the British and others the opportunity to renegotiate their status with the Qing.

On October 8, 1856, Guangzhou police boarded the Chinese owned, but British flagged ship, *Arrow*. The ship was registered in Hong Kong and its detainment gave the British governor, John Bowring, the justification to seek renegotiation of the trade treaties with China. Until this point, the British and other western powers strained to maintain a neutral position in the war between the Taiping movement and Qing Dynasty. They preferred to simply wait and see who won and deal with them then. However, the disruption caused by the conflict was impacting the bottom line.

That Britain chose to respond militarily against the Qing government was not directly related to either the Taiping, or their opposition to the opium trade, but it had a significant effect on the later decision to support the Qing.⁸⁸ The British reacted with an ultimatum to return the ship and crew and apologize. The apology was never forthcoming and the Second Sino-British war, or Arrow War, began. The British first destroyed the Chinese navy around Guangzhou and secured the port, before sending an expedition under James Bruce to threaten Beijing directly. Joined by French forces, the British reduced several forts around Beijing until the Emperor relented and agreed to new terms.⁸⁹

The new Treaty of Tianjin, signed on June 26, 1858, allowed for additional treaty ports and the posting of diplomats with access to Beijing, although in a concession to Manchu 'face' the diplomats were forced to reside just outside the city. Treaties were also signed with France, as well as non-belligerents such as the United States, granting them similar concessions and trade

⁸⁷ Tyler Dennett, *Americans in Eastern Asia: A Critical Study of the Policy of the United States with Reference to China, Japan and Korea in the 19th Century* (Macmillan, 1922), 211.

⁸⁸ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 24–28; Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 48.

⁸⁹ Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 47.

rights as the British.⁹⁰ The result was that the Western powers were now happy to deal with the Manchu led government and support was denied to the Taipings, except for a handful of independent mercenaries and missionaries.⁹¹ Importantly, the opium trade was also allowed to continue.

The United States was largely content to let the British do the fighting and forcing of agreements with the Chinese and then follow up with their own treaties.⁹² American military involvement in China was always smaller than that of the British. Once the United States was embroiled in its own Civil War, from 1861 on, official support to any side became extremely limited. In fact, once the blockade of the Confederacy began and nearly all US ships were recalled, American merchantmen were entirely dependent on the Royal Navy for protection.⁹³ However, the war in America did not prevent the high profile, if not official, involvement in the war in China by several prominent Americans.

Frederick Townsend Ward and the Ever-Victorious Army (1860-62)

Frederick Townsend Ward was born in Salem Massachusetts in 1831. He received limited formal education as a child, and being from a long line of sailors and ship owners, began sailing at an early age. He at some point in the late 1840s attended the military academy that is now Norwich University in Vermont. but did not graduate. He returned to the sea and served on ships operating between China and Mexico. In Central America, he joined with William Walker and learned the fundamentals of filibustering, skills which he later employed in China. Ward seems to have left his service before Walker was arrested for violating United States neutrality. Shortly thereafter Ward joined the French Army and served in Crimean War from 1854-56 where

⁹⁰ Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 47–48.

⁹¹ Selby, *The Paper Dragon*, 107.

⁹² Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 37.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 262.

he likely learned many of the tactics that he later used to train and employ the Ever-Victorious Army. In 1857, he returned to United States and through his father's ship brokerage company obtained service on a ship yet again. This time when he arrived in Shanghai he recognized the opportunity presented by the Taiping threat to the city. He stayed and established the Shanghai Foreign Arms Corps in 1860.⁹⁴

The element was initially founded and structured with the realization that there was not enough time to train native troops in Western drill to be able to address the Taiping threat. Ward secured the trust of Yang Fang, a customs official in Shanghai and through him financed the hiring of discharged Western sailors and other adventurers as officers, as well as body of Filipino troops. Over time more Westerners joined the officer corps, the most notable being Ward's chief lieutenants, Henry Burgevine and Edward Forester.⁹⁵

Initially, Beijing held a dubious opinion of the Corps and made it clear to the administrator of Shanghai, Wu Xu, and Yang Fang that it was viewed as a purely merchant undertaking and not officially sanctioned under the Qing banner. Therefore, Wu Xu set the priorities and objectives for Ward in the period of 1860-61. During this time the Shanghai Foreign Arms Corps had only one victory, when they recaptured the city of Songjiang, southwest of Shanghai. The city later fell again the Taipings and Ward suffered several costlier defeats though 1861.⁹⁶ Despite these setbacks Ward's force had made an impression on both the Qing and Taiping leaders, the later often referring to his soldiers as the "foreign devils."⁹⁷

In 1862 Ward began to achieve actual success, but even before this his, attractiveness to his Chinese employers started to grow, Xue Huan, the governor of Jiangsu province, spoke highly of Ward to the Emperor and related his apparent acceptance of Chinese customs and desire to

⁹⁴ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 24–28.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 29–31.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 32–33.

⁹⁷ Carr, *The Devil Soldier*, 123–24.

become a Chinese subject. After Ward participated in the successful retaking of the port city of Gaoqiao, north of Shanghai, Xue praised him even more. Thus, by April of 1862, both Ward and Burgevine had been made the equivalent of colonels in the service of the Qing Dynasty and the force they led was officially recognized by the government in Beijing and granted the title of Ever-Victorious Army.⁹⁸

From a cultural competence perspective, it appears that Ward employed the competencies of *self-regulation* and *intercultural interaction*. He used his understanding of the culture to modify his behavior (intercultural interaction) based on his metacognitive recognition of the problem (self-regulation) that he needed to integrate himself more into the Chinese culture to preserve his position. However, the motives appear to be largely self-interested and suggest a cultural realist interpretation that the problem was ensuring a steady stream of income for his operations, and personal enrichment.

During this time, Ward seems to have recognized the need for the application of cultural skill from a realist perspective to navigate the Chinese culture. Historian Jonathan Spence writes, “he moved with great skill to consolidate his position with the Chinese. February 1862, the governor of Kiangsu [Jiangsu] reported that ‘Ward has informed the Taotai and the American Consul that he wishes to become a Chinese subject and change to Chinese dress.’ The following month Ward married Chang Mei [Changmei], the daughter of Taki [Yang Fang], the Shanghai banker who had helped to finance his forces.”⁹⁹ “It is unlikely that this was any marriage of love; it appears, rather, to have been a practical step on Ward’s part to bind himself closer to the Chinese and to gain direct financial backing from his father-in-law.”¹⁰⁰ Yang Fang, also culturally pragmatic, was motivated by the need to gain some level of control in the relationship with Ward

⁹⁸ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 52–54.

⁹⁹ Jonathan D. Spence, *To Change China: Western Advisers in China, 1620-1960* (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), 69–70.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 70.

that he hoped was inherent in the father-in-law to son-in-law relationship. However, Changmei herself had less value to him since she had been originally betrothed to a man who died making her “damaged goods” in Chinese society. As she was not suitable for marriage to a Chinese man, the betrothal was described by Platt as “primarily...a business arrangement.”¹⁰¹

Ward can be seen to be culturally realist in that, “[b]y making these very graphic gestures, Ward consciously mortgaged himself to the Chinese. He had realized that to prove his loyalty to his Chinese employers he should fit himself as much as possible into the Chinese system.”¹⁰² After his death, Ward’s marriage to a Chinese woman became a key aspect of the narrative constructed by the Qing about Ward’s service to the dynasty. The Chinese showed the ability to make other culturally realist accommodations that were at odds with the symbolic culture in the service of operational necessity.

Among the Chinese, Li Hongzhang and his mentor Zeng Goufan are the actors most exemplifying Cross-Cultural Competence. Their decisions and actions exhibited aspects of *self-awareness*, *cultural perspective taking*, *cultural learning*, *self-regulation* and *cultural reasoning*. They attempted to understand the likely motivation of Ward and other foreigner adventurers (cultural learning), and recognized that this was separate from the motives of the Western governments and determined that it was based largely on fame and fortune (cultural perspective taking). They then recognized and modified their behavior to take advantage of this conclusion (self-awareness, self-regulation, and intercultural interaction) and avoid future disruptions in the relationship (cultural reasoning). Toward this, Li was advised by Zeng to work closely with the foreigners saying in a letter dated May 11, 1862, “You, Hung-chang [Hongzhang], should cultivate friendship with the foreigners. If you should refuse all their proposals, they would again

¹⁰¹ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 268–69.

¹⁰² Spence, *To Change China*, 70.

stir up disputes.”¹⁰³ When compared to the sometimes-brutish behavior of Westerners, which will be exemplified by Henry Burgevine later, Li and his superiors seem to have operated from a much more culturally competent perspective. However, their motives were clearly driven by a recognition of the expertise and equipment that could be gained from the West to help defeat the Taiping Rebellion and the need for Ward’s force to defend Shanghai. Li was advised to be forgiving regarding Ward and others in keeping with the principle of *quan bian*, and was ultimately flexible. Upon his later promotion to Acting Governor of Jiangsu Province, Li received additional guidance on dealing with foreigners, and Ward specifically, in an imperial edict:

Li Hung-chang [Li Hongzhang] should take into consideration the character of the foreigners, and try to make friends with them. The Shanghai Foreign Musketeers are quite powerful, and the foreigners often boast about their strength. The said Acting Governor should make greater endeavors to drill his troops to please the foreigners. As for Ward and others who seek both fame and fortune, he should also fraternize with them, even to the expense of making small rewards.¹⁰⁴

The Chinese seemed to go well out their way to work with Westerners and develop the relationships which appeared motivated by a culturally realist perspective.

The relationship between cultural competence and cultural realism in this case is one of behavior driven by motivation. Cultural competence is an operational strategy developed to serve a need for cooperation across cultural lines. As foreign troops took casualties, Li recognized that, “...the enmity between the foreigners and the long-haired rebels will be deeper than ever, something not unprofitable to China. Foreign affairs will be even more in our favor.”¹⁰⁵ Li continued to carefully manage his relations with the foreigners and did his best to allay suspicions that the Chinese were not as cooperative in operations against the Taiping. On May 29, he

¹⁰³ James Chester Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion, 1850-1864* (Hong Kong University Press, 1963), 94.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 95.

reported to Zeng, “I ... shall say some tactful words to comfort them; if I can meet their wishes, I shall do so. I will never quarrel with them. Shanghai has to be protected by them.”¹⁰⁶

Li did not go to such great lengths with all Westerners, however. In June, he wrote about the British Admiral James Hope, “I ... have met [him] as many as four times—all because he called first—and I have to treat with him as the occasion arises. Even were the situation to become desperate, I would never ask for his help or be willing to serve foreigners.”¹⁰⁷ However in the same letter to Zeng he complimented Ward, “...who valiantly defends [Songjiang] is indeed the most vigorous of all. Although until now he has not yet shaved his hair or called at my humble residence, I have no time to quarrel with foreigners over such a little ceremonial matter.”¹⁰⁸ Here Li’s own cultural competence and realism is shown. Ward is perhaps making efforts to adhere to the culture of the Chinese, but the success lay more with Li’s willingness to accept him because of his utility to his Chinese superiors and employers.

Li also advised others on how to deal with the sometimes-insulting foreigners. He told Prince Gong, “When the barbarian chiefs come to negotiate, I treat them politely. When to comply with their wishes is impossible, I shall reject them. In recent months, though the barbarians have never come to the camps, I respectfully observe my Teacher’s and the Elder Xu [Huan]’s order to keep aloof...”¹⁰⁹

By September 1862, Li had lost faith in many of the corrupt Chinese officials and the some of the foreigners around Ward, though his relations with Ward remained on good terms. He wrote to Zeng after sickness had depleted Wards forces, “Ward commands enough authority to control the foreigners in Shanghai, and he is quite friendly with me. [Wu Xu] [the Shanghai daotai] and Yang Fang [the customs daotai] both depend on Ward. If my Teacher gave them an

¹⁰⁶ Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion*, 95.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 95–96.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 102.

order, these “rats” would all endeavor to comply with it. Ward is indeed brave in action, and he possesses all sorts of foreign weapons.”¹¹⁰ Again the pragmatic nature of the Li’s relationship to Ward is shown. Ward was valuable because he was an intermediary between both foreigners and corrupt officials, and because he brings modern, Western weapons and techniques. When Ward was killed at Ningbo, Li had trouble with his initial successors.

Ward’s Troublesome Successors (September 1862 – March 1863)

The question of Ward’s successor was a matter of discussion between both Chinese and British officials. Li recognized that only a foreigner could control the mostly Western officers of the Ever-Victorious Army, but was reluctant to hand control over to a British officer, so the matter was between Ward’s two most prominent American lieutenants, Henry Andrea Burgevine and Edward Forester. While the daotai Wu did not trust either man, Admiral Hope was willing to compromise on a non-British officer and recommended Burgevine. Li wrote in October 1862, “As the British have entrusted the Ever-Victorious Army to foreigners, the Army will be treated as foreign. Burgevine has twice called on me since then. He seems quite easy to consult with. His extravagance should not be severely criticized. But I hope that he will exert himself as usual.”¹¹¹ Again, we see Li’s concerns being as much about the effectiveness of Burgevine as a commander as it was about how agreeable he was to work with. However, relations between Burgevine and Chinese employers declined precipitously.

In November of 1862 Li complained to Zeng of the difficulties in trying to move the Ever-Victorious Army to Nanjing for an operation there. Costs of both transportation and rations were exceeding what the Chinese were willing to pay and Li wrote of Burgevine, “[He] is full of intrigues and stubborn. Wu and Yang [the daotais] both say that he is not so easy going as Ward.

¹¹⁰ Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion*, 103.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 104–5.

Yet the Throne issues an edict ordering me to appoint another officer to take over the command.”¹¹²

By January of the following year Burgevine had not departed for Nanjing, and not being paid was prepared to lead his troops in mutinous looting of the Shanghai area. After being persuaded against this by one of his Chinese officers, he settled for a more forceful demand from his financier Yang Fang. “Burgevine brought several dozen musketeers to Shanghai on [January 4th] and broke into Yang Fang’s residence where he violently beat the said [D]aotai, and stole more than forty thousand silver dollars.”¹¹³ Burgevine was soon relieved and it was agreed that command be placed under a British officer rather than another foreign adventurer.¹¹⁴ Since no American officer was likely to be forthcoming it was agreed that Captain John Holland take temporary command of the Ever-Victorious Army until Captain Gordon received authorization to do so.¹¹⁵ However, Hollands short time in command was not successful and in his first engagement on January 15, 1863, the Ever-Victorious Army took hundreds casualties and lost many guns to the Taipings. The unit returned to garrison to await Gordon’s arrival.¹¹⁶

Charles George Gordon and the Ever-Victorious Army (1863 – 64)

Gordon finally provided strong leadership to the Ever-Victorious Army, an element missing since Ward was killed six month earlier. Gordon’s approach was very different than that of Ward. He led the army as an experienced and professional military officer, not a true mercenary or adventurer.¹¹⁷ While fundamentally different, the two men did share some interesting similarities in their personal histories.

¹¹² Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion*, 108.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Spence, *To Change China*, 80–81.

¹¹⁵ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 316–17; Spence, *To Change China*, 81.

¹¹⁶ Spence, *To Change China*, 81.

¹¹⁷ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 123.

Gordon, born January 28, 1833 was the son of British Lieutenant General William Gordon and his pious, puritanical wife Elizabeth. From them he drew his two great loyalties, to the British service and to God, and with these a belief in the superiority of Western culture and the literal truth of the Bible.¹¹⁸ After many moves between garrisons as a child, the younger Gordon entered the Royal Military Academy at Woolrich. Here, he proved to be quarrelsome cadet and graduated late after hitting another student. While not particularly gifted academically, he excelled at cartography, a skill which served him well in his appointment to the Royal Engineers when he finally commissioned.¹¹⁹ Like Ward, Gordon served in the Crimean War, was wounded, and participated in the attack on the Great Redan during the Siege of Sevastopol in 1855. Following the war, he was posted to Armenia and missed the opportunity to for service in the Indian Mutiny (1857-1859). In 1859 Gordon was promoted to captain and volunteered for service in China—a move which literally made his name.¹²⁰

The fact that Gordon was not a mercenary, but a representative of the of the British government, meant he conducted himself in the interest of his home nation as well as that of the Qing government. In contrast to Ward's mission, focused on the defense of Shanghai, Gordon conducted more offensively focused operations. Additionally, following Ward's death, and at the urging of Gordon, the relationship between the Ever-Victorious Army shifted from the local provincial level to a more regional level, placing Gordon more directly under the control of Li Hongzhang.¹²¹ This shifting of responsibilities would impact the course of events significantly.

Gordon, like Ward before him, had a reputation in combat as a fearless and effective leader. The most significant action he saw, both from the sense of military objective and cultural

¹¹⁸ Byron Farwell, *Eminent Victorian Soldiers: Seekers of Glory* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988), 102–3.

¹¹⁹ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 125–26.

¹²⁰ Farwell, *Eminent Victorian Soldiers*, 103.

¹²¹ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 123–24, 129.

consequence, was during the Siege of Suzhou in late 1863. Here his relationship with Li finally faltered after an initial period of good rapport. Throughout this time, Li shouldered most of the burden of maintaining the relationship.

When Gordon took command in March of 1863, Li's observation suggested that both parties were attempting to cross cultural lines and make the relationship work. Li wrote to Zeng, "His loyalty and bravery seem a little greater than those of Holland ... Since taking over the command, Gordon seems more reasonable [than the others]. His readiness to fight the enemy is also greater. If he can be brought under my control, even if he squanders forty or fifty thousand dollars, it will still be worthwhile." Gordon seems to have reflected the characteristics of cultural reasoning at least initially in the impression he made on Li, and made efforts to avoid disruption of the relationship. Li for his part, while impressed, had already displayed the realist lens through which he viewed the relationship. The benefits of Gordon's experience and leadership of the Ever-Victorious Army were expected to be worth a significant financial investment, provided Gordon did not get too far out of control.

By April 1863 Gordon had taken a demoralized army and turned it back into an effective fighting force. However, his efforts were mostly focused inwardly toward the unit he commanded. A series of reforms had helped control the army, including a ban on looting, which showed something of an appreciation for self-regulation and cultural learning as he adjusted not just his personal behavior, but that of his men. Li wrote in an official memorial on Gordon's promotion to the equivalent of Brigadier-general:

When the British General Staveley formerly stated to your official that Gordon was brave, clear-minded and foremost among the British officers in Shanghai, your official dared not believe it. Yet since he took up the command of the Ever-Victorious Army, their exceedingly bad habits gradually have come under control. His will and zeal are really praiseworthy.¹²²

¹²² Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion*, 112.

Li's pleasure seems to be centered on the fact that the Ever-Victorious Army had become a more reliable fighting force and thus more able to achieve Qing objectives. Gordon's conduct is in stark contrast that of Burgevine, though in time the "will and zeal" of Gordon placed him in conflict with Li when cultural differences finally exceeded the patience of both men.

About this time Burgevine went through the British and Americans diplomats in Beijing to be reinstated as commander of the Ever-Victorious Army, Li lobbied strongly against it. Li highlighted Burgevine's lack of cultural competence, particularly cultural reasoning, and a misplaced view of the contexts underlying the relationship between the two men. Li wrote, "Gordon is the better man... When Burgevine had returned from the Capital to Shanghai full of self-satisfaction, he requested me immediately to reappoint him. I flatly refused and gave the details to Prince [Gong]." By June Gordon's tactical talents were made evident and Li focused on his combat skill as his most praiseworthy attribute with, "... the foreign officer Gordon and others ... did not even use their heavy guns to bombard the cities when they succeeded in capturing the ringleaders and exterminating the dens, their feats exceeded your official's expectation."¹²³ Gordon abilities as a leader are clearly valued more than his manners.

The problem of Burgevine eventually resolved itself. When reinstatement was not forthcoming, Burgevine exposed his true mercenary nature and defected to Taipings in August 1863.¹²⁴ He was later to be captured by Qing forces and imprisoned. When the United States declined his extradition, it was agreed that he be kept in Chinese custody, but not harmed. Burgevine finally relieved everyone of his interference when he drowned in boat accident during a transfer to an inland prison in June of 1865.¹²⁵

¹²³ Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion*, 116.

¹²⁴ Smith, *Mercenaries and Mandarins*, 143.

¹²⁵ Wilson, *The Ever-Victorious Army*, 181.

By September 1863, Li still had faith in Gordon but this was beginning to waiver in regard to his troops, and more importantly to the intentions of the Western powers. He reported in a memorial dated September 14, 1863: “Gordon is quite obedient in assisting the campaigns. After the conclusion of final victory, he may not cause any trouble, or if he does, your official can rein him in sharply. As to the proposal of the British leaders to recover one or two provincial capitals on behalf of China, it is difficult to guarantee that they would not use this as a pretext to demand trade concessions.”¹²⁶ To Li, the benefits of Western intervention became questionable despite Gordon’s performance. The cultural price and debatable loyalty of a foreign sworn officer, rather than a mercenary become apparent. In fall of 1863, Gordon and Li had a serious falling out when their cultures and objectives finally shifted out of alignment.

During the imperial siege of Suzhou from October until the Taiping force finally surrendered on December 4, 1863, Gordon tried to alleviate the bloody stalemate through negotiations with the Taiping leaders. The commander of the Taiping garrison was one of Hong Xiuquan’s principle lieutenants, Tan Shaoguang, known as ‘The Esteemed King.’ Under him were six subordinate kings, also known as Wangs. Gordon entered negotiations with Gao Yongkuan, also known as, ‘the Receiving King.’ Goa led a conspiracy against Tan, and agreed to open the gates to the city for guarantees of safety. Gordon cleared the plan with Li, who’s Anhui Army was also participating in the siege. On December 4th, the conspirators assassinated Tan at a palace dinner before following through on their part of bargain.¹²⁷

Li reported just days before the fall of Suzhou that the cultural rapport with Gordon remained intact, “Recently Gordon has been quite obedient and attentive, and friendly with the Brigadier-General [Cheng Xueqi] as though they were brothers. He intends, after the recovery of

¹²⁶ Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion, 1850-1864*, 120.

¹²⁷ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 329–30.

[Suzhou], to hand over the Ever-Victorious Army to the Brigadier-General [Cheng].”¹²⁸ The nature of the relationship remained suitably structured and non-threatening to Li and he hoped it would resolve with full Chinese control of the Ever-Victorious Army. However, this quiet transfer did not occur.

Gordon appears to have conducted other negotiations with the Taiping leaders, without the consent of Li, to secure the release of Western mercenaries from Taiping service before the breaking of the siege. His true loyalties to the West are shown in a letter to Tan Shaoguang where he wrote, “If there are many Europeans left in [Suzhou], I would ask your Excellencies if it does not seem to you much better to let these men quietly leave your service if they wish it; you would thereby get rid of a continual source of suspicion, gain the sympathy of the whole of the Foreign nations, and feel that your difficulties are all from without.”¹²⁹ Tan’s response is very interesting in that it shows that he knew that the Western powers were profit driven and that anything may be on the table for negotiation, even while the fighting continued. Tan wrote:

As to the military equipment and weapons of both sides, both of us know all the details. Your side seeks profit, and we shall buy. We have no rule prohibiting trade. If at present you have guns, cannon, or other foreign commodities, please come and trade with us as usual. And if Your Excellency should be willing to come to our side, we shall be delighted to work together with you.¹³⁰

While Gordon’s reply is lost, then next letter from the Tan is compelling in that it suggests that Gordon did indeed engage in double dealing with the Taipings, selling weapons for Western lives, if not for profit.¹³¹ Tan’s reply reads:

...I received your reply and know that my reply to you has been noted. The horse you sent me as a present, I accept with thanks. After trying it, I found it to be very good. I wish also to acknowledge the receipt of guns, cannon, etc. I am deeply grateful for your great kindness. Meanwhile I have ordered some gold bracelets and gold girdle ornaments, to return your kindness. As soon as they are made I shall send them to you.

¹²⁸ Cheng, *Chinese Sources for the Taiping Rebellion, 1850-1864*, 123–24.

¹²⁹ Wilson, *The Ever-Victorious Army*, 195.

¹³⁰ Franz Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion: History and Documents* (University of Washington Press, 1971), 1196.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 1197.

As to the people from foreign countries, they can come and leave as they please. We shall not tempt them to join us, nor shall we forbid them to leave. In a word, our country is fighting for the territory against the [Qing]; we do not have any grudge against foreign countries.¹³²

This exchange suggests that Gordon had dropped any true concern for the cultural implications of his actions. While it seems that he did act in self-interest, he certainly had British and Western interests ahead of the those of his Qing superiors. It is not known if Gordon ever received the gold before Tan was assassinated, but it is revealing of his truer motives in his service to the Qing Dynasty.

Gordon entered the surrendered city the next morning and soon discovered the bodies of the Kings where they had been executed and dismembered by Li's forces. He then temporarily resigned his command in protest to the violation of his honor, as he had given his guarantee to the Taiping leaders. This "ultimately led to the withdrawal of her Majesty's Order in Council, which permitted him to serve under the Imperial Government" and the end of British and Qing cooperation against the rebels¹³³ Gordon even went so far in a letter to his mother to express a desire for the execution of Li Hongzhang.¹³⁴ This did not happen but in a matter of months the Qing Dynasty, and the provincial armies, completed the destruction of the Taiping Rebellion. What remained of the Ever-Victorious Army was formally disbanded on May 31, 1864, and Hong Xiuquan died on June 1st. The last significant vestiges of the Rebellion were destroyed before the end of 1864.

¹³² Michael, *The Taiping Rebellion*, 1198.

¹³³ Wilson, *The Ever-Victorious Army*, 196; Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 333.

¹³⁴ Platt, *Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom*, 332.

Legacy of Ward and Gordon

Frederick Townsend Ward's legacy in China was largely defined by how Li Hongzhang, as his immediate superior, chose to memorialize him.¹³⁵ Li made the following recommendations for Ward's burial, "...We owe him our respect, and our deep regret. It is appropriate, therefore, to entreat that your Gracious Majesty do order the Board of Rites to take into consideration suitable posthumous rewards to be bestowed on him, Ward; and that both at Ningpo [Ningbo] and at Sungchiang [Songjiang] sacrificial altars be erected to appease the manes of this loyal man."¹³⁶ The historian Caleb Carr concludes that Li, no longer concerned with suspicions or jealousies about Ward, wisely chose to emphasize his choice to be Chinese. Carr writes, "There was real purpose in his depiction of Ward as a wholly loyal and valiant defender of the Manchu dynasty: the Ever Victorious Army would need a new commander soon, and by setting Ward up as the ideal of a naturalized Chinese subject, Li [Hongzhang] hoped to make his successor fit a mold which Li was well aware Ward himself had never matched."¹³⁷ Another imperial decree stated, "Ward was a foreigner who submitted to China. He was a little arrogant, but he has served China and died while fighting the rebels; therefore, he should be rewarded and treated exceptionally well, so that foreign countries will be impressed."¹³⁸

Ward was embraced by the Qing Dynasty because of his overt attempts to comply with Chinese tradition, but these were motivated as much by self-interest as any actual loyalty to the dynasty. His marriage to a Chinese woman was to guarantee a smoother relationship with her father, who coincidentally paid for Ward's operations. His professed loyalty to the China was to

¹³⁵ Carr, *The Devil Soldier*, 300.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 301.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

prevent punishment and extradition the United States. When he died, he was still on good terms with Li Hongzhang and other Qing officials, which allowed them to create the narrative of his service to the dynasty.

Charles George Gordon's service to the Chinese ended when the British crown withdrew its support. Gordon believed that only he could lead the Ever-Victorious Army and disbanded it when he departed. The Chinese did honor him for his service despite his clash with Li Hongzhang at Suzhou. He was awarded the highest military rank in the Qing Dynasty as well as the yellow jacket and permission to wear the peacock feather, all very significant recognitions in the Chinese government, but he declined nearly all the money offered by the dynasty. The British government also rewarded him with a promotion to lieutenant colonel and membership in the Order of the Bath, Britain's fourth highest order of chivalry. When he returned home, he became known as "Chinese" Gordon because of his exemplary service there, but it was over twenty years before he was granted another command.¹³⁹

Gordon returned briefly to China in 1880 to advise the Qing on their negotiation and border dispute with Russian, and to also prevent Li Hongzhang from starting a revolution of his own.¹⁴⁰ In 1884, Gordon commanded British forces in the Sudan. He was eventually besieged in Khartoum by forces of the Mahdi. The British launched a relief effort with much public anticipation in England, but it arrived too late. Mahdi forces broke through on January 26, 1885 killed "Chinese" Gordon and displayed his severed head to European captives for identification.¹⁴¹ He is remembered as one of greatest soldiers of Victorian era in Britain.

Gordon was always a servant of the British crown and kept the interests of British Empire ahead of the Chinese Empire. He showed at Suzhou that he was as concerned with the safety of

¹³⁹ Farwell, *Eminent Victorian Soldiers*, 113.

¹⁴⁰ Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, 79; Farwell, *Eminent Victorian Soldiers*, 127.

¹⁴¹ Farwell, *Eminent Victorian Soldiers*, 138–46; Byron Farwell, *Queen Victoria's Little Wars* (New York: Norton, 1985), 294.

Westerners working with the enemy, and his own honor as soldier, as he was with achieving the objectives of his Qing superiors. He left his service to China on very poor terms, though his image back home was one of a righteous and upright man resisting the brutal actions of a foreign regime for his actions at Suzhou.

Relevance of the Mercenary Experience to Today

The experience of Ward and Gordon remain relevant today as militaries, particularly those of the United States and its allies wrestle with how to approach cultural and cross-cultural issues. Cross-Cultural Competence and cultural training are an attempt to leverage culture in attaining mission success. Culture clearly matters and this realization is what Patrick Porter calls the current “cultural turn,” which looks for anthropological reasons for success or failure in war. Western militaries expected technology to solve the tactical and strategic problems they faced.¹⁴² The challenges of the early 21st century revealed that technology could not be the only answer. Cross-Cultural Competence as part of that cultural turn attempted to identify the characteristics that would allow warfighters to operate effectively in different cultural contexts. The hope was that by smoothing over cultural differences, and avoid disruptions, US forces could leverage the local population and foreign military partners to ensure military success. The examples of Ward, Gordon, and Li certainly do not disprove this idea; however, the notion of cultural realism reveals the motives behind the effort are likely driven by cold pragmatism rather than an appreciation for diversity. In this light, cultural competence is a useful operational strategy, justified by the American symbolic strategies grounded in inclusion and globalization.

In multinational operations or advisory missions, it will pay to consider both the opposing and complimentary natures of cultural competence and cultural realism. Cultural interaction is more likely to be successful when both parties have an interest in working together.

¹⁴² Porter, *Military Orientalism*, 6–8.

Cross-Cultural Competence will not, however, make an invader's presence more palatable to the invaded. The recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan show that cooperation is contingent on mutual interest and compatible objectives. While the ultimate quality of the relationship will be enhanced by the cultural competence and awareness of the parties involved, it will only be operative once the pragmatic aspect of the relationship has been established.

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