CHAPTER 1


After having a period of brisk contacts of trade and cultural exchanges for more than ten centuries since the beginning of our common era the people of India and China (cultural cousins of the past) suddenly found themselves tied together by British colonial chains and became, ironically, "colonial cousins" during the 19th century. It was the common enemies of India and China (i.e. Pax Britannica) which united the two ancient civilizations again in their common anti-imperialist struggles.

In the middle of the 19th century two explosive events in Asia shocked the Brave New World. One was the First War of Independence in India in 1857, and another was the Taiping Revolutionary War lasting 15 years from 1851 to 1864. Apparently, the two events were drastically different in nature. While the Indian uprising was against the foreign rule, the Chinese rebellion was aimed at overthrowing the domestic government. There were other differences such as the class compositions of the two revolutionary forces and Taiping's being fueled by a new ideology which had a Christian element while this was not the case with the Indian uprising. But if we examine the Taiping Movement in depth, its anti-imperialist character becomes discernable.

The difference of these two major events arose from the different approaches of British imperialism in colonizing India and China. While London took up a direct rule in India, it adopted a more sophisticated method of "ruling the periphery by the periphery"
in China. Britain first waged the Opium War to scare the Manchu government out of its independent spirit and began to employ the latter as an authority in servitude to open up China for the British game-play of exacting super-profit. The Chinese peasants realized the degeneration of their national government to a willing instrument of British imperialism. So, they launched the Taiping Revolution to get rid of this British instrument. Though they did not openly raise the anti-British slogan as their Indian brethren did, their revolutionary intention had an unpronounced anti-imperialist element. Whatever the western historians (particularly those who want to whitewash British imperialism) want to obscure the true anti-imperialist nature of the Taiping Movement. The British government in London at that time understood it better. It mobilized an international and also Chinese force to put the Taiping down. It used the Manchu regime to fight a proxy war against the Taiping Revolution. It was an undeniable fact that without the international intervention engineered by Britain the Taiping challenge would not have disappeared so quickly while the Manchu government would not have saved its skin so easily.

All this provides the historical context for me to take up the mutual support between the peoples of India and China in their common struggle against British imperialism and its Chinese instruments.

Since peoples of both the countries were in the abyss of misery, strong sentiments and sympathy developed for each other specially in the hearts of sensitive and people of insight. They longed to know the sufferings of the people and state of affairs of the either side. As a result a hazy picture of many events occurred in front of them and there within
they could collect and know a few real happenings of the either side. How the uprising of 1857 and Taiping uprising influenced each other is a question of debate. It would be my humble attempt to clarify some doubts through the available data from all possible sources. After analysing the material it becomes clear that there were no direct contacts between the leaders of these uprising despite the fact that some Indian troops joined hands with the Taipings. Interestingly there is no such material prior to the outbreak of The First War of Indian Independence which indicates that Indian forces deployed in China switched sides to the Chinese people, since the Taiping uprising was not the only occasion when the British deployed the Indian troops in China and the Chinese fought the British. Shortly before the Taiping uprising the Chinese fought against the British during the First Opium War (1840-42), later the Second Opium War (1857-60) was fought. It was only after the outbreak of The First War of Indian Independence that the hatred and the feeling of revenge for the British among the Indian troops in China erupted like a volcano. Certainly, the spark was provided by The First War of Indian Independence. Another fact which simply cannot be refuted is that both played an important role under objective conditions whereby both rendered mutual support to each other under objective conditions.

**Immediate reaction of the British**

In March 1958 Elgin, a special British envoy, proceeded from India to China with British forces and collected some troops from Mauritius and other places. On 17th March Lord Harris at Madres telegraphed to Canning recommending him to stop the army going to China under lord Elgin and General Eshburbham and to render it immediately
available for Indian wants. Elgin had just reached Singapore, when he received a letter from Canning urging him to divert his forces to India as situation in India was quite volatile. The uprising of 1857 was a massive show of strength by the patriotic forces with the sepoys as the backbone. They were all out to capture Delhi and expel the aggressors from their motherland. The situation was tense, and Canning, the Governor General of India, apprehended that it would be difficult to hold Delhi. It was due to this that he apprised Lord Elgin who was proceeding to China of the situation in India and requested that the soldiers under the latter’s command and those who were on their way to China be diverted for deployment in India, for safeguarding and restoring the British possessions.

In his letter of May 29, 1857, Canning wrote, "I write for the purpose of representing to your Lordship the urgent need in which India now stands of assistance by European troops and of inviting your Lordship to consider whether the military force which is placed at your disposal for services in China should not first be employed in restoring safety to our Indian possessions in Bengal." After the capture of Delhi Canning wrote "Everyday during which Delhi remains in the hands of rebels is an encouragement to a rising elsewhere, this state of thing is full of danger." He also mentioned that it would be difficult to suppress the rebellion with the force which they have in hand at present in India and the European forces called from Persia cannot be at Calcutta for some weeks and may take many weeks on its journey "the need therefore is very great and urgent" therefore he said "I request to your Lordship with my earnest request that you will give to the Government of India your utmost aid in European troops and will consent to

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1 The History of Indian Revolt, London: 1859, p.211.

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move the regiments at your disposal to Calcutta before employing them in China." In his reply to Canning in a letter dated June 4, 1857, Elgin replied in the following words, "I have only to add what I am sure it is hardly necessary for me to impress on your Lordship that in diverting from their destinations a portion of the troops intended for China, both the General and myself feel that we are incurring a heavy responsibility and making a great sacrifice and that we confidently rely on your Lordship to put us again at the earliest period in possession of the full amount of our allotted force which we believe to be by no means more than adequate to the work we have in hand." Meanwhile he wrote that "I have sent order by the "AUKLAND" to Panang directing the officer commanding 'The Simoon' should be touch there, to proceed at once from that point to Calcutta." Lord Canning wrote back to Elgin on June 24, and thanked him for so readily acquiescing in the request for the troops and wrote further out of compulsion that Elgin will send to Calcutta every European soldier that he can spare of shore "which are on their way from England to China." In regard to the European soldiers in Singapore Elgin replied to Canning in these words, "there is not one European soldier at the place and at Hong Kong if our latest advices be correct we have only one very weak European Regiment and a few artillery men." However Elgin with his discussion, with General Ashurbham resolved that "if before arrival of the next mail from India, either the 5th

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2 Foreign Department Proceedings, Secret, 29 May, 1857, No.36, National Archives of India (NAI) Also See Foreign Precedings April 24-May 29, 1857, p.1475, NAI.

3 Foreign Deptt. Proceedings, 26 June 1857, No.32 NAI.

4 ibid, No 33, NAI.
(Military Regiment) from Mauritius or the 90th from England shall have reached Singapore. I shall at once despatch them to Calcutta. This entire tense and flurried correspondence shows that the British empire in India was really shook to its roots for the first time and they saw India slipping out of their hands.

After these tense and flurried preparations the British colonialists dispatched officers and men from the various fronts in order to strike back. Some of the troops those arrived before the mutiny were being sent to China consisted of twenty regiments besides artillery. Some of these had been on the way from England before the mutiny began. Certainly being sent to China as the author of The History of Indian Revolt says while one army was returning (to India) after the close of a war with Persia, other was going out to be begin a war with China, others were called in the wake of uprising which included First Madras Fusiliers reached India in May. 35th, 36th 64th and 78th Queen’s Regiment together with artillery belonging to all the three presidential armies reached in June, the Fifth Fusilier 90th foot and a wing of the 29th reached in July. 59th, a military train a naval brigade from Hong Kong and a Royal marine from the same place reached in August; 23rd welsh fusilier, 93rd Highlanders, 5th, 17th, 27th and 38th regiments of Madras native infantry reached in September and 82nd foot and 48th Madras Native infantry reached India in October same year.

British Troopship "Simoon" carrying 700 men of the 5th Fusilier was proceeding

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5 Foreign Deptt. 1857. Secret. 26th June, No.32-33, NAI.
6 The History of Indian Revolt, op. cit., p.211.
7 ibid, p. 212.
to China was stopped by Elgin and sent-back to Calcutta immediately after its arrival there. 2nd Battalion Military train destined for China reached Calcutta in "Blervie Castle" Ship on 7th of August. At its arrival Canning was the happiest person and wrote to Elgin in a letter dated August 28, that "the battalion will be of greatest value to the Government of India." British not only moved these forces but also deployed forces from Burma, Ceylon, Hongkong, Cape of Good Hope, Malaya and even from Britain itself.

It should however, not be assumed that the British abandoned their China policy. In China they have pursued the policy of so called "neutrality" as far as their approach in regard to Taiping Rebellion was concerned. They did not abandon it as is reflected in the words of Lord Canning the then Governor General of India when he asked Lord Elgin, who was on his way to China with troops to divert these troops to India. He wrote, "I did not compare the present exigencies in India and the interest at stake there with those with which your Lordship had to deal in China, but I venture to think that the delay of assistance which might be fatal to those interest and to the good name of England in the one case, could produce only temporary inconvenience in the other."

The mutual support under objective condition is clearly visible, it was only after the British had quelled down the 1857 uprising that they were able to dispatch more Indian troops to China. Fitchell remarked that "the troops those arrived before the mutiny were being sent to China consisted of twenty regiments besides artillery all landed at

8 Foreign Dept, Proceedings, Sec. 1857, June.26, No.34 NAI.
9 Foreign Dept. Proceedigs, Sec. September 25, 1857, Nos.81-83.
10 Foreign Dept. Proceedings Sec. 29th May 1857, No.36 NAI. Also see Foreign Secret Proceedings 24th April to 29th May 1857, p.1476 NAI.
Calcutta. Some of these had been on the way from England before the mutiny began. On July 12, 1859, He Gui in his memorial to the throne wrote: "The British commander Bruce had called one thousand Indian troops from India; these shall be reaching Shanghai after one month." He further wrote: "At present there is no British battleship at Shanghai, they have asked for Indian troops from India, had formed a force with wounded men and had urged foreign mercenaries to bear the expenses". He Gui informed the throne about the arrival of these forces in November 1859, when he said: "Indian ships had reached Shanghai after 22 days of voyage along with French and British troops. The Indian soldiers accounts for ten thousand men. this certainty has caused panic in the minds of the inhabitants". It is visible from this statement that it was only after quelling of the uprising that the British could despatch Indian soldiers to China. The 1857 uprising also caused serious financial crisis for the British back home as well as abroad. In China they faced the problem of 'inadequate funds and manpower'. Now they were quite selective while choosing the sepoys for their services abroad. The Indian troops in China generally came from the Sikh Regiment, Madras Regiment, Bombay Native Infantry and Ludhiana Rifles etc. since all these regiments showed their loyalty to British while quelling down the uprising in India. We have also a reference from correspondent of Times who suggested to the authorities to dispatch those soldiers abroad who had shown soft corners for the rebels. He wrote: "Many people think that there could be no difficulty in carrying
on our corrective measures in India and our war with China at the same time. There are doubtless, sepoy regiments which, although not openly, in revolt, are not trustworthy in action against their coreligionists. Why not send them to China?" This may be a simple suggestion but the fact that they were deployed in China can’t be ruled out.

**Chinese knowledge of Indian uprising**

While the imperialists were busy quelling down the uprising of 1857 in India, they joined the French and collaborated with the Qing government in China in order to expand their military aggression. When their efforts to sign unequal treaties with the Taipings fizzled out they searched for allies and were ready to crackdown on the great Taipings with their help. The crackdown was delayed as a massive upsurge of the Indian people broke out in India. As soon as the news of Indian uprising reached China. The people of China rejoiced over it. The news reached in the Guangdong Province of China first around June 1857. Hua Tingjie of Nanhai country have noted down in *An Account of Contact with Foreigners*. "...The British dependency of Bengal has rose in uprising and have defeated the British forces. After a month or two later it was again heard that the British forces were ambushed and completely annihilated. A commander or some imperial son-in-law as others say have been killed, others were bewildered and caught in panic. All the people tells the same story. When asked about the actual situation Governor General Ye Mingshen said he had the same reports from various quarters. Incidentally letters from

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the Hongkong mercenaries also carries the same reports.\textsuperscript{14} It was this hatred towards the British which made the Chinese people happy when the Indians rose in revolt. But more pleasing to one's heart was the fact that a glorious chapter was written down in the history of Sino-Indian relation when the Indian sepoy\'s serving under the British in China turned the barrel of their guns towards their masters and mercilessly killed them while fighting shoulder to shoulder on the side of the Taipings. The material which we have been able to collect is scanty but invaluable. Such references could be found only after the British broke their so-called 'neutrality' with the Taipings. One thing is amply clear that the switching over the sides by Indian troops was never planned, nor was it a conspiracy, nor was it for the sake of money as many of the 'Yang Xiongdi' (Foreign brethren generally referred to the Westerners) did. It was a spontaneous rebellion against the British as it happened with the general sepoys during the 1857 uprising in India. The grievances and the conditions of the Indian Sepoys serving the British in China were more or less the same as those of their Indian counterparts. They looked upon the Taipings as they looked upon themselves, were swayed away by the policies carried out by the Taiping which were anti-imperialist and anti-feudal in nature. Having differentiated between the good and the evil some of them viewed the cause of the Taipings as their own cause and sacrificed their lives with thousand and thousands of the Taipings.

\textsuperscript{14} Historical Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (ed.), \textit{Jindaishi Ziliao} (Materials on Modern History), no.2, 1956, p.108.
Evidences of Indian involvement

The reports of Indian soldiers joining the Taiping could be found in the memorials of the Qing army generals or other officials of the throne and with the foreigners who were directly involved in this peasant uprising. Zeng Guofan (1811-1872) and Li Hongzhang (1823-1901) were central figures of this time. The former was the organizer of famous Xiangjun (Hunan Army) which became the main source of his power, the latter the builder of the Huaijun, the Army of Huai region. The duo defended the Dynasty throughout their career. But their regionalization of the Army resulted in the eventual collapse of the dynasty. The Hunan Army was the main force in quelling the Taiping uprising while the Huai Army suppressed Nian Rebellion and became the successor of dwindling Hunan Army. Here are a few references which we have been able to collect. In 1861 Zeng Guofan reports in one of such memorials: "under the command of Zheng Wang (Just King) Wei Yushan, there are a large number of Heiyi (Foreigners with dark complexion) serving the Taipings and fighting along with him". Here the word 'Heiyi' needs an explanation. This was generally referred to the Indians. We have come across such instances earlier in works like, Chen Luntong's book HAIGUO WENJIANLU (Accounts of Foreign Countries Heard and Seen), In one of its chapter entitled Xiao Xiyangji (Record of the Smaller Ocean i.e. the Indian Ocean) reference to the dark complexion of Indian people is made. "The people of minya (Bengal) and xiao baitou (little white heads) are neighbours. People of Bengal are dark in complexion." Their

15 Zengwen Zhenggong Quanjji (Collection of Zeng Guofan’s official coorespondences) vol. 14, p.244.
clothes are complete white, while British, Dutch and French have come here to trade".16

People of Xiao Baitou probably is referred to the white little cap borne by the Muslims on their heads. While ‘Minya’ is referred to Bengal. A.F. Lindley, a Briton who also served the Chinese Taiping army and was the only foreigner duly commissioned by Zhong wang (Loyal King) Li Xiucheng, the commander-in-chief of Taiping Army to act against the enemy, raise armies against them and seek funds for that purpose from the Taiping; writes in his book ‘Tiping Tienkwoh’ "In 1863, (Loyal King, Zhong Wang) Li Xiucheng entrusted him to organise a new army consisting of two hundred volunteer foreigners in Suzhou. The force was named to be ‘Loyal and Faithful Auxiliary Ligion’, in this connection Lindley came to Shanghai where he obtained the services of several men who had served their time in a British Regiment and had received their discharges; while many other promised to join him as soon as they were able".17 Lindley left his friend Moreno in Shanghai "Where he acquainted himself with many French officers who were willing to serve the revolutionists, and, as he spoke Hindoostanee perfectly well, he had managed to ingratiate himself with native officers of 22nd BNI (Bombay Native Infantry) and Belooche Regiment some of whom had promised to join him".18

Lindley in another account writes about a ‘British East Indian Subject’ who was caught with two other foreigners while endeavouring to join the Taiping Army at Zhang Zhou. Three were "carried into the interior and murdered by heavy ironing" then were drowned


18 ibid., p.652.
in the river. Yet in another reference the author repelled an attack with his ‘Indian Comrade’ while going to Su Zhou in a boat in Dahu lake in October 1863.

On February 19, 1863, Li Hongzhang in his memorial to emperor Xianfeng (1831-1861) wrote: "In the war campaign of Shaoxing in Zhejiang province while captain Tardif de Moidrey a French officer who has been deputed by Qing government as the deputy commander of Jiangsu was commanding the Qing and other allied forces, was attacked by fifty to sixty Indian troops and shot dead. In this incident three foreigners and above twenty Yongding soldiers lost their lives. Besides; many were wounded in the attack." In another incident of May 12, 1863 while defending Tai Cangzhou the Taipings fought fiercely with the forces of Major Bannon and Captain Tchirikoft. Finally this was the day of surrender for the Taipings. When left to vulnerability the Taiping forces ran helter-skelter, While fleeing from battlefield many lost their lives in stampede. When attacked or shortly after the attack by the aggressors two Americans and two French who were asking for amnesty were executed along with the three Indian soldiers who belonged to Fifth Regiment of Bombay Native Infantry. These soldiers were fighting shoulder to shoulder on the sides of the Taiping army." Yet another reference of Indian soldiers taking the sides of Taiping is mentioned in the Zuo Zongtang’s memorial to the

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19 Ibid., p.801.
20 Ibid., p.636.
21 Li Hongzhang Gongzougao (Drafts of Li Hongzhang’s memorials to the throne), Nanjing, published in 34th year of Guagxu (1908) Juan 3, pp.5-6.
22 Taiping Tianguo Shi Yicong (History of Taiping Tianguo-Translation series) vol.3, Beijing: 1985, p. 239.
emperor which goes: "In October 1863, one Indian soldier was killed by Zuo Zongtang’s army when it attacked and seized Hangzhou." 23

There are also references of some individual soldiers joining the rank of Taipings. Linddey writes that how he and an ‘Indian comrade went from Shanghai to suzhou to join the Taipings in October 1863.24 In another reference a ‘British East Indian subject’ wished to join Taipings in the company of Burgevine and others.25

Therefore it is quite obvious that many Indian soldiers sympathised with the cause of the Taipings. It was due to the similar sufferings faced by the Indian soldiers and the Taipings that many of the Indian troops in China not only turned their daggers toward the British but also fought against the forces of imperial Qing. This shows their sympathy and support for the Taipings. In words of Lindley "the true reason why those engaged in assisting the Taipings preferred that course with all its troubles and dangers, is that, having once met the revolutionists the immense superiority of the latter to the manchus had enlisted their sympathies and active support."26

**Indian involvement vis-a-vis Western involvement**

The attitude of the Taiping changed from time to time towards the foreigners with

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23 *Zuowen Xiang Gongzougao Chubian* (Primary edition of Zuo Zongtang’s memorials to the throne) Juan II, p. 7.


25 Ibid p.800.

26 Ibid, p. 476.77.
the changing scenario. they were quite hopeful of the westerners that the latter will maintain their neutrality and would not interfere in their affairs. They wished, the foreigners to continue their rivalry and Gun and Cannon diplomacy with the Qing empire. Therefore Tiapings were quite generous towards them in the beginning and to some extent even during the Second opium war (1857-60) this is testified by the fact when He Wenqing a Taiping official wrote to the French consulate in Ningbo in the 2nd month of Tenth Taiping year (1862) that the anglo -French action against the Manchus during Second Opium war was just, as the tartars refused to come to terms on the question of treaty ports.27 The reasons being; The Taiping looked upon the Qing Empire as their bitterest enemy and ‘fan manfuhan’ (oppose Manchus restore Hans) as their ultimate goal. Therefore the defeat of the Mnahcus at the hands of western powers in Taipings points of view was moving a step ahead in their objective. Secondly; the imperialists had declared so called ‘neutrality’ against the Taipings which Taiping took for granted that the imperialists would break. And thirdly the Taipings thought that may be this way they would be able to enlist the support of the imperialist in their anti-Manchu tirade. On the other hand side, each and every move of the imperialists was calculated. The reasons for their ‘neutrality’ were, the imperialists were not aware of the affairs of Taipings and their military strength the second being the involvement of British forces in Creamia, Persia and India. the imperialist nevertheless, were waiting for an opportunity to strike. They knew it clearly that Taipings stand on Trade and opium was not in their favour. The

27 Museum of the Heavenly Kingdom (comp.), Taiping Tianguo wenshu Huibian (Documents on the History of Taiping Rebellion), Zhonghua Bookshop, Beijing 1979, p. 322.
Taipings had declared. "In peace why only the British, they are ready to normalize trade and open the commercial ports to all countries" in connection with opium the Taipings categorically stated. "The hazardous weed is a subject to ban".

It was in 1860 when Li Xiucheng entered Shanghai and was militarily intervened by Anglo-French forces that the concept of Tianxia (under the Heaven) and Yijiazhiren (all are the members of a single family) of the Taipings went under drastic change. Yangxiongdi all of a sudden became yangguizi (foreign devils) Li xiucheng writes in his notes. "Foreign devils had come to me with the proposal that in order to enlist their support we part away with our territories..but I have told them that "my fight is for China until I get the entire map." Another important Taiping leaders Hong Rengan writes,"The Tartars and foreign devils had brought disaster to China ... The destruction of our empire has been caused by the help rendered by the foreign devils to the Tartars."

However, there were some westerners who rendered support to the Taipings. But their motive behind the support was clear. Unlike their western counterparts who also joined the Taiping Army Indian soldiers showed their complete loyalty to the Taipings. The Yang Xiongdi who also took part in the rebellion didn’t consider the cause of Chinese people as their own for the explicit ulterior motives and huge sums of money. Such most outstanding example we find in an American called Burgevine. Henry Andrea 'Baijiwen'

28 Taiping Tianguo Wenshu Huibian op cit. p. 300.

29 Documents on Taiping Uprising op cit p.543.

30 Ibid. 555.
as popularly known in Chinese who switched over sides between the Taipings and Qing forces whosoever offered him the huge sums of money and rank. On occasions he was also expelled from the army by both the Qing and the Taipings. Lindley writes that after having badly treated and cashiered by his Manchoo masters Burgevine had joined Taiping at Su Zhou but the excuse of the Mandarins was that "Burgevine had disobeyed orders, resisted lawful authority and seized the money"31 Being expelled from the Qing army was not a problem for him as the doors of Taiping Army were open for him, he joined them, was not satisfied and came out of it. One of his fellow American and his friend Butler on October 21, 1863 writes in his self confession note: "on September 18, 1863 the reward which we were supposed to get did not work out. We got only a total sum of one thousand Yuan to be distributed among soldiers and officers. The entire plan of Burgevine fizzled out and he decided to quit the Taiping with his forces and join the Qing forces".32 Not only this, he went even further, while still serving the Taipings, once he was sent to Shanghai with the mission to purchase arm and ammunition. He left with huge sums, squandered it out and returned with some cases of brandy instead of arms.

It is here that we differentiate between the support rendered by the westerners and the Indian troops to the Chinese people. Why the Indians did so is quite clear, a few lines from Gordon's letter to zhongwang (loyal king) Mu Wang when the Taiping Army captured Burgevine and other Europeans on account of suspicion will just substantiate it.

31 Tiping Tiengwoh, op.cit., p.593.
The letter reads: "At present you should ponder over the matter of Europeans who have been serving under you. Every soldier in an army should be loyal then only could he put a courageous struggle, if not or if he is forced to do so he not only is a weak soldier but also troublesome for the commander as he continuously has to use a part of his energy to contain him from the rebellion". This was precisely due to this fact that Indian soldiers switched over their sides to the Taipings. Gordon knew the things about the Europeans who in the night used to come to his camp, eat drink, make merry and than join back the Taipings during day time. It was also on this account that they had to leave the Taipings when Taipings came to know about these facts. On the contrary this was not the case with the Indians, not a single such example have been found. It is not intended to say that there was none in the European camp who didn’t support the Taiping cause. Yes, there were people like A.F. Lindley who like the Indian soldiers went to the war fronts with the Taipings and rendered full support to them. He served the British navy in China but switched over to Taipings in 1860 and was with them till 1864 when he returned to England. But after carefully examining his book *Tiping Tiengwoh* one comes to the conclusion that he definitely has given this uprising a religious coloring. He himself, gets confused and fails to recognise the real face of imperialists when he says since the Taipings believe in Christianity therefore the British who also practice Christianity should not kill them. But we can’t and should not underestimate the role played by Lindley during the Taiping Uprisings while there was no question of the Taipings joining the 1857 (Indian) uprising since the situation was

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33 ibid., p. 192.
entirely different. This could be due to the limitations of history at that time when both
the uprisings failed to recognise similarity between their goals. This is also due to the fact
that both also failed to establish a direct link despite the fact that Indian soldiers fought
along with the Taipings. However, on objective conditions both the uprisings rendered
indirect support and co-incided with each other. Prof Pan Xianghua has rightly put it in
the following words: "It could be said that the anti-British struggle of the Chinese and
Indian people during these two uprising sent mutual echoes and supported each other.
During the second opium war the anti-British struggle of the Chinese specially the severe
attack of the Taipings on Britishers pinned down their forces thus weakened the military
force of the Britishers quelling the uprising of 1857. After the outbreak of Indian
uprising, it contained Britishers from not dispatching large armies to China, not only this,
they were also forced to call back a part of their forces which were to be sent to China.
This indirectly supported the struggle of the Chinese people."34

Thus, the cross-cultural currents between India and China, which literally came to
a halt during this period were further consolidated when both the countries faced a new
'common enemy' - the imperialists (the foreign divils'to the Chinese and qafir or
yavanas to the Indians). Their relations developed into a new sphere where both put
together their energies, supported each other and sympathised with each other. This new
sphere was the sphere of anti-imperialist struggle which sowed the seeds of nationalism
in both the countries and intensified their steadfast struggle against colonialism. It won't

34 Pan Xianghua. *Yindu Minzu Daqiyi* (The Great Indian National Uprising). Beijing:
1979, p. 36.
be wrong to assert that the 1857 uprising and the Taiping Uprising in China and the involvement of Indian troops in the Taiping was the first salvo of anti-imperialist struggle of the Indian and Chinese peoples. Whatever joint efforts were there were all sporadic and not concerted. The Indian leaders made no efforts to establish link with the Chinese, nor did Taiping leaders make any conscious efforts to liaison with any Indian troops in China. It was the anti-British resentment and hatred that roused sympathy for their Chinese brethren in the heart of the Indian soldiers.