It was no ordinary fanaticism either. Outside the borders of their country, the Chinese were mounting *suicide* attacks against Westerners. "The very coolies," writes Friedrich Engels, "Emigrating to foreign countries rise in mutiny, and as if by concert, on board every emigrant ship, and fight for its possession, and, rather than surrender, go down to the bottom with it, or perish in its flames. Even out of China, the Chinese colonists ...conspire and suddenly rise in nightly insurrection ..."

Why do the Chinese hate us?

No doubt the Europeans then were asking this question. And, like the democracy-mongers in the United States today, unwilling to examine the root causes, the history of their own atrocities, unwilling to acknowledge how they "throw hot shell on a defenseless city and add rape to murder," the Europeans then, too, were outraged. European statesmen and newspapers fulminated endlessly about Chinese barbarity, calling their attacks "cowardly, barbarous, atrocious ..." The Europeans too called for more wars, endless wars, till China could be subdued, totally.

Friedrich Engels was not deceived by the moralising of the British press. Yes, the Chinese are still "barbarians," but the source of this "universal outbreak of all Chinese against all foreigners" was "the piratical policy of the British government." Piratical policy? No, never! We are on a civilising mission; *la mission civilizatrice Européenne.* It was not a message that the West has been ready to heed, then or now.

Why had the Chinese chosen this form of warfare? What had gone wrong? Was this rage born of envy; was it integral to the Chinese ethos; was this rage aimed only at destroying the West? Westerners claim "their kidnappings, surprises, midnight massacres" are cowardly; but, Friedrich Engels answers, the "civilisation-mongers should not forget that according to their own showing they [the Chinese] could not stand against European means of destruction with their ordinary means of warfare." In other words, this was asymmetric warfare. If the weaker party in a combat possesses cunning, it will probe and fight the enemy's weaknesses, not its strengths.

Then as now, this asymmetric warfare caused consternation in the West. How can the Europeans win when the enemy neutralises the West's enormous advantage in technology, when the enemy refuses to offer itself as a fixed target, when it deploys merely its human assets, its daring, cunning, its readiness to sacrifice bodies?

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"What is an army to do," asks Engels, "Against a people resorting to such means of warfare? Where, how far, is it to penetrate into the enemy's country, how to maintain itself there?" The West again confronts that question in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. The West has "penetrated into the enemy's country," but is having considerable trouble maintaining itself there. Increasingly, Western statesmen are asking: Can they maintain this presence without inviting more attacks?

Friedrich Engels asked the British to give up "moralising on the horrible atrocities of the Chinese." Instead, he advises them to recognise that "this is a war *pro aris et focis* ["for altars and hearth"], a popular war for the maintenance of Chinese nationality, with all its overbearing prejudice, stupidity, learned ignorance and pedantic barbarism if you like, but yet a popular war." If we can ignore the stench of Western prejudice in this instance, there is a message here that the West might heed. Is it possible that the Muslims too are waging a "popular war," a war for the dignity and sovereignty of Islamic peoples?

In 1857, the Chinese war against Westerners was confined to Southern China. However, "it would be a very dangerous war for the English if the fanaticism extends to the people of the interior." The British might destroy Canton, attack the coastal areas, but could they carry their attacks into the interior? Even if the British threw their entire might into the war, it "would not suffice to conquer and hold the two provinces of Kwangtung and Kwang-si. What, then, can they do further?"

The United States and Israel now hold Palestine, Iraq, and Afghanistan. How strong, how firm, is their hold? On the one hand, they appear to be in a much stronger position than the British were in China. They have the "rulers" -- the Mubaraks, Musharrafs, and Malikis -- in their back pockets. But how long can these "rulers" stand against their people?