



# Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500  
blr@raremaps.com

## 興勃的國天平太 [The Sudden Rise of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom]

**Stock#:** 36703  
**Map Maker:** Mass Culture Society Publisher  
**Date:** 1960 circa  
**Place:** Taipei, Taiwan  
**Color:** Color  
**Condition:** VG  
**Size:** 30.5 x 44.5 inches  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

### *Remarkable Series of Taiwanese Classroom Hanging Maps Covering the Modern History of China*

Striking series of maps, The Modern History of China Hanging Map Series [興勃的國天平太], published in the 1960s in Taipei. The colorful and graphically-compelling maps tell the story of China's modern history from a Republican perspective from the early Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) to the Second World War.

The map series was published by the Mass Culture Society Publisher [興勃的國天平太], a short-lived publisher that specialized in educational materials, under the direction of Taiwan National University Professor Lin Shoukong [林壽康].



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### □□□□□□ [The Sudden Rise of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom]

Used as teaching aids in Taiwanese schools and universities, the series constructs a narrative of Chinese history that supported the political project of the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek in the 1960s. Overall, the series includes small scale maps, depicting macro-level developments affecting the Middle Kingdom, while two large-scale maps and numerous insets provide local-level details.

#### **This Map: The Sudden Rise of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom**

This map depicts the rise of Taiping Heavenly Kingdom from 1851 to 1856. Led by Hong Xiuquan, the self-proclaimed brother of Jesus and "Heavenly King," the Taiping forces marched from Guangdong to Nanjing, establishing their capital there and picking up reinforcements along the way. Their various campaigns are represented by different kinds of red arrows, while the Qing forces movements are shown in black. At the highpoint of the Taiping Rebellion, the Taiping forces numbered nearly 30 million, and they threatened to take all of China, though they were eventually defeated by the Qing with British and French aid.

#### **Publishing context of the series**

The 1960s were a fascinating decade in the history of the Republic of China. Taiwan was on the front line of the global Cold War, and cross-strait relations were tense. The Chinese Nationalist Party, led by an aging Chiang Kai-shek, maintained martial law on the island, and the Modern History of China Hanging Map Series reflects the political climate in Taiwan at the time. The series had to be approved by the Ministry of the Interior, indicated by the registration number given in fine print at the bottom of each map.

Born in Henan on the mainland, Professor Lin Shoukong, the historical advisor to the publisher, fled with the Nationalists to Taiwan in 1949, becoming one of the Republic's most important intellectuals. He published several textbooks that were standard in Taiwanese schools, and it is likely that teachers used these maps in conjunction with one of these textbooks.

The keystone to the Nationalists' political project during this period was their assertion that they were the legitimate rulers of all China, and by extension of Taiwan's education system, and these maps in particular served to inculcate this notion in the minds of students.

Viewed in sequence, the series begin at the ethnically Han Chinese Ming Dynasty's high point, with an inset depicting Zheng He's Voyages throughout the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. The fall of the Ming and the rise of the Qing make up the second sub-section of maps. A majority of the maps depict developments during China's "Century of Humiliation" (1839-1945), when weak, ethnically Manchu rulers allowed foreign powers to chip away at Chinese sovereignty leading to fragmentation and immiseration of the once-mighty Chinese empire. The final maps in the series depict the rebirth of China under Sun Yat



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard  
La Jolla, CA 92037

[www.raremaps.com](http://www.raremaps.com)

(858) 551-8500  
[blr@raremaps.com](mailto:blr@raremaps.com)

---

### □□□□□□ [The Sudden Rise of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom]

Sen and the heroic defense of the nation against Japan by the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-shek, omitting the victory of the Communists in the Chinese Civil War.

The sequence implies a teleology in which the Han people, brought low for centuries by foreign oppression, would regain control of the Middle Kingdom. The maps thus reinforced the founding myth of the Chinese Nationalist Party in the minds of students facing the political uncertainties of 1960s Taiwan.

These maps are remarkable artifacts from a short-lived publishing house. They reflect an important period in Chinese and Taiwanese history.

#### **Rarity**

As these maps were ephemeral and used in a classroom setting, their survival is uncommon. We have located only three complete sets, two in Taiwan schools and one in the National Library of Australia.

#### **Detailed Condition:**