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to the generations of our family

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Abstract

This dissertation questions the binary distinction between tradition and modernity. Below, I examine how modernizing processes draw from and remake traditions. I discuss the advent of the idea of mass education in Egypt and China in the late-19th century and how this and related concepts altered earlier understandings of knowledge, vocation, and belonging in the Islamic and Confucian traditions. I argue that advocates of mass education and other reforms effectively used their traditions to argue for conscriptionist progressive social and political projects. Such projects, in my analysis, are not only exercises of power people of some over others. The projects rather substantively contribute to modern understandings of the self, the community of the tradition, and the state. However, as expansive and inclusive as the idea of education as duty and right is, questions of difference invariably arise. Reformists treat people who are marked as not belonging to Confucian or Islamic traditions as subjects of generosity and suspicion at the same time. I do not see the minority question as the inevitable outcome of modernizing states that privilege one tradition. Instead, I approach the minority question through investigating older conceptions of difference within and among communities, and within individual people and forms of thought. This dissertation will foreground the contrast between modern reformists and earlier thinkers. I will do so by outlining how these modern and premodern people thought about topics such as education and relations with others on their traditions' own terms. I will also examine how late-19th century Western scholars interpreted Islamic and Confucian reform in their categorizations of spiritual and scientific modernity and its others.

Note on transliteration, character sets, citation, dates, and translation

I have transliterated Arabic using the style of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. For Chinese, I use Hanyu Pinyin 漢語拼音. I use traditional Chinese characters throughout the dissertation, except when I refer in the footnotes or bibliography to works printed in the People's Republic of China. In these cases, I use simplified characters. I cite the Qur'ān according to chapter and verse, and the canonical ḥadīth collections by book and chapter. I generally refer to classics of the Confucian canon that come from before the Han 漢 dynasty (before 206 BCE) in the method they are usually cited such as by chapter and verse. I refer to all other texts by a modern printed edition. I use Gregorian dates throughout, and all dates are Common Era unless specified. By convention, I use anglicized names for places such as Cairo and Istanbul, and people such as Confucius 孔子 and Mencius 孟子.

Introduction

This dissertation questions the binary distinction between tradition and modernity. Below, I examine how modernizing processes draw from and remake traditions. I discuss the advent of the idea of mass education in Egypt and China in the late-19th century and how this and related concepts altered earlier understandings of knowledge, vocation, and belonging in the Islamic and Confucian[1] traditions. I argue that advocates of mass education and other reforms effectively used their traditions to argue for conscriptionist progressive social and political projects. Such projects, in my analysis, are not only exercises of power people of some over others. The projects rather substantively contribute to modern understandings of the self, the community of the tradition, and the state. However, as expansive and inclusive as the idea of education as duty and right is, questions of difference invariably arise. Reformists treat people who

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[1] Robert Eno, *The Confucian Creation of Heaven: Philosophy and the Defense of Ritual Mastery* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 6-7; Lionel M. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 1-21.

I will be using terms like "Confucian" and "Confucianism" rather than the newer terms related to the Chinese Ru 儒. People, such as the authors above, who prefer the term Ru are correct that the term "Confucian" is a foreign coinage that overly privileges an inaccurate analogy with Christianity. It is not wholly wrong to say the term Confucian is perhaps as misleading as "Muhammadan" for Islam. While Ru has greater emic meaning for Chinese speakers today, the word *ru* can also limit the range of meanings of the name of the tradition. A *ru* is a ritual scholar, someone in a particular vocation: see chapter 2 part 2. In the late-19th century, as we will see, partisans of this tradition imagined the whole of society integrated into this tradition and inculcated with its canons and norms. These partisans also sometimes reconceived these canons in ways that were sharply at odds with the orthodoxy lists of and interpretations of texts that had defined the Ru-tradition proper: see especially chapter 4 part 1; indeed some of these novel interpretations glorified Confucius as he had not been venerated before. For these reasons, I prefer to highlight and unpack the modern ambiguities introduced into this politically-privileged Chinese tradition and am using the term "Confucian".

are marked as not belonging to Confucian or Islamic traditions as subjects of generosity and suspicion at the same time. I do not see the minority question as the inevitable outcome of modernizing states that privilege one tradition. Instead, I approach the minority question through investigating older conceptions of difference within and among communities, and within individual people and forms of thought. This dissertation will foreground the contrast between modern reformists and earlier thinkers. I will do so by outlining how these modern and premodern people thought about topics such as education and relations with others on their traditions' own terms. I will also examine how late-19th century Western scholars interpreted Islamic and Confucian reform in their categorizations of spiritual and scientific modernity and its others.

The dissertation comprises five chapters, each with two parts, and an introduction divided into four sections. Section 1 outlines the binary of tradition and modernity, the narratives and contrasts that help establish that binary, and some of the problems that arise within these accounts. Section 2 states the thesis of the dissertation, describes the transformation of tradition under conscriptionist progressive power, and defines the conceptual frameworks involved and their heuristic value. In section 3, I explain how I am undertaking this project as a comparison across traditions and their histories and argue why this approach can contribute to and complicate scholarship undertaken in different ways. Section 4 shows the plan of the dissertation with each chapter and its two parts connected in a descriptive summary outline.

Section one: The tradition-modernity binary and its limits

Here, I will establish the theoretical foreground for the thesis of the dissertation in the problems posed by the binary opposition of tradition and modernity. While it can be explained in many different ways, a general understanding of this binary underlies much of scholarly and popular discourse. Generally, this account of the binary says that while history can always be understood in terms of change, the modern period is in significant ways apart from what came before. Where tradition refers to the continuity of what is handed down, modernity is a condition of questioning that reception and a will to imagine the human and natural world remade. My sources for these understandings are Max Weber (1864-1920)[2] and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)[3] respectively, though these are by no means exhaustive. After treating these primary sources, I will move to examine three scholarly narratives of the tradition-modernity binary that identify the main sources of change as modern power, the rise of the individual or the self, and secularization and/or secularism. While each of these frameworks has heuristic value, I will identify theoretical and empirical problems within each that the dissertation will address below.

Narratives and contrasts of the tradition-modernity binary

In this dissertation, I consider the dichotomous key of tradition and modernity and the narratives that attend it without privileging Western perspectives and assuming Western causal agency. However, it is precisely these that scholarship on tradition and modernity tends to put in the foreground. As such, my outline of this binary and my assessment of its limits will necessarily be in terms of Eurocentric frameworks. I do not

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[2] Fritz Ringer, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[3] Manfred Kuehn, *Kant: A Biography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

mean that Western scholars are describing phenomena wholly different than those of the dissertation's main primary sources, and as such, it is not that I find existing scholarship wholly inaccurate. It is rather that the tradition-modernity binary gives rise to particular problems that assume the two concepts explain two different concrete realities in order to prove such a difference. For one thing, this is circular arguing. For another, overly-binary accounts of tradition vs modernity always yield up liminal cases that point to other ways of understanding the temporal dichotomy. In this way, the dissertation's primary sources and Western scholarship connect to each other. I will illustrate this by reference to two figures at the limits of the long 19th-century: Immanuel Kant and Max Weber, representing the terminus of the Enlightenment and the rise of modern social science respectively. The body of the dissertation places them at similar points: we will begin by observing the effect of Kant's credo of Enlightenment freedom on French educational and imperial institutions that influenced Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-73),[4] and we will end with Weber's characteristically overconfident conclusion of why China cannot modernize. Below, however, we can use Kant and Weber as an introduction to the binary of tradition and modernity from which contemporary scholars draw.

I do not have a specific date when Europeans defined for themselves a tradition-modernity binary; however, Kant's essay "What is Enlightenment?" memorably accounts for many of the features of the latter. In it, Kant makes two generalizations,

[4] David Newman, translator's introduction, *An Imam in Paris: Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric, 1826-1831* (London: Saqi, 2004), 29-66.

one historiographical and one moral: that humanity tends toward progress, and that people in one time are not bound to follow their predecessors from another.

> An age cannot bind itself and ordain to put the succeeding one into such a condition that it cannot extend its (at best very occasional) knowledge, purify itself of errors, and progress in general enlightenment. That would be a crime against human nature, the proper designation of which lies precisely in this progress; and the descendants would be fully justified in rejected those decrees as having been made in an unwarranted and malicious manner.[5]

Humanity understands itself and its world partially and over the long term, but its historical, epistemological, and normative nature is expressed in "progress in general enlightenment". Kant may be triumphal when he says humanity is headed toward its goal, but he is not announcing an end of history; as he famously puts it, "If we are asked 'Do we live in an *enlightened age*?' the answer is, 'No,' but we do live in an *age of enlightenment*."[6] Taken together, in the two quoted statements Kant says that humans in their modern condition can be sure of their ultimate trajectory and should be free to pursue it.

However, modernity's freedom is complicated for Kant. On the one hand, there is the stirring call that opens his text:

> Enlightenment is man's release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self-incurred is this tutelage when its cause lies not in lack of reason but in lack of

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[5] Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?", in *"Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals" and "What is Enlightenment?"*, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Library of the Liberal Arts, 1959), 89.

[6] Kant, "What is Enlightenment," 90.

resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!*

"Have courage to use your own reason!"—that is the motto of enlightenment.[7]

People do not need to tutor themselves with the past; they must be bolder. However, Kant does not specify against whom they must be bolder; who is "another"? In part, Kant is indicating that the highly individualist nature of his enlightenment project means that people are not bound by other people's judgments. People have individual potential and are individually responsible, a point which engenders significant complications, as outlined in the discussion of Michel Foucault below. However, by "another", Kant also indicates the previous generation, which Kant says has no right to assert its ideas or knowledge, even truths, on its successor. In self-incurred tutelage, humanity and human individuals make the temporal thinking of previous generations into timeless tradition.

While I do argue that Weber can contribute an idea of tradition in general that applies particularly to political, social, and intellectual life outside the Protestant North Atlantic, Weber does not present tradition as such as the binary opposite of modernity with the wide range of meanings a general use might attach. He rather speaks concretely of a "traditional authority".[8] Here, Weber contributes a more descriptive, if highly abstract, account of what Kant might consider self-incurred tutelage. Weber explains "the authority of the 'eternal past,' of *custom*, sanctified by a validity that extends back into the mists of time and is perpetuated by habit. This is 'traditional' rule."[9] Tradition

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[7] Kant, "What is Enlightenment," 85.

[8] Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures: "Science as a Vocation" and "Politics as a Vocation"*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004).

[9] Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 34.

refers to the right to instruct from the past, the content and legitimacy of such teaching being the past itself. Weber is perhaps best remembered for his work on the instrumental and bureaucratic programs of modernity; however, such programs, like the Protestant ethic, have a functional opposite in the static closed loop of the rationality of tradition.[10] Unlike Kant's harbinger's partisanship of modernity, Weber's assessments appear more disenchanted,[11] and as such, they have helped establish the tradition-modernity binary not as a contest of differing views, but as an established reality modern scholars should try to explain.

Foucault's analysis of modern power is the first major contemporary scholarly approach to the tradition-modernity binary taken in this dissertation. At first, Foucault may not seem to use such a binary. Nevertheless, Foucault does treat governmentality—the accumulation and interconnection of knowledge-power since the Western Renaissance—as distinct and unprecedented in its ambit and ambition.[12] In postcolonial

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[10] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 35-46.

Here are Weber's canonical examples of traditionalism as a spiritual-economic attitude characterized by self-sustaining stasis and refusal to develop in the world. Though he is referring to pre-Reformation Europe, we will see in chapter 5 that Weber sees China and the Muslim world in this way as well. Traditions that function well to a certain extent gain a certain kind of inertia. When Weber identifies this inertia mean he can then subject do a kind of historical analysis in which any trait, trope, or feature at any point in the tradition's history provide insight into any other, given how consistent highly-functioning non-Protestant traditions appear to Weber over space and time.

[11] Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, 181-82.

In contrast to the popular shorthand of "Weberian values", it is clear Weber himself does not think modernization yields only unalloyed goods.

[12] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality" in *Power*, ed. James D. Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley et al vol. 3 of *Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, series ed. Paul Rabinow, 201-22, (New York: New Books, 2000).

Foucauldian terms, what is novel is not imperial desire for power, but specific modern mechanisms of organization and will to know the other—as Timothy Mitchell puts it, "the power to colonize."[13] Talal Asad explores "the European project", a novel undertaking of knowledge-power that distinguishes the West from the non-West and is much broader, long-lasting, and more insidious than the limited facts of colonial administration.[14] For Foucault, where realms of life do not fit neatly into the state, the idea of supervision and conducted conduct increases the domain of the political. Where modern power does not invariably coerce in the simplest sense, it does discipline. It is precisely within Foucauldian biopolitics, that which is not definitely within, but not definitely outside, the state proper, that mass education in the modern conception fits.[15] Late in his life, Foucault sketched a domain of ethics, practices, disciplinary practices, and of care for the self.[16] While Foucault does not define ethics through the term "tradition", postcolonial thinkers have posited that governmentality in the Foucauldian sense directly contradicts the assumptions of moral autonomy and self-knowledge on which so many premodern ethical traditions are based;[17] modern power is premised on people's inability to govern themselves.

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[13] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 8.

[14] Talal Asad, "A Comment on Aijaz Ahmad's *In Theory*," *Public Culture* 6 (1993): 31-39.

[15] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Bipolitics: Lectures at the College de France, 1978-79*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[16] Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self," in *Technologies of the Self : A Seminar with Michel Foucault,* ed. by Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, Patrick H. Hutton, 16-49, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988).

[17] Wael B. Hallaq, *The Impossible State: Islam, Politics, and Modernity's Moral Predicament* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); see also Noah Salomon, *For Love of the Prophet: An Ethnography of Sudan's Islamic State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 22-24.

Like Foucault, other scholars center their critiques of modernity on maleficent changes to the concept of the self. Alasdair MacIntyre famously says that chaos now reigns in moral theory because modern people do not have a teleologically coherent idea of manhood.[18] Modern thought has lost the idea of narrative cohesion of selfhood, memorably put in Aristotle's idea that someone will know if they are happy when they are on the point of dying and able to take full sum of their lives understanding their direction.[19] In place of normative ideas of what a person is for and standards of how one is properly constituted, MacIntyre says, there are only incoherent claims to rational

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[18] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: An Essay in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 1-5.

Here I use the term "manhood" to emphasize that the concept of gender is under-theorized in teleological concepts of a human life well lived. Most of the paradigm cases of premodern systems of virtue ethics assume that men and women have entirely different teleological possibilities. MacIntyre is not ignorant of this, and says that Aristotle's thought, out of which MacIntyre outlines his own, is "deformed by his beliefs about women and about the nature of slaves." *Whose Justice, Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 104. MacIntyre approvingly cites the Jane Austen possibly one of the last Westerners to truly understand and appreciate the relationship between virtue, teleology, and the narrative coherence of a life well-lived, if Austen presents a distinctively gendered portrayal. By contrast, Terry Pinkard says that MacIntyre clearly presents himself as a feminist. "MacIntyre's Critique of Modernity," in *Alasdair MacIntyre*, ed. Mark C. Murphy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 181.

My point is not to suggest virtue theory or MacIntyre's concept of tradition stands apart from feminism, only that gender is particularly un-theorized in the abstraction from particular human lives or ideals of either of these concepts. Below I suggest that certain modern reformist Muslim 'ulamā' and Chinese imperial scholar-officials generalized the vocational ethics particular to their professions in their presentation of the model of the new citizen and committed believer. Only men were supposed to serve as *shi*, and many of the practices that defined the profession of the 'ulamā' were conventionally restricted to men.

[19] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* in *Aristotle's Ethics: Writings from the Complete Works,* trans. Anthony Kenny and Jonathan Barnes, 1.10-11, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

absolutes, or more generally, emotivist resignation to the idea that people are instrumentalists and will do whatever they want.[20] MacIntyre does not believe that no person since the Enlightenment knows what to do, but he finds that under political liberalism, communities organized around meaningful conceptions of the good life and political justice are increasingly small-scale.[21] Saba Mahmood argues that such forms of social life obtain uneasily amid a broader culture and politics that is often indifferent, if not outright hostile, to the meaningful practice of tradition and the idea-cultivated obedience to authoritative models of personal conduct.[22] For postcolonial scholars such as Asad and Joseph Massad, the cause of this climate is political and epistemological secularism and liberalism, within which they diagnose an Islamophobia that is not merely the residue of colonialist prejudices, but an intolerance to any lifeway that does not strictly separate moral and ethical concerns from public life in precisely the way liberals do.[23]

Secularization is the narrative of the tradition-modernity binary in which the former diminishes and cedes conceptual terrain to the latter. Charles Taylor memorably extends the story of the rise of modernity to well before the Reformation. He argues that

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[20] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 23-36.

[21] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 256-63.

MacIntyre does not hold out radical or conservative hope for modern societies, but hopes that groups of people might come together to affirm their common visions of the good life.

[22] For example, Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 99-113.

[23] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 159-256; Joseph Massad, *Islam in Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

movements intermittently arose within Christian churches that sought to break down the distinction between church and laity.[24] His is a memorably counterintuitive kind of secularization; for him, secularization begins when medieval monastic preachers sought to govern the secular by their routines of discipline that church life had assumed to be special to their traditions.[25] Taylor believes this outward movement prefigures the all-governing Geneva Consistory, the Puritan utopias, and the nation-state that claims it can guarantee universal human rights while it monopolizes policing power, and each of these represents a step in the advance of modernity.[26] As political preoccupation with the worldly increases, religious traditions ultimately diminish, as within the secular, a "nova" of moral, esthetic, and political alternatives to the hegemony of the church, or even of Christianity, develop and proliferate.[27] Tradition here would seem to be the remainder of a process that originally appeared to expand the ambit of tradition. Asadian accounts of secularism and the secular differ importantly from Taylor's secularization.[28] Hussein Agrama defines secularism as the politicization of the boundary between the religious and the non-religious, the indeterminacy of which is a justification for the intermittent but never-reversed expansion of state supervision.[29] In

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[24] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 62-66.

[25] He says "the Reformation is the ultimate fruit of the Reform spirit, producing for the first time a true uniformity of believers, a levelling up which left no further room for different speeds," 77.

[26] Taylor, 90-145.

[27] Taylor, 297-504.

[28] Asad, *Formations*, 21-66.

[29] Hussein Ali Agrama, *Questioning Secularism: Islam, Sovereignty, and the Rule of Law in Modern Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 1-41.

both accounts, the domain defined through beliefs and practices authorized in tradition is reduced through modern secularization, is made subject to the state, and defined alongside an opposite which has a proprietary claim to the public sphere—the secular.

Limits of the tradition-modernity binary

Though the above conceptions and stories of the tradition-modernity binary have certain explanatory power, we will need to challenge, emend, and reframe them to understand the primary sources of this dissertation and the processes in which they took part. We may begin by responding skeptically to Kant and Weber and saying that modernity is not self-evidently a *sui generis* way of looking at the past, present, and future. MacIntyre argues against what I will generalize as Weber's view of the non-West when he explains that traditions are always changing.[30] If the authority of the past is a general feature of a traditionalist worldview, the way the past was seen as authoritative has varied dramatically from time to time, particularly, as we will see in the body of the dissertation, from institutional practice to institutional practice. When traditions stop being grounds for debate among practitioners, they die, according to MacIntyre.[31] Likewise, if Kant presents Enlightenment as a liberation form the tutelage of the past, we might ask why he begins his Enlightenment manifesto with a quote from an authority from Latin antiquity. In his work explored in chapter 5, Kant makes clear that

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[30] MacIntyre's often quoted definition states that a living tradition is an "an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition." Moreover, in history "traditions decay, disintegrate and disappear," *After Virtue*, 222. MacIntyre argues that what he identifies as the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition of virtue ethics was successful and vital because of its ability to synthesize and adapt discordant ideas from milieus with radically different assumptions about the good life, *Whose Justice*, 164-208.

[31] MacIntyre, *Whose Justice*, 164-82.

he upholds the authority of a distinctly Protestant Christianity,[32] which itself is dedicated to the retrieval of and reconnection to the thought and practice of the early church. For Kant, an enlightened religious believer is a person who identifies the ethical ideals fundamental to their religion, as opposed to the outward manifestations prescribed by tradition.[33] In other words, it is a person who can reconceive the authority of the past. In postcolonial terms, modernizing European power claims both a unique capacity for progress as well as a universal humanistic tradition on which such spiritual and political privilege is based.

We can see another complication of the tradition-modernity binary in Foucault's idea of subjectivation. Foucault examines two contrasting uses of the word "subject", being a subject, possessed of agency or, in some sense, power, and being subject to another person, a rule, or a form of power.[34] Where voluntary submission to discipline and ethical guidance defines some subjectivities within some of the premodern traditions Foucault studies,[35] he believes the modern subjects are those who look upon themselves as disciplinary powers look up them. The difference between penitence and the penitentiary[36] would seem to be that the former is not coercive, while the latter is,

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[32] Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, trans. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[33] Kant, *Religion*, 122-47.

[34] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8 no. 4 (1988): 777-95.

[35] Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self,* vol. 3 of *The History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1986), 37-68; "The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom," *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* vol. 1 of *The Essential Works of Michel Foucault*, ed. Paul Rabinow, 281-302, (New York: The New Press, 1997).

[36] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* trans. Alan Sheridan. (New York: Vintage Books, 1977).

but this is not strictly the case for all the modern institutions studied by Foucault.[37] Moreover, Foucault did not expound the concept of freedom the way he did other concepts, and so it is not freedom or unfreedom that can distinguish modern power from its antecedents. We might draw on Agrama or MacIntyre to say that the people really *are* striving for discipline and to care for themselves and others when they follow premodern models similar to the ones Foucault discusses.[38] Agrama and MacIntyre might then claim that the dominant discourses of the good life of modern societies are either intellectually-empty hopes, or are themselves instruments of coercive power.[39] However, it is not always so simple. Consider the centrality of the disciplinary institution of mass education *both* to the discourses of self-determination *and* anti-

[37] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).

[38] Hussein Ali Agrama, "Ethics, Tradition, Authority: Toward an Anthropology of the Fatwa," *American Ethnologist* 37 no. 1 (2010): 2-18.

[39] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 51-78; Agrama, *Questioning Secularism*, 107-59.

colonial resistance.[40] For this reason, we will discuss below the way that education is both a right and an obligation, owed by the collective to the individual and vice versa. To consider how education can be imagined in this way, we will need to consider how tradition is put to work in modern power and can constitute modern subjects.

Accordingly, we will also need to think about how self-fashioning complicates the tradition-modernity binary, how ideas care of the self has not simply receded into the past and become unthinkable or unintelligible since the 19th century. To begin with, while Saba Mahmood argues that while religious revivals among Egyptian women cut against the grain of dominant liberal feminist forms of power, the debates and discursive practices that sustain the revivals have been made possible by the massive democratization of access to the resources of Islamic traditions—namely, mass literacy.[41] The history of mass education in the United States prominently features hegemonic liberalism, scientism, and the ideologies of the security state; however, it also features

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[40] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Bloomsbury, 2000); Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics Of Language in African Literature* (London: J. Currey, 1986); Alasdair MacIntyre, *God, Philosophy, Universities: A Selective History of the Catholic Philosophical Tradition* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011); Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

I do not disagree with Timothy Mitchell and Gregory Starrett that mass education and educational modernization in Egypt are processes bound up with colonialism and the rise of the national state. However, I argue below that education does not reduce to domination, and that resistance to colonialism or nationalism is hard to conceive without some project of mass consciousness-raising and cultivation of capabilities through discipline, which in part explains why the idea of mass education itself has not been significantly controversial in Egypt, or we will see, in China. In a sense, MacIntyre deals with some of the ambiguities of modern education because he argues that the modern expressions of the Catholic educational tradition in the US are resisting the forces of liberal domination.

[41] Mahmood, 79-83.

robust traditionalist responses that prize individual practice and that aim at community self-determination.[42] The fact that Foucault, MacIntyre, Hallaq, and others can sustain such scholarly critiques of the loss of normative concepts of the self is reason to think they have touched on matters of contemporary critical concern. Below, chiefly in chapters 1 and 2, we will explore how Muslim and Confucian reformists shaped an idea of a modern subject committed to tradition and to progress. I will argue they have not given up serious discussion of self-fashioning, but have instead radically reconceived the social and political relations that provided people different ideas of who and how to be.

The modernist protagonists studied here are also not agents of secularization in any simple understanding of the idea. Models of secularization such as Taylor's provide deep and surprising genealogies; however, because of their sources, they are limited in breadth to metropolitan Europe.[43] It is simply not a universal fact of modern societies that religious tradition has withered away as alternatives have gained popularity and cultural and political power.[44] Agrama argues that secularism's quality of always seeming to be in process and incomplete is secularists' own rhetoric rather than

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[42] Kathleen Sprows Cummings, *New Women if the Old Faith: Gender and American Catholicism in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

[43] I do not mean Taylor's analysis only applies here, but he, like MacIntyre, almost exclusively draws from writers in these geographical locations to describe what the modern world is and is not like. Perhaps Westernization obtains to some extent because of colonialism, globalization, mass media, and other factors, but it is not self-evident that Calvin's utopianism or Nietzsche's nihilism have much to do with the intellectual and political histories of Nigeria or Japan. We should not just assume that they do.

[44] Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 271-393.

empirical observation.[45] Moreover, I will abbreviate a complex discussion in development economics and say that it is not evident that all modern societies are becoming more like those in the Global North in all respects.[46] The Asadian definition of secularism, in which religion intermittently arises as a source of political anxiety, obtains in such diverse contexts as France and Egypt in part because people in those places continue to see religious traditions as significant in personal and political life, even if they do not see them as significant in the same way.[47] Chapters 3 and 4 below explore the rise and persistence of the minority question in mass education, among other modernizing processes. Through the minority question, religious difference, among other differences, attained political significance it did not have before.

Section two: Thesis and conceptual frameworks

Thesis

In this dissertation, I will rethink the unsettled binary between tradition and modernity by discussing the ways that two traditions informed and were in turn shaped by modernizing processes. I will argue that on the eve of the 20th century, Islam and Confucianism were conscripted into the project of mass education under progressive power. Reformist Muslim ʿulamāʾ and the last generations of Confucian imperial

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[45] Agrama, *Questioning Secularism*, 1-41.

[46] The consensus is often stated that while inequality among countries has decreased, it is still acute; Zia Qureshi, "Trends in Income Inequality: Global, Inter-Country, and Within Countries," Brookings Institution website, December 2017 https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/global-inequality.pdf.

[47] Mayanthi Fernando, *The Republic Unsettled: Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); Charles Hirschkind, "Heresy or Hermeneutics: The Case of Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd," *American Journal of Islamic Studies* 12 no. 4 (1995): 463-77.

scholar-officials (*shi* 士) saw in their traditions inspiration for the idea that everyone in society needed to spend many formative years in formal school. When they subscribed to this idea, the ʻulamāʼ and *shi* radically departed from older understandings of who needed to engage in long-term formal study and what purpose education serves. *Shi* and ʻulamāʼ took discourses and practices that had been specific to their vocation and its forms of authority and used them to define a universal obligation for any participant in modern society. In such a way, they rendered it unclear just what such participants are supposed to do with knowledge in their own lives as well as how they were supposed to relate to each other through shared knowledge or through greater or lesser degrees of knowledge.

Because these new universal obligations also foreclosed intersubjective possibilities that did not have to do with the state, the reformist educational project also rendered ambiguous the relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims and Confucians and non-Confucians (which was itself a novel way of dividing Chinese society) in the modern state. In other words, mass education conceived in terms of a majority tradition contributes significantly to the minority question. On the one hand, the *shi* and ʻulamāʼ described the states and societies in which they were leaders as tolerant, inclusive, and inclined to equality. The reformist scholars furthermore believed in an epistemology in which the world should appear the same from any geographical, social, or traditional location. People of any religious or no religious commitment could contribute to knowledge, knowledge could be shared across confessional and political lines, and doing so would contribute to the good of all. On the other hand, the modern ʻulamāʼ and *shi* studied here envisioned conscriptionist, assimilating institutions that

enforced conformity. They argued that despite its supposedly cosmopolitan character, modern knowledge was needed principally to serve the state and the community in particular, and in explicit opposition to other states and communities. Under such assumptions, the diversity of Islamicate and Chinese societies was seen to be a potential hindrance. Islamic and Confucian traditions always enjoyed political privilege in those societies respectively, and partisans of orthodoxy tended to distinguish their traditions from others, sometimes stridently. Nevertheless, mass education and mass society greatly reduced the institutional, material, and discursive means by which individuals and communities who were not of the majority could express autonomy.

This dissertation foregrounds the modern period and particular changes affected through and within traditions. In this, when I describe how a modern understanding came about and the particular tensions that configured it, I will then turn back in history to examine older ideas and practices. I will highlight how similarly Muslim and Confucian modernizers conceived of traditional reform, mass education, and the problem of difference by outlining just how different older institutions and discourses were from these modern ones and from each other. In the parts of the dissertation chapters that take these excursuses back into history, it will not be a surprise to read that institutions such as the madrasas of the premodern Muslim world and the Chinese imperial-service exam system (*keju* 科舉) functioned quite differently. They were shaped by different ideas of what was canon, what was authoritative knowledge, and what trained and certified people for different kinds of responsibilities. It will not be a surprise to see that premodern Confucian *shi* and Muslim ʿulamāʾ looked differently at people, communities, and traditions they perceived to be different from their own; the

plurality of traditions was socially, politically, and conceptually a different state of affairs in imperial China and in cities in the premodern Muslim world. However, I will argue that each of these organizations of concepts, discourses, and practices in the premodern period differed significantly from the modern institutions that were supposed to draw on their precedent. I will not be illustrating change over time in order to criticize modern reformers for making errors or misrepresentations. Rather, I will try to provide critical perspective of the kinds of change in tradition affected through modernity.

Conceptual frameworks

Conscription

Throughout the dissertation, I will refer to the conceptual frameworks I mention above to describe the ways that modernizing processes draw on and remake traditions and the ways that tradition becomes a potential within modernity. Most importantly, I will argue that the modernizing process of mass education is a conscriptionist process, and it can be said that it is a conscription of tradition under progressive power. The late-19th century ʿulamāʾ considered below conceived of mass schooling as a project of conscription. Military conscription does not present recruits a choice about whether to join, but it can present rhetoric of duty, the possibility of honor and achievement, and the prospect of belonging to a greater whole. Talal Asad describes colonialism as a conscriptionist process: a massive expropriation of life and labor affected through new coercive forms of politics.[48] Asad is concerned with the conscriptionist processes

[48] Talal Asad, "Conscripts of Western Civilization," in *Dialectical Anthropology: Essays in Honor of Stanley Diamond* vol. 1, ed. Christine Ward Gailey, 333-51 (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1992).

whether colonized people were martially or economically conscripted or deployed locally or globally. I apply Asad here to consider mass education as just such a process: the requirement of a community to discipline all its members in order to confront immanent threats.

David Scott expands on Asad to examine the postcolonial context, in which individual and collective goods cannot be conceived of except through the modes of development and production into which colonial polities were conscripted.[49] In important respects, Scott argues, the postcolonial imaginary offers only one standard of political capability and collective belonging, that of a state modeled on the imperial example, and difference from this standard can only be seen as failure. Drawing on Scott, I argue the reformists' vision of conscriptionist education affords only judgments of success or failure to perform duties and is not concerned what kind of learning conscripts might want, how they might fashion themselves, or how they might contribute to each other otherwise. The 'ulamā' claim this monopoly on interpretation of the public good through what I describe as progressive power.

Progressive power

In part, I am using the term "progressive power" to center the processes of modernization and not the content of particular modern ideologies such as liberalism.Progressive power explored below is defined as a relationship reformist elites take toward the rest of society. They think non-elites need what the elites need and should have what the elites have. It will be become clear that I am not using "progressive" as an alternate term for "liberal" to which the opposite is "conservative".

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[49] David Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).

Progressive power is rather a mode of caretaking and instruction by which many privileged groups representing many different perspectives engaged the general population, which they understood as in need. Contemporary scholars of Islamic studies, the history of the Muslim world, and related fields are familiar with the idea that liberalism was an import from the West that only partially indigenized.[50] Those Muslim ʻulamāʼ and laypeople who took it up wanted to remake their societies along European lines, and they promoted secularism, women's rights, and a reduced, flexible, and ultimately dubious version of Islamic thought.[51] Liberalism represents freedom that Muslims and others subject to colonialism did not ask for. Liberal tradition in the late-19th century as much as today provides a set of standards by which to judge the Muslim world as backward, and the more subject to liberalism people and institutions become, the further from Islamic traditions in their true form. Here I am referring only to scholarship on Islam, as there is no ready equivalent to this canon of postcolonial thought in the study of East Asian traditions. Scholars such as Saba Mahmood have highlighted the uneasy ways that liberalism informs both scholarship on Islam and the

[50] This view is canonized in Albert Habib Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[51] Malcolm H. Kerr, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Rashīd Riḍā* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966); Wael B. Hallaq, *Sharīʿa: Theory, Practice, Transformations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 355-551.

intermittent attempts by Westerners to exercise power over Muslims, and she and others have undoubtedly provided critical and provocative insight.[52]

However, if oversimplified, this scholarship tends to collapse the binaries of liberalism and Islam, power and resistance, and tradition and modernity into each other too neatly. The concept of mass education, for example, is a novelty as a political practice, but it is hardly so at odds with Islamic and Confucian traditions that it can be solely described as an effect of liberalism. Mass education, along with the condescending tolerance cum scrutiny of the minority question, rather result from a moral and historical concern late-19th century scholarly elites took toward the societies they were part of. Progressive power reimagines modern communities and institutions around goods that used to be limited to only a part of society.

Conscriptionist progressive power is principally not about remaking people individually and collectively through coercion. It does not need to be an exercise of the state. I will illustrate these aspects of progressive power and why it is not simply another name for liberalism or modernity with reference to scholarship on US history. Kathleen Cummings describes Catholic responses to liberal and Protestant discourses of feminism and mass education in the US at the turn of the 20th century. Religious leaders and laypeople conceived of a system of lifelong religious education for everyone in the community.[53] To achieve this, women religious and others took work as teachers

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[52] Saba Mahmood and Charles Hirschkind, "Feminism, the Taliban, and Politics of Counter-Insurgency," *Anthropological Quarterly* 75 no. 2 (2002): 339-54; Saba Mahmood, "Secularism, Hermeneutics, and Empire: The Politics of Islamic Reformation," *Public Culture* 18.2 (2006): 323-47; Wael B. Hallaq, *Restating Orientalism: A Critique of Modern Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

[53] Cummings, 101-56.

when they had not before. Young people were imagined as students and the inculcation of religious belief, trustworthy information, gender roles, and home economics was imagined as the work of the entire community. Progressive power rather works to extend goods, values, and sensibilities particular to an elite section of society to the whole of the community. Public education, like public health and temperance, were hallmark causes of the period in US history called the progressive era, despite the fact that these causes are not "progressive" in the limited political sense of being opposed by conservatives such as religious or business leaders; the opposite was the case. Whether or not the modern ʿulamāʾ and *shi* below can be described as liberal or their claims to religious orthodoxy are accepted, their vision of society was an inclusive one with a role for everyone in achieving goods that before had defined the positions of relatively few people.

Minority questions

The reformist *shi* and ʿulamāʾ argued that everyone in society should have access to the goods that had been the privilege and responsibility of their positions within their particular traditions, but not everyone in society belonged to or was associated with those traditions. This is one way of stating the minority question, which is a general category Saba Mahmood and others use to talk about the general problem of the modern political imaginary exemplified in the Jewish question, the woman question, and

others.[54] The reformists examined here, and often times their opponents, discussed how to promote renewal, solidarity, and cohesion in the Ottoman, Egyptian, and Qing 清 states through the Islamic and Confucian traditions. However, all agreed that those states included and should include many people and institutions not identified with those traditions. All the reformists recognized the claims that such people might have on the state—for example, they all agreed on the right of education for all. They all agreed that tolerance and inclusion were the marks of a progressive and generous society. However, the reformists also believed that including minority peoples, communities, and institutions posed specific obstacles to their progressive goals. People presented obstacles to their own rights and empowerment, in other words. Minority peoples, communities, and institutions were all seen to be deficient in their commitment to progressive modernity, and sometimes suspect of loyalties outside the state, which is defined by its relationship to a tradition that is not their own. In some sense, the reformists wanted to universalize participation in and identification with their traditions, but even before such universalist programs as mass education were even realized on much scale, the *shi* and 'ulamā' believed they could not trust those programs' effects on particular people who became intermittent new sources of anxiety in the newly-reimagined polities.

Colonialism and postcolonial theory

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54 Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 31-106; Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 48-77; Aamir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

The reformists reimagined those polities as communities that could resist hegemonic power by means of that power. As in the discussion of conscriptionist power above, the dissertation builds from the observation that both colonizing projects and resistance to colonialism make use of modern power forms, concepts, and political imaginaries. Asad argues we do not need to focus on who first thought of these or whom they benefitted but the concepts and practices themselves and their effects.[55] In this dissertation, I try to establish a critical perspective from different premodern situations on these modern commonplaces. However, I do not do so to argue that solutions to contemporary problems invariably lie in the precolonial world,[56] and certainly not that this world could somehow be analyzed as a whole and judged as more tolerant and less restrictive than the modern world. The dissertation rather focuses on conscription, conformism, the narrowing of conceptions of human flourishing, the suspicion of the

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[55] Asad, "On *In Theory*," 36-39.

[56] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 256-63; Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006); Wael B. Hallaq, *Restating Orientalism*; *Reforming Modernity: Ethics and the New Human in the Philosophy of Abdurrahman Taha* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019).

By and large, the scholars this dissertation draws do not do "constructive-studies scholarship". They do not tend to propose practical solutions to the violence, harm, and imbalances they identify. When they do, they do not insist that the only standards for such solutions lie in the past. This note is citing scholars who do make suggestions of what is to be done and models for how to do it. For example, though MacIntyre says that a culture as confused and corrupt as the post-Enlightenment culture cannot think morally or politically in any consistent way, he famously ends *After Virtue* by saying that those who would live meaningfully in the modern world must take inspiration from Trotsky and St. Benedict. Jonathan Lear reworks MacIntyre in his commentary on an example of reimagined Native American tradition. In addition, after dismaying that a true commitment to Islamic law and its social and political ethics was not possible in a world of liberal hegemony, in his recent work, Wael Hallaq has considered possible positive examples of Christian and Muslim traditionalism.

other that cannot seem to be disabused, and the normalization of orientalist myths as sites for engaged critique, and argues that these features of modernity do not emerge naturally from the traditions I examine. They rather represent major reconfigurations in how *shi*, 'ulamā', and others conceived of knowledge, education, society, and politics. As such, these intellectual and practical processes merit scrutiny through the application of postcolonial theory because of their relationships to power in the moment of the late-19th century and because they shape how we understand the present world and imagine the future.

Section three: Scope and methods of comparison

This dissertation compares modernizing processes in Islamic and Confucian traditions. In this section, I will first outline how we will examine these historical-traditional topoi, and then I will explain what we gain from organizing and focusing the study this way. I place modernity in the conceptual foreground through a historical comparison of ideas of knowledge and belonging in these traditions. In this way, we will be able to assess change over time and between traditions. The dissertation focuses on Islamic and Confucian traditions both for their differences and for their comparable qualities. Within the two traditions, there are very different ideas about who needs authoritative knowledge and what they should do with it, and so we can see the homogenizing effects of modernization in the similarity of the ideas put forward by reformists. When we depart from the late-19th century moment and move backward a comparable amount of time in each tradition, looking at comparable institutions, we can gain different critical perspectives on how knowledge, religious and political

commitment, and belonging connect and can be held in tension and what possibilities they presented to individuals and communities.

Ways of life compared

The dissertation begins in the moment of the late-19th century and focuses on how scholars trained in Islamic and Confucian vocations conceived of new societies brought together through mass education in solidarity against imperialism. In the modern period I put four contemporaries—Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Tahṭāwī, Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905),[57] Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909),[58] and Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927)[59]. These four were all steeped in premodern learning and excelled in the institutions (to which we will turn in a moment), and all were part of transitional generations of scholars who conceived of mass education and modernizing states but were not themselves formed by them. They were at the center of discussions about what shape mass education was to take, how such programs took inspiration from and made use of Islamic or Confucian traditions, and how those identified as not belonging to Islamic or Confucian traditions posed problems for the progress and security of the

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[57] Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Al-ʿAmāl al-kāmila* [Complete works], 6 vols. (Beirut: al-Muʹassasah al-ʿArabīyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 1974); Uthman Amin, *Muḥammad ʿAbduh,* trans. Charles Wendell (Washington, DC: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953); Mark Sedgwick, *Muhammad ʿAbduh* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010).

[58] Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, *Zhang Zhidong quanji* 張之洞全集 [The complete works of Zhang Zhidong], 12 vols. (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1998); William Ayers, *Chang Chih-tung and Educational reform in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

[59] Kang Youwei 康有為, *Kang Youwei quanji* 康有為全集 [Complete works of Kang Youwei], 12 vols. (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin daxue chubanshe, 2007); Kung-chuan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975).

state. I do not focus only on these four 19th-century reformers, but I consider their work at some length to illustrate the range of issues considered and tensions within long-term, high-profile intellectual projects. Indeed, they lived lives in tension between the new world they imagined alive with possibilities and the one they confronted full of precarities. They both saw their traditions as the hope for their communities and for all humanity as well as complicated legacies in urgent need of reinterpretation.

In order to show how significantly and dramatically the reformists reinterpreted such issues as knowledge and belonging, I examine understandings of these at formative points. In particular, the madrasa as institution of higher religious legal education in the Sunnī Muslim world[60] and the Confucian imperial service exam system[61] went through formative transformations around the same time, the 11-12th centuries CE. Not coincidentally, this period was also the moment in which Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111)[62] and others delineated a proper scope for speculative thought among traditionalist kinds of knowledge and mystical discipline. It is around this time in China that Zhu Xi (1130-1200)[63] and the Daoxue 道學 movement[64] before him promoted an

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[60] Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Boston: Brill, 2007).

[61] John W. Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: A Social History of Examinations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[62] Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

[63] Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Zhuzi quanshu* 朱子全書 [Complete works of Master Zhu], 27 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002); Wing-tsit Chan, *Chu Hsi: Life and Thought* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1987).

[64] Stephen A. Angle and Justin Tiwald, *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2017).

integrative cosmological, social-political, and self-cultivative philosophical program based in Zhu's designation of the Confucian canon. I do not argue these premodern moments show a synchronic similarity between Islamic and Confucian traditions as such. However, first, I do think it is significant that moments when orthodoxies concretized accompanied major reforms to institutions that would promote scholarly life on the basis of those orthodoxies down to the turn of the 20th century, albeit in different ways. Second, this similar time depth gives us some perspective on how striking the changes proposed in modern epistemologies and social and political institutions were. We should not assume Muslim and Chinese societies stayed static between 1200 and 1900, of course, but we can appreciate that modernizers were to a large extent questioning the fundamentals canonized by formative figures of the tradition.

Rules and reasons of comparison

A comparison between two modernization projects informed by long-term histories shows the different ways tradition can inhabit the modern world and under what conditions. I am not making a specific comparison between these traditions based on a particular idea of what comparison between traditions as such should be.[65] If we want a focused understanding of how one tradition is seen to modernize or not, we could look to studies of a single tradition or of one location. However, in that case, scholars do not always argue or argue convincingly what is specific to this location and

[65] For reference consider Bruce Lincoln, *Apples and Oranges: Explorations in, on, and with Comparison* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018); Wendy Doniger, *The Implied Spider: Politics and Theology in Myth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map is not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975); Bryan W. Van Norden, *Taking Back Philosophy: A Multicultural Manifesto* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

what might describe modernity or tradition more generally.[66] By contrast, scholarship focused on a large plurality of traditions, locations, and processes would necessarily lack depth if it were as short as a dissertation, and as an extended project, writers and readers risk the loss of coherence.[67] There are many illuminating studies of modernization that compare Western ideas, institutions, and processes to those in colonies or spheres of influence.[68] However, these are necessarily Eurocentric at least to some extent; they suggest implicitly or explicitly that models for modernity are set in the West, or they highlight the Western protagonism of the imperial era. This dissertation does not ignore the West, but it does not center the West either, and I illustrate the range of resources and possibilities for thought present in two particular traditions in transformation.

Islamic and Confucian histories and frameworks provide a range of possibilities for comparing the lives of traditions and projects of modernization. Most importantly,

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[66] Milton B. Singer, *When a Great Tradition Modernizes: An Anthropological Approach to Indian Civilization* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); John and Jean Comaroff, *Of Reason and Revolution*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992-97).

[67] I discuss how late-19th century scholars believed they should and could assess the meaning of religion once they had sufficient data on all traditions. The most memorable apex of this trend is perhaps Jaspers' "axial age" conceit exemplified in *Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus: The Paradigmatic Individuals* trans. Ralph Manheim (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1985). However, work such as this is not as significant a trend in contemporary scholarship. Notable exceptions include *The Construction of Orthodoxy and Heresy: Neo-Confucian, Islamic, Jewish, and early Christian Patterns* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998).

[68] Mufti; Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*; *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, Modernity* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

we can sharpen our view of modern homogenizing processes when we can see the diversity of premodern situations. Islamic and Confucian traditions do not present common roots the way that Islamic traditions share with others such Christianity and Judaism. The scope of their interaction was rather limited before the 20th century, and we will explore some of this interaction in chapter 4 below. Accordingly, when we can compare and contrast the features that they developed, we will not be searching for a common history or mapping divergent evolution. We will rather be interested in how the different ways a tradition can thrive.

In terms of the modern situation, we can see different elements coming together to form a common or comparable picture in both modern China and the Islamic eastern Mediterranean. For example, a scholar familiar with the West and Islamic traditions might assume that individual people and local communities necessarily define themselves and others through single traditions; in other words, one is not Christian and Muslim at the same time. But such politics in which the state and citizens are identified with specific and exclusive traditions are entirely novel to China as argued below. We will also observe situations a scholar familiar with the West and East Asian histories might not consider. Such a scholar might assume that people acquire canonical knowledge in a tradition and occupy positions of authority in society only through the state or a hierarchical institution such as the church. This is not the case in the premodern Muslim world, and it is a new idea here that the state assumes the responsibility for public knowledge, which it extends to all people. I do not present a model of what comparative scholarship as such should be, but rather illustrate how to think across time and traditions about a common set of themes and problems.

Section four: Plan of the dissertation

This section outlines each chapter of the dissertation. There are some patterns among the chapters. All body chapters have two parts. For chapters 1-4, part 1 discusses a late-19th century situation, and part 2 critically contrasts the modern case from a premodern perspective. Chapters 1 and 2 discuss the advent and effects of the idea of mass education within the Islamic and Confucian traditions respectively in contrast to older regimes of authoritative knowledge. Chapters 3 and 4 discuss how the minority question emerged within and alongside the drive to mass education in contrast to older negotiations of difference. Chapters 1 and 3 discuss Islamic traditions and 2 and 4 discuss Confucian traditions. Chapter 5 provides contrast to the other body chapters; it concerns Western scholarship at the turn of the 20th century on Confucianism and Islam with respect to themes such as knowledge and the emergence of the tradition-modernity binary in academic religious studies.

In chapter 1, I contrast Islamic reformist views of conscriptionist education with the educational philosophy at home in the madrasas. I begin in part 1 by introducing al-Ṭahṭāwī, who attempted to modernize the Egyptian educational system amid the rise of a militarizing state. Al-Ṭahṭāwī believed education was a religious calling rooted in human nature, and accordingly, every person should engage in it for religious reasons and to assure the human role on earth. Muḥammad ʿAbduh broadly agreed with this, adding that mass education was required to maintain a developing Muslim state. In part 2, I contrast the universalist vision with what I am calling a partitive view of education

in Ghazālī's *Iḥyā' ʿulūm al-dīn* (The revival of religious learning).[69] Ghazālī also agrees that Islam calls all believers to knowledge, but he says that formal study is the purview only of a dedicated few. Ghazālī believes that the great majority can seek out learned Muslims to assuage their doubts, while scholars need to focus on a lifetime vocation.

Chapter 2 contrasts mass education with the elite tradition of the Confucian exam and the Daoxue movement. Part 1 begins in the heat of the 1898 (Wuxu 戊戌) reform, in which Zhang Zhidong wrote the *Quanxue pian* 勸學篇 (Exhortation to learning).[70] The text argues for universal education in terms of the Confucian tradition of developing human capability (*rencai* 人才). Zhang believes every subject needs to be fully cultivated for energetic state service. In part 2 I examine the reform of the imperial-service exam in the Song 宋 dynasty that sought to select leaders on the basis of *rencai*. At the moment when the Confucian canon was becoming the basis of imperial public life, Zhu Xi also developed a philosophy of self-cultivation which could potentially apply to those who did not succeed in the exam. I argue that this Confucian tradition that provides for life exterior to the state has disappeared with the advent of mass education.

Chapter 3 returns to the eastern Mediterranean to investigate the minority question in modern states in contrast with the *dhimma* system of religious diversity in the premodern Muslim world. As part of its program to promote loyalty to the state, the Ottoman empire proposed a system of mass education to provide schooling for all

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[69] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' ʿulūm al-dīn* [Revival of religious learning], 2 vols (Cairo: Dār al-Salām lil-Ṭibāʿah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ wa-al-Tarjama, 2003.

[70] Zhang Zhidong, *Quanxue pian* 勸學篇 [Exhortation to learning] in *Quanji,* 12:9703-68.

subjects of all religions. I examine Muḥammad ʿAbduh's brief career leading a mixed-confession imperial school in Beirut. The cosmopolitan city was also the scene of intense Christian missionary activity, which Muslim conservatives opposed as vociferously as ʿAbduh's reform project. Rather than seeing opposition to learning across confessional lines as reactionary opposition to modernity and common life, I examine the very modernity of the minority question. In part 2, I look back at how differently Muslim thinkers distinguished a school as a site of moral intimacy and familial inculcation with the mixed traffic of a market place. I examine a text by Taqī al-Dīn ibn Taymiyya[71] which demands that Muslims scrupulously distinguish themselves from non-Muslims and ask what forms of common life have receded when intimacy with others is coerced as in modern education.

Chapter 4 examines the rise of the minority question in even more extraordinary circumstances in China. I return to Zhang's text to examine how it distinguishes patriotic and progressive Confucianism against other traditions such as Daoism and Buddhism. Zhang concludes that the temples and religious institutions of these traditions would better serve as schools for the whole nation rather than sites of obscure partiality. Zhang's sometime colleague Kang Youwei agrees with him and further says that Confucianism should serve as exclusive state religion (*guojiao* 國教). Kang imagines a Confucian future in which the tradition subsumes all others and advocated for forceful persecution of other traditions. Part 2 looks back at the syncretism of traditions in

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[71] *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, eds. Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010); Ovamir Anjum, *Politics, Law and Community in Islamic Thought: The Taymiyyan Moment* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012).

China, particularly around the time of the Daoxue movement. I focus on a distinctive Confucian doctrine of the virtues and how the Muslim thinker Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 (1570-1660) deploys this ethics in his account of human flourishing.[72] I argue that in imperial China, the idea of one person belonging to one tradition to the exclusion of others tended not to come up, and that plurality was potential within individuals as well as society.

Lastly, chapter 5 turns the gaze to the Western academy at the turn of the 20th century and the rise of the modern study of religion. Where the rest of the dissertation focuses on how modernizers wanted people to learn about their own traditions, this chapter investigates the relationship between Western knowledge about the non-West and the belief in Western spiritual and technical exceptionalism. In part 1, I look at humanistic approaches which tend to see Islam, Confucianism, and other traditions as the "others" of Christianity and social-scientific approaches that see these as the "others" to modernity. I examine the textual studies of Max Müller and others who sought to put such traditions as Islam and Confucianism in the story of the universal human spirit—invariably a story told in Christian terms. Part 2 concludes the dissertation by turning to Max Weber, who takes up the humanistic scholars studied in part 1 to ask why Islam and Confucianism, in his view, did not modernize. As subtly and ironically as Weber scrutinizes Christian traditions, he argues rather flatly that at some points in their history, Islam and Confucianism became set in the historical concrete of

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[72] Wang Daiyu 王岱輿, *Zhengjiao zhenquan* 正教真 [Real commentary on the true teaching]; *Qingzhen daxue* 清真大学 [Great learning of Islam]; *Xi hen zhengda* 希真正答 [True responses on the rare truth] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1987).

ideal-types. Whether generous humanists or skeptical social scientists, modern Western scholars have tended to exclude possibilities of hearing others on their own terms.

Chapter 1 Guides to Faith: Mass Education and Islamic Thought

Introduction

This chapter contrasts two conceptions of education: the modern idea of schooling as a universal right and obligation and the premodern idea of formal study as a path to religious vocation. Religious scholars have long upheld that Muslims need to learn about and understand their religion;[1] however, only recently have ʿulamāʾ argued that communities must develop the political and material infrastructure of compulsory schooling. They encountered and considered this idea while confronting the rise of modern colonial and hegemonic state forms. However, universal education does not simply reduce to power relations. Rather it results from broader changes in epistemology, ethics, and politics at work in Islamic traditions—a case I make in two parts. In part one, I examine the work of ʿulamāʾ such as Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801-73)[2] and Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905)[3]. These reformers argued not only that

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[1] A prophetic ḥadīth tradition states that "Seeking knowledge is an obligation on every believer" (*ṭalab al-ʿilm farīḍa ʿulā kull muslim*); Muḥammad ibn Yazād ibn Māja, *Sunan* [Sunna]*: muqaddima* [introduction], *bāb faṣl al-ʿulamāʾ wa-l-ḥaththʿalā ṭalab al-ʿilm* [chapter on the ʿulamāʾ and encouraging the seeking of knowledge].

[2] David Newman, translator's introduction, *An Imam in Paris: Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric, 1826-1831* (London: Saqi, 2004), 29-66; David H. Warren, "For the Good of the Nation: The New Horizon of Expectations in Rifaʿa al-Tahtawi's Reading of the Islamic Political Tradition," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 34 no. 4 (2017): 30-36.

[3] Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Al-ʿAmāl al-kāmila* [Complete works], 6 vols. (Beirut: al-Muʹassasah al-ʿArabīyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 1974).

For scholarly biographies, see ʿUthman Amin, *Muḥammad ʿAbduh,* trans. Charles Wendell (Washington, DC: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953); Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 67-152; Mark Sedgwick, *Muhammad ʿAbduh* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010).

conscriptionist education was required for the moral and material progress of the community and the security of the Muslim state, but for the development of individual religious belief and subjectivity, and even for life itself. In part two, I contrast this modern way of thinking with a premodern theory of partitive religious education. In the *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* (The revival of religious learning),[4] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111)[5] distinguishes between the universal individual responsibility to seek knowledge and the much narrower calling to formal study. Ghazālī argues the latter applies only to those who will ultimately guide the community and teach others. Far from seeing "everyone else" as deficient in ability, duty, or rights, as is the modern view of people without schooling, Ghazālī articulates a mode of intellectual self-reliance and discernment in religious life.

Part one: Education as Islamic universal
Introduction

This part outlines how late-19th century reformist ʿulamāʾ conceived of universal education as a requirement of modern religious life. Such a life was supposed to take place in a public society with open, shared knowledge. In the epistemologies of the European Enlightenment, knowledge is potentially accessible to anyone from any religious or political commitment. In the wake of European imperialism in the Muslim

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[4] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn* [Revival of religious learning], 2 vols (Cairo: Dār al-Salām lil-Ṭibāʿah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ wa-al-Tarjama, 2003.

[5] For scholarly biographies and monographs on Ghazālī, see Montgomery Watt, *Muslim Intellectual: Muslim Intellectual: A Study of al-Ghazali* (Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press, 1963); Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Eric Ormsby, *Ghazali: The Revival of Islam* (Oxford: Oneworld: 2008); Kenneth Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver: Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī and his "Revival of the Religious Sciences"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014).

world, ʿulamāʾ and political leaders in Egypt sought foreign expertise to develop modern educational institutions based in part on these new understandings. Al-Ṭahṭāwī, among others, called for universal mandatory schooling to instruct children of both sexes through young adulthood in religion, science, and the liberal arts. Simply put, his universal ideas of the human intellectual condition necessitated universal education. Because he thought education took place primarily at home, he argued for the effective conscription of all citizens to promote the sensibilities and attitudes associated with moral and material progress, distinctive gender roles, and being human itself. He thought that humanity was divinely entrusted with sovereignty over the earth and that without formal education, people could have no access to the knowledge they need to fulfill this mandate or to understand religious doctrine and obligations. Where al-Ṭahṭāwī theorized universal mass education as right and obligation, ʿAbduh reflected on his various work in the field of education reform. He basically understood the Islamic mission as pedagogical and rationalistic, inspiring inquiry and enlightenment, in contrast to scholarly and popular orientalist caricatures of the time. ʿAbduh also believed only mass education could facilitate the state security and economic development that modern times required.

Modern knowledge and the colonizing state

New conceptions and politics of knowledge shaped the asymmetric exchange between Egypt and European powers at the time when the discourse of mass education emerged. Such asymmetries developed in part through new epistemologies that claimed truth on neutral grounds, open to all irrespective of religion through free inquiry. Kant's credo "dare to know" promoting the pursuit of knowledge and the overcoming of

traditional barriers provides a basis of the idea of education's liberatory potential.[6] If knowledge could make people free, knowledge itself was also detached from particular authorizing structures, such as Christian churches and classical-medieval standards of formal proof and demonstration.[7] In the Enlightenment, knowledge was supposed to consist of facts observable in the world that were intelligible through universally-applicable rationality.[8] This objectively-observable knowledge could be published in new media and circulated in spaces such as the famous salons, coffeehouses, and secret and private societies, all of which constituted "publics" that, if not open to all, were not

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[6] Immanuel Kant, "*Toward Perpetual Peace" and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, trans. David L. Colclasure. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 17-23. However, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, among others, had doubts that the progress and spread of knowledge would contribute to a more moral society even at the height of the cult of reason, an objection he made the basis for his own theory of education. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences and Arts*, trans. Judith R. Bush, Roger D. Masters, and Christopher Kelly (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England [for] Dartmouth College. 1992).

[7] Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Science of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: An Essay in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 36-87; Daniel A. Stolz, *The Lighthouse and the Observatory: Islam, Science, and Empire in Late Ottoman Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic: 1860-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Stolz describes how late-19th century Egyptian ʿulamāʾ and laypeople compared and contrasted modern science disembedded from particular religious commitments with older ideas of the cosmos and the natural world in the history of Islamic thought. Marwa Elshakry studies the impact of the interest in modern science in different confessional and non-confessional contexts in the the Arab world in the late-19th and early-20th century. I deal with Elshakry's treatment in chapter 3 part 1 below.

[8] MacIntyre says that Kant made a serious of poor arguments to defend his idea of morality as a set of maxims abstracted from any tradition or context, and according to MacIntyre, Kant's seed of error grew into the amoral chaos of the modern West; 43-47.

necessarily organized within traditional boundaries of religion, class, and gender.[9] When Napoleon occupied Egypt from 1798-1801, he was accompanied by a contingent of *savants* interested in Egypt as a natural and human environment.[10] In France and elsewhere, a new Egyptomania took hold in the European elite, a knowledge that would connect with other fields such as the study of language[11] to form the basis of modern Orientalism, discussed in chapter 5 below. Here, I want to highlight new knowledge as the connection between Europe and Egypt. As interest in the universal human subject and the past of the non-Western other developed in Europe,[12] European technical and

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[9] Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society*. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1988), 5-22, 86-95; Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), 1-42.

[10] Juan Ricardo Cole, *Napoléon's Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan, 2007); Edward Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 76-92.

[11] Consider the importance of Edward William Lane, *Description of Egypt: Notes and Views in Egypt and Nubia…* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2000); *Arabic-English Lexicon* (New York: F. Ungar, 1956); *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, Written in Egypt During the Years 1833-35* (London: East-West Publications, 1978) .

[12] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 16-65; Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions, or, How European Universalism Was Preserved In The Language Of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 265-73.

Consider the Exposition Universelle and the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago as late-19th century exhibitions of humanity in the West. Mitchell memorably describes the in Paris in 1889. At the Exposition, people in Europe could see samples of "traditional" non-European costumes, rituals, and architectural spaces. Masuzawa argues that the Parliament normalized the idea that Protestantism existed in greater and lesser degrees in all world religions as such, and so was uniquely legible to German, English, and American scholars, a topic I address in chapter 5.

scientific expertise became a political question in the non-West.[13] Public knowledge, particularly scientific knowledge, became a point of potential sharing between the West and others as well as, according to consensus, the best way to secure non-Western polities against the imperial activity that intensified in the 19th century.

Humanity, Islam, and education: al-Ṭahṭāwī

Al-Ṭahṭāwī's career as an education reformer fit within the project of modernizing the Egyptian state which was both cosmopolitan and nationalist. Muḥammad ʿAlī (1769-1849) consolidated his hold on power to become Egypt's military leader, in fact if not formality, following the end of the French occupation 1801. If remembered as a forerunner of Egyptian nationalism or Arab nationalism, the Albanian-born pasha belonged also to the Ottoman world and the Mediterranean more broadly.[14] He employed few native Egyptians as officials, and military leaders tended to be from Turkish, Greek, and Caucasian backgrounds.[15] He cultivated support from the Azharī ʿulamāʾ and a multinational military state within Egypt as well as the Sublime

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[13] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial Classroom: Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002); Mark E. Lincicome, *Principle, Praxis, and the Politics of Education Reform in Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995).

Many non-Western states sought to adopt Western military, material-, and social-scientific ideas and practices to defend themselves against imperialism. The Chinese formula of adopting Western education and techniques to preserve indigenous traditions, which I discuss in chapter 2 part 1 applied to many contexts.

[14] Khaled Fahmy, *Mehmed Ali: From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt* (Oxford, England: Oneworld, 2009)

[15] Khaled Fahmy, *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali, His Army and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Porte. He sent students to France to study different technical and scientific fields.[16] However, his was not the first educational contact premised on acquiring expert knowledge from Europe. Europeans established a school of geometry in Istanbul in the early 18th century, and Ottoman rulers founded military colleges on the French model toward the end of the century.[17] Muḥammad ʿAlī's sent foreign-studies delegations first to Italy, with which large communities in Egypt had long-standing ties, and employed Western European experts and advisers in his projects of military, industrial, and agricultural reforms.[18] I bring up these facts to broaden the background of education reform and to suggest that we need to see it as more than a project of building up a single nation-state or as a response to Western imperial protagonism. Al-Ṭahṭāwī's vision of modern education did assume something like a national state and bears influence from his time in France;[19] however, his thought also more broadly reflects the epistemologies and politics of his period and situation.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī articulated his ideas for reform in many different contexts and institutions. He studied the ḥadīth and Arabic grammar and rhetoric at Azhar and

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[16] Alexis Wick, "Sailing the Modern Episteme: Al-Ṭahṭāwī on the Mediterranean," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 34 no. 2 (2014): 405-17.

[17] Newman, 15-28.

[18] Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 100-95.

[19] Warren, 37-46.

David Warren says that modern scholars have not appreciated the extent to which al-Ṭahṭāwī draws on and repurposes terms and expressions of Islamic political traditions in his conception of the nation-state (*waṭan*). Below, I focus on the ways that al-Ṭahṭāwī takes up those traditions to argue that mass education supports the nation, religion, and human development as well.

attracted the attention of the scholar Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār (1766-1835), who served as shaykh al-Azhar in the 1830s.[20] Al-ʿAṭṭār also advocated engagement with the physical and medical sciences and history and enjoyed Muḥammad ʿAlī's patronage, a combination that would shape al-Ṭahṭāwī's career. After serving as imām to the Egyptian student delegation to Paris from 1826-31,[21] al-Ṭahṭāwī directed Cairo's Language School (*Madrasa al-alsun*) and translated numerous works of geography, material science, and history.[22] His political and public fortunes rose and fell with different approaches to the questions of modernization pursued by Muḥammad ʿAlī's successors as khedive. He was likely the target of ʿAlī Mubārak (1823-93)[23]. Where al-Ṭahṭāwī's reformist program applied to many kinds of educational institutions, Mubārak's political educational theory tended to give up on the idea that religious learning could ever be modern.[24] Indeed, al-Ṭahṭāwī's thought fits neither into a secular-nationalist vein or a religious-cosmopolitan tendency like Muḥammad ʿAbduh's. It rather uses concepts such as

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[20] Daniel Crecelius, "Non-Ideological Responses of the Egyptian Ulama to Modernization", in *Scholars, Saints and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions in the Middle East*, ed. Nikki Keddie, 167-205 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

[21] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *An Imam in Paris*, 101-373.

[22] Warren, 34-35.

[23] Lorne M. Kenny, "'Alī Mubārak: Nineteenth Century Egyptian Educator and Administrator," *Middle East Journal* 21 no. 1 (1967): 35-51.

[24] Michael Reimer summarizes "in 'Ali Mubarak's view, although al-Azhar remains a shrine and symbol of religious authority, it is no longer a center for serious intellectual endeavor. Because of its moral, pedagogical, and philosophical failings, it has become irrelevant to the future of culture in Egypt, though its history remains a vital element in the formation of Egypt's national identity." Michael J. Reimer, "Contradiction and Consciousness in Ali Mubarak's Description of al-Azhar," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 no. 1 (1997): 54.

humanity and the nation to explain and explore the religious mandate of universal learning.

Al-Tahṭāwī on humanity, education, and Islam

His most comprehensive work on the theory and practice of education occurs in his *Al-Murshid al-amīn li-l-banāt wa-l-banīn* (The trustworthy guide to girls and boys).[25] The title does not designate it as a book for children to read, but rather one centered around childrearing. It suggests that raising the young constitutes a collective religious undertaking. Al-Ṭahṭāwī believes that through formal education (*taʿllum* and *taʿlīm)*, children and parents assume their roles in the family and community, and the norms of human nature can be realized within the natural order. Beyond seeing education as necessary for family harmony, gender differentiation, and social progress, al-Ṭahṭāwī sees it as a requirement of human life itself because human dependence on the natural world demands that humans know that world. Al-Ṭahṭāwī does not argue that the state is responsible for educating citizens or should ensure that all children go to school. He rather argues that education in letters, sciences, and, most importantly, religious doctrine[26] is a vital human imperative involving and affecting all spheres of a community.

In this text, al-Ṭahṭāwī approaches education in terms of human universals. However, human universals are not all the same. Some universals describe the human

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[25] Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Al-Murshid al-āmīn li-l-banāt wa l-banīn* [The trustworthy guide to girls and boys] (Cairo: al-Majlis al-Aʿlā lil-Thaqāfa, 2002).

[26] He discusses his curriculum that includes sciences (*ʿulūm*), arts (*funūn*), and letters (*ādāb*) among other religious and non-religious topics; 86-90.

condition through Islamic traditions,[27] and others describe it in a way that necessitates mass education as a goal of religious human-development politics[28]. Al-Ṭahṭāwī tries to ground the latter in the former. While he speaks often of the nation or homeland (*waṭan*),[29] the modern idea of the national state does not limit the scope of his thinking, nor does he emphasize that an educated body politic will help the state better advance domestic or geopolitical goals. The imaginary he does focus on is rather that of a community constituted by the family (*ahl*), thought of as mothers, fathers, boys, and girls. Everyone potentially needs to assume the role of teacher or learner, and formal education for the needs to start as young as possible and continue to adulthood.[30] Al-Ṭahṭāwī calls for *tarbiyya* applied to all people, young and old, male and female in this introductory exposition.[31] Only in the education of each individual does learning benefit the whole of society.[32] Education also constitutes a natural responsibility of the community for its members, and particularly of mothers for their children.[33] He observes that all societies provide for education in some way or another.[34] In this view, assuring that everyone has a full and adequate education would be perfecting a practice in place that touches and each individual and the whole of society. This signifies that the

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[27] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 19-26.

[28] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 57-59.

[29] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 90-95.

[30] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 8-18.

[31] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 4-8.

[32] al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 27-29.

[33] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 6.

[34] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 7.

education reform the author describes is a path to meeting a need and realizing a commitment strived for in varying conditions worldwide. The pursuit of learning crosses contexts because it helps human secure basic needs in connection to their shared environment.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī understands education as the way to secure humanity's place in nature and crucial to human life in the world. The physical make-up of humanity differs little from that of the animals, plants, and inorganic things of the world, but that God provides for the difference between human beings and what might otherwise overpower them.[35] al-Ṭahṭāwī sees a basic equality within humanity and a "lack of distinction of its colors and natures and its tendencies to civilization (*tamaddun*) by nature".[36] Men and women share in some attributes (*ṣifāt*) together while each gender specializes in others.[37] Al-Ṭahṭāwī begins this discussion by outlining human rationality (*nāṭiqiyya*) and its sovereignty (*sulṭana*) over the created world.[38] This provides the ecological and anthropological basis for understanding education as refining select attributes within this sovereignty. He concludes a discussion the physical necessities of human life:

> Humanity—to the extent that it is surrounded by many things with whose knowledge it is charged and is responsible for, and being aware of the fact of their necessity to humanity—is such that it must have knowledge of them and study

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[35] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 25-28.

[36] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 28. Warren argues that al-Ṭahṭāwī adopts *tamaddun* as a call to progress for Egypt; 44. However, in this passage, al-Ṭahṭāwī claims to observe a practice present in all societies irrespective of *tamaddun*. In this section of the treatise, al-Ṭahṭāwī is concerned with the perfection of attributes universal to communities and individuals.

[37] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 34-48.

[38] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 19-21.

their nature, and there is no way of access to that knowledge except learning and education (*tarbiyya*).[39]

This extended statement brings together significant assertions: that knowledge of the reality of human dependency on the things of the world is self-evident, that humans are charged with knowledge about those things and their nature, and that humans have no access to that needed knowledge save by education—and it is this last point that is particularly striking. Al-Ṭahṭāwī says here that without formal learning, people could have no way of knowing what they need to fulfill their stewardship responsibilities or even to survive, given that they depend on nature. *Tarbiyya* here secures human needs and is essential to human responsibilities. Al-Ṭahṭāwī is saying that without *tarbiyya*, [40]humans cannot survive. He is defining human life in biotic and normative terms through access to education. The author implies that without it, human ecological relationships cannot be realized, a view echoed in his outlook on social relationships.

In addition to designating education as necessary for achieving a natural habitat, al-Ṭahṭāwī explains how learning instructs people how to inhabit social roles with particular capabilities. He says girls and boys should both learn reading, writing, and mathematics.[41] Virtues (*faḍāʾil*) such as intellect (ʿ*aql*), purity (ʿ*afa*), and justice (ʿ*adl*) obtain in both men and women "to the extent they are people" (*min ḥaythihim nās*).[42] However, much of the text concerns the necessity of educating men and women for

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[39] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 60.

[40] Though it is clear al-Ṭahṭāwī is referring to the meaning of formal education, *tarbiyya* also refers to agricultural and moral cultivation.

[41] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 66-67.

[42] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 34.

distinct roles in the domestic sphere. Educating women, particularly contributes to "the improvement of social intercourse, relations (*maʿāshira*), and gentleness (*ḥilm*)".[43] This 19th-century vision of happy homemaking and good relations extends to polygynous households as well as monogamous ones.[44] Relationships should be governed by expectations of rights and should aim at intimate caring.[45] However, al-Ṭahṭāwī remains focused on relationships between husbands and wives, and parents and children; he does not discuss kinship beyond two generations or collateral relationships, but for briefly addressing siblings' love for each other.[46] For him, the household mirrors the school and acts as school where *tarbiyya* is not politically realized.[47] It is not novel that al-Ṭahṭāwī is concerned with parents instructing children. However, he sees kinship relations as instrumental to the mission of modern education, and in formal education, people learn how to be kin. Education cements the bases of biotic, social, and ethical life. Even if later reformers did not echo al-Ṭahṭāwī's claim that humanity could not survive without universal education, they did see this kind of instruction as necessary for the Muslim umma to thrive in the modern world.

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[43] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 55.

[44] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 151-57.

[45] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 273-77.

[46] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 378-86.

[47] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Murshid*, 298-375.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī concludes his text with a selection (*shidhra*) of ḥadīth of Muḥammad[48] on the humanity's precarity in the absence of the intervention of religious knowledge. Among them, he writes, is a tradition about the distinction between the ḥalāl and the ḥarām. It says

> The ḥalāl is clear (*bayn*) and the ḥarām is clear, but between them there are certain doubtful things (*mushtabihāt*) which many people do not know. So, one who guards against (*man attaqā*) the doubtful things protects their religion and their honor. However, one who falls into doubtful things (*shabahāt*) falls into ḥarām, like the shepherd who allows grazing around a bounded pasture (*ḥimā*), they are liable to fall in it (*yuwshiku an yawqaʿ fīh*).[49]

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[48] Jonathan AC Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009).

Ḥadīth are traditional accounts of the words and actions of the early community of Muslims, particularly of Muḥammad. A ḥadīth consists of a text (*matn*) of the particular words or actions, and a chain (*isnād*) of transmitters of how it reached the point where it was either written down or delivered to a particular time time. Al-Ṭahṭāwī's *shidhra* lacks the *isnād* components, which makes the *matn* components into abstracted ideas of good conduct. As Brown explains, this is not the way that premodern Muslim scholars understood the ḥadīth. For them, the genealogical and biobibliographical records of the traditions themselves situated them in the lifeworld of the early communities, or in the case of unreliable traditions, marked them outside it. See also chapter 3 part 2 below.

[49] Al-Ṭahṭāwī, 393; Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: kitāb al-aymān* [book of faith], *bāb faḍli mani astabaraʾ l-dīnih* [chapter of the favor of one who cares for his religion]; Nawawī, *An-Nawawī's Forty Hadith*, trans. Ezzedin Ibrahim and Denys Johnson-Davies (Damascus: Holy Koran Publishing House, 1977), 42-43.

The text al-Ṭahṭāwī writes is very close to the text of the sixth tradition, which is attested in al-Bukhārī, in the canon of Abū Zakariyā al-Nawawī's (1233-77) 40 ḥadīth. The difference is in these last words, where al-Nawawī records "*yuwshiku an yartaʾ fīh*", which means "they are liable to allow grazing in it." I could not find a ḥadīth that records the text exactly as al-Ṭahṭāwī does. There is not much difference in meaning here in terms of what the shepherd is doing. However, al-Ṭahṭāwī's shepherd who falls is perhaps doing something worse, or having something worse happen to him, literally in the text, whereas al-Nawawī's version implies disfavor or punishment might happen to the shepherd later.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī concludes his text that calls for mass education with this ḥadīth, and he is using this prophetic statement to make a point. While people might not need specific instruction to have some idea of what constitutes the ḥalāl and the ḥarām broadly, there are many things that are not clear. Untutored people (or even people who have to lead other people like shepherds) might not discern correctly among the *shabahāt* and fall into error. Al-Ṭahṭāwī is using this tradition to conclude his case for mass education as an obligation of the human biological and moral condition. However, the ḥadīth also says that those who tread carefully, so to speak, can avoid the *ḥimā* where they should not go. You could argue that this ḥadīth says believers are on their own recognizance, and I will argue in part 2 that a partitive model of education assumed that most people could largely make their way in the world or seek guidance in it. However, in late-19th century Egypt, as elsewhere, the universal model articulated by al-Ṭahṭāwī became the assumed norm.

Education, politics, and Islamic reform

In the generations after al-Ṭahṭāwī, ʿulamāʾ and others discussed education reform as Western empires reasserted themselves and orientalist discourses circulated. Increasingly ʿulamāʾ in different contexts recognized Western, particularly British, power as a challenge affecting the whole umma.[50] Al-Ṭahṭāwī worked for Egyptian institutions, however the generation that included Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Jamāl al-

[50] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 103-29.

Dīn al-Afghānī (1839-97),[51] saw Islamic reform as a project focused on securing particular states as well as on that should secure the Muslim umma and Islamic intellectual traditions as such. While different Muslim states sponsored different reform programs and experienced successful and failed attempts to secure autonomy, Christian missionary activity increased.[52] The orientalist and historian Ernest Renan (1823-92) earned notoriety in the Muslim world for his *Islam and Science*, in which he outlined the racial and religious-intellectual obstacles to Muslim social and material progress.[53] If the work encapsulated many opinions broadly held in the West and beyond, Renan particularly dismisses those who claim to synthesize Muslim doctrine and modern science. A newly assertive and optimistic counter from Afghānī and others does not need to be seen only as response, however.[54] Renan's prejudice and new imperial missions provoked not only reinvigorated reformism of the cosmopolitan and liberal varieties but also indicated these would not be contained only within established institutions, paradigms of translation, and colonial administrations and Muslim states.

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[51] Nikki R. Keddie *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "Al-Afghānī"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani": A Political Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

[52] Marwa Elshakry, "The Gospel of Science and American Evangelism in Late Ottoman Beirut" in *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters*, ed. Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather J. Sharkey, 167-210 (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2011).

[53] Cemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 47-54.

[54] Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, "Answer of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani to Ernest Renan" in Nikki Keddie, ed., *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, 181-87; Monica M. Ringer and Holly Schissler, "The Al-Afghani-Renan Debate, Reconsidered" *Iran Nameh* 30 no.3 (2015): 28-45.

Reform, synthesis, and progress: Muḥammad ʿAbduh

ʿAbduh's thoughts on education reform reflected the eclectic influences and interlocutors of his peripatetic later career. British authorities banished ʿAbduh from Egypt for his support of the ʿUrābī resistance in 1882, and ʿAbduh traveled to Beirut to serve as an academic administrator,[55] then lived in Paris and published the anti-imperialist periodical *Al-ʿUrwa al-wuthqā* (The firmest bond) with Afghānī. He then visited Britain and Tunisia before returning to Egypt in 1888.[56] As Islamic reform's celebrity spokesman, ʿAbduh met with considerable criticism for his novel and idiosyncratic thinking on legal and doctrinal issues.[57] He never silenced accusations that he was more of a modern cosmopolitan than a rooted Muslim, even though he served as Grand Muftī of Egypt, and he could not dissuade his critics that he had Western sympathies, despite his record as an opponent of empire.[58] Contemporaneous critics and modern academic scholars have interpreted his various public projects as incoherent (even opportunistic, depending on his audience and his perception of

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[55] See chapter 3 part 1.

[56] Mark Sedgwick, *Muhammad Abduh* (Oxford, England: Oneworld, 2010), 29-70.

[57] Indira Falk-Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism: Al-Azhar and the Evolution of Modern Sunni Islam* (New York: Macmillan, 2010), 165-96.

[58] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin*, 161-218.

expediency) attempts to Islamicize Western liberalism.[59] However, ʿAbduh's bricolage of education reform thought nonetheless shows how he conceived of a more unified umma achieving epistemic and political modernity.

ʿAbduh took an eclectic approach to education reform reflecting the varied situations in which he found himself and the different perspectives he tried to engage. He did not write a detailed treatise on a single curriculum to prepare anyone for any future life or articulate a vision of society based on sensibilities it needed to have inculcated as al-Ṭahṭāwī did. Samira Haj argues that ʿAbduh is too often misread as an adapter of the Enlightenment, and that rather than favoring autonomy of religious thinking, ʿAbduh's education theory is based in his view that Muslims live enmeshed in political society with commitments to each other.[60] In assessing the prospects for his social vision of education, he approached different educational institutions within Egypt and under the Ottoman state on their own terms.[61] ʿAbduh's working life included different institutional contexts, as the travels and comments of earlier generations of Muslim reformers contributed to a cosmopolitan conception of a Muslim society confronting imperialism and its prejudices and coming to new terms for how religion

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[59] Falk-Gesink summarizes criticism of ʿAbduh, saying that he "did internalize European ideals, but melded them creatively with Islamic concepts, creating a hybridized framework for an authentically Islamic revolution of thought. This held within it a potential for overturning British authority. In a classic "mimic man" scenario, Lord Cromer would later discredit him as not sufficiently earnest in his faith, too Westernized to be really useful. Nonetheless, to his Egyptian critics, 'Abduh was a colonial agent," 165-66. See also Malcolm Kerr, *Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muḥammad ʿAbduh and Rashīd Riḍā* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

[60] Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 119-27.

[61] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila* 3:81-85; 112-15.

could be valued. As much as texts such as the *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (Essay on monotheism)[62] discuss Islam as the divine enlightenment and education of the whole human community, ʿAbduh's discourses of education also place national society at the center, explicitly addressing the need for economic and social development in the Egyptian context.[63] Along with other discourses shaped by progressive power, conscriptionist education was conceived as a human need applicable to any social context as it was embedded in the imaginary of the nation. ʿAbduh's conceptions of an educated religious society show both his anthropological universalist and Egyptian Islamic concerns.

For ʿAbduh, a modern Muslim society should be schooled in knowledges that reinforce each other. He argues that proper understanding of dialogical theology (*kalām*) contains "the calling to modern knowledge (*daʿwa ilā al-ʿulūm al-ʿaṣriyya*)".[64] For ʿAbduh, *kalām* represents "judgments to support the foundations of religion with definitive intellectual evidence (a*ḥkām li-taʾayyid al-qawāʾid al-dīniyya bi-l-adilla al-ʿaqaliyya al-qaṭiʿiyya*)".[65] Here ʿAbduh reasserts that logic expressed through clear and rigorous theology critically reinforces religious belief. However, he puts this classical

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[62] Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Risālat al-tawḥīd* [Essay on monotheism] in *Kāmila*, 3:353-480; *The Theology of Unity,* trans. Ishaq Masaʾad and Kenneth Cragg (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966).

[63] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:42-49; 3:106-11.

[64] Muḥammad ʿAbduh, "*Al-ʿUlūm al-kalamiyya wa-l-daʿwa ilā al-ʿulūm al-ʿaṣriyya*" [The theological sciences and the calling to modern knowledge], in *Kāmila*, 3:15-22.

[65] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:15.

understanding with the statement that "beneficial new sciences (*ʿulūm jadīda mufīda*)" are "requirements (*lawāzim*) for our life in these times", and thus "it is necessary for us to acquire them (*la budda linā iktisābihā*)".[66] Alongside ʿAbduh's saying that Islam is the "first religion to address the rational mind" and open the secrets of the material world to observation, not instituting education of this reformist organon is a political and theological failing.[67] Though imagining educational reform does not necessitate mass education as such, an expanded and interconnected understanding of *ʿulūm* argues against the sufficiency of older religious institutions of learning and against the sufficiency of any education directed toward only a personal vocation, whether religious or technical. Such a task is beyond the ken of the ʿulamāʾ and the kinds of technical experts who worked in elite military academies alone; it requires a universal education, he explains. ʿAbduh believes that religious commitment needs to engage in multiple forms of understanding to be truly informed. He also believes that a Muslim state needs to provide for an informed society to be truly able to sustain its sovereignty and character.

While ʿAbduh had an optimistic vision of reformed and revivified Muslim societies, he also believed mass education was a political urgency. He says

> Is it not evident that there is no religion (*dīn*) without the state (*dawla*), and there is no state without imposing force, and there is no imposing force without power (*qūwa*), and there is no power without wealth (*tharwa*)? Trade and

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[66] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:18.

[67] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:466. ʿAbduh viewed modern science as an instrumental necessity and a proud Muslim legacy. However, he saw himself as also a resistor of materialism. Elshakry, *Reading Darwin*, 161-218.

> industry do not belong to the state, rather its wealth is through the wealth of the people. The wealth of the public cannot be but through the spread of knowledge among them to the extent that they have access to attaining it.[68]

Self-determination and human development depend on the spread of knowledge. Here, ʿAbduh's imperative parallels al-Ṭahṭāwī's assertion that ecological life depends on education. Both authors present these as truisms and do not consider the material or political life of societies that are not organized around the spread of knowledge; in other words, they do not consider how most people lived through most of history. ʿAbduh and and al-Ṭahṭāwī believe that the state and society realize themselves and make themselves effective through their ability to educate. Both are manifestations of the extent and nature of education access. What can be understood as natural forms of human life depend on one particular developmentalist project. However, ʿAbduh's and al-Ṭahṭāwī's invocation of religion is not incidental to their advocacy. It rather signifies a shift toward understanding religion's capacity for progressive power, a shift that has proved determining of modern social and political imaginaries of the project of conscriptionist education.[69] Many different kinds of intellectual heirs to al-Ṭahṭāwī and ʿAbduh's reformism take part in this shift, as do many who do not share their views of the accommodation of Muslim doctrine with modern science or a flexibility in legal

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[68] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:20.

[69] Compare Gregory Starrett, *Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics, and Religious Transformation in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), particularly 23-62.

thought.[70] However, this shift does signal a departure from premodern understandings of the ethical commitment and social vocation of education.

Part two: Partitive education and teleological understandings of ʿ*ilm*

Introduction

In this part, I present a partitive model of education, with its balance of responsibility between lay people and religious scholars, in contrast to the modern conception of mass education above. Premodern as well as modern Muslims have believed in the goods of knowledge and the refinement of education. The ʿulamāʾ have generally held that ʿ*ilm* is obligatory for both individual believers to conduct their religious life and for the umma as a whole, which also requires special kinds of knowledge, particularly fiqh and ʿ*aqīda*. In the premodern period, this latter kind of knowledge required worthy and disciplined learners to seek it out in a process that most resembles what moderns understand as education. This chapter part contrasts the different epistemologies and subjectivities that apply to ordinary believers and committed scholars in Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ* and the educational philosophies and practices taking shape in his time. Ghazālī argues that while God requires all Muslims to understand their ritual duties and some basics of his nature, believers are also entrusted to seek authoritative opinions for themselves on what they do not understand. In a crucial contrast from the modern period, Ghazālī also believes ordinary people can judge for themselves the amount and kind of knowledge they need. He stresses they should not look beyond their understanding, lest they confuse themselves. For these ordinary people, he outlines a subjectivity of discipleship and reception to the authority

[70] Falk-Gesink, 197-235.

of guides. Ghazālī draws significant contrasts between laypeople and those who undertake formal religious education for the sake of guiding the community.

A partitive model of premodern learning: Knowledge as fulfillment and obligation

Though the partitive model differs from modern ideas of universal education as right and duty, some continuities bear focus. Al-Ṭahṭāwī and ʿAbduh argue that rationality dictates how humanity can understand its place in the cosmos and in history, and here they do not only follow the European Enlightenment. Elaborative Aristotelians such as Abū l-Walīd ibn Rushd (1126-98), synthetic Aristotelians such as Abū ʿAlī ibn Sīnā (980-1037), and other thinkers such as Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406) believe a rational faculty distinguishes humanity from the rest of creation, and the creator's intellect interacts through higher cognitive states.[71] Crucially, however, moderns make *taʿlīm*

[71] Primary sources: Abū l-Walīd ibn Rushd, *Long Commentary on the "De anima" of Aristotle*, trans. Richard C. Taylor (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Abū ʿAlī ibn Sīnā, *Avicenna's "De anima": Being the Psychological Part of "Kitāb al-shifā'*, trans. Fazlur Rahman (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* trans. Franz Rosenthal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 333-40; secondary sources on the Aristotelian tradition: Herbert A. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, Theories of Human Intellect* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1992); Dag Nicholaus Hasse, *Avicenna's "De anima" in the Latin West: The formation of a Peripatetic Philosophy of the Soul, 1160-1300* (London: Warburg Institute, 2000); Dmitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition* (Leiden: Brill, 1988); for intellectual psychology and mystical traditions and their modern reception see also Omnia Elshakry, *The Arabic Freud: Psychoanalysis and Islam in Modern Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 42-62.

central to this process in ways it was not before.[72] Another similarity consists in the general idea that parents instruct children, particularly fathers instructing sons.[73] The nuclear family as a space and target of social politics is modern, however, as seen in the discourse of homeschooling in mid-19th century Egypt. Finally, something called *ʿilm* is obligatory for all in premodern and modern religious thought. It is just that premodern and modern educational theory makes use of different epistemologies. In premodern Islamic epistemologies, different kinds of knowledge called for different kinds of disciplines and pedagogies. The root of this concept emerges in how religious legal theory distinguishes different obligations of knowledge.

The partitive model of premodern Islamic education outlined here approaches learning in terms of its legal obligations. In the most general sense, Islamic legal theory evaluates human actions on a continuum from prohibited (ḥarām)[74] to obligatory (*farḍ* or *wājib*)[75]. Obligations are required of each individual Muslim (*farḍ ʿayn*) and of the umma in aggregate, of which a part may discharge the obligation for the whole (*farḍ kifāya*) (hence my use of the term "partitive" here). Jurists describe these obligations in

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[72] Consider how at odds with the modern education-centered epistemology is Ibn Sīnā's famous "flying man" thought experiment and Ibn Ṭufayl's fiction of a child alone on an island. These illustrate theories of sense perception, cognition, and logical reasoning as well as the centrality of divine inspiration in all human thinking. Michael Marmura, "Avicenna's 'Flying Man' in Context," *Monist* 69 (1986), 383–95; Abū Bakr ibn Ṭufayl, *Ibn Ṭufayl's "Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān": A Philosophical Tale* trans. Lenn Evan Goodman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[73] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, "O Son!" trans. David C. Reisman, in *Classical Foundations of Islamic Educational Thought*, ed. Bradley J. Cook (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2010), 88-107.

[74] Wael B. Hallaq, 2009. *Sharīʿa: Theory, Practice, Transformations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 308-24.

[75] Hallaq, 223-39.

detail in legal compendia (*mukhtaṣarāt*) such as Ibn Rushd's *Bidāyat al-mujtahid* (The distinguished jurist's primer).[76] Obligatory actions described here include, for example, the pillars (*arkān*) of religion, such as ṣalā,[77] keeping the fast of Ramaḍān,[78] paying zakāʾ,[79] and undertaking ḥajj[80]. These can be largely glossed as ritual actions in that they have prescribed timing and procedures, even if scholars and schools disagree about finer points. Other actions, such as the waging of jihād,[81] are considered *farḍ kifāya*. The partitive model here describes the seeking of knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*) as both *farḍ kifāya* and *farḍ ʿayn* and explores the different ways different kinds of learners and knowers conceive of and meet these obligations. The partitive model here in part 2 contrasts with the universalist conscriptionist model in part 1.

The partitive model I am proposing here distinguishes different types of learners and knowledges, and it does not have the conscriptionist implications of the concept of education understood as universal right and duty. From premodern to modern times, Islamic traditions valorize knowledge. However, *ʿilm* in a partitive understanding does not designate a uniform body of information, concepts, and know-how discoverable from any institutional perspective, or lack thereof, the way that the modern category of knowledge does. It certainly does not do so in the way that allows al-Ṭahṭāwī to say life

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[76] Abū l-Walīd Ibn Rushd, *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer*, 2 vols., trans. Imran Ahsan Khan Nyazee (Reading, England: Garnet, 1994).

[77] Ibn Rushd, *Jurist's Primer*, 1:96-226.

[78] Ibn Rushd, *Jurist's Primer*, 1:330-60.

[79] Ibn Rushd, *Jurist's Primer*, 1:283-323.

[80] Ibn Rushd, *Jurist's Primer*, 1:374-453.

[81] Ibn Rushd, *Jurist's Primer*, 1:454-88.

itself requires knowledge (let alone formal education) or ʿAbduh to say political society requires these. The *ʿilm* that the law requires of all is embodied and practiced in the basics of ritual and captured in authoritative formulas. The *ʿilm* only some are responsible for is the reserve of expert discernment and admits much greater possibilities of error and misapplication. Moreover, it is important to note that even if knowledge is uniformly understood as obligatory, the classical Islamic legal concept of *farḍ ʿayn* differs significantly from the modern idea of a human right or obligation as basis of conscriptionist project.[82] Premodern ʿulamāʾ did not think that if believers individually failed to fulfill this *farḍ*, then the whole of political society needed to be conscripted to assure they did. *Farḍ ʿayn* in and of itself does not imply the need for a particular political form or public space in which believers should fulfill what the law requires. In the late-19th century, ʿulamāʾ and others were living in a world that had many schools and was building more,[83] a world that assumed everyone had to go to a school with a set curriculum, but earlier generations had broader conceptions. This does not imply that premodern models were more capacious or accommodating any more than it implies the absence of modern political and technical developments circumscribes them.

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[82] Timothy Mitchell details the ways that modern governance at once promoted the ideas of individual liberty and public society as well as the fears of the deviant undisciplined individual and the mass mob. Where modern freedoms were offered, the needs for conscriptionist discipline seemed to increase; 95-127.

[83] Consider the survey in James Heyworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt* (London: Luzac and Co., 1939).

It is important to understand the ideals, spaces, and practices of premodern Islamic education on their own terms. The pious patronage that established and maintained premodern Islamic schools needs to be understood as securing individual merit and providing for community needs. School-patrons were not coordinating a conscriptionist exercise that extended to the whole community. Madrasas as well as mosques were often founded by religious endowment (waqf), a pious act that warranted consideration in the hereafter and commanded respect in life. Waqfs would often provide for basic upkeep and sometimes the services of Qurʾān recitation, but student stipends and payment for teachers were rare on the whole.[84] It is not that donors did not consider teachers' and students' needs, but that madrasas were spaces in which individuals pursued vocation. Personal responsibility serves as the basis for both the *farḍ ʿayn* and *farḍ kifāya* in that the law does not require others such as waqf-donors to provide for those seeking knowledge to fulfill either of the *farḍ*s. Of course, individuals are not left alone as autonomous agents with only themselves to rely on. Ḥadīth-traditions do express that parents should educate their children, and that political

[84] Jonathan Porter Berkey, *The Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

leaders are responsible for the education of children without parents.[85] However, education in this formula is not a potential "problem" in the sense understood in modern human rights or human development theory. Such an idea of a "problem" implies that social or political actors should change conditions, institutions, and practices to fulfill provide a population's needs.[86] In this vein, though mosques would often provide *kuttāb*-schools where young children could learn the basics of Qurʾān recitation at little or no cost, these were not modern schools designated to serve all of a specific population and that required that population to participate in them. Under presentist bias, *kuttāb*s seem to prefigure modern public schools, but this bias obscures the purposes premodern institutions serve in their own contexts more than it clarifies them.

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[85] In matters of Qurʾān instruction in the *kuttab*, leaders of the community or the community at large may act in the parents' capacity. "If the orphan (*yatīm*) has no guardian (*waṣā*) the leader (*ḥākim*) of Muslims oversees his affairs and proceeds in the manner of the orphan's father or guardian. If this is in a place without a *ḥākim*, the orphan is seen over in such a way that if the good people (*ṣāliḥū*) of this place come together in the oversight of the interests of the the people at large, then the overseeing of this orphan is one of those interests." Those who volunteer to teach such a child are undertaking a blessed task. Abū Ḥasan al-Qābisī, "Al-risāla al-mufaṣṣila li-aḥwāl al-mutaʿlimīn wa-aḥkām al-muʿallimīn" [Dedicated essay on the disposition of students and the guidance of teachers and students] in *Al-tarbiyya fī al-Islām aw al-taʿllum fī raʾī al-Qābisī* [Education in Islam, or learning in the opinion of al-Qābisī] ed. Aḥmad Fuʿād al-Aḥwānī (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, 1955), 292.

[86] The British educational reformer James Kay-Shuttleworth (1804-77) says "No fallacy is more transparent or more monstrous than that which assumes that knowledge, or whatever training is got in schools, is a natural want, certain to assert itself like the want of food, or clothing, or shelter, and to create a demand. The fact is the very reverse of this assumption. . . . All statesmen who have wished to civilize and instruct a nation have to create this appetite," quoted in Starrett, 23. Starrett and Mitchell discuss how important the naturalization of mass education was for the colonial and nation-building projects. I have tried to show that the imaginary of modern education involves more than some people seeking to control others, though it undeniably includes that.

The partitive model distinguishes modern ideas of political rights from older conceptions of ordered goods. It is stated above that though premodern jurists called some knowledge *farḍ ʿayn*, they did not then argue that learning it constituted a political right. Furthermore, though they believed the *farḍ kifāya* knowledge to be of a rarer and higher nature than that which the law minimally requires,[87] they did not then have to believe that in a more just or developed society, more people would have access to these fields or understand them. To take examples from the Western tradition, Aristotle and John Stuart Mill both believe contemplation and intellectualism represent goods higher than sensuous pleasures; however, only the latter's political philosophy proposes maximizing access to these goods for the greatest number of people.[88] Modern political philosophies like liberal Islamic reform do not easily accommodate the idea that not all goods apply or belong to all people in the same ways. Take literacy for example, reformers like ʿAbduh and al-Ṭahṭāwī tried to envision institutions that would instruct everyone how to read and write, and no doubt their efforts increased the number and diversity of people who could have access to their religious traditions and to

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[87] We explore the types of specialized knowledge below, and reasons 'ulamā' might fear that those knowledges would overwhelm or confuse ordinary people and invite controversy that could damage faith. 'Ulamā' could refer to texts such as the ḥadīth of the *ḥimā* above to warn laypeople against traversing into *mutashabihāt* they could not understand, if modern reformers thought the answer to this danger was to raise everyone to an 'ulamā' level.

[88] Aristotle, *Aristotle's Ethics: Writings from the Complete Works*, trans. Anthony Kenny and Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 260-67; John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1871), on the order of pleasures 10-17; on pursuing the greatest good for the greatest number, 8-38.

other fields of knowledge and interest.[89] However, the modern focus on uniformity ignores the possibility of plural forms of literacy, multifarious relationships among oral and textual forms, and thought beyond metropolitan settings.[90]

Partitive education in Ghazālī's *Revival*: Collective obligation and guidance

Like the reformist thought written in the modern political and epistemological context, Ghazālī's *Revival* reflects concern with preserving tradition against confusion and attesting its capacity to include multiple ways of thinking. Ghazālī lived in a time of doctrinal contestation in the fields of cosmogony and soteriology, and, more fundamentally, about the nature of and sources of authority in many fields and genres. It is easy to overstate the challenge of Greek logic to more catholic views of Sunnī theology, the extent of Ghazālī's defeat of freethinking at least in the Eastern Muslim world, and the significance of this repudiation in Islamic intellectual history as a whole.[91] However, the first book of Ghazālī's *Revival*, *The Book of* Knowledge (Kitāb al-

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[89] Mitchell, 128-60.

Mitchell links changes in Arabic orthography to the rise of print media, the increase in literacy, and colonial and nationalist forms of governmentality. We can acknowledge the authoritarian potentials in these changes as well as their possibilities for creating capabilities and solidarities.

[90] Brinkley Messick, *The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Rudolph Ware, *The Walking Qur'an: Islamic Education, Embodied Knowledge, and History in West Africa* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

[91] Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 14-19. Montgomery Watt *Muslim Intellectual: A Study of al-Ghazali* (Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press, 1963, 7-46.

ʿilm),[92] goes beyond the core assertions found in his *Incoherence of the Philosophers* and *Deliverance from Error* to claim a comprehensive order of intelligibilities of the world: empirical, logical, gnostic, and through revelation.[93] His leadership of the Niẓāmiyya madrasa in Baghdad also locates his work within the context of the Sunnī institutional response to the perceived challenges of theology untethered to the Qurʾān and the Sunna and to the Shīʿī missionary calling (*daʿwa*).[94] When the Sunnī Ayyūbīs retook Cairo from the Shīʿī Fāṭimīs in 1171, the Dār al-Ḥikma at the Azhar mosque was repurposed into the ancestor of the institution that instructed al-Ṭahṭāwī, ʿAbduh, and many reformist ʿulamāʾ and those with other views.[95] Examining the *Revival*'s theoretical and practical conceptions of knowledge and education cannot exhaustively account for premodern views of these topics. However, it shows an attempt at locating the practices of knowledge-seeking and formal education within a field of community and institutional commitments shaped by particular pressures in a text of formative significance.

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[92] Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ* 1:1-105; "*Kitāb al-ʿilm*"*: The Book of Knowledge: Book 1 of the "Ihyā ʿulūm al-dīn"*, *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*, trans. Kenneth Honerkamp (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2015).

[93] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Deliverance from Error: An Annotated Translation of "Al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl" and Other Relevant Works* translated Richard Joseph McCarthy (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 1999); *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* translated Michael E. Marmura (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2000); Moosa, 65-92; 165-89.

[94] Marshall G. Hodgson 1974, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization*. 3 vols. (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1974). vol. 2, 152-200.

[95] Hodgson, 2:255-92.

Ghazālī wrote the *Iḥyāʾ* as an organon of Islamic knowledges and inflects the text with his juristic, pedagogical, and mystical sensibilities. Ghazali's peripateticism differed from al-Ṭahṭāwī's mission and ʿAbduh's exile. Where the modern ʿulamāʾ were called to the political work of educational leadership and academic administration, Ghazālī left his post at the Niẓāmiyya to undertake ḥajj in 1095.[96] He began composing the *Revival* in relative seclusion in Damascus, and he reckoned this work continued for 11 years. He returned to his Nishapur near his native Tus in 1106, and after briefly resuming teaching in Baghdad at urging of the Saljuq vizier, he returned to Iran and died in his native Tus in 1111 having finished the *Iḥyāʾ*.[97] The text comprises 40 books (*kuttāb*). The first quarter concerns epistemology, *ʿaqīda*, and major ritual practices. The second quarter covers major life events, undertakings, and modes of living such as marriage, work, solitude, and travel. The third is called the "Quarter of the Destructive Evils" (*Rubʿ al-muhlikāt*) and discusses psychology and dispositional self-discipline. The last is titled the "Quarter of Deliverances" (*Rubʿ al-munjiyāt*) and deals with the care of the self through repentance, meditation, and self-examination. On the whole, the text takes the perspective of an individual male Muslim; that is, it does not describe the community or polity as such in the way that modern treatments of *ʿilm* and *taʿllum* do. He explains the different pathways of knowledge required of all and of some on others' behalf as different kinds of personal development.

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[96] Watt, 128-51; Eric Ormsby, *Ghazali: The Revival of Islam* (Oxford, England: Oneworld, 2008), 87-110; Kenneth Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver: Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī and his "Revival of the Religious Sciences"* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2014), 30-62.

[97] Gardner, 63-176.

Ghazālī introduces his text by describing the practices and modes of reference believers use to acquire the knowledge obligatory for every individual. Ghazālī begins by affirming the ḥadīths that state "seeking knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*) is incumbent on every believer" and "seek knowledge even unto China" do affirm that all need to know. Every practitioner needs to understand how to prepare for and carry out ṣalā, ḥajj, the fast of Ramaḍān, and the payment of zakāʾ.[98] For understanding the nature of God's oneness and Muḥammad's prophecy expressed in the shahāda, a believer does not need to have illumination (*kashf*) of this through "scrutiny of studies (*baḥth*) and attention to proofs (*adilla*), but rather it is enough for one to affirm it definitely without difference of suspicion (*iktilāf raib*) and disturbance of oneself (*iḍṭirāb nafs*)".[99] Similarly, for "creeds (*iʿtiqādāt*) and thoughts of the heart (*khawāṭir al-qulūb*)", one must learn of them "according to one's *khawāṭir"*; if doubt (*shakk*) arises, one is required to learn the knowledge affects the "resolution of doubt (*izālat al-shakk*)".[100] Ghazālī here articulates a doctrine of self-examination and self-reliance to meet an obligation of a relatively basic intellectual comprehension. This self-reliance has a corollary that a community will have knowledgeable people those with questions can seek. However, Ghazālī argues that the Sunna enjoins seeking knowledge to dispel doubt within oneself rather than meeting another person's standards such as a teacher committed to a set curriculum and to which one is bound by mutual obligation. This contrasts with modern conscriptionist views, whether a mandate of the law of a state or an enlistment of the learned to provide

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[98] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā*ʾ, 1: 24-25.

[99] Ibid., 1:24.

[100] Ibid., 1:25.

for the community's education indicating a different relationship between seekers of knowledge and their guides.

Ghazālī calls on ordinary people to fulfill their obligation by seeking guidance. Though Ghazālī's views do not show a political sense of urgency that a community be edified, he does articulate a characteristic vision of the need for comprehension. His Ashʿarī theological school tended to favor the doctrine that the faith of a believer dependent on another's understanding (*aymān al-muqallid*) was not sufficient for salvation.[101] In other words, those whose faith lacked understanding could not only simply trust that others understood correctly. In contrast to forms of authority that demand obedience or compel action, Hussein Agrama suggests that requesting the considered legal opinion of the fatwa involves the seeking of the authority of a guide.[102] A guide can find a way for a traveler beginning from one place and in search of another, though a guide's taking a journey does not substitute for the traveler's following them.[103] This model based on fatwa-guidance can apply to others with a reliance on a kind of self-knowledge that recognizes disturbance and doubt and can gauge a sufficient comprehension. Ghazālī makes it an obligation that individuals understand when they

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[101] Mohammad Fadel, "'*Istafti qalbaka wa in aftāka al-nasu wa aftāka*": The Ethical Obligations of the *Muqallid* between Autonomy and Trust" in *Islamic Law in Theory: Studies on Jurisprudence in Honor of Bernard Weiss* edited A. Kevin Reinhart and Robert Gleave, 105-26 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 106-14.

[102] Agrama "Ethics, Tradition, Authority: Toward an Anthropology of the Fatwa" *American Ethnologist* 37 no. 1 (2010): 13-14.

[103] In his discussion of education in the *Iḥyā'*, Ghazālī himself employs the metaphor of guided travel. He is talking about how important it is for students to share a fellowship like people making the pilgrimage, who look out and care for each other along the way. See chapter 3 part 2.

need guidance and what obstacles to understanding they must negotiate. He envisions the obligation of guidance met by a capable few.

Ghazālī bases his model of partitive education largely in the fields of knowledge too specialized for all but a few to master. He outlines these fields as those knowledges that are obligations of the whole community (*farḍ kifāya*), for which a part of the community, the ʿulamāʾ, may carry the obligation for others.[104] He divides these fields into those legal (*sharīʿiyya*) studies and those not concerned with the law. *Sharīʿiyya* studies encompasses the interpretation of the bases of the law (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) in revelation and prophetic tradition and authoritative practice as well as those studies required for interpretation such as grammar and usage (*naḥw*). Ghazālī highlights disciplinary protocols and compares the work of the law to the work of medicine, in which unpracticed skill can imperil the fate of those to whom one ministers.[105] After the legal field which is responsible for the fate of the community in the hereafter, Ghazālī describes the functions of theology (*ʿilm al-kalām*) and esoteric (*bāṭin*) knowledge, which are praiseworthy pursuits within boundaries prescribed by the early community and undertaken with a firm understanding of the Sunna. Those interested in mysticism or theology must not pursue their curiosity if they do not understand how and why these

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[104] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā*, 1:26-40.

[105] For the discipline required of students see Burhān al-Dīn al-Zarnūjī, "Taʿlīm al-mutaʿallim: Ṭāriq al-tataʿallum" [Instruction of the student: The method of learning], trans. G.E. von Grunebaum and Theodora M. Abel, in *Classical Foundations*, 108-55; for the reciprocal demands of students and teachers see Ibn Jamāʿa, "Tadhkirat al-sāmiʿ wa-l-takallum fī adab al-ʿālim wa-l-mutamutaʿallim" [A memorandum for listeners and lecturers: Rules of conduct for the learned and the learning], trans. Michael Fishbein, in *Classical Foundations*, 156-207.

require mastery in linguistic and tradition studies.[106] In effect the large amount of knowledge described as *farḍ kifāya* has a significant barrier to entry, which only the properly disposed and prepared should attempt to overcome.

Ghazālī distinguishes such people from the rest of the umma through an account of the nature of knowledge and the proper dispositions to it. If Ghazālī wants ordinary believers to be ready to seek guidance, the capability to explain doctrine or inculcate mystical awareness is not equally distributed.[107] Moreover, while earnest unexamined faith has full divine merit, misstatement and intellectual partisanship among the learned imperil harmony and direction for the whole community; such are the perils of knowledge (*āfāt al-ʿilm*).[108] Comparing the levels of acquiring knowledge to levels of acquiring wealth, Ghazālī says enough can be acquired to meet one's needs and not more, it can be hoarded, it can make people personally rich, or it can be "dispersed to others, and this is a virtuous generosity (*sakhiyya mutafaḍala*); this is the noblest state for wealth".[109] The granting of perspective (*tabṣīr*) to others is like dispersing wealth. Ghazālī says life requires a minimum amount of acquisitions, just as religious life subsists on a basis of obligatory knowledge. Those who seek more than their material

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[106] The Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ believed in a different order of knowledge and the self-discipline required to ask questions philosophically and learn about higher truths. Their organon differs, but their spirit is close to Ghazālī's. When ʿAbduh said Islam awakens the rational mind to scientific and religious truths, he is in drawing on both; Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ, "Al-Risāla al-sābiʿa min al-qism al-riyāḍā fī al-ṣanāiʿ al-ʿilmiyya wa-l-gharaḍ minhā" [The seventh epistle of the propaedeutical part on the scientific arts and what they aim at], trans. Rüdiger Arnzen, in *Classical Foundations*, 20-37.

[107] Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ*, 1:155-57.

[108] Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ*, 1:72.

[109] Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ*, 1:69.

needs can become greedy, as those who carelessly or improperly approach their studies may incline to vanity and pretentious ignorance. Only a noble-minded few practically understand the purpose of authoritatively providing knowledge, of sharing the wealth. However, Ghazālī is asserting more than Pope's saying about the dangers of a little learning in this analogy.[110] He presents the possibilities of living with a teleological understanding of knowledge.

Whereas Ghazālī argues that people can employ different capabilities to learn depending on their individual and communal needs, modern educational theory has only one normative view of these human dimensions. His account of the nature of knowledge is basically teleological, and those who understand this nature understand knowledge's purpose to be shared. Ghazālī does not mean that all those who have need of knowledge can or ought to try to become teachers, but that the practices of education are organized around achieving this state. However, Ghazālī does not imagine most who undertake *ṭalab al-ʿilm* understanding this or taking part in *taʿllum*, *taʿlīm*, or *tarbiyya*. His distinction between the subjectivities of self-reliant resolution of doubt and the self-sacrifice of scholarship corresponds to the distinction of *farḍ ʿayn* and *farḍ kifāya*. The imaginary of modern universalist education collapses this distinction. Every person must learn as much as they can of all the fields from ʿaqīda to natural science, and

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[110] The couplet from 1711: "A little learning is a dang'rous thing/Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring." Ghazālī might prefer a metaphor that makes clear that everyone needs to drink to survive, while agreeing with the spirit of the expression. Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism* (London: W. Lewis, 1711) Google Books. https://books.google.com/books?id=tt4NAAAAQAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=alexander+pope+little+knowledge&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjch7iC_YDaAhXm3YMKHT-mBNIQ6AEIKTAA#v=onepage&q&f=false
, II.216-7).

because correct knowledge reinforces correct belief, any deficiency in comprehension is potentially a deficiency in religion. It is not only that a modern capabilities approach is more abstract than Ghazālī's account of the capabilities of different vocational undertakings. It is also that the modern view of education inhibits our ability to imagine lives not structured by intense educational labor and extensive time to be fully humans. In modern times, Muslims or others may retain the belief in divine mercy toward modest errors in understanding; however, in either religious or non-religious terms, the individual and social relationship to knowledge has been altered through the conscription to learn.

Conclusion

In contrast to the premodern thought explored in part 2, epistemological and political modernity meant the flattening of distinctions in the call to knowledge and access to it. Reformist ʿulamāʾ believed that modern conditions challenged believers to organize new universal institutions to realize the what their religion had always taught. While reformists such as al-Ṭahṭāwī and ʿAbduh found practices of elementary and higher learning insufficient, the world that shaped these practices had other purposes for them the partitive model describes. The partitive model does not describe a system that could have offered education to all, in fulfillment of the mandate of the well-known ḥadīth, if only technology and organizational methods permitted. The model does not examine premodern education as an inchoate or potential form of modern education. It rather distinguishes the intellectual self-assessment and discipleship counseled for ordinary believers from the vocation of guidance a select few undertake on behalf of the community as a whole. The chapter does not contrast premodern and modern attitudes

to argue the former were more tolerant or open-minded, but to illustrate how the latter model reinterprets tradition under modern power.

The year that ʿAbduh died, 1905, was also the year in which China's imperial-service exam system finally came to an end. In terms of classical fiqh, the route to authoritative vocation closed. Reformers in China also proposed conscriptionist universal education, and they provided no clearer teleological vision of what subjects of such an education were to do with it, what they should be doing for their community, or how they should view the trajectory of their lives, the formative portions of which would be consumed with this education. Significant differences obtain between the different situations. Reformist scholar-officials in late-Qing China believed Chinese traditions supported a call for mass education. They did not invariably identify this calling with one strand proprietary strand of Chinese learning called "Confucianism", or a similar name,[111] unlike how ʿAbduh and others could argue Islam specifically addressed human rationality for the modern world. However, promoters of universal learning in China did have model of the imperial-service exam system. The *ke ju* by definition expressed a relationship to the imperial state and demanded ritual routines and a set curriculum in ways that premodern madrasas and *kuttabs* never did. As much as these distinctions bear consideration, the dramatic reconfiguration of tradition under progressivist modernizing conceptions comes to the forefront in approaching the issue of education.

[111] See chapter 4.

Chapter 2 Exhortations to Learning: Confucianism and Conscriptionist Education

Introduction

This chapter contrasts the discourse of conscriptionist education at the end of the Qing 清 (1644-1911) dynasty with the epistemology and politics of the imperial-service exam system (*keju* 科舉)[1] in the Confucian renaissance of the Song 宋 (960-1279). An official at the center of the calamitous reforms of 1898, Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909)[2] called for universal schooling in his text *Quanxue pian* 勸學篇 (Exhortation to learning),[3] published that year. Zhang argues that all imperial subjects should partake of a lifelong learning program that includes modern theoretical and applied sciences because everyone needs to contribute to building a modern society and economy. He makes Confucian learning the center of this curriculum because the survival of the state and the tradition are mutually dependent. This program was the cornerstone of Zhang's vision of an integrally Confucian national society; however, he does not conceive of what service education does for the people being educated or what future it prepares them for other than as human resources for development. He does not imagine a life without an all-encompassing state politics. By contrast, for the thousand

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[1] Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[2] Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, *Zhang Zhidong quanji* 張之洞全集 [The complete works of Zhang Zhidong], 12 vols. (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1998). For scholarly biographies, see William Ayers, *Chang Chih-tung and Educational reform in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); Daniel H. Bays, *China Enters the Twentieth Century: Chang Chih-tung and the Issues of a New Age, 1895-1909* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1978).

[3] Zhang Zhidong, *Quanxue pian* 勸學篇 [Exhortation to learning] in *Quanji,* 12:9703-68.

years before, the exams, with their Confucian canon, directly connected cultivated humanistic values to specific leadership vocations. Also in the Song, the dao-learning (Daoxue 道學)[4] movement led by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200)[5] looked to the canon to discern the shape of ways of and reasons for self-cultivation that are not limited to state service, as important as that is. The Song literati (*wenren* 文人)[6] also showed the pattern of flourishing lives outside the state.

Part one: Chinese learning and universal education
Introduction

This part considers the conceptions and possibilities of mass education in the context of the 1898 reform moment. I focus on Zhang Zhidong's *Quanxue pian* as a longform articulation of the mandate for mass education within Confucian political cosmogony, philosophy, and history. Zhang was a central figure pushing the emperor to call for extensive state investment and reorganization in the summer of the Wuxu 戊戌,[7]

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[4] I am choosing this term because it is more specific than "neo-Confucianism", referring to a movement-proper rather than a period that lasts several centuries. For more on the reference of this term as opposed to others see Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi's Ascendancy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992), 1-18; Stephen C. Angle and Justin Tiwald, *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical Introduction* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2017), 1-3.

[5] Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Zhuzi quanshu* 朱子全書 [Complete works of Master Zhu], 27 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002). For scholarly biography see: Wing-tsit Chan, *Chu Hsi: His Life and Thought* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1987).

[6] We will be dealing here mostly with the sense of *wenren* as scholars who are also graphic artists in the Song. See Susan Bush, *The Chinese Literati on Painting: Su Shi (1037-1101) to Tung Ch'i-ch'ang (1555-1636)* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012), 1-28.

[7] *Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural Change in Late Qing China* ed. Rebecca E. Karl and Peter Zarrow (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

and he carefully couched his novel proposals in the language of defending the empire and the ruling dynasty's divine mandate. For this, Zhang is often seen as a conservative and emblematic of the short-lived centripetal approach to transforming Chinese society. I focus here on how Zhang imagines this binary to encompass all forms of knowledge and how he intends everyone in and every part of society to learn it and find their place through it. Zhang argues the binary accounts for all forms of human capability (*rencai* 人才).[8] His vision of empowerment is a conscriptionist one, however, and he believes that developing *rencai* in all people will contribute to a more dynamic society awakened to its needs for moral self-improvement and technical progress. He argues at the same time that people must be firm grounding in the past, which he claims a decadent

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[8] We will be discussing changes to the term for political capability (*cai* 才). Consider a classical reference to the term. When asked about government, Confucius says "raise up those who are virtuous and capable" (*ju xiancai* 舉賢才); Lunyu 論語 (Analects) 13.2.

I am translating *cai* as capability to specifically echo Amartya Sen's, along with Martha Nussbaum's, doctrine of the capabilities approach to human-rights theory. Human flourishing in society, in this model is not only understood through negative classical-liberal freedom or economic empowerment but the cultivation of human potential to think and act and the structuring of the state in such a way that such capability matters; Martha Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

I argue that Nussbaum's approach can describe the project that Zhang Zhidong and his contemporaries were embarking on: they argued that mass education would create more human capability to improve the life of the people and serve the empire. What is noteworthy for me is that mass education conscripts all of society into the project of creating *rencai*, whereas in the empire this quality was associated with a specific vocation. Elsewhere I argue that in Egypt, reformers similarly generalized the ethical imperatives of Islamic legal education in their arguments for mass education; "Guides to Faith: Conscriptionist Education and Islamic Thought," *Comparative Islamic Studies* 12.1 (2019) (forthcoming).

scholarly class (*shi* 士) has neglected.[9] He conceives of education as a mode of governance in his vision of compulsory lifetime learning and a Confucian humanistic core in advanced studies. This vision ultimately replaced older ideas of merit and vocation associated with the imperial-service exam system with an order intended to fit all subjects into a predisposed whole and a continuing modern outreach mission.

The Late-Qing context and the inspirations of education reform

While the Egyptian state was one of the first to attempt a massive program of political and military reform in which the discourse of mass education developed, imperial China was one of the last. When court politics and national discourse concerned questions of knowledge and learning, they largely centered around the nature of the *keju*.[10] Only in the first years of the 20th century did reformers connect plans for standardized and tested general education to questions about the exams' future, shortly before they were finally cancelled.[11] For most of the 19th century education reform occurred on the empire's peripheries as provincial leaders pursued various small-scale and short-term programs to promote understanding of technology and material science.[12] Only the brief period between the coup and counter-coup of the *Wuxu* secured the ideas of mass education in the vision of the imperial and national future. In part, this lateness attests the conservatism of *keju* academic institutions and the view that

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9 For a scholarly narrative on the withdrawal and decline of the *shi* see Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

10 Benjamin A. Elman, *Civil Examinations and Meritocracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 306-21.

11 Ayers, 237-45.

12 Ayers, 182-89.

Western learning represented something apart from, and potentially unnecessary to, Chinese learning rather than a direct competitor. Histories of modern mass education in China also include new social and political forms in the foreign-led Christian missions and in the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (Taiping tianguo 太平天國).[13] After the Meiji installation, a conscriptionist imperial state arose in Japan that made some use of the Chinese episteme, albeit radically reconceived.[14] Nineteenth-century *shi* encountered the thought and practice of mass education in circumstances very different from the state in which they worked and with very different conceptions of the imperatives of knowledge.

As in the Muslim Mediterranean,[15] Christian missionaries and the implicit connection to Western hegemony contributed to the imaginary of mass education. Protestant missionaries established schools for both sexes and opened the first universities to use the name *daxue* 大學.[16] However, reformist *shi* did not tend to think such institutions were competing with indigenous school-forms. Unlike Christianity, the traditions the *shi* followed did not have a strong sense of personal conversion or that it would present a message that could disrupt a state. Confucian political cosmology does not require that individual subjects commit to a particular belief, and while ritual is

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[13] Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 6th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 261-94.

[14] Mark E. Lincicome, *Principle, Praxis, and the Politics of Education Reform in Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1995).

[15] See chapter 3 below.

[16] Gael Graham, *Gender, Culture, and Christianity: American Protestant Mission Schools in China, 1880-1930* (New York: P. Lang, 1995).

inherently political in classical texts,[17] the imperial state was not organized in such a way to promote uniform ritual practice among all[18] and it could not thus be threatened by Christian rites as such. Unlike the concept of the millet in premodern Islamic political jurisprudence,[19] imperial China did not conceive of different schedules of legal rights for people of different religious communities. Unlike in modern states, imperial Chinese regimes did not conceive of the need to identify all subjects with a particular, single tradition or that the state's disposition toward religious institutions concerned a lay population.[20] In the *Wuxu* era, concerned literati were able to detach Christianity from Western science and technology, and when they were interested in religion, it was what it meant within Western contexts and political forms.[21] Once it was connected to that aggrandizing politics and its technical and administrative power, *shi* took notice of Christian and Western secular educational forms and their potentially expansive mandate.

However, the Taiping militarized mass society united in undertaking spiritual and practical transformation also appeared in China. Inspired by the belief that he was Christ's younger brother, Hong Xiuquan 洪秀全 (1814-64) led a mass rebellion that

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[17] Confucius contrasts between political leadership by laws (*zheng* 政), which only inspires fear of punishment, and leadership through morality and ritual propriety (*li* 禮), which inspires people to self-regulation.

[18] See chapter 4 below.

[19] See chapter 3 part 2 below.

[20] See chapter 4 part 2 below.

[21] For example, Kang Youwei 康有為, "*Yidali youji*" 意大利游记 [Record of travel to Italy], in *Kang Youwei quanji* 康有為全集 [Complete works of Kang Youwei] (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 2007), 7:346-406.

captivated foreign interest but provoked slow and fitful response from the Qing state.[22] Guo Baogang calls the Heavenly Kingdom a "utopia of reconstruction", identifying it with a tradition that extends forward to Mao's revolutions.[23] This tradition could include the Confucian intentional community of the Taizhou school (*Taizhou xuepai* 泰州學派) established by disciples of Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472-1529) committed to ritual observance and politics of care.[24] However, it also resembles the religious institutions described by Foucault and in the pattern of monastic preaching described by Taylor.[25] The kingdom was also conscriptive; it had no civilian subjects or non-militant religious leaders or specialists. Most everyone practiced martial arts, and the Taiping armies brought destruction to settled populations in addition to battling imperial forces. While *shi* such as Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811-72) and Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901) did not take "inspiration" from the Taiping as they confronted them, the impact of mass mobilization could not be denied.[26] To the extent they could make them, their reform programs were regional, and if they were meant to serve the whole empire, they

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[22] Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (New York: Norton, 1996).

[23] Guo Baogang, "Utopias of Reconstruction: Chinese Utopianism from Hong Xiuquan to Mao Zedong," *Comparative Asian Development* 2 no. (2003): 197-209.

[24] Yu Hong, "All Things Are Already Complete in My Body: An Explanation of the Views of the Taizhou School on the Human Body," *Frontiers of Philosophy in China* 5 no. 3 (2010): 396-413.

[25] Michel Foucault, *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault,* ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 16-49; Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2007), 25-90.

[26] Hsü, 221-50.

admitted only a few people and so were not conscriptionist.[27] However, by the late 19th century, Li, Hong, and others believed the state needed to transform militarily and administratively and that this transformation required reconsideration and recommitment to classical traditions on the part of the *shi* as well as the population at large.

When rebellions threatened the Qing order and foreign forces defeated China, various provincial and military officials responded in the Self-Strengthening movement (Ziqiang yundong 自強運動). Officials tended to focus on military modernization; however, the Qing often lost against foreign empires in the decades after the Taiping rebellion, and the time of Self-Strengthening canonically ends with defeat by Japan in 1895.[28] Innovative officials, Zhang Zhidong among them, created small-scale programs to promote the study of foreign languages, material sciences.[29] Zhang and others also promoted the discourse of Self-Strengthening in official newspapers and journals. While Zhang favored official propaganda, others such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao promoted personal and corporate intellectual brands.[30] When officials established schools and published their work and planning, they demarcated a political sphere in which present concerns and visions of the future could be debated as well as past

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[27] Knight Biggerstaff, *The Earliest Modern Government Schools in China* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1961).

[28] Hsü, 261-94.

[29] Ayers, 100-37; 160-72.

[30] Ayers, 144-60; Seungjoo Yoon, "Literati-Journalists and the *Chinese Progress* (Shiwu bao) in Discord, 1896-98," in *Rethinking the 1898 Reform*.

examples reconsidered.[31] This is not to say that the political sphere had been limited to the court and the rulers up to this point, but by 1898, the increasingly chaotic and partisan court politics echoed before a larger audience than only the highest officials. If Self-Strengthening represented an abortive movement from the provinces and abroad inward to the political center, the *Wuxu* summer signaled a push outward, a conscriptionist outreach.

The Reform of 1898 and the normalization of mass education

When bold reformists rapidly rose and collapsed at the imperial court, they brought little lasting change but broadened the vision of what a new society reinvigorated through tradition would mean.[32] The Guangxu 光緒 emperor (1871-1958) had for some years fallen under the influence of senior officials such as Weng Tonghe 翁同龢 (1830-1904) and Zhang Zhidong who couched reform in terms of strengthening the imperial state and tradition.[33] However, with a more radical younger generation of their proteges such as Kang and Liang, they proposed sweeping reforms and immense

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[31] Mary Backus Rankin, "Some Observations on a Chinese Public Sphere," *Modern China* 19 no. 2 (1993): 158-82; William T. Rowe, "The Problem of 'Civil Society' in Late Imperial China," *Modern China* 19 no. 2 (1993): 139-57.

[32] A primary source collection: *Wuxu bianfa wenxian ziliao xiri* 戊戌變法文獻資料系日 (Hundred days reform document reader) Qinghua daxue lishixi 清華大學歷史系 comp. (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 1998). For primary sources in English: Ssu-yü Teng and John K. Fairbank, eds, *Research Guide to China's Response to the West: A Documentary Survey, 1839-1923* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954).

For scholarly analysis see *Rethinking the 1898 Reform*; Luke S.K. Kwong, *A Mosaic of the Hundred Days: Personalities, Politics, and Ideas of 1898* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); Hao Chang, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis: Search for Order and Meaning (1890-1911)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

[33] Ping-Ti Ho, "Weng T'ung-ho and the 'One Hundred Days of Reform'," *Far Eastern Quarterly* 10 no. 2 (1951): 125-35.

investments in new offices and development programs. An edict ordered that all the academies (*shuyuan* 書院) focused on Confucian classics and exam-prep convert to "schools for Chinese and Western studies" (*Zhongxue Xixue zhi xuexiao* 中學西學之學校). The state should continue to build beyond the *shuyuan* to provide for the schooling of the whole empire under the slogan "no one without learning, and no learning is insubstantial" (*ren wu bu xue xue wu bu shi* 人無不學學無不實).[34] When the dowager Cixi 慈禧 (1835-1908) launched a counter-coup, most all of the edicts and plans of the period were either cancelled or neglected.[35] Cixi had nearly all those responsible for radical reform proposals fired but for Zhang and a few with conservative credentials.[36] His survival might indeed brand him a conservative if he is defined against younger freethinkers scattered to the provinces and abroad and unmoored from political jobs. However, the significance of Zhang's text here is in how it conceives the spaces and political routines of mass education, in which the state, the past, and the future could be shaped for society as a whole.

Zhang's manifesto

In the *Quanxue pian*, Zhang Zhidong discovers a mandate to mass education as he outlines his distinctive views of how Chinese and Western thought should relate. The authors of the 1898 reforms were imperial-service scholars writing to the emperor and each other recommending immediate and specific official actions. Zhang's *Exhortation*

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[34] Ayers, 177.

[35] Kwong, 211-37.

[36] Ayers, 144-59.

stands out from this because it advocates for numerous programs as coordinated efforts at many layers of government, stakes several positions on the nature of the state and its underlying political philosophy, and interprets the relationship between Chinese traditions and modernization. The well-known phrase "Chinese learning for substance; Western learning for utility" (*Zhongxue wei ti Xixue wei yong* 中學為題西學為用) does not occur in the *Exhortation*.[37] However, as Tze-ki Hon summarizes, scholars have tended to foreground this binary and its significance for placing Zhang on the conservative-radical reformist spectrum.[38] Below I do address Zhang's positions on constitutional issues, his epistemological taxonomies of foreign and indigenous studies, and how his practical proposals for school curricula reflect both these. However, I do so in context of how he discovers and affects the mandate to universal learning.

Zhang instructs readers on the nature of political, epistemic, and moral crises that China must confront through education. He begins the text by directing toward "five points to know" (*wuzhi* 五知). First, know the shame (*chi* 恥) of not being like Japan, an emerging modern empire. Second, know the fear (*ju* 懼) of becoming like Egypt, subject to colonial hegemony. Third, know the need to change (*bian* 變) customs (*xi* 習) and laws (*fa* 法) to adapt. Fourth, know what is urgent (*yao* 要) in prioritizing the humanistic learning of old to fit with modern methods and to leave room for modern and Western forms of knowledge. Lastly, know the roots (*ben* 本) to which people must

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[37] The phrase is evoked in the imperial edict of June 11, 1898 that calls for adaptive, selective modernization; Kwong, 157-60.

[38] Tze-ki Hon, "Zhang Zhidong's Proposal for Reform: A New Reading of the *Quanxue pian*", in *Rethinking the 1898 Reform*, 77-98.

hold in the modern world: nation (*guo* 國), kin (*qin* 親), and the sages (*sheng* 聖).[39] In these, the cardinal moral senses connect to geopolitics, reform and preservation order themselves together, and individuals find their place in the greater whole. Zhang connects different purposes and urges rethinking, but like the Islamic modernists, he suggests that Chinese traditions provide the pattern and precedent for this kind of reform and reconsideration. He quotes from the Zhongyong (Doctrine of the mean) "Loving learning is next to wisdom. Strengthening practice is next to human perfection. Knowing shame is next to heroism" (*hao xue jinhu zhi li xing jinhu ren zhi chi jinhu yong* 好學近乎知力行近乎仁知恥近乎勇).[40] Throughout, however, he argues that the state must educate people in wholly new ways to pursue these personal ideals and meet modern moral and political challenges.

Zhang argues that education trumps regulatory politics, and that education must expand beyond the derelict institutions of traditional scholarship. For example, Zhang argues that while he supports a ban on opium to combat addiction, prohibitions alone do not suffice. He again quotes Confucius, who says that punitive rules inspire fear of punishment rather than more morally-effective sense of *chi*. Zhang comments

> This—laws (*fa* 法) cannot put into policy (*zhi* 治), but Confucius' (*ming* 名) teaching can put it into policy. This regulations (*zheng* 政) cannot realize (*hua* 化), but learning (*xue* 學) can realize it.[41]

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[39] Zhang, 12:9705.

[40] Zhongyong 21.

[41] Zhang, 12:9732.

Xue instills the sense of *chi* in people needed to confront modern social emergencies. Unfortunately, Zhang finds that learned officials (*xue shi* 學士) are unworthy of their responsibilities. They understand Confucian traditions through baroque exam-forms and do not grasp its practical wisdom, and moreover they know woefully little about the modern world. With both traditional moral sense and modern competence in mind, Zhang intends to remove *xue* from the exclusive purview of the *xue shi*. *Xue* needs to extend to all of society and encompass new ways of understanding the world.

In keeping with this, Zhang lays out his doctrines of pedagogy as social action and as a state responsibility. To begin with, Zhang primarily understands the tradition and practice he wants to reform, expand, and protect as "teaching" (*jiao* 教). He speaks often of "my" or "our teaching" (*wu jiao* 吾教) and "sacred teaching" or "the sages' teaching" (*shengjiao* 聖教)[42]. The discussion here sets aside the use of the term *jiao* to mean "religion" in a particular sense of a disciplinary practice, or as an abbreviation of or reference to the neologism for religion, *zongjiao* 宗教.[43] Suffice for the moment that Zhang can cover *jiao*'s potential semantic overlap with the statement "Knowledge is the proper meaning of *jiao*" (*zhizhe jiao zhi wei ye* 智者教之謂也).[44] Zhang puts out axioms that connect knowledge, learning, moral sense, and politics; however,m= he is not merely reciting formalities or truisms that inherently pertain to each other. Zhang

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[42] *Shengjiao* is one way of expressing the true transmission of Confucian orthodoxy. Joseph A. Adler, *Reconstructing the Confucian Dao: Zhu Xi's Appropriation of Zhou Dunyi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 15-76.

[43] See chapter 4 below.

[44] Zhang, 12:9708.

expands such ideas as *xue*, *zhi*, and *jiao* in epistemological, practical, and social terms. As knowledge, *zhi* can pertain to any knowable object, from Confucian precepts to scientific truths. As learning, *xue* refers to a fundamental need of all people as human beings and citizens. *Jiao* defines a defensive and reformist undertaking that mobilizes the state and society.

Zhang argues that the state needs to undertake its pedagogical function *jiao* to secure good government. He says "By means of *jiao*, there is government" (*yi jiao wei zheng* 以教為政).[45] He goes on to say that the application of *jiao* depends on the state: "If the state has no power, *jiao* is not followed" (*gu guo bu wei ze jiao bu xun* 故國不威則教不循).[46] He continues, connecting the exercise of power to the spread of knowledge: "How does *jiao* advance? Only by having force can it advance." (*jiao heyi xing you li ze xing* 教何以行有力則行).[47] Here, the similarities to ʿAbduh's formula are clear: education is a concerted project manifest through state power without which the state does not survive. A state that lacks the power to educate lacks the power to defend itself, and knowledge makes the defense of the state effective. ʿAbduh also says that religion would not survive without an empowered pedagogical state that promotes human development.[48] Even if Zhang does not use *jiao* to mean religion or tradition specifically or in general, he, like ʿAbduh, argues that education is an urgent mission for the state

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[45] Zhang, 12:9708.

[46] Zhang, 12:9708.

[47] Zhang, 12:9708.

[48] See chapter 1 above.

that requires extraordinary effort. Also like ʿAbduh, Zhang claims that the conscriptionist mandate applies to the normative connections to the past that root a community as well as to new ways of learning.

Zhang argues that *jiao* and *xue* connect modernizing society to enduring lessons of the past. To begin the text, Zhang evokes the hegemon (*ba* 霸) King Zhuang 莊 of Chu 楚 (613-519 BCE) from the Warring States (*Zhanguo* 戰國) period (481-221 BCE).[49] Zhang says this of this king that

> To preserve his people's lives, he would discipline (*qinzhen* 勤箴) his people. To prepare the military, he would each day caution (*shijing* 勤箴) his troops. To avoid disaster (禍至無), he would daily teach (*xun* 訓) his people.[50]

Here, Zhang recalls the violence and political disintegration of the period before a united empire, implicitly comparing the situation to the precarities of late-Qing China to suggest the *ba*'s instructive remedies. Zhang says that modern Chinese should look to the period of the Confucian classics and their lessons about realpolitik and the pedagogical role of the state. Elsewhere, Zhang states that Confucius' dictum that *zhi* and *jiao* have no respect of class only refers to the kind of *jiao* that emperors can do.[51] Though he rejects classless society as such, he envisions an all-encompassing *jiao* through direction from the center. Even if the emperors or scholarly elite do not

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[49] King Zhuang is one of the Five Hegemons (Wuba 五霸), who are traditionally considered usurpers of the correct order: consider Mengzi 孟子 6B27. Here, however, Zhang is referring to an example of realpolitik.

[50] Zhang, 12:9704.

[51] Zhang, 12:9716-18.

correctly *jiao* society, modern people need to connect to and reflect on the authoritative past.

Zhang defines the concept of deep, engaging connection (*tong* 通) to secure essentials of Chinese knowledge in the modern context. He defines the concept as a personal imperative for learners, saying it means "devotedly studying something and reflecting on it deeply, then knowing its meaning with the mind-heart" (*hao xue shensi xin zhi qi yi* 好學深思心知其意).[52] He means for the whole of society to read Confucian literatures, meditate on them, and apply them personally, socially, and politically. People should connect to the literatures and connect them to their lives. However, *tong* also refers to how knowledges themselves connect. Zhang says that reformed education proceeds from realizing the *tong* between Chinese traditions and Western physical and social sciences, or else, he says, curricular politics will favor one at the other's expense when society must have both.[53] For Zhang, connections manifest historically through the diffusion of Chinese knowledge to South Asia, and from there to the West, where essential ideas about political economy, agriculture, and warfare could develop into modernity over the long duration.[54] Zhang does not extensively explain this as a 19th-century theory;[55] he only uses it to argue that the kinds of knowledge the state and society need have an essential unity prior to the distinctions among them that give rise

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[52] Zhang, 12:9764.

[53] Zhang, 12:9764-67.

[54] Mencius refers to *tong* as communication and trade among people who have economically specialized and developed practical knowledges of those particular economic roles; 3B9.

[55] See Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 383-92.

to partisanship among reformers. Such educated elites who do not understand the unifying *tong* cannot understand the sages' *jiao*. Zhang develops his philosophical epistemology to explore the harmony and order within knowledge and its significance for China's place in the world.

Zhang is perhaps best known for his interpretation of the substance-utility (*tiyong* 體用) binary[56] within the framework of mass education. Zhang explains *tong* as a practical harmony within knowledge by saying "Chinese learning (*Zhongxue* 中學) is learning of the inner. Western learning (*Xixue* 西學) is learning of the outer. Chinese learning governs the self and the mind-heart (*shenxin* 身心). Western learning pertains to the affairs of the world (*shishi* 世事)."[57] The statement describes the world from the perspective of a late-Qing scholar-official: within China, people can fashion themselves with the resources of traditions handed down through time, while the rest of the world, even Asia, turns to Western learning and is subject to colonial intelligibilities. It also expresses how these *xue* properly apply. In this "Old *xue* serves as substance. New *xue* serves as utility" (*jiuxue wei ti xinxue wei yong* 舊學為體新學為用). Zhang adds that the "old" means Chinese and the "new" means Western.[58] Zhang marks geographical and

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[56] For an overview of the *tiyong* binary, see Zhang Dainian, *Key Concepts in Chinese Philosophy*, trans. Edmund Ryden (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 240-57. See also Brook A. Ziporyn, "The Ti-Yong 體用 Model and Its Discontents: Models of Ambiguous Priority in Chinese Buddhism and Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucianism," in *The Buddhist Roots of Zhu Xi's Thought*, ed. John Makeham, 193-276, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[57] Zhang, 12:9767.

[58] Zhang, 12:9740.

temporal domains for *ti* and *yong* in what scholars older than him would see as a compromise, and what younger generations would find reactionary.[59] Tze-ki Hon writes that Zhang is trying to affect a hierarchical, complementary hierarchy, as in the binary relations of ruler and minister.[60] While people and states need the modern *yong*, it cannot intrude on the core *ti* that sustain both through time.[61] However, because Zhang is making these distinctions in his manifesto for mass education, he intends that this harmonious tension apply in all of society.

Zhang's *tiyong* doctrine is best understood not as an abstract philosophical scheme but as a formula for including all *xue*, *zhi*, and capabilities in a social and political reconstruction. To serve the state and be a full Confucian person, every person needed to comprehend and use *tiyong*. In the *Quanxue pian*, Zhang complains that scholars and officials do not understand the scope of their duties or are not competent to fulfill them. He often frames these complaints in terms of "human capability"—*rencai*, a classical Confucian concern for talent and merit that political service should

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[59] Zhang thinks all knowledge can fit into the *tiyong* binary; it is either (adapted) from (Chinese) tradition, or it is novel and practically employable. Though Zhang uses this binary to appeal to Song-dynasty Daoxue Confucianism explored below, his use is novel and apart from older understandings of the binary. See Joseph R. Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate: A Trilogy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 65-69.

[60] Tze-ki Hon, "Zhang Zhidong's Proposal for Reform: A New Reading of the *Quanxue pian*," in Rethinking the 1898 Reform Period: Political and Cultural Change in Late Qing China ed. by Rebecca E. Karl and Peter Zarrow (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2012), 77-98.

[61] Luke S. K. Kwong, "The T'i-Yung Dichotomy and the Search for Talent in Late-Ch'ing China," *Modern Asian Studies* 27 no. 2 (1993): 253-79.

attract and cultivate and that the exam should certify.[62] Zhang calls for universal compulsory education to develop *cai* among "the people", in part to provide for a more competent imperial service corps, and in part because even the most menial work supports his Confucian national project and needs the proper instruction in its specific *zhi*.[63] In his chapter "Establishing Schools" (*Shexue* 設學), Zhang describes a state-school curriculum that first instructs children in Confucian moral precepts, then incorporates *xinxue* such as geography, world history, and natural science for secondary-school students.[64] Grounding in these basics prepares students to pursue specialized higher education in a trade, agronomy, business, law, or traditional studies.[65] Though these branches represent specific *cai* needed for political and economic modernization, Zhang also envisions a reformed imperial-service exam that includes a general survey of these and other *yong* topics.[66] In all, Zhang calls for schools to instruct all of society on the nature and function of the *xue* as *tiyong*, to prepare each person's *rencai*, and provide a new standard of knowledge for the highest calling of state service. Through reformed education, Zhang envisions an invigorated society.

In as much as Zhang's text concerns the urgencies of the moment, he gives traces of a future education can shape. In the *Quanxue pian*, mass education responds to

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[62] At the beginning of Zhang's outline of a curriculum, he states that an imperial decree called for schools to be established because few people could pass the exams. According to Zhang, the emperor saw that candidates did not meet earlier standards. Zhang, 12:9739-40. See part 2 below.

[63] Zhang, 12:9734-36.

[64] Zhang, 12:9734-37.

[65] Zhang, 12:9724-32.

[66] Zhang, 12:9746-49.

uncertainties about how the *tong* of the *xue* can be realized, the reform and protection of the *sheng jiao*, and the constitution of the Qing state. Zhang criticizes the concept of popular sovereignty (*minquan* 民權)[67] as exemplified in the US, Britain, and France. However, he reveals some of his uncertainty by suggesting that the education he advocates could make *minquan* feasible, and perhaps desirable, if the quality and training of *rencai* assured informed and sincere critique and discourse. Zhang finds it difficult to imagine how such a society could emerge from complacent elites, who mindlessly follow recent precedent without *tong* for true traditional ideals and an uneducated populace made lethargic through opium. Zhang argues that learning can restore people's focus, quicken the spirits, and inspire their curiosity.[68] With more education, more people could travel abroad to study and learn foreign languages in depth. Most importantly, learning gives the people practical work to occupy their time and the sense that they were contributing to the whole, the opposite of selfish lassitude Zhang associates with narcotics. A truly inclusive school system could prepare students for modernized exam and, more broadly, a society structured around the *ti* and *yong xue*.

In the *Quanxue pian*, Zhang provides a comprehensive program and philosophical framework in the context of the Wuxu reform movement at court, and his conservative vision assured support beyond that moment. Zhang survived Cixi's coup

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[67] Reformers and revolutionaries called for *minquan*, and Zhang equivocates about whether this is feasible or desirable in an empire or whether *minquan* necessitated a republican political form; Xiaowei Zheng, *The Politics of Rights and the 1911 Revolution in China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018).

[68] Zhang, 12:9732-33.

that displaced reformist officials associated with the Guangxu emperor. Like ʿAbduh, who framed his work differently for different political contexts, Zhang was able to normalize the imaginary of a mass institutionally-educated society among different audiences. After ʿAbduh died, conservatives thoroughly criticized his legal and theological speculations, while retaining the idea of Azhar as a national institution presiding over a system of compulsory universal schooling.[69] After 1898, Zhang spent the rest of his career experimenting with higher vocational education on the provincial level. The generations of revolutionaries that came to power in China after Zhang died in 1909 would find little to venerate in the text that supported the empire, the exam system, and *tong* with the Confucian canons. However, across the political spectrum and the official-nOn-official divide, a conception of national traditions, an adaptation of *rencai* to the category of man as universal, and a belief that schools ought to shape the whole of society and its future could be assumed.

A new national institution

Founded in 1898, Imperial Peking University (Jingshi daxue tang 京師大學堂) was the capstone of a comprehensive education system envisioned along the lines of Zhang's practical epistemology. Like their contemporaries in Egypt, reformist officials in the Self-Strengthening movement established new academic institutions often focused on foreign-language translation. However, unlike Egypt, the central state's highest officials did little to direct or sponsor these projects. While Christian missionaries established universities in China, the emperor decreed the opening of the *daxue* with his

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[69] Indira Falk-Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism: Al-Azhar and the Evolution of Modern Sunni Islam* (New York: Macmillan, 2010); see chapter 1 above.

tutor Sun Jia'nai 孫家鼐 to lead and with the rule system suggested by Liang Qichao. As the title of a classical Confucian text, this term is usually translated "great learning"; however, to name a university completes what Lydia Liu calls "roundtrip translation" from Chinese through Japanese and back.[70] Liang proposed that each student study Confucian classics (*jingxue* 經學), neo-Confucianism (*lixue* 理學), Chinese historiographical traditions, basic physics, mathematics, political science (*zhengzhixue* 政治學), literature (*wenxue* 文學), physical education (*ticao xue* 體操學), and at least one foreign language. After completing this expansive curriculum, students would need to specialize in an applied science such as medicine,engineering, or law and government.[71] The curriculum effectively moved *tong* in Chinese *ti* to the *yong* of defined socio-political roles.

When Zhang Zhidong rewrote the regulations for the Imperial University in 1904,[72] he retained Liang's assumptions and vision of the future. Cixi's allies ousted Liang from power in 1898 and charged others such as Zhang Baixi to plan the university more fully. Scholars such as Timothy Weston have tended to argue that this task fell to Zhang Zhidong in large part because of the conservative credentials demonstrated in his *Quanxue pian*, and that his university plans stress Confucian traditions more than

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[70] Lydia He Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity- China, 1900-1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 283.

[71] "Zongli yamen zou ni Jingshi daxuetang zhangcheng" 总理衙门京师大学堂章程 [Zongli Yamen's proposal for Imperial Capital University regulations], in Beijing daxue xiaoshi yanjiushi 北京大学校史研究室, *Beijing daxue shiliao* (Historical materials of Peking University), 81-87 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1993).

[72] "Daxuetang zhangcheng" 大学堂章程 [University regulations], in 97-130; Lin, 9-17.

Liang's.[73] However, the two sets of rules do not compare easily; Zhang's text focuses more on the configuration of the faculty than the curriculum for all students. For this reason, the two can be considered more complementary than necessarily opposed, and, as at institutions such as the Azhar, curricular and faculty politics can shift broadly without changing the framework of a universal education of which these academies are part.[74] In the case of the institution that would eventually become Peking University (Beijing daxue 北京大學), Zhang and his predecessors envisioned a place to train a service elite with secure traditional moorings. They also imagined that training for this, or any, working life consists of broad familiarity with all forms of *xue*, out of which one would be specifically developed. The mass education system Zhang theorizes can develop *rencai* in anyone. Though a place like the Imperial University can refine *rencai* for highest callings, it only serves as exemplar of what all of society is practicing; *ti* and *yong* apply universally in study and for students.

End of the exams

Along with the beginnings of the university system, the rise of mass education meant the end of *keju*. In the first years of the 20th century, some reformers believed that schools should prepare candidates for the exam while others thought that graduating school was equivalent to passing some or all levels of the exam. Conservatives at the Hanlin academy opposed these ideas because they implicitly diminished the importance of the exam. Reformers could argue that schools supervised students over the long term and could judge how committed they were to studies with a

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[73] Weston, 118-20; Lin, 9-17.

[74] Falk-Gesink, 197-236. See chapter 1 part 2 above.

lifetime of evaluations. The exam, on the other hand, could not so judge how students develop and respond to challenges; it could only evaluate them once and judge their character on perhaps their worst day or perhaps their best. The *keju* could be newly seen as a narrow and limited way to judge *rencai*. In 1903, Zhang wrote that the exams should end within 10 years. In 1905, he joined Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 to call for an end to the *keju*, and the empire had its last exam that year.[75] In the *Quanxue pian*, Zhang had argued that the eight-legged essay (*baguwen* 八股文) promoted formal complication at the expense of essential understanding, and that the exams should test more modern technical and governmental *xue*.[76] The Hanlin examiners remained obstinate, arguing that Zhang sided with the abolitionists for curricular reasons rather than because he understood the exams differently in principle. However, the *Quanxue pian* had already envisioned that Confucian traditions spoke and belonged to all of society and that moral formation and the good of the nation required dedicated *xue* of all citizens, propositions alien to the contexts in which the *keju* reformed and developed.

Part two: The dao of learning, politics, and commitment in Song China
Introduction

This part explores the reform of the imperial-service exam and the development of Daoxue philosophy. In these processes, Confucian traditions opened educational avenues into state service and ways of being outside the frameworks of official politics. The early Song emperors elevated the *keju* into the academic institution that defined the identity of the scholar-official class (*shidafu* 士大夫) and imperial understandings of

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[75] Ayers, 237-45.

[76] Zhang, 12:9749-54.

rencai. Though hereditary privilege persisted as a way to gain office, the exam became indispensable to governance, as evidenced by the amount and variety of educational apparatuses devised to help aspirants prepare. I argue that such was the importance of the *keju* that it could be said to exist almost outside the state, marking and facilitating the high degree of cultural and political continuity of the last 1000 years of imperial history. The elevation of the exam was also contemporaneous with the rise of Daoxue thought and its doyen Zhu Xi. Master Zhu's philosophy of investigation (*gewu* 格物) rooted students in the cosmos and polis of the Confucian canon, and it pointed to deeper realities beyond it. The Daoxue manifested a Confucian humanism that also inspired the social and esthetic sensibilities of the literati (*wenren* 文人), Confucians of the world of the imperial state and its canon-education but at home outside these, personal and political possibilities not assumed in mass education.

Exhorting verse: The Zhenzong emperor's poem

The exhortation to study Zhang Zhidong put forth as his manifesto for mass education had a Song antecedent: the "*Quanxue shi*" 勸學詩 (Verses exhorting learning) of the Zhenzong 真宗 emperor (968-1022). Zhenzong presents five couplets in praise of the individual benefits for :

> Acquiring wealth does not require buying fertile fields; books have their own thousand bushels of grain/ Making a home does not require great halls; books have their own stores of gold/ In finding a wife, none needs regret not having a good matchmaker; in books, there are women with complexions like jade/ In leaving home, none needs regret not having any followers; in books, there is a

crush of chariots and horses/ For sons wanting to reach life's aspirations; the five classics he should diligently peruse.[77]

The poem is hardly noteworthy for evocative images or high-minded commendations of learning. It rather treats *xue* as an activity with mundane, practical benefits, among which we can find wealth, family connections, and power. During the Song, study acquired offered these benefits because the state reformed the exams, and they became central to the recruitment of the imperial service and to membership in literati that flourished outside of government. The possibility of material wealth comes from the broadening of way into elite life. People who took the exam could secure a place for themselves among the *shi* class, a benefit which could radiate outward to their relations and that they could offer potential partners. If elites in China have always supported scholarly traditions, after the Song, dedicated academic cultivation became the paradigmatic elite activity.

Presented merit: The *keju*

In the Song dynasty, the imperial-service exam became the main standard of *rencai* and cemented the Confucian identity of the elite. If it is difficult to pinpoint a precise starting date for the exam system,[78] the exam principally connects performative ritual knowledge to governance. The word *ru* 儒, from which Confucian traditions take

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[77] This translation modifies Wai-yee Li, *Enchantment and Disenchantment: Love and Illusion in Chinese Literature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 121 n43.

[78] Benjamin Elman states the ancestor to the late-imperial exam was first given in the Han 漢 (206 BCE-220 CE) dynasty in 134 BCE, but it was not regularly administered after 132 CE; Elman, *Cultural History*, 5. John Chaffee argues that in practice, the exam debuted in the Sui 隋 dynasty (581-618) in 589; John W. Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: A Social History of Examinations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 15.

one of their names, denotes a ritual (*li* 禮) scholar.[79] In the Mengzi, it states "the dao of the *ru* is that the ancient ones (*gu* 古) treated the people as if they were looking after (*bao* 保) an infant."[80] The role of ritual in this *ru* activity is defined in the text with the expression "Of the functions of *li*, harmony is the most important" (*Li zhi yong; he wei gui* 禮之用和為貴).[81] In the Zhouli 周禮 it states that high officials should "administer the rites in order to harmonize the state" (*li dian yi he bangguo* 禮典以和邦國).[82] In addition to the classics' emphasis on practical wisdom, officials in this model require significant specialized knowledge. The locus classicus for ritual learning is through following one's parents,[83] a model which promotes a kind of inherited, embodied *savoir-faire*, but the exams also test ways that candidates apply ritual, esthetic, and

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[79] Lionel M. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 19-22.

Jensen summarizes uses of the term *ru* and how it came to name the Confucian tradition. He provocatively argues that Confucianism as a branded, exclusive, national tradition is an idea Chinese scholars indigenized from the outside. I would not go that far, but I deal with the concretization of the Confucian canon in this part and the relationships among Confucianism and other traditions in chapter 4.

[80] Mengzi 3A5.

[81] Lunyu 1.12.

[82] Zhouli 周禮, Tianguan zhongzai 天官冢宰 56. See Chenyang Li, "The Confucian Ideal of Harmony," *Philosophy East and West* 56 no. 4, 583-603.

[83] Consider Lunyu 4.20. During the Song, there was also renewed focus on ritual learning between generations; Zhu Xi, *Jiali* 家禮 [Family rituals], in *Zhuzi quanshu*, 7: 857-958; *Chu Hsi's Family Rituals: A Twelfth-Century Chinese Manual for the Performance Of Cappings, Weddings, Funerals, and Ancestral Rites*, trans. Patricia Buckley Ebrey (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991); Patricia Buckley Ebrey, "Education Through Ritual: Efforts to Formulate Family Rituals During the Sung Period", in *Neo-Confucian Education: The Formative* Stage, ed. William Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 277-306.

historical precedent. In effect, however, the binary between the exams and political heredity tilted toward the former, and after the Song reforms, the exams became the primary way that socioeconomic advantages were asserted in the governance of *rencai*.

The most important reforms of the *keju* in the Song redefined individual merit and gave it pride of place in official recruitment.[84] These reforms invested the system with a more consistently professional elitist character than it had had before. In the Tang, officials could be recruited from the lower ranks—"outside the stream" (*liuwai* 流外)—of mainline imperial service; however, the Song closed this avenue.[85] In 992, the practice of name-concealing (*fengmi* 封彌 or *huming* 糊名) began, and from 1015, clerks copied students' exams (*tenglu* 謄錄) to prevent graders from recognizing familiar handwriting. In 1007, the Zhenzong emperor said of the latter, "We must strive for the utmost fairness [*chih-kung*] and select the cultivated amongst the poor landlord [i.e., humble scholars]."[86] We would be familiar with double-blindness as a standard of fair evaluation. However, the reforms also emphasized individual merit over identification with a group. The graders were not supposed to know if candidates were part of a

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[84] This is not to suggest that the late empire achieved a meritocracy in the sense of a socially-mobile polity which effectively separated individual aptitude from socioeconomic background. It is rather that over time, it became more difficult and ultimately impossible to directly inherit imperial-service offices. On the debate over mobility and meritocracy see Ping-ti Ho, *The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); Peter K. Bol, "Peter K. Bol, "The Sung Examination System and the *Shih*," *Asia Major* 3 no. 2 (1990): 149-71; Benjamin A. Elman, *Civil Examinations and Meritocracy in Late-Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

[85] Chaffee, 56.

[86] Quoted in Chaffee, 51.

familiar social set to them. They also made personal character evaluation impossible. It could be objected from a meritocratic perspective that the imperial service would need to know the *rencai* of applicants by seeing their names, making answers to questions part of a full application to the service that included a full CV, as it were. The same would go for long-serving clerks; surely they had demonstrated their competence in many of the tasks of governance irrespective of their Confucian humanistic refinement or lack thereof. The Song reforms present a novel counterargument: that the empire can best find *rencai* through searching out individually-demonstrated political aptitude that rose above menial administration. The question then became how to change the exam to find that quality of presented merit and how to assert it in a system defined by significant hereditary privilege.

The Song reforms did not end the practice of political inheritance. Rather, they tied it to the *keju* bureaucracy and its standards. In the Song, imperial servants retained the right to recruit close relatives into the government, a practice called the "shadow" (*yin* 蔭) privilege. With a Confucian ritual consciousness that male descendants are responsible for continuing ancestors' character-conduct, some such as the philosopher Zhang Zai 張載 (1022-77) argued that *yin* would best verify the moral quality of prospective officials.[87] Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052) proposed that *yin* be limited and that beneficiaries would have to pass an exam to take advantage of it.[88] The two approaches rather synthesized by the end of the end of the Song. John Chaffee

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[87] Chaffee, 47.

[88] Alfreda Murck, *Poetry and Painting: The Subtle Art of Dissent* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 29-30.

points to the development in the Song of a registration bureaucracy to certify candidates for the exam. One requirement it imposed was that candidates certify their filiality (*xiao* 孝), which required documentation of ancestry and verification that their male ancestors had not taken part in major crimes or deviations for two generations.[89] Chaffee notes that this could be an occasion for discrimination on the basis of ancestry, and throughout the Northern Song, powerful families were able to entrench themselves in the service and maintained significant rivalries. However, these great-house parties tended not to survive the transition to the Southern Song.[90] Even if they had, in time, the main way for families to establish or re-establish themselves and practice *yin* for their descendants would have been through the exam. The *keju* can in large part be understood as a venue for elite competition, which, because of the leisure and resources likely to help candidates prepare, can never really be separated from hereditary privilege, *yin* or no. In the Song, this venue established itself as an arena with a significant degree of autonomy.

The anonymizing of the exams also removed the person of the emperor and the practical necessity of the court to the testing process. In the Han dynasty, the term "greater scholar" (*boshi* 博士) referred to an expert in the Five Classics, and during this dynasty, emperors would administer oral and written exams on policy questions.[91] This expresses the ritual in its purest form: aspiring officials submitting to the son of heaven, who judged their expertise and fidelity to established understandings of the classics.

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[89] Chaffee, 53-55.

[90] Elman, *Cultural History,* 61-63.

[91] Elman, *Cultural History*, 5.

However, after Song reforms, the person of the ruler receded, and the continuity of the dao became the testable standard. Rather than see the latter as objective and the former subjective, I suggest that the latter diminishes the subjectivity of the ruler as judge of or actor in the tradition. Imperial courts did create and sponsor various authorizing bodies, from the Song Imperial Academy (Taixue 太學) discussed below to the Qing Comprehensive Catalog of the Four Libraries (Siku quanshu 四庫全書).[92] These could (rarely) change the canonical texts[93] and identify the prestigious interpretations that official exam-readers would incline to follow. However, even if these bodies expressed imperial or personal power, they acted within the tradition and provided terms and institutional contexts for debate to continue when people died, alliances shifted, and dynasties changed. The presence of such bodies to supervise literature and research decreased the need for emperors or courtiers to intervene in scholarship and increased the complexity and specialization interventions would need to effect lasting change in how readers encountered the tradition.

To aid aspiring exam candidates, the Song empire established an extensive school system, which, unlike the *keju*, did not endure in its scope or mission. Northern Song administration established schools (*shuyuan* 書院) which as many as 200,000 students attended.[94] A more meritocratic exam system called for the state to extend to subjects

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[92] For the importance of this institution in see Benjamin A. Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984), 100-12; 160-63.

[93] In the Ming dynasty, from 1384-1414, officials significantly censored the text of the Mengzi including the discussion of overthrowing leaders who had lost the mandate of heaven; Elman, *Cultural History*, 81.

[94] Chaffee, 4-17.

the space and means for preparation beyond the Confucian aspirations of cultivation for its own sake. Moreover, during this time when adherents of the *ru* dao distinguished themselves against Daoists and Buddhists, this would have represented a material investment in opposition to temples and monasteries as centers of learning.[95] However, inclusive schooling did not necessarily dovetail neatly with the expansion of the exams. Zhang Zhidong was not the first *ru* to notice a potential conflict of ideas of merit represented by graduating from a school versus taking the exam. The thinker and iconoclastic politician Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-86) recommended that school-graduation could replace exam-qualification, as Zhang did briefly before the end of the exam system.[96] Beida also had a Song precedent in the Imperial Academy (Taixue 太學), a college for Confucian scholarship in which the state granted stipends. Students prepared for exams there, and its teachers were considered preeminent scholars of their day.[97] However, from the Song until the end of the Qing, education constituted a discursive field between the exams and various preparatory institutions, with the latter socially and politically subservient to the former, and never with the same extent of continuity. This is because imperial Chinese states did not have modern conceptions of inculcating patriotism and developing capability of all citizens, and Confucian social forms flourished outside the state and its political consciousness.

Merit, thought, and study: Song Daoxue

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95 Thomas H.C. Lee, "Sung Schools and Education Before Chu Hsi," in *Neo-Confucian Education: The Formative Stage* ed. William Theodore de Bary and John W. Chaffee (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 105-136.

96 Elman, *Cultural History*, 17.

97 Chaffee, 30-35; Lee, 113-17.

Here we will consider Zhu Xi and the Song Daoxue for how he conceives the canon as rooting the self in the cosmos, both in political service and not. The imperial state did not exclusively adopt Zhu Xi orthodoxy as the standard for the examinations until 1313.[98] However, his thought illuminates the world of the exams in two respects: it solidifies the canon as the primary practical and theoretical means to understand the polis and the cosmos, and it imagines self-cultivation within the state and outside it. While it is an exaggeration to say Zhu invented Confucianism, it is not as much as saying that Ghazālī invented Sunnī Islam.[99] However, like his contemporary, he did produce a oeuvre that could claim to touch on every aspect of individual and social life, from the ritual to the supernal and eternal.[100] He did so claiming to rely only on the Confucian canon and not on sources that inclined readers to heresy. He also set a high standard for personal cultivation; however, he did not find in this standard an imperative to uplift all people so they could meet it. While his philosophy of selfhood and his cosmology elevated the dao of political commitment in imperial service, it also opened up space exterior to the state. Zhu's vision also fit a literati society that could endure the vicissitudes of dynastic politics and provided a sense of place for those who did not win state service through the exam.

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[98] Peter K. Bol, "Culture, Society, and Neo-Confucianism, Twelfth to Sixteenth Century," in *The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History*, eds. Paul Smith and Richard von Glahn (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 241-83.

[99] Ghazālī wrote the opus *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* [Revival of religious knowledges] at the time when the madrasa system was entering its maturity in the core regions of the Sunnī Muslim world; see chapter 1 part 2 above.

[100] Zhu Xi, *Jiali*; *Taijitu shuojie* 太極圖說解 [Explanation on the diagram of the supreme ultimate], in *Zhuzi quanshu*, 13:63-87; Chan, 103-38.

Zhu Xi approaches the Confucian canon as the primary way to understand the human place in the political cosmos. Through his commentaries, Zhu Xi promoted the idea of the Four Books (*Sishu* 四書): the Lunyu,[101] Mengzi,[102] the Daxue 大學 (Great learning),[103] and the Zhongyong,[104] as co-constitutents of Confucian learning alongside the Five Classics (*Wujing* 五經).[105] While none of these volumes had fallen into neglect, Zhu Xi was able to argue that they were necessary and sufficient for the learning and politics of the dao. Zhu's thought is remembered through the famous passage from the Daxue:

> The ancients who wished to illuminate bright virtue under heaven first ordered their states. Wishing to order their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended their knowledge. This extension of knowledge inhered in the investigation of things (*zhizhi zai gewu* 致知在格物). Things being

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[101] *Confucius: "Analects" with Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, trans. Edward Slingerland (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003; Zhu Xi, "Lunyu jizhu" 論語集注 (Commentary on the Lunyu), in *Quanshu*, 6:61-241.

[102] "*Mengzi" with Selections from Traditional Commentaries*, trans. Bryan W. Van Norden (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008); Zhu Xi, "Mengzi jizhu" 孟子集注 (Commentary on the Mengzi), in *Quanshu*, 6:242-460.

[103] *"Daxue" and "Zhongyong": Bilingual Edition*, trans. Ian Johnston and Wang Ping (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012), 41-177; Zhu Xi, "Daxue zhangju" 大學章句 [Commentary on the Daxue], in *Quanshu*, 6:13-28.

[104] *"Daxue" and "Zhongyong"*, 211-493; Zhu Xi, "Zhongyong zhangju" 中庸章句 (Commentary on the Zhongyong), in *Quanshu,* 6:29-60.

[105] More even than the *Wujing*, the *Sishu* were the moral and political orthodoxy for the exam system; Daniel Gardner, *The Four Books: The Basic Teachings of the Later Confucian Tradition* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007).

> investigated, knowledge was then completed. Knowledge being complete, their thoughts were then sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified. Their hearts being rectified, their persons were then cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were then regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were then ordered. Their states being ordered, all under heaven then came to peace.[106]

Gewu—taking things epistemologically into one's own hands—is the root of a refined self and a peaceful community.[107] The mantra connects self-discipline, introspection, and seeking truth in the world, and as such, presents a standard to judge a prospective servant-manager of the state. Confucius connects family and political relationships;[108] however, in this organon, introspection and investigation are fundamental to both. As in Ghazālī learning at higher levels proceeds from learning at lower ones, and in the Song, the state demanded a level of higher learning to undertake public affairs as *shi*. However, Zhu Xi also imagines learning as a good in and of itself that does not lead only into this role.

Zhu promotes an epistemological ethics of investigative commitment in the world as well as a cultivated attention to the canon. It is difficult to imagine Zhu Xi's approach to reading out of place with the larger *ru* tradition, or any scholarly tradition. He describes reverential attention (*jing* 敬)

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[106] Daxue 大學 2.

[107] Daniel K. Garnder, *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsueh* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

[108] Consider Lunyu 1.2: "As for conduct (*weiren* 為人), those who behave appropriately as sons or younger brothers (*xiaoti* 孝悌) and yet are fond of offending superiors (*hao fanshang* 好犯上): they are few indeed."

> As for reverential attention, don't think of it as some matter outside yourself. It is simply to collect your own mental energy and focus it here and now. Now it seems to me the reason none of you are making progress is that you only know how to talk about *gewu* but are lacking in the fundamentals. Unconcentrated (*bu zhuanyi* 不專一) as your mental energy and your intentions are, your effort is unpenetrating (*bu jingrui* 不精銳). It is not that certain matters in particular distract your thinking; just enjoying the scenery leads your heartmind (*xin* 心) far astray. How can this compare to maintaining your focus within at all times? To have absolutely no interest in the inconsequential matters of the world may seem unfeeling at first, but in fact, it is best if this is the case.[109]

This makes for an ideal reminder for one preparing for the exams, and perhaps Zhang Zhidong would agree that an abbreviated tour of the canon requires extra attention so nothing is missed. Notably, this kind of deep reading does not fit the mold of Confucius' Socratic pedagogical dialogs or Mencius' frequent episodes of political advising. It does not model its social or political context. The imaginary evoked here is of a reader committing at least some effort in solitude or trying to escape distraction.[110] However, whether or not readers are preparing for the exam, Zhu believes that study aims at realizing the patterns of the living world and within the self.

However, he orients it toward a focus of the *Daoxue* that is novel to the Song period and its openness to metaphysical speculation: the *li*. "When we read the Six

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[109] Zhu Xi, *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 [Disquisitions of Master Zhu], in *Zhuzi quanshu,* 14:378; Zhu Xi, *Learning to Be a Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu, Arranged Topically* trans. Daniel K. Gardner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 174.

[110] Chaffee contrasts the effects of increased availability of books, and implicitly changes in reading practices: "The impact of printing on Sung China was profound, and profoundly different from that on Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For where the latter led through the vernacular Bible to the Reformation, the former led through the classics to the examinations." (14)

Classics, it should be as if there were no Six Classics. We are simply seeking the Pattern of the Way (*daoli* 道理) within ourselves".[111] Taken together, these facets of Zhu Xi thought, which in some form, has the respect of "orthodoxy" widely in subsequent East Asian intellectual history,[112] set it apart from the pre-Song tradition. While we should not imagine that Zhu Xi's epistemological or metaphysical views can be neatly separated from his concern for ritual propriety, he does envision a spiritual-intellectual vocation oriented toward something other than political service, even to the canon—"reading books, and even being a scholar are secondary matters" (*dushu nai xuezhe di er shi* 讀書乃學者第二事).[113] If Confucius presents a tragic commitment to maintaining the tradition to rectify speech and conduct amid political chaos, Zhu Xi's work presents the possibility of retaining the integrity of literary commitment when the immediate rewards of this commitment are uncertain or absent. His presents a complementary view to the *Quanxue* offering that imagines rich rewards of loyal work through study, a view that resonated with *wen* scholars in the exterior of state politics and those facing the precarities of an altered state.

Exteriors: Failure and dao

Though Zhenzong's poem refers to the material and social rewards of success in the exam, the system as a whole and the Daoxue of Zhu Xi offered a teleology of literati

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[111] Zhu, *Zhuzi quanshu*, 14:345; *Learning to be a Sage*, 152.

[112] On the reception of Zhu Xi in Korea, see HaeSung Lee, "The Neo-Confucianism of the Joseon Dynasty: Its Theoretical Foundation and Main Issues," *Asian Studies* 4 no. 1 (2016): 165-94; *The Rise of Neo-Confucianism in Korea,* ed. William Theodore de Bary and JaHyun Kim Haboush (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985).

[113] Zhu Xi, *Zhuzi quanshu*, 14:313; *Learning to be a Sage*, 128.

life. Here, recalling MacIntyre, the practice of preparing for and taking the exam is organized around succeeding in it; the best at it exemplify the skills-virtues involved.[114] However, the *keju* and Daoxue also presented a teleology of Confucian personhood irrespective of political career. If someone had invested the time and labor in the canon, they could approach Zhu Xi's intellectual *telos*, the goal of being a person attuned to the *li* in the ways of heaven and earth. That the exams expanded to include men from so much of imperial Chinese society and persisted for the rest of its history meant that the personal and philosophical Daoxue was intelligible within enduring social practices other than state service. We can conceive of these practices and spaces such as *shu yuan* through the general rubric of *wenren* 文人, the term usually translated "literati" that is composed of the character meaning texts and the character meaning people. The term does not have a definition in an official imperial literature, but it does not necessarily exclude *shidafu*; people can be both. We can use the term here *wenren* below in its composite sense of relating texts to people, relationships facilitated by the imperial *keju* but exterior to the imperial state.

Though the *keju* was an innovation of political administration, exams also supported the state from outside it. The *keju* did not invent Confucian tradition in the sense of a *daotong* or continuity of the way; however, they contributed significantly to its archive. Because of the *keju*, traditions of the *ru* could become arguments extended through time among many non-*ru* studying policy debates, poetry, and literary styles. In high-level academic and courtly debates about orthodoxy and in students' tentative

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[114] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 181-205.

textual interpretations, such arguments could reconfigure and recur. While all these activities put the state at the center, they constituted a late-imperial *wen* society that endured multiple dynastic crises and forms of administration. Benjamin Elman argues that imperial history after the Song has fewer territorial and governmental disruptions than before the Song in large part because the *keju* motivated so many people of means to commit to reading the canon and arguing precedent for newly-arising situations.[115] The *keju* also provided a standard of *wen* for non-Han 漢 Chinese dynasties to establish their cultural credentials and to assimilate, often through separate, preferential exams, into the society they ruled.[116] An exam-polity can yield multiple different state forms, such as the Southern Song's localized, "fief" system in which administration passes among *shi* with deep community ties, which Zhu Xi preferred,[117] and the late Qing's highly centralized system of frequent official rotation which meant Zhang Zhidong, Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao and others were familiar with conditions in much of China. The *keju* could not support such different forms of empire if it adhered completely within one and *wen* did not form the basis of social life beyond them.

We can consider *wenren* social lives in the arts as illustrative of flourishing outside the framework of the state. This is not to suggest that bureaucrats cannot be painters, poets, and philosophers; the modern division of imaginaries does not obtain in imperial China. However, the *wenren* tradition in the arts is exterior to the state and its

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[115] Elman, *Cultural History*, 61-63.

[116] Elman, *Cultural History*, 29-55.

[117] Angle and Tiwald, 201-07.

academic institutions and evinces its own Confucian sensibilities.[118] In the *Daoxue* turn, wide-ranging conversations about self-cultivation and metaphysics diminished the relative importance of politics in general. Also, many of the movement's luminaries like Zhu Xi found little political success. In the case of Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), his was a deliberate conservative protest against the New Policies (*Xin fa* 新法) of Wang Anshi.[119] A consummate poet and calligrapher, Su also wrote extensively on art criticism.[120] Consider Su's praise of an old master

> The literary work of Wen T'ung (1019-1079) is the least of his accomplishments (*te*, "virtu"), and his poetry, the minor part of his writing. What is not used up in the poetry overflows to become calligraphy and is transformed to become painting. Both are what is left over from poetry….Looking at scholars' painting is like judging the best horses of the empire: one sees how spirit (*i-ch'i*) has been brought out; but when it comes to artisan-painters, one usually just gets whip and skin, stable and fodder, without one speck of superior achievement. After looking a few feet or so, one is tired.[121]

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[118] Murck; Ronald Egan, *The Problem of Beauty: Aesthetic Thought and Pursuits in Northern Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Richard M. Barnhart, "The Five Dynasties and the Song Period (907-1279)," in *Three Thousand Years of Chinese Painting* ed. James Cahill, Lang Shaojun, Nie Chongzheng, Richard M. Barnhart, Wu Hung, and Yang Xin (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 87-139.

[119] On the fallout of this opposition see Wang Yugen, "The Limits of Poetry as Means of Social Criticism: The 1079 Literary Inquisition against Su Shi Revisited," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 41 (2011): 29-65.

[120] Su Shi 苏轼, *Lunshu xuanzhu* 论书选注 [Discussions of calligraphy selected and commented], ed. Li Yukang (Nanjing: Jiangsu meishu chubanshe, 1988). Ronald Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

[121] Quoted in Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih, translators, *Early Chinese Texts on Painting*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 196; Chinese text quoted in Bush and Shih, *Chinese Literati*, 188.

Aside from the precious amateurism that disdains artisan, functional painting,[122] Su is describing a complete elite person. The basic vital substance in the Daoxue tradition, qi 氣, overflows one artistic medium and goes into another. He also provides a model of artistic cultivation in multiple domains, with poetry at the center, which parallels the *Daxue* credo above elevated by Zhu Xi. A person cultivated in *gewu* is rooted in the family, community, and cosmos, and an artist with expressive skill can illuminate the greater spirit.

Conclusion

This chapter contrasts modern visions of learning and political commitment with the conceptions of merit, vocation, and human flourishing of the Song dynasty. While in the Song, Confucian traditions defined the *rencai* of imperial service and were the basis of a flourishing exterior, the Confucian future conceived in the late Qing required universal assent to these traditions and identified them narrowly with the state. While in the Song, the intellectual life associated with the exams sustained and revitalized the state, in the late-19th century, neither the *jiao* nor the state were assumed to be able to exist without the other. Zhu Xi argues that only people of intense focus and mnemonic commitment can attune themselves to the basic patterns of the living world in the Confucian canon. Zhang Zhidong, on the other hand, hopes to use distilled versions of those wisdoms to discipline a slothful society. What had been seen as the practical-political and philosophical-esthetic ends of engaging with the Confucian tradition became the basis for a demand of all society. Zhang could be considered a conservative

[122] There are perhaps echoes here of Confucius' distinction of the aristocratic worthy person (*junzi* 君子) from the more mean petty person (*xiao ren* 小人).

compared to Confucian heretics or those who distrusted or despised those traditions. However, his alarm that the values, forms of discipline, and teleologies of the privileged in society are not shared or accessed by all is a hallmark of progressive power. Under progressive power, a community must uplift its weakest members to inspire consensus on the goods of life. If it is admirable that late-19th century social reformers did not wish to hoard material advantages and showed novel concern for the lives of others, they did not imagine other ways of being in the polis among or without them.

The previous two chapters have focused on the inclusive premises of mass education: proponents sought to proclaim their truths to all and inspire solidarity against colonizing forces. However, such visions necessarily elide difference, both the difference of need for or disposition to traditional knowledge explored above, as well as the positionality of people adhering to different traditions with different encounters with modernity, the subject of the next two chapters. These chapters consider questions of educational accommodation, both the accommodation of people with different ritual and communal needs and the provision of physical and social spaces for that education itself. While Daoxue thinkers such as Zhu Xi tried to demonstrate Confucian traditions were sufficient for any philosophical inquiry and the contemplative life as such, Zhang Zhidong and many of his contemporaries projected a Confucian chauvinism premised on the delegitimization and dispossession of others to a novel extent. Likewise, though multiple communities cohabited in the Islamic Mediterranean for many centuries, the projects of institutional modernization, such as universal education, gave the minority question new stakes.

Chapter 3 Distinguishing Companions: Islamic Education and Mixed Situations

Introduction

In this chapter, I will consider the questions of inclusion, exclusion, and assimilation[1] in mixed-confession education in late-19th century Beirut in contrast to older understandings of the intimacy of learning and traffic among strangers. In part one, I investigate the idea of common knowledge and the prospects of public schooling in the Ottoman empire under the Tanzimat reforms. I will examine the thought of the consummate protagonist of this optimism, Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849-1905), a scholar who wanted to inspire Muslim umma to engage a changing world with generous confidence.[2] Opposite ʿAbduh, I will look at his fellow Azharī scholar, mystic, and civic leader Yūsuf al-Nabhānī (1849-1932), who saw in the modernity and cross-confessional schooling an assimilationist power that threatened the distinctiveness of this

[1] It will not be possible in this chapter to address the political violence adumbrated in the modern discourse of assimilation as such. Consider the example of the forced removal of indigenous peoples by the United States and their subsequent education undertaken with the goal of eradicating native culture and producing young citizens disconnected from it. See David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995). Another paradigm of assimilation is Jewish assimilation in Europe before World War II, which was in the face of the threat of political violence. See Hannah Arendt, *The Jewish Writings* (New York: Schocken Books, 2007); Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 25-77. Political violence did not obtain in this way in the places and times addressed here.

[2] ʿUthman Amin, *Muḥammad ʿAbduh,* trans. Charles Wendell (Washington, DC: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953); Samira Haj, *Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition: Reform, Rationality, and Modernity* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 67-152; Mark Sedgwick, *Muhammad ʿAbduh* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010).

community.[3] I do not only see al-Nabhānī as a more consistent or observant critic of modern power than ʿAbduh, but want also to look back at some older understandings that in modern times were in uncertain flux. In part two, I investigate the formative educational theory of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111).[4] Ghazālī thought students and teachers should know each other intimately and encourage each other as companions on their shared path. The community of the madrasa was imagined entirely differently from a place such as a market in which people of different religions would mix. I consider this kind of space in the thought of Taqī al-Dīn ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328), who enjoined Muslims to scrupulously distinguish themselves from non-Muslims when they did business with them.[5] Ibn Taymiyya is concerned about a concept called *tashabuh*, which, along with other terms from the etymology *sh-b-h*, can connote the modern idea of assimilation.

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[3] Amal Ghazal, "Sufism, *Ijtihād* and Modernity, Yūsuf al-Nabhānī in the Age of ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II," *Archivum ottomanicum* 19 (2001): 239-72; Illiberal" Thought in the Liberal Age: Yusuf al-Nabhani (1849-1932), Dream-Stories and Sufi Polemics Against the Modern Era in *Arabic Thought Beyond the Liberal Age: Towards an Intellectual History of the Nahda,* eds. Jens Hanssen and Max Weiss, 214-233, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). Samir Seikaly, "Shaykh Yusuf al-Nabahānī and the West," in *Les européens vus par les libanais à l'époque ottomane*, eds. *Bernard Heyberger and Carsten Michael Walbiner*, 175-81, (Berlin:Ergon Verlag, 2002).

[4] Montgomery Watt, *Muslim Intellectual: Muslim Intellectual: A Study of al-Ghazali* (Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press, 1963); Ebrahim Moosa, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Eric Ormsby, *Ghazali: The Revival of Islam* (Oxford: Oneworld: 2008); Kenneth Garden, *The First Islamic Reviver: Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī and his "Revival of the Religious Sciences"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014).

[5] Muhammad Umar Memon, *Ibn Taimīya's Struggle against Popular Religion: With an Annotated Translation of his "Kitāb iqtiḍā' as-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm mukhālafat aṣḥāb al-jaḥīm"* (The Hague: Mouton, 1976); *Ibn Taymiyya and His Times*, eds. Yossef Rapoport and Shahab Ahmed (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010); Ovamir Anjum, *Politics, Law and Community in Islamic Thought: The Taymiyyan Moment* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Part one: Modern anxieties of difference and mixed-confession education

Introduction

In this part, we will examine how anxieties of assimilation persisted in a vision of modern education that was supposed to be progressive and inclusive. We will examine the epistemological and political bases of this view of modern knowledge, which is theoretically accessible to anyone in any community, a view that inspired the drive to mixed-confession schooling in the late Ottoman empire and appealed to the Islamic reformism of Muḥammad ʿAbduh. ʿUlamāʾ such as Yūsuf al-Nabhānī further highlight the assimilationist power of modern concepts and practices that purport to be neutral and accommodating. However, even ʿAbduh's optimism about the commons was colored by a persistent suspicion of the other, and educational modernity was always linked to the idea of European technical and cultural superiority, which Muslims and indigenous Christians had to contest within particular states and between them. In addition, this fraught inclusive idea in practice excluded Muslims with older conceptions of belonging and difference.

The late-Ottoman scene: Knowledge, religion, and politics

In ʿAbduh and al-Nabhānī's Beirut, questions of educational reform acquired their distinctive salience through epistemological change, altered intercommunal politics and competition among institutions of religious learning. When we discuss how particular ʿulamāʾ conceived of mixed education and why, we are discussing a modern situation in a state of rapid and extensive transformation rather than just how new channels formed for older agendas and suspicions. In the polyglot and multicultural empire, officials, religious leaders, and laypeople debated if and how ideas associated

with Western Europe and the nation-state should change older institutions and understandings. The Ottomans did not successfully change the empire into a nation; however, in this transitional period, older universals of an Islamic mission and Muslim primacy, communal autonomy, and scholarly cosmopolitanism were available for debate alongside empirical objectified knowledge, a centralized state, coeducation, and co-citizenship. Rather than reverting to familiar lines of antagonism—reformist vs traditionalist, colonial vs indigenous, Muslim vs non-Muslim—we can rather attend to a macrohistory of these debates and processes in which norms of knowledge and belonging were in flux.

After the European Enlightenment, modern people have tended to discuss knowledge as existing potentially in the world and accessible to all who would learn and investigate. After the Enlightenment and through much of the 19th century, knowledge was not presumed to reside in particular authoritative institutions that required commitment to a certain vocational role, as in the church. Knowledge about the world outside oneself rather consisted in empirical observation and systematic rational inquiry and needed no reference to religious doctrine, although a myriad of religious frameworks were presumed to accommodate such knowledge.[6] New senses of public knowledge contributed new senses of a public sphere consisting of print news media, "commonplaces", and encyclopedias, and these in turn contributed to new public spaces

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[6] Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Science of Wealth and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: An Essay in Moral Theory (*Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 36-87.

such as cafés and, ultimately, public schools.[7] This "openness" does not mean that new knowledge was innocent of political power; on the contrary, it contributed to the imaginary of European scientific and critical superiority to which Muslims and indigenous Christians responded.[8] Even so, as Marwa Elshakry has studied, a public sphere of scientific interest consisting of academic journals, newspapers, and magazines arose among lay and clerical Arabic readers and writers of all confessional backgrounds in the late-19th century.[9] Many, such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh, believed that enthusiasm for modern science could inspire an Islamic revival, while others doubted whether scientific doctrine and religious orthodoxy were commensurable.[10] Discussions of new

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[7] Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 5-22, 86-95; Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 1-42.

[8] Edward Said, Edward W. *Orientalism (*New York: Penguin, 2003); Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *The Theology of Unity* translated by Ishaq Masa'ad and Kenneth Cragg (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966); Monica M. Ringer and Holly Schissler, "The Al-Afghani-Renan Debate, Reconsidered" *Iran Nameh* 30 no.3 (2015): 28-45.

Said and Mitchell describe how the ideas of Western civilizational, intellectual, and technical superiority—and even in some sense, the idea of the West itself—developed in their hegemony over the Middle East after 1798. By the later 19th century, Muslim ʿulamā' were responding to these chauvinisms. Take for example Muḥammad ʿAbduh's *Theology of Unity* as a response to Ernest Renan's *L'islamisme et la science*, a text that provoked refutations from many quarters of the Muslim world.

For another example of the dual imaginary of science as cosmopolitan intellectual undertaking and vital to the security of particular states against other particular states, see Audra J. Wolfe, *Freedom's Laboratory: The Cold War Struggle for the Soul of Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018).

[9] Marwa Elshakry, *Reading Darwin in Arabic: 1860-1950* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

[10] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin,* 161-219.

knowledge did not cut across all community boundaries in the same ways, however, when the ideas of how those boundaries could be negotiated were also changing.

Sulṭān Abdülhamid II undertook the Tanzimat reforms both to strengthen the central state and affirm its inclusive character, a combination that actually further marginalized non-Muslims. The Ottoman administration justified the Tanzimat by arguing it regularized Islamic justice and secured non-Muslims' autonomy and rights. Saba Mahmood summarizes "a weakened Ottoman Empire adopted religious liberty and minority rights within its governing apparatus in order to shore up its territorial sovereignty and harness the fractious loyalties of diverse irredentist groups".[11] However, the reforms also meant that intercommunal relations on a local level were potentially a matter of public order on the imperial level, and that codes authorized and arbitrated by the Sublime Porte were the only standards of fairness to which majorities or minorities could appeal.[12] Karen Barkey argues that the Tanzimat represented a failure of the traditional ways of flexibility and negotiation at which local Ottoman officials as well as the Sublime Porte had excelled, a tradition she connects back to the Roman empire. She

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[11] Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 31.

[12] Najwa al-Qattan, "*Dhimmis* in the Muslim Court: Legal Autonomy and Religious Discrimination," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31 (1999): 429-444. Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the *Millet* System," in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society,* ed. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis 2 vols, 1:69-88 (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1982), "The Strange History of the Millet System," *The Great Ottoman–Turkish Civilization* ed. in Kemal Cicek, 2 vols. (Ankara: Yeni Turkiye, 2000).

Najwa al-Qattan is skeptical that autonomous religious communities were practically subject to the Ottoman state as distinct and enduring millets. Benjamin Braude suggests it is only after the Tanzimat reforms that the term "millet" comes to refer to distinct religious communities, and the idea of a central state always making or arbitrating negotiations among clearly-defined antagonist religious groups is a retrojection.

says this attempt to secure central authority contributed substantively to the breakdown of the state's practical capabilities.[13] European powers also applied pressure to fissures in the empire by intensifying their claims to protect Ottoman Christians' religious freedom, claims with roots in merchants' rights to extraterritoriality and broad understandings of diplomatic immunity and plural belonging that obtained before the 19th century.[14] Amid rising Christian nationalisms in Greece and the Balkans, Ottoman officials cannot but have seen non-Muslims as potentially seditious or even insurrectionary, suspicions that, when applied hostilely to Christian communities, cannot but have in turn increased the appeal of protection by powerful European actors.[15] However, suspicions did not arise only in narrowed avenues of negotiation and abstract imaginaries of geopolitics.

Confrontations in Beirut: Reform, conservatism, and mixed education

In the intellectual and cultural scene of late-19th century Beirut, the politics of reform and inclusion persistently gave rise to mistrust and suspicion across community lines. In a sense, Beirut's identity as a polity emerged with communal conflict. The Sublime Porte designated the city a provincial capital in order to restore peace after violent clashes between Christians and Druzes in Mount Lebanon in 1860.[16] The events

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[13] Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-27; 264-296.

[14] Salahi R. Sonyel, "The Protégé System in the Ottoman Empire," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 2 no 1 (1991): 56-66.

[15] Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2016), 31-51.

[16] Usama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

there caused international outcry, and Britain and France asserted their roles as protectors of Christian minorities in the region.[17] The American presence also grew in the area of Beirut as US-based Protestant missions sought to preach the Gospel all over the world.[18] Ottoman authorities did not allow Christians to seek Muslim converts, but particularly in Beirut, missionaries had a wide latitude to proselytize to indigenous Christians and other non-Muslims.[19] By the 1880s, foreign and indigenous Christian communities had established missions, schools, and other institutions of outreach in the multifaith city. Perhaps one of the best known has been the Syrian Protestant College (SPC), the forerunner of the American University in Beirut, founded in 1862.[20] Under the leadership of Daniel Bliss (1823-1916), the school turned from the "gentle crusade" to a more forceful sectarian stance against the other traditions, the "superstition so prevalent in the East," and against scientific materialism.[21] Bliss marginalized the non-Protestant students at the SPC and purged teachers suspected of Darwinism. Within the

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[17] Sonyel.

[18] Abdul Latif Tibawi, *American Interests in Syria, 1800-1901: A Study of Educational, Literary, and Religious Work* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1966), 253-256.

[19] Abdul Latif Tibawi, *Arabic and Islamic Themes: Historical, Educational and Literary Studies* (London: Luzac & Company, 1976), 256-260.

[20] Daniel Bliss, *The Reminiscences of Daniel Bliss* (New York: Revell, 1920); Henry Harris Jessup, *Fifty-three Years in Syria*, 2 vols. (New York, Revell, 1910); Marwa Elshakry, "The Gospel of Science and American Evangelism in Late Ottoman Beirut," *Past and Present* 196 (2007): 173-215; Tibawi, *American Interests*, 150-301; Samir Khalaf, "Leavening the Levant: New England Puritanism as a Cultural Transplant," *Journal of Mediterranean Studies* 7 no. 2 (1997): 268-92.

[21] Quoted in Jens Hanssen, *Fin de siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005), 111.

domain of the scientific, there were potentially threats to religious belief in general.[22] However, there were also potential rhetorical, apologetic, and material techniques to bolster specific communities and institutions against others.

Foreign Christian evangelists and Muslim and indigenous Christian reformists often understood science education as a way to advance their communities' standards and interests in the contentious scene of Beirut. The SPC evangelist Henry Jessup (1832-1910) put it starkly that scientific "Education is only a means to an end in Christian missions."[23] Marwa Elshakry examines the reverse of this instrumentalist relationship in her account of how Muslim and Christian intellectuals in Beirut in the 1880s, including Muḥammad ʿAbduh, revisited medieval natural theologies to spread scientific knowledge with a patina of piety.[24] In either case, the scientific learning and religious commitment were supposed to harmonize. At this moment, the question of compatibility dealt not only with religious doctrine but also had geopolitical implications. ʿAbduh took the developmentalist view that religion could not exist without the state, and the state could only be militarily and economically secured

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[22] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin*, 161-218; Hanssen, 174; Jamal al-Dīn al-Afghānī, "Refutation of the Materialists," trans. Nikki R. Keddie and Hamid Algar in *An Islamic Response to Modernity: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamāl ad-Dīn "al-Afghānī"* by Nikki R. Keddie, 130-74 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

ʿAbduh often met criticism that his love for foreign science inclined him away from orthodoxy. However, ʿAbduh was also concerned about the prospects of a methodologically-atheist science that did not acknowledge the signs in creation of the the creator, though However, he spent some time in Beirut translating Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī's "Refutation of the Materialists".

[23] Jessup, 2:592.

[24] Elshakry, *Reading Darwin*, 131-91.

through mass education in science.[25] In 1869, the empire passed a law that mandated public education for subjects of all religious communities,[26] and Ottoman leaders began to realize those plans later in the century.[27] When they did, in places like Beirut, they drew on the efforts of reformist leaders such as ʿAbduh and on a culture of progress that crossed confessional lines. As much as discourses of science and education reform take place in an arms race (in this period and others), they also assume a spirit of shared curiosity and inquiry.

This spirit abided for a time in Beirut in the very educational institutions maintained by communities among whom tensions were rising. The avowedly antagonistic Daniel Bliss even declared that SPC "is for all conditions and classes of men without regard to colour, nationality, race, or religion".[28] The Christian intellectual Buṭrus al-Busṭānī (1819-1883) went further and said that his al-Madrasa al-Waṭaniyya (The national school) was for students "from all sects, *millet*s and races without discriminating against their personal beliefs or any attempt at proselytizing and [should be given] full license to carry out their religious duties".[29] For al-Busṭānī, an inclusive

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[25] Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Al-ʿAmāl al-kāmila* [Complete works] (Beirut: al-Muʾassasah al-ʿArabīyah lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 1974), 3:20.

[26] For a translation of the text of the law, see the appendix of Emine Ö. Evered, *Empire and Education under the Ottomans: Politics, Reform, and Resistance from the Tanzimat to the Young Turks* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012).

[27] Benjamin C. Fortna, *Islam, the State, and Education in the Late Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Evered; Michael Provence, "Late Ottoman State Education," in *Religion, Ethnicity and Contested Nationhood in the Former Ottoman Space*, ed. Jorgen Nielsen, 115-127 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

[28] Bliss, 198.

[29] Quoted in Hanssen, 167.

freedom to learn meant freedom from doctrinal imposition or prohibition from others. A school such as the SPC, explicitly founded to promote Christian inculcation, could not easily accomplish this.

Others believed schools needed to keep their religious mission strictly separate for the sake of inclusive modern learning. The translators and educators Yaʿqūb Ṣarrūf (1852-1927) and Fāris Nimr (1856-1951), whom Bliss fired from SPC on suspicion of their materialist tendencies,[30] thought that no academic institution could serve as a true place of higher learning unless "it renounced religious fanaticism and permitted its teachers and pupils to embrace whatever religion they chose, expecting nothing from them beyond teaching and learning".[31] For them, education, especially scientific education, should happen in a space that does not exclude others by religion. Their understandings of such an inclusive space are not necessarily the Western secular understandings explored above. It is clear they do not think that modern education should scrupulously avoid religion, but rather that pupils' chosen religious commitments should be embraced and protected. Like the Tanzimat liberalism and the 1869 education law, here equality and religious difference are constitutive of each other. Modern education is similarly defined through contrast: on the one hand its topics and modes of instruction are supposed to be religiously neutral, but on the other hand modern education is supposed to contribute to the survival and success of particular religious communities.

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[30] Nadia Farag, "The Lewis Affair and the Fortunes of *al–Muqtataf*," *Middle East Studies* 8 no.1 (1972): 73-83; Elshakry, *Reading Darwin,* 67-72.

[31] Quoted in Tibawi, *Arabic and Islamic Themes*, 280.

As leader of al-Madrasa al-Sulṭāniyya, Muḥammad ʿAbduh tried to configure these productively in a school that supported an Islamic vision of modernity for both an inclusive student body and political community. The 1869 law mandated that *lycée*-schools be built in all the provincial capitals, but in 1883, inspired by al-Bustānī, Aḥmad ʿAbbās al-Azharī established the Sulṭāniyya through the supervision of the private Jamʿiyyat al-Maqāṣid al-Khayriyya al-Islāmiyya (Islamic benevolent society). A mixed-confession school,

> For 8 Ottoman lira per year the school taught Turkish, French, and English, accounting and algebra, geometrics, natural philosophy, geography and history, chemistry, painting, legal sciences, engineering, and calligraphy in a curriculum that spanned six years. For Muslim students sharīa law, theology, and Hanafī jurisprudence were compulsory, while Christian students were taught the Ottoman civil code and allowed to attend church on Sundays under the supervision of a priest appointed by the school.[32]

ʿAbduh was hired to teach philosophy in 1884, and there he promoted this reformed curriculum as well as a less coercive pedagogy. In the tradition of al-Bustānī, ʿAbduh also conducted cosmopolitan literary salons that would be remembered for generations to come. ʿAbduh also forged a lasting achievement in his *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (Essay on monotheism) based on his lectures at the Sulṭāniyya.[33] In it, ʿAbduh calls Islam "the first religion to address the rational mind (*khāṭibu al-ʿaql*)",[34] making as sharp a rebuke to Orientalist prejudice as conservative recalcitrance. He calls on Muslims to embrace a

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[32] Hanssen, 176.

[33] ʿAbduh, *Risālat al-tawḥīd* (Essay on monotheism), in *Kāmila*, 3:353-480; *The Theology of Unity*, trans. Ishaq Masa'ad and Kenneth Cragg (London: Allen and Unwin, 1966).

[34] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:466.

modern world which he felt he could confidently engage while maintaining his distinction as Muslim, a confidence others did not share.

I have suggested above how an inclusive vision of education such as ʿAbduh's is freighted with anxieties, and ultimately it was not able to relax the tensions among religious communities or to cement confidence in a modernizing Islam. Long a target of conservative criticism, ʿAbduh left Beirut in 1888, and the Sulṭāniyya was absorbed into the state education system.[35] However, according to ʿAbduh, the state badly needed to build more boarding schools outside the cities, and in general the push in the 1880s for scientific learning in reformed Islamic education did not produce schools that could match missionary schools.[36] This meant that increasingly, the only way to pursue the modern learning promoted by the state and discursively connected to the security of the Muslim umma was in increasingly-sectarian Christian missions. However mixed the Sulṭāniyya had been, al-Nabhānī reports that by 1901, Christians were not sending their children to schools run by Muslims.[37] Al-Nabhānī had an acute animus against ʿAbduh and accused him impiety and even irreligion.[38] However, he shared with ʿAbduh the view that religious education was an imperative of state security. He recommended that the Sublime Porte close all the Christian missionary schools and direct the Muslim

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[35] Hanssen, 177.

[36] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 3:77-92.

[37] Yūsuf al-Nabhānī, *Kitāb irshād al-ḥayārā fī taḥdhīr al-Muslimīn min madāris al-Naṣārā* [Book guiding the perplexed in warning the Muslims of the Christians' schools] (Cairo: Ṭabaʿa al-Ḥamīdiyya al-Miṣriyya, 1904), 38.

[38] Yūsuf al-Nabhānī, *Al-Rāʾiyya al-ṣughrā fī dhamm al-biḍʿa wa-madḥ al-Sunna al-gharā*ʾ [The short "r" of censure for deviation and praise for the esteemed Sunna] (n.p., n.d.), 13-21.

students to its own.[39] Clearly, the growth of an urban elite literate in multiple idioms of modern religion and possessing a shared future did not mitigate intracommunal hostilities. I argue this is because such ideas might be conceptually opposed to religious and geopolitical partisanship, but are in rhetoric and political practice inextricable from them.

One persistence political and rhetorical theme was the concern over assimilation, which both ʿAbduh and al-Nabhānī expressed. In Beirut, ʿAbduh warned the Sublime Porte that

> Muslims do not shrink from sending their children to [American, Jesuit, Lazarist or Frères] schools in expectation of learning sciences or European languages . . . By the end of their schooling their hearts become void of every Islamic bond and pass out as infidels under the cover of the name of Islam. Love of the foreigner becomes rooted in their hearts, and they become more inclined to follow the foreigners and execute their wishes.[40]

Al-Nabhānī echoed ʿAbduh's concern about the foreign-mission education and argued that students schooled there would "by appearances be of the people of Islam" (*fī l-ẓāhiri min ahli al-Islām*) professing faith and honoring their ritual obligations but "would live among Muslims with corruption in their hearts (*fasād al-qulūb*)." A person like this "is not really on the inside (*fī al-bāṭin*) one of the people of their religion".[41] In other words, ʿAbduh and al-Nabhānī are afraid of infiltration, of corruption from the inside of individuals that is not visible on the outside or to the group. While the two agree that Muslims attending Christian schools could be a source of this problem, al-

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[39] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 43-45.

[40] Quoted in Tibawi, *Arabic and Islamic Themes*, 124-25.

[41] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 22-23.

Nabhānī registers a much broader range of concerns about Muslims assimilating to others exercising power over them.

Al-Nabhānī criticizes ʿAbduh as a complete hypocrite on issues of *tashabuh*. Al-Nabhānī applies his charge against ʿAbduh's education philosophy typified in his education philosophy, and from the former's perspective, ʿAbduh was promoting exactly the kind of habituation to others that erodes Muslims' distinctions from them in his infamous Transvaal fatwa.[42] In 1903, ʿAbduh took questions on how Muslims could adapt to non-Muslim norms, and he responded arguing for broad leniency. In the fatwa, ʿAbduh says it is permissible for Muslim men to wear a Western-style hat (*burnīṭa*), because if the one wearing it

> does not intend by doing so to leave Islam and enter another religion, that it is not to be considered un-Islamic (*mukfar*). Indeed, if it is out of some need (*li-ḥāja*), like protecting from the sun or avoiding incumbrance (*makrūh*) or in pursuing some advantage (*maṣlaḥa*) that is not blameworthy (*lam yakruh*), then the idea of *tashabuh* does not apply to this.[43]

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[42] Charles Adams, "Muḥammad ʿAbduh and the Transvaal Fatwa," in *The Macdonald Presentation Volume: A Tribute to Duncan Black Macdonald*, 11-30 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1933); John Obert Voll, "Muḥammad ʿAbduh and the Transvaal Fatwa: The Neglected Question," in *Islam and the Question of Minorities*, ed. Tamara Sonn, 27-39 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996); Haj, 147-51.

[43] ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 6:255.

ʿAbduh prioritizes interior dispositions and intentions over outward appearance,[44] and we have seen that both he and al-Nabhānī are certainly concerned with how Muslims might think or feel on the inside that they do not outwardly show. However, if Muslims adopt outward appearances like non-Muslims, what they are doing precisely is blurring the line between themselves and others, which makes it difficult to distinguish who is who.[45] In a context of Muslim disempowerment, adopting the ways of others could be seen as validating the power imbalance. Al-Nabhānī attacked ʿAbduh's fatwa in no uncertain terms, saying it amounted to seeing evil in good and good in evil.[46] Without appropriate distinctions, al-Nabhānī speculated that ʿAbduh "associated" (*yuʿāshiru*) with Christians and "ate with them whatever they ate".[47] How and with whom students would take school meals was an issue in mixed-confession education in Beirut in the

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[44] Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*, 118-188.

In contrast to the present period, in which what women wear is the site of considerable controversy, this famous controversy from ʿAbduh's time concerns men's clothes. However, the liberal discourse of the hijāb and ʿAbduh's discussion of this headwear is largely the same in that it focuses on individual subjects' interior choices of how to present religious observance externally. Mahmood critically intervenes to trouble the boundary between individual agents and exterior rules, maxims, or injunctions one may choose to follow or not. She argues that pious women fashion themselves through striving for apt performance of religious obligations, striving which in turn shapes their interior understandings, competences, and inclinations. Below, Ibn Taymiyya commends a similar approach to self-monitoring, where Muslims assert their individual subjectivity *and* collective belonging through a similar process to the one Mahmood describes in contradistinction to non-Muslim others.

[45] Consider also that the Sulṭāniyya made all its students wear military-style uniforms; Hanssen, 179.

[46] Al-Nabhānī, *Al-Rāʾiyya al-ṣughrā,* 13-17.

[47] Al-Nabhānī, *Al-Rāʾiyya al-ṣughrā,* 17. The Transvaal fatwa said Muslims could eat meat slaughtered by non-Muslims provided it was not in and of itself not ḥalāl; ʿAbduh, *Kāmila*, 6:256.

late-19th century.[48] ʿAbduh was granting a broad license he thought Muslims needed to work, study, and advance in a world among others, but for al-Nabhānī it amounted to confusing the Muslim for the non-Muslim.

Al-Nabhānī also did not want Muslims to sound like non-Muslims and argued against the teaching of foreign languages in general. Scholars tend to think al-Nabhānī did not know foreign languages, and he did not travel to the West like ʿAbduh did.[49] Children trained in a second language might have a way of communicating that their parents would not understand, and, moreover, missionary-converts and infiltrators might make use of a code. Al-Nabhānī says that if a Muslim learns a foreign language, "the country sponsoring the school in which he studied would become more dearer (*aḥabb*) to him than his own, and its nationality (*jinsiyya*) dearer to him than his nationality".[50] Al-Nabhānī is in part reverting to *jinsī* protectionism, but he is also recognizing that language is not an empty medium; it can only be taught with specific content. Here, al-Nabhānī is concerned with the stories and histories that extolled Europeans and attacked pious Muslims and the science which, though desperately sought by Muslim state-makers, were in large part taught in foreign languages.[51] Despite

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[48] Hanssen, 184.

[49] Ghazal, "Sufism, Ijtihad, Modernity", 250; Seikaly, 177.

[50] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 17.

[51] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 17.

In its early years, the SPC's instructional language was Arabic, but the school found few teachers of science, technology, engineering, or medicine who could speak Arabic, particularly after the anti-Darwin purges. The school chose to hire Americans to teach these fields, and this was the beginning of the long-term transition to English as the instructional language. See Tibawi, *Arabic and Islamic Themes*, 272-74.

its supposedly transcendent and inclusive qualities, science remained a religiously-precarious field inaccessible to those not at least in some part inculcated for a Eurocentric modern world. With his concerns, al-Nabhānī highlights the assimilative potential of the techniques and technologies that were supposed to protect Muslim autonomy and their potential for students' moral formation as subjects and as a community.

Al-Nabhānī's overarching assessment is that if Muslims go to school with non-Muslims, they risk the fate of their souls. In much of his work, al-Nabhānī, like ʿAbduh, is concerned about Muslims attending Christian missionary schools and worries about them taking religious instruction and accompanying their peers in Christian worship.[52] However, I have argued above that unlike ʿAbduh, al-Nabhānī's concerns extend to much of the habitual and epistemological basis of mixed education as such. Amal Ghazal summarizes the argument of al-Nabhānī: "The process that gradually made the students doubt religion was, he claimed, the learning of 'natural science', the mixing with unbeliever teachers and students at schools, and the reading of books that questioned religion".[53] Al-Nabhānī does not cite any books that students would read or how these questioned religion; he does not believe his case requires it. The mixed setting of the school is enough. He says "if a student spends significant time in this setting, Satan, his accursed ministers (*ʿawānuhu*), and his brotherhood (*ikhwānuhu*) of the errant other students (*al-talāmīdh al-ḍālūn*) will spit (*yunfathu*) at him".[54] It is not clear whether it

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[52] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 15, passim.

[53] Ghazal, "Sufism, Ijtihad, Modernity", 250.

[54] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 21.

is Christian students or other Muslims who are an infernal brotherhood, and whether the spitting is overt hostility or moral peril,[55] but in intention it is clear: Satan makes use of others in this environment. Al-Nabhānī is describing a place in which the smallest doubts in a young Muslim's understanding intensify by degrees to covert and even outright apostasy.[56] For him, mixed schools are inherently assimilative environments that risked effacing the boundaries between the umma and the encroaching others. Al-Nabhānī saw the shifts in religious politics, epistemology, and imperial and metropolitan governance as dangers to his community, but these also show the foreclosure of older ways of negotiating knowledge, belonging, and difference.

Part two: Intimacy and difference in premodern Islamic thought

Introduction

In this part, I contrast the norms and models of Muslim religious education with thoughts about living and trafficking among others in the premodern period. I do not suggest that schooling has inherent characteristics that means it has to take place among people with the same religion, and modern ideas of education have simply transgressed the rule or forgotten this feature. Rather, I explore how transmitters, audiences, and interpreters of religious knowledge assessed each other in moral and doctrinal terms. This mode of assessment developed in ḥadīth criticism in the early centuries of Islamic intellectual history and had application to other fields of *ʿilm* as knowledge-production specialized, expanded, and diversified. In the *Iḥyāʾ*, Ghazālī presents his argument that teaching and learning are religious-ethical vocations that

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[55] We might ask if both of these possibilities adhere in assimilation: people who are different choose to either accept hostility or surrender their identity.

[56] Al-Nabhānī, *Irshād al-ḥayārā*, 16-35.

require dedicated self-scrutiny and best flourish in settings of intimate care and understanding. Such settings are only conceivable among people who can develop a close fellowship of a shared praxis and orientation. By contrast, while Muslims may often find themselves in close quarters with non-Muslims, thinkers such as Ibn Taymiyya argue that believers must carefully guard against thoughtlessly imitating others. Even in a world where he assumes non-Muslims do not have political power over or against Muslims, Ibn Taymiyya believes that because human nature is naturally conforming, Muslims must actively resist the homogenization with others and alienation from their own. This is to say that when we examine, premodern understandings of belonging and difference we can find concepts of self-fashioning significantly at odds with modern imperatives of mixed education.

Intimacies and purposes of premodern learning

Different forms of learning in premodern Islam were premised upon intimacy and moral estimation. Muslims have made Muḥammad's example a model for ritual, moral, and social conduct in different ways. Muslim scholars of prophetic ḥadīth included moral criteria in their judgment of transmitters' reliability, a norm also important in the transmission of other forms of knowledge and the cultural milieu in which knowledge was prized. Drawing in part on prophetic ḥadīth, Ghazālī argues that religious education demands the moral scrutiny of teachers and the self-examination of all. He and other premodern ʿulamāʾ believed the selective and demanding calling of religious higher education best occurred in intimate fellowships in which learners and their guides could share and support each other. I do not mean to convey the character of knowledge production and transmission as such in the Muslim world by exploring

these ethical and critical precepts. Rather, these illuminate the distinctive ways scholars in Muslim traditions have understood knowledge to flourish and how they applied and deliberated the authoritative examples of tradition.

Since almost the formative periods, Sunnī Muslim scholars authenticated their veneration of the prophet and the early communities through source-critical methods. Jonathan Brown narrates the processes by which the Islamic mission spread far and wide in the first generations after Muḥammad's death. Reports (ḥadīth) about Muḥammad and those close to him proliferated to an extent that caused concern over confusion of these authoritative precedents.[57] Different styles of rectification developed: for example, Mālik ibn Anas (711-95) applied the law from ḥadīth he saw living continuously from the first Muslim communities in Medina,[58] while Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nuʿmān (699-767) argued that the opinion (*raʿī*) of the *ṣaḥāba* could constitute authoritative precedent when nothing clearer and better known of Muḥammad was at hand.[59] Later, ʿulamāʾ of the "people of tradition" (*ahl al-ḥadīth*) developed critical methods for assessing prophetic reports on their own terms, largely in terms of the chain of transmission (*isnād*).[60] Brown writes that listeners to ḥadīth have always been concerned about the reliability of their chains of transmission. Even in less scholarly terms, the formalized program of *ahl al-ḥadīth* included a field called the "science of

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[57] Jonathan AC Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009, 15-122.

[58] Umar F. Abd-Allah Wymann-Landgraf, *Mālik and Medina: Islamic Legal Reasoning in the Formative Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

[59] Aron Zysow, *The Economy of Certainty: An Introduction to the Typology of Islamic Legal Theory* (Atlanta: Lockwood, 2013); Brown, *Hadith*, 103-06.

[60] Brown, *Hadith*, 77-95.

men" (*ʿilm al-rijāl*) for assessing transmitters in terms of precision in mnemonic fidelity as well as moral conduct and doctrinal correctness, standards that did not necessarily apply before.[61] We should note that all the relationships between precedent and law or doctrine mentioned here call for listeners to evaluate the givers of knowledge as well as content of precedent. Epistemology does not neatly separate from the moral subjectivity of those conveying knowledge, quite unlike in the world of the Enlightenment and after.

ʿUlamāʾ also connected personal estimation and scholarly authority in fields other than prophetic tradition.[62] Brown explains how the eventual written canonization of ḥadīth collections did not diminish the importance of scholars establishing chains of transmission. Authority (*ijāza*) to teach the contents of ḥadīth collections also required young generations of scholars to connect themselves to older scholars and their legacies.[63] *Ijāza* came later to refer to the certification of scholarly proficiency on any text, a meaning that found expression in the world of the madrasas, the world of Ghazālī and his successors.[64] Ḥadīth again serve as a model for Islamic scholarship in general in that religious knowledge has generally been understood to be diffuse, and debate, routinization, and standardization have not been organized through centralized

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[61] Brown, *Hadith*, 80-88.

[62] If knowledge is assumed to have a positive moral value—to connect to the good or the good life—in many premodern traditions, it is not always the case that scholarly authorities are subject to the same kind of character-evaluation as presented in different Muslim literatures explored below. Consider how "character-blind" the Chinese imperial exam system of the Song and after could be, judging scholarly competence, interpretive orthodoxy and esthetic sensibilities anonymously. See chapter 2.

[63] Brown, *Hadith*, 44-45.

[64] Ahmed El Shamsy, "The Social Construction of Orthodoxy" in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Timothy Winter, 98-117 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

institutions but are rather subject to academic-institutional, and often geopolitical-metropolitan, prestige relations. In places such as Cairo and Damascus in the 11th-14th centuries,[65] scholarly traditions represented themselves through bio-bibliographical literatures such as the *ṭabaqāt*, which often featured praise for scholars' diligence, religious and ritual rectitude and mystical devotion in addition to and beyond their indexical information.[66] Even the less-religiously inflected term for humanistic refinement—*adab*—refers also to ritual and social comportment rooted in prophetic ḥadīth.[67] As textual production increased and specialized, concerns about moral and religious turpitude channeled into and helped to define standards of erudition, if blunt critique of persons rather than arguments could not be said to be sufficient nor piety assumed to indicate aptitude in teaching or scholarship.

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[65] Jonathan Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge in Medieval Cairo: A Social History of Islamic Education* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Michael Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice in Medieval Damascus, 1190-1350* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*: *The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); George Makdisi, *The Rise of Humanism in Classical Islam and the Christian West: With Special Reference to Scholasticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990); *The Rise Of Colleges Institutions of Learning In Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990).

[66] J.A. Mojaddedi, *The Biographical Tradition in Sufism: The "Ṭabaqāt" Genre from al-Sulamī to Jāmī* (Richmond, England: Curzon Press, 2001).

[67] Consider this use prior to the belles-lettristic meaning studied by Makdisi among others: *Moral Teachings of Islam: Prophetic Traditions from "Al-Adab al-mufrad" by Imam al-Bukhari*, trans. Abdul Ali Hamid (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira, 2003).

Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ* explores the reciprocal moral expectations among teachers and students in the pursuit of the vocation of guidance.[68] Although the *ʿālim* distinguishes between seeking knowledge to fulfill religious obligation and undertaking formal religious education, Ghazālī believes learning connects directly to morality. He says

> If you were to ask: "How many students with reprehensible character have gained knowledge?" How you have missed the mark! How far you are from [understanding the nature of] the true knowledge that will be of benefit in the abode of the hereafter, and that will ensure salvation. For the very beginning of that knowledge is his awareness that disobedience is a destructive deadly poison. Have you ever seen anyone take poison knowing it was deadly?[69]

Though his statement pertains to *ʿilm* as such, it is in a context of describing the relationship between students and teachers.[70] He declares bluntly that if jurists and scholars display blameworthy traits, they cannot be very good jurists or scholars. To flourish as scholars, which is the teleology for serious study, Ghazālī says students must cultivate a probing inner awareness. He says "the goal (*maqṣid*) of the student is to reach [a? the?] state of being (*ḥāl*) of adornment of his interior and beautifies the virtues

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[68] Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn* [Revival of religious learning], 2 vols (Cairo: Dār al-Salām lil-Ṭibāʿah wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʿ wa-al-Tarjama, 2003; *"Kitāb al-ʿilm": The Book of Knowledge: Book 1 of the "Ihyā ʿulūm al-dīn", The Revival of the Religious Sciences,* trans. Kenneth Honerkamp (Louisville: Fons Vitae, 2015).

[69] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn,* 1:63.

[70] See also Abū Ḥasan al-Qābisī, "Al-risāla al-mufaṣṣila li-aḥwāl al-mutaʿlimīn wa-aḥkām al-muʿallimīn" (Dedicated essay on the disposition of students and the guidance of teachers and students) in *Al-tarbiyya fī al-Islām aw al-taʿllum fī raʾī al-Qābisī* (Education in Islam or learning in the opinion of al-Qābisī) ed. Aḥmad Fuʿād al-Aḥwānī, 245-348, (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, 1955); *Classical Foundations of Islamic Educational Thought* selected and introduced by Bradley J. Cook (Provo: University of Utah Press, 2010.

of excellent character, and the result should be closeness to God (*al-qarb min Allāh*)".[71] Ghazālī then uses the metaphor of Ḥajj to describe progress in education, a process which begins with the rectification of intentions and is only complete in the precise practice of a distinctive religious rite. Ghazālī focuses extensively on the nature of supportive fellowship on this religious journey.

Though he does not describe the learning space of the madrasa as such, Ghazālī describes the intimate social life of learning in an environment of deeply-shared sensibilities. Ghazālī treats Muḥammad as the exemplary teacher, and while it would be simple enough to explain that he instructed Muslim communities as a leader, the author adds another layer to the example emphasizing Muḥammad's paternal care. Because of this, "The first duty (*waẓīfa*) of a teacher is benevolence toward his students, treating them like he treats his sons"[72]. However, through the analogy to the prophet, "the teacher's domain (*ḥaqq*) is greater than that of the parents because while the father is the determiner (*sabab*) of the child's existence and present life, the teacher is the determiner of his eternal life"[73]. Teachers act as nurturers and sustainers for students entrusted to their spiritual care. They also need to facilitate a sense of camaraderie in a shared purpose, as pilgrims with the same intended destination. Ghazālī says "The companionship of travelers on the way to the same town is the root of friendship and affection, so how much more of these are shared on the journey to the higher place?"[74]

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[71] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn,* 1:66.

[72] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn,* 1:69.

[73] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn,* 1:69.

[74] Ghazālī, *Iḥyā ʿulūm al-dīn,* 1:69.

Ideally, students should share in a greater love for each other and with their teachers, who act as their guides. He is also describing a sociality of knowledge predicated on fundamental resemblance of purpose, and on care, which, guided by a paternal teacher, expresses what is good for one's fellows because it is good for oneself. Ghazālī's companionship inheres among people who deliberately cultivate resemblance rather than among those who must guard against it in their transactions.

Distinguishing companions in mixed spaces

We can contrast a negotiation of spaces in which communities mix with Ghazālī's pedagogical and collegial care-ethics. Here, we examine a text by Ibn Taymiyya that explicates a regime of Muslim moral caution against unconscious resemblance to people of other traditions. The iconoclastic jurist lived in Damascus, a cosmopolitan hub of many communities, and while he certainly does not celebrate diversity in a modern sense, he believes that in such a place Muslims can pursue commercial interests among diverse people, and that this requires a politics of recognition if not solidarity. Ibn Taymiyya presents a structure of permission for Muslims to participate in *dhimmī* festival-markets. Doing business with others during their religious celebrations requires special vigilance to make sure one does not accidentally take part in the occasion and cannot be perceived to. He foregrounds his concerns about non-resemblance in an anthropology of habituation, in which incidental or unthinking practices can shape inclinations and fashion the self. For someone like Ibn Taymiyya the ethics of traffic with non-Muslims could not less similar to the intimacies and reciprocal care commended in religious education as described by someone like Ghazālī. This is because while religious communities co-existed in close proximity to each other, with intermixed

interests and even households, in Islamic legal theory the idea of them cohabitating in a place like a modern school would contravene the ethical and political thought of that theory.

Ibn Taymiyya presents an ethical practice that allows Muslims to do business among others in a way that avoids *tashabuh*. He takes a main theme from his text from the prophetic ḥadīth that says "who imitates a group of people becomes one of them" (*man tashabbaha bi-qawm fa-huwa minhum*).[75] "Most Muslim scholars," says Youshaa Patel, "read the hadith as a polemically-charged admonition for Muslims to be *different* from non-Muslims, especially Jews and Christians".[76] Ibn Taymiyya outlines a broad case against *tashabuh* and the Muslims' divine-prophetic injunction to be different in the *Kitāb iqtiḍāʾ al-ṣirāṭ al-mustqīm mukhālifa min aṣḥāb al-jaḥīm* (Distinguishing the straight path apart from the companions of hell). This text does not exhaust the literature on *tashabuh*, but it does integrate legal, ethical, mystical, and interpretive discourses on the topic in Sunnī traditions after Ghazālī.[77] Ibn Taymiyya argues that when pursuing *maṣlaḥa* with others, believers must closely monitor the inclinations of their somatic senses and be careful not to unconsciously imitate what others are doing (within reason) and how they are doing it while they negotiate shared interests that are marked by non-Muslim religious significations. Ibn Taymiyya's

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[75] Abū Dā'ūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Sunna of Abū Dāwūd)*: kitāb al-libās* [book of clothing]*: bāb fī lubsi l-shuhara* [chapter on the garment of fame].

[76] Youshaa Patel, "'Whoever Imitates a People Becomes One of Them": A Hadith and its Interpreters," *Islamic Law and Society* 25 (2018): 360.

[77] Youshaa Patel, "The Islamic Treatises against Imitation (*Tašabbuh*): A Bibliographical History," *Arabica* 65 (2018): 587-639.

standards of non-*tashabbuh* are high like al-Nabhānī's, and like al-Nabhānī in his case against ʿAbduh, he does not think it only comes down to a believer's good-faith efforts to avoid *tashabbuh*. However, like ʿAbduh, Ibn Taymiyya is granting permission for believers to facilitate their affairs.[78] We will see that unlike both the modern ʿulamāʾ, Ibn Taymiyya does not succumb to a fear of assimilation in which double-agents' apostasy or political subterfuge might lurk beneath the surface. He rather outlines an embodied disciplinary practice Mahmood recognizes and that allows for coexistence with distinctions.

Ibn Taymiyya's thought on negotiating the marketplace adumbrates a political order of the *dhimma* system, which has long occupied modern scholarly interest.[79] In mainstream Islamic legal theory, traditions with particular genealogical affiliation with Islam articulated in the Qurʾān, such as Judaism and Christianity, enjoy a protected status. Collectively, these protégés are called *ahl al-dhimma*. Required to pay special

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[78] Ibn Taymiyya is describing a practical ethics for how Muslims should behave among the *dhimma*, or non-Muslim minority groups under the protection of Muslim rule. A number of legal and political theories and practices govern the relationship among the state, Muslims, and the *dhimma*, the main effects of which are to preserve Muslims' distinctions. Ibn Taymiyya is mainly concerned here with the interior, dispositional, and micropractices (*akhlāq*) to preserve that distinction and Islam's ecumenical superiority as a religion he believes the distinction signifies.

[79] Anver M. Emon, *Religious Pluralism in Islamic Law: Dhimmis and Others in the Empire of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); David Nirenberg, *Neighboring Faiths: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the Middle Ages and Today* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); *Dhimmis and Others: Jews and Christians and the World of Classical Islam*, eds Uri Rubin and David Wasserstein (Tel Aviv: Eisenbrauns, 1997); Youssef Courbage and Philippe Fargues, *Christians and Jews under Islam*, trans. Judy Mabro (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997); A.D. Muztar, "Dhimmis in an Islamic State," *Islamic Studies* 18 no. 1 (1979): 65-75.

taxes (*jizya*),[80] *dhimmīs* enjoy a degree of autonomy in religious practice and in many legal realms. Modern scholars often study the *ahl al-dhimma* in legal theory in contrast to modern notions of citizenship under the state.[81] Whether or not religious minorities enjoyed greater autonomy or fewer rights than non-majority communities in nations today, *dhimmī*-style politics was not predicated on the idea of individual civic-political equality.[82] Premodern Islamic states were not structured by the anxieties of the minority question, because they did not assume a single kind of sovereignty over a discrete population and did not aim to facilitate uniform access to and supervision by political institutions—assumptions on which Ottoman reform was premised. This is not to suggest premodern Islamic governance always meant "live and let live"; Ibn Taymiyya believes the law envisions social humiliations of non-Muslims coupled with incentives to convert. But in the interstices of that eventuality, Ibn Taymiyya envisioned an ethic of distinction for believers among non-believers and strategies for the guarding of the self.

Ibn Taymiyya allows Muslims to do business with non-Muslims during the exceptionally risky occasions of their festivals despite considerable reservations. He discusses markets associated with holidays specifically for the risks a believer might encounter, but he makes clear that his concerns apply much more broadly to business in others' markets. Ibn Taymiyya relates to non-Muslims as *dhimmīs*, as protected minorities who have particular rights, but whom Muslims ought to discourage from

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[80] Fazlur Rahman, "Non-Muslim Minorities in an Islamic State," *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 7 (1986): 13-24.

[81] For a summary of the scholarship comparing premodern Islamic legal traditions to liberalism and citizienship, see Emon.

[82] Mahmood argues that the importation of this framework to the late-Ottoman context was transformative, *Religious Difference*, 31-65.

living in the way of their traditions, or at least not encourage them to do so. The ethic Ibn Taymiyya generalizes from Muḥammad is "the Prophet emphasized to his community to differ from them even in many lawful things and in the details of worship (*ṣifāti al-ṭāʿāt*), in case agreement with them in this respect should become a precedent (*dharīʿa*) to promote agreement with them in other respects".[83] He felt that one should maintain scrupulous difference from others so coincidence in worship does not occur, and be different from them in what one may legally do. Even limited similarities can contribute to broader ones and undermine distinction. Ibn Taymiyya says that if Muslims can do this, they can do business with others even on their holidays because Muḥammad did not specifically prohibit this, and he embodied the balance between what is useful for people and legal and moral standards by which they should live.[84] However, Ibn Taymiyya says that one may only undertake such business if one is ready and able to scrutinize others and carefully distinguish oneself, because "One who is unable to recognize what is unacceptable (*munkar*) as a whole or in detail cannot avoid it just by intent (*qaṣd*)".[85] For those mature enough, Ibn Taymiyya commends an anthropological vigilance.

Ibn Taymiyya grounds his ethic of Muslim distinction against others in an ethic of scrupulous monitoring of natural assimilative tendencies. He argues that human nature is defined through sociability: "Because among all humans there is a commonality of the shared species (*mushāraka fī al-jins al-khāṣṣ*), their mutual

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[83] Ibn Taymiyya, 193.

[84] Ibn Taymiyya, 194-96.

[85] Ibn Taymiyya, 211.

interaction (*tafāʿil*) is the most consequential" and so, "In light of this principle (*aṣl*), there is influence exerted and received among the house of Ādam, and the acquisition of one another's habits and character (*akhlāq*) by social relations (*muʿāshira*)".[86] Without thinking, Muslims may acquire the habits of non-Muslims in clear contravention to prophetic directive.

While physical habits can have important significance in ritual observance and in other areas, Ibn Taymiyya thinks that outward coincidence in habits has a purchase on one's interior. "Outward similarity (*mushābiha*) yields a kind of interior affection (*mahabba*) and friendship, and likewise inward affection on the inside yields outward similarity ".[87] Accustomed to thinking of friendship as affective or even spiritual, we may forget to consider what a friendship looks like from the outside, which is people mirroring each other. Moreover, affinity often forms by spending time together, a concern al-Nabhānī registers in thinking about Muslims as classmates with non-Muslims. The Qurʾān, Ibn Taymiyya reminds us, tells readers not to take Jews or Christians as friends.[88] With such attention to the hazards of mixed spaces, Ibn Taymiyya warns against Muslim women and children taking part in business there. They might find themselves unable to resist "idling and sport" in general.[89] Mothers might take children to the baths in unconscious imitation of Christians' celebrating the

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[86] Ibn Taymiyya, 219-20.

[87] Ibn Taymiyya, 221.

[88] Ibn Taymiyya, 218.

[89] Ibn Taymiyya, 185.

baptism of Christ.[90] Ibn Taymiyya seems most concerned about members of the community he finds most vulnerable; one can only imagine what he would have thought about children compelled to be intimate with others for their formative years. However, we do not need to sympathize with Ibn Taymiyya's concerns to understand his ethic of self-monitoring as care of the self among others.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can consider the meaning of an older regime of distinction and intimacy in altered modern circumstances. In some ways, al-Nabhānī is reacting as if Ghazālī and Ibn Taymiyya were presented the prospect of mixed education, the potential for mixed messaging and habit formation ʿAbduh's legal thought downplays or does not recognize. Al-Nabhānī's deployment of earlier tradition shows such ethical and anthropological concerns as elaborated by Ibn Taymiyya. However, their suspicion of and even hostility toward others come through clearly. We do not need to ignore this in appreciating the broader frameworks of learning and difference out of which it comes. Rather, from a constructive standpoint, we can appreciate the extent to which even their politics that disinclines them toward solidarity with others also allows those others social and ritual space to represent themselves. In other words, theirs is not a coercive project attempting to remake others or to control the domain in which they might constitute their communities. Taken together, the views of Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyya, and al-Nabhānī contrast with the project of conscriptionist education. As that project does not theoretically or historically separate from the increase of coercive power of the modern state, we can observe that inclusive education under modern power does not so

[90] Ibn Taymiyya, 227.

much prepare people to belong alongside others and respect their distinctive spaces as it prepares people to relate to others on the assumption that they have had similar formative experiences in homogenizing settings. We do not have to think that modern states or institutions erode all forms of personal or communal distinctiveness to appreciate that their aims at inclusion are not innocent of domineering power but predicated on it.

Reformers of the Qing empire, with its panoply of different traditions and communities, made similar calls for educational institutions to encompass the whole of society, but a different problematics of inclusion emerged. The inclusive message of reformers like Zhang Zhidong and Kang Youwei was even more hegemonic than their Ottoman contemporaries: they imagined everyone included in Confucian traditions at the expense of others' belonging and even physical and institutional space. They reach such a vision not because they are necessarily more chauvinistic than al-Nabhānī but, seemingly paradoxically, because subjects to Chinese politics were not considered *not* to be potentially Confucian subjects. The change we will see as we look to the premodern period is that in general, quite unlike in the Muslim or the West world, individuals and communities had not been assumed to belong to one tradition at the expense of others. The question that signaled the changes of modern epistemology and progressive power was a question of the identity of the state and its society.

Chapter 4 Destroy Temples and Build Schools: Education and the Diversity of Chinese Traditions

Introduction

In this chapter, I contrast the politics of difference that accompanied the advent of mass education with the commensurability among traditions in imperial China. At the end of the Qing 清 dynasty (1644-1911), Confucian reformist scholar-officials (*shi* 士) and intellectuals believed that the empire urgently needed an educated citizenry and that religious spaces could be converted to schools, and potentially their assets seized, to facilitate this process. Confucian *shi* did not see all such places and the traditions with which they were associated the same way, however. They tended to view their own tradition as the natural choice for a state religion (*guojiao* 國教), to inculcate society with patriotic, secular, historically-progressive sensibilities the modern moment requires. These modern Confucian partisans did not take such a view of Buddhism, Daoism, and more local traditions; they thought history would subsume these others, and the future would be without them. By contrast, scholars of Daoxue 道學 Confucianism[1] sought to demonstrate that theirs was the cardinal Chinese tradition, a dao so great and inclusive it was not limited even to itself and its scholars not confined to it. To follow a number of such integrative scholarly exercises through time, I refer to the ethical thought of the five constant virtues (*wuchang* 五常) and how it was deployed at the inauguration of the Han 漢 Kitāb, the tradition of Islamic thought in the Chinese

[1] For use of term see Stephen C. Angle and Justin Tiwald, *Neo-Confucianism: A Philosophical Introduction* (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 2017), 1-9 and chapter 2 part 2 above.

language.[2] Such a concept and its genealogy help us understand a world without the modern politics of proprietary assignment to single traditions.

Part one: Ritual space, state religion, and the problem of others

Introduction

In this part, I consider how reformist scholars understood the conscriptionist project of mass education to call for a Confucian hegemony in China. The connection between these two is not intuitive or necessary. However, in general, as we have seen in previous chapters, those reformers who envisioned a learned society tended to find existing education too heterodox and heterogeneous. Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909) wanted to physically transform the places associated with Confucianism into schools. However, he also believed the state would need the physical and financial resources of other traditions as well. Zhang established a binary in which state-Confucian institutions were forward-looking and apt to contribute to public welfare, whereas those associated with Buddhism, Daoism, and especially more local religious forms were potentially backward and resistant. Education activists made use of this binary to seize temples in the name of modernization in the chaotic years of the transition between the Qing empire and the Republic of China. I use the theme of historical transition to study how the iconoclastic thinker and activist Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858-1927)[3] conceived of a novel and charismatic Confucianism as a state religion which surpassed others. Kang has a transcendent vision of a future unity of humanity to

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[2] Donald Daniel Leslie, Yang Daye, and Ahmed Youssef, *Islam in Traditional China: A Bibliographical Guide* (Sankt Augustin: Monumenta Serica Institute, 2006).

[3] Kang Youwei 康有為, *Kang Youwei quanji* 康有為全集 [Complete works of Kang Youwei], 12 vols. (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue chubanshe, 2007).

which the esoteric Confucian path guides. The belief that the majority tradition will promote national unity and the concern that incompatible minority traditions might not is characteristic of the late 19th century, and it does not easily accommodate older expressions, such as those of Chinese Islam, that express belonging to multiple traditions.

School facilities and the valuation of tradition in the *wuxu* period

In 1898 and after, the discourse of the need for mass education gave rise to debates about the nature of correct belief and ritual practice. A diverse array of reformers such as Zhang Zhidong, Kang Youwei, Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929), and others came to believe that the state could look to ritual and traditional institutions for the physical and financial infrastructure of mass education. For them, the state purview over these institutions included the right to scrutinize doctrine and practice for its compatibility with the modernizing aims of the collective. While all did not agree on what to do with the places and people they found aberrant, or even what aberration was, they all tended to say those not aligned with Confucianism were incompatible with that tradition and did not serve the empire's present needs. Through the reformists' work, the difference among *jiao* became a problem of collective political identity and was coded into the rubric of the politicized temporality of modernization.

In the *Quanxue pian*, Zhang Zhidong conscripts religious-traditional institutions into the mass education project. In chapter 2 above, we examined how Zhang understood that "by means of teaching, there is government" (*yi jiao wei zheng* 以教為

政).[4] While *jiao* refers to education in a general sense, it can also refer to religious teaching or tradition. Zhang recognizes that the weak late-Qing state could not afford to construct purpose-built schools for all the subjects of the empire as soon as they are needed. Zhang describes how the state can find the space for schools: "We can start by converting the Confucian academies into them" (*xian yi shuyuan gaiwei zhi* 先以書院改為之).[5] The *shuyuan* had been places in which students could prepare for the imperial-service exam. When the Song 宋 dynasty (960-1279) reformed the exams and made them central to the traditions of political life, they established *shuyuan* widely.[6] Zhang believes mass education will better prepare more students to take the exam, and while he also wanted to modernize the testing system, Confucian learning was still central to both these new envisioned tests and Zhang's ideal school curriculum.[7] Moreover, after the exams ended in 1905, the *shuyuan* had no other intrinsic purpose, so those who wanted Confucian education to continue could logically turn to the *shuyuan*. However, Zhang imagined other traditions' spaces as potential schools as well.

Zhang subjects Buddhist and Daoist institutions to a political calculus and finds that they take more than they give to public education and public life. He estimates that the state will not be able to provide everyone a place for school if only the *shuyuan* are

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[4] Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, *Quanxue pian* 勸學篇 [Exhortation to learning] in *Zhang Zhidong quanji* 張之洞全集 [Complete works of Zhang Zhidong], 12 vols. (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1998), vol. 12, 9703-68., 12:9708.

[5] Zhang, 12:9739.

[6] John W. Chaffee, *The Thorny Gates of Learning in Sung China: A Social History of Examinations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 4-17.

[7] See chapter 2 part 1 above.

conscripted for this purpose.[8] Buddhist and Daoist temples (the term *siguan* 寺觀 covers both) are also aligned with *jiao*, with teaching, and they are fair game for repossession and repurposing. For every ten *siguan*, Zhang proposes converting seven of them into schools.[9] Goossaert and Palmer report that Zhang was known as a leader of a "build schools with temple property" (*miaochan xingxue* 廟產興學) movement.[10] As precedent, Zhang cites three of the rare instances in which state actors destroyed Buddhist temples because they did not pay taxes.[11] Having just referred to the strained resources of the imperial state in 1898, Zhang implies that the country cannot afford to have so many unproductive institutions of *jiao* taking up otherwise useful educational space. He says, "today the temples in the empire number in the tens of thousands, and in the great cities there can be more than a hundred in a district" (*jin tianxia siguan hezhi shu wan, duhui baiyu qu* 今天下寺觀何止數萬，都會百餘區).[12] The "ten thousand" (*wan* 萬) figure can mean a myriad, a hyperbolic amount. In any case, Zhang is saying that Buddhist and Daoist ritual spaces are an extensive untapped resource, and under extraordinary circumstances, the state, a main site of concern in the Confucian tradition, can repurpose other traditions' institutions.

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[8] Zhang, 12:9739.

[9] Zhang, 12:9740.

[10] Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 44.

[11] Zhang, 12:9741.

[12] Zhang, 12:9739.

Zhang also believes that a renewed and reconceived Confucianism can subsume and protect the other traditions themselves. He says of Buddhism and Daoism, "today, Western *jiao* are flourishing, while these two groups are in decline, and their potency cannot endure for long."[13] Zhang says this is because Buddhism as a movement has run its course, and that people do not believe in Daoist spirits like they used to. That is, Buddhism is out of date, and Daoism dwells in the belief in discredited cultic powers. At a time when institutions must be conscripted into the mission of educational modernization, these two traditions do not seem like they can pass muster. Zhang does not limit himself to criticizing the two, however; he suggests his own tradition is the solution to the faults he finds in the others. Moreover, "if the Confucian tradition (*Rufeng* 儒風) could revive, China would be at peace, so the two traditions can take its protection."[14] When he says Confucianism or Confucian China could protect the other two traditions from the West, he obscures the fact that it is precisely Confucian partisans and *shi* who are looking down on the other traditions and claiming their spaces from their leaders, supporters, and patrons.

Zhang ends the text with a similarly condescending argument for religious tolerance and a warning about dissension. He titles his last section "Against Attacking *Jiao*" (*fei gong jiao* 非攻教), and begins: "*Jiao* that differ from each other have often fought. Since the time of Zhou 周 and Qin 秦 it has been so."[15] Since the formative period of Chinese traditions, they have fought: Zhang is naturalizing the idea of

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[13] Zhang, 12:9739-40.

[14] Zhang, 12:9740.

[15] Zhang, 12:9768.

incompatibility and conflict. He goes on to say, "As for the conflict between Confucianism and the other traditions, it concerns fundamental moral distinctions"—literally, it is about "distinguishing black and white" (*ban hei bai* 辦黑白).[16] The situation today (*jinri* 今日), however, cannot accommodate debate or contention: it is clear that "our Mencian Confucian *jiao* is China's truest sacred *jiao* (*zhi zheng zhi shengjiao* 至正之聖教)"; it presents the "clarity of heavenly principles" (*tian li zhi chun* 天理之純) and models "human relations' utmost" (*ren lun zhi zhi* 人倫之至).[17] While Confucianism is the summit of Chinese intellectual history, and it could not be further apart from the other traditions, toleration is the best practice. Zhang says that at this critical moment, the task lies "in political reform, not in religious conflict" (*zai xiu zheng*, *bu zai gong jiao* 在修正，不在攻教).[18] Zhang argues that while before religious conflict arose from the differences (deficiencies) of the other *jiao*, China must enter a new age which recognizes the supremacy of Confucianism and in which traditional-institutional relationships are restructured for the sake of uplifting the nation.

Kang Youwei amplified Zhang's messages that Confucianism had demonstrated its exclusive superiority in the modern present over and against other traditional forms. Before Kang articulated his famous idea of Confucianism as state religion, which we discuss below, he advocated for the state to take over ritual spaces both to provide schools and to confront the problem of deviant religion. In 1898, Kang wrote a memorial

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[16] Zhang, 12:9768.

[17] Zhang, 12:9769.

[18] Zhang, 12:9769.

to the Guangxu emperor "petitioning the immediate conversion of the *shuyuan* in each province into secondary schools, and the heretical temples (*yinci* 淫祠) in each town and county into elementary schools."[19] *Yin* describes aberrant or deviant, and *yinci* and the phrase *yinsi* 淫祀 is often translated "immoral cults". In his public discourse and official advice, Kang, like Zhang Zhidong, is advocating that the state subsume the traditional spaces associated with Confucianism. However, Kang goes further than his elder in arguing the state should undertake school conversion as a punitive exercise, whereas Zhang does not explicitly call for Buddhism, Daoism, or even Christianity to be corrected or punished. After the coup that halted the 1898 reforms, an imperial counter-edict stated that the institutions targeted above "are to be maintained as before, and not be changed into schools, unless they are immoral cults (*yinsi*)."[20] So while the *miaochan xingxue* movement did not immediately achieve its aims at its outset, the reaction against the *wuxu* reforms left intact the link between mass education, state infrastructure, and normative ideas of what *jiao* should be.

Kang's discourse of *yin* institutions and teachings anticipated recurring campaigns against superstition (*mixin* 迷信). Kang's thoughts on the proper form of the Confucian tradition, and the proper disposition of its ritual-cum-educational spaces, could be too extreme and idiosyncratic to convey a positive sense of *jiao* that would be recognizable to many people at his time. However, the label *yin* is inherently negative

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[19] *Wuxu bianfa wenxian ziliao xiri* 戊戌变法文献资料系日 [1898 reform documentary journal], ed. Qinghua University History Department (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 1998), 770.

[20] Cited in Goossaert and Palmer, 47 n9.

and not inherently specific. Throughout his career, Kang denounced various practices of icon- and ancestor-veneration, a stance which according to Goossaert and Palmer "evinced what would be a major characteristic of Republican-period writings on religion: a desire to model Chinese religion on a Christian-based model of what a 'religion' should be."[21] Kang's student Liang Qichao 梁啟超 (1873-1929) popularized this new term "religion" (*zongjiao* 宗教) as well as its opposite *mixin*.[22] While the *jiao* in *zongjiao* does not designate mass education as such, the religious vs. superstition question concerns what it is right that people practice and be taught. In Kang and Liang's Protestant-inflected discourse of religion and modernity, *mixin* were an obstacle to the form of progress that only a centralized state was supposed to secure. In practice, in the temple-seizure campaigns of the first years of the 20th century, *mixin* designated those structures and organizations not associated with a court-recognized high tradition, that is, with the *sanjiao*. Though not always a contested process, temple seizure met with resistance in rural areas where locals fought to retain resources and autonomy from the central state.[23]

In theory and practice, the *zongjiao* versus *mixin* discourse heightened the stakes of the concerns voiced by Zhang Zhidong and others about the incompatibility of particular *jiao* with rectified public knowledge, the state's goals of modernization, and with each other. However, while the *miaochan xingxue* movement and the anti-*mixin*

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[21] Goossaert and Palmer, 46.

[22] Vincent Goossaert, " 1898: The Beginning of the End for Chinese Religion?" *Journal of Asian Studie*s 65 no. 2 (2006): 320.

[23] Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).

campaigns defined some of what a thriving public religion was against, they did not specify much of the character of a Confucianism apt for the modern moment.

Kang Youwei's Confucian visions: A religion of man and the Chinese state

Here I want to consider what Kang meant by Confucianism in a religious sense and what this meant for *jiao* that are not Confucian. These are complicated questions because Kang's output varied so much throughout his life and his public politics did not necessarily align with his visions of ideal human society. Like many elite scholars, Kang's political fortunes at court rose and fell with the 1898 reform, and his polemical and extreme style and content meant he had an unstable social-intellectual circle. His biographers have capably illustrated the complexities of his thought as it unfolded in different circumstances of his career. Here, however, I will examine how he saw Confucianism as a state religion (*guojiao* 國教) for China's uncertain present and how he understood Confucianism as the summit of human political evolution. In the words of Hsiao Kung-yuan, Kang believed that "owing to its intrinsic superiority the 'Confucian religion' was theoretically suitable for all mankind, and that it was the only 'religion' suitable for China under the existing conditions."[24] Though Kang is in many ways an outlier among Confucian reformists and modernizers, his program is a theoretical outgrowth of the practical discourses of mass education and *miaochan xingxue*. Kang outlines a speculative universal history in which Confucianism supersedes and subsumes others to provide for humanity's spiritual and intellectual needs.

[24] Kung-chuan Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975), 118.

Kang made his call for political reform through imagining a novel and iconoclastic cult of Confucius. In 1895, Kang said that all places identified as *yinsi* should be cleansed of devotional figures or objects and restructured around the worship of Confucius.[25] In 1911, the year of the Xinhai 辛亥 revolution that ended the Qing dynasty and established the Republic of China, Kang founded the Confucianism[26] Movement (Kongjiao yundong 孔教運動) in which a *guojiao* venerating Confucius was advocated.[27] Kang reimagined the family of Ru traditions restructured around the figure of Confucius. Before the late-19th century, devotion to a multiplicity of sages, saints, and rulers could have been understood on the Ru-*yinci* spectrum, in which the question of who or what was Confucian was not asked. Kang tries to intervene to establish a clear icon, a brand of rectified and exclusive tradition. In Confucius, a historical person, he chooses someone less likely to be venerated by Buddhists, Daoists, and others, as opposed to mythic figures such as the ancient Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors (*Sanhuang wudi* 三皇五帝), who were revered in imperial history more generally.[28] Confucian traditions had been embedded in the history and practice alongside others. While some institutions such as the exam system could be described as definitively

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[25] Goossaert and Palmer, 46.

[26] Anna Sun prefers the term "Confucianity" to translate Kongjiao. Anna Xiao Dong Sun, *Confucianism as a World Religion: Contested Histories and Contemporary Realities* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 43.

[27] Sun, 10.

[28] These figures are canonized in Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (145 BCE-86 BCE) *Shiji* 史記 (Historian's records). The *Benji* 本紀 (Annals) text begins with the Five Emperors. *The Grand Scribe's Records*, vol. 1., ed. William H. Nienhauser, Jr., trans. Tsai-fa Cheng, Zongli Lu, William H. Nienhauser, Jr., and Robert Reynolds (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994).

Confucian, concrete ritual spaces and abstractions such as state ideology admitted plurality and ambiguity that Kang wanted to replace with a definitive and exclusive claim on a founder figure.

Kang understands Confucius as a sage who, among few founding-father peers, articulates the shape and goals of human history. In his essay "*Kongzi gaizhi kao* 孔子改制考" (On Confucius as a reformer),[29] Kang describes the divine interjection of Confucius into the human world. He begins:

> Heaven, having pity for the many afflictions suffered by the men who live on this great earth, (caused) the Black Emperor to send down his semen so as to create a being who would rescue the people from their troubles—a being of divine intelligence, who would be a sage-king, a teacher for his age, a bulwark for all men, and a religious leader for the whole world.[30]

Incarnated of the divine, Confucius came to guide humanity, a peer of Jesus and Gautama Buddha. In "esoteric words",[31] Kang finds that Confucius outlines the plan of human history in its three ages: the age of chaos (*shuailuan* 衰亂), the age of

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[29] Kang Youwei, "Kongzi gaizhi kao 孔子改制考" [On Confucius as a reformer], in *Kang Youwei quanji* [Complete works of Kang Youwei], vol 3., 1-234 (Beijing: Zhongguo Renmin Daxue chubanshe, 2007). Translations follow Feng Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* vol. 2, *The Period of Chinese Classical Learning (From the Second Century B.C. to the Twentieth Century A.D.*), trans. Derk Bodde (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953), as indicated.

[30] Kang, 3:3; Feng, 675.

[31] Kang wrote of one of these: "When I came to read the *Evolutions of Rites*, I was greatly moved and exclaimed: 'Herein are to be found the successive changes of the Three Ages of Confucius, and the real truth of his Great Way.'... This text represents the esoteric words and true teachings of Confucius. It is a precious record without superior in any country, and a divine recipe for resurrecting all sentient beings throughout the world" (quoted Feng, 679). The text he is referring to is the "*Liyun* 禮運" chapter of the *Liji* 禮記.

approaching peace (*shengping* 升平), and the age of sublime peace (*taiping* 太平).[32] However, Kang says that Confucius' advice was limited to what people in his Warring States context could understand; modern technology and political organization change everything, of which Confucius, according to Kang, was aware beforehand.[33] Awakened interpreters such as Kang must thus apply the deep-historical hermeneutic to discern transcendent wisdom in Confucius' very situationally-specific teachings about rituals and role-ethics.[34] With such an esoteric standard, Confucius can be interpreted to mean almost anything he is required to mean, and if Confucius can mean almost anything, patriotic Chinese interpreters have little need to refer to the other sages, narratives, and authorities of Chinese traditions. Commentators tend to agree that Kang's Kongjiao borrows extensively from Buddhist, Christian, liberal, and other traditions,[35] which further bolsters his claim that Confucianism is sufficient not only human history, but the present as well.

For Kang, Confucius' Confucianism is not only transcendental, but particularly apt for China's moment of transition. Kang says that the sage's historical philosophy

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[32] The three-ages doctrine appears in the Gongyang 公羊 commentary on the *Spring and Autumn Annals* (Chunqiu 春秋) that was such an influence on Kang Youwei and many of his interlocutors; Harry Miller, trans., *The Gongyang Commentary on the "Spring and Autumn Annals": A Full Translation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Feng, 81-83.

[33] Consider Kang Youwei 康有為, "Lunyu zhu 論語主" [Commentary on Confucius' *Analects*], in *Quanji*, 6:393; Feng 684.

[34] Consider Roger T. Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011).

[35] For example, Hsiao Kung-yuan characterizes Kang as "making use of whatever suitable ideas he found in Confucianism and borrowing whatever Buddhist and Christian notions that were serviceable" (118).

presents the material-political evolution of humanity from individual filial relations, to families, clans, tribes, and states. In the historical moment when the imperial order was unravelling—that is the liminal time period of approaching peace—Kang says that Confucius imagines a polity united by patriotism rather than lineage or proximity, that is, nation-state with a national ideology.[36] The state requires that citizens relate to each other through the *guojiao*. Though China, through Confucius, is the source of this historical insight, the tendency in Chinese history of *jiao* to intermix and individuals and communities to draw freely from multiple traditions impedes the late-Qing polity from realizing its republican potential. Kang finds that China is at a disadvantage compared with the West, where adherence to a canonized national tradition is the foundation of citizenship.[37] In another respect, however, Confucianism points the way to the future. Kang believed that despite the numinous and prophetic content of his own interpretations, the essence of Confucianism is secular, worldly, and humanistic: "Confucius loathed divine authority for its undue influence [on men] and swept it away. Therefore Confucianism suits the present world best."[38] As much as Kang saw Confucianism as a modern nation's antidote to partiality and superstition, he also believed it foretold of humanity united in the future.

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[36] Kang, 6:393.

[37] Feng, 673.

[38] Quoted in Hsiao, 167. Consider also that Kang says in his commentary on the *Zhongyong* that "spirits abounded in high antiquity, but deities were few in middle antiquity. The wiser men became, the fewer spirits and deities." Kang Youwei 康有為, "*Zhongyong* zhu" 中庸註 [Commentary on the *Zhongyong*], in *Quanji*, 5:369-92; quoted Hsiao, 164-65.

Kang uses an eclectic mix of Confucian vocabulary to expound his philosophy of the future great unity (*datong* 大同) beyond all the distinctions of history. On the face of things, Kang's utopian vision seems to have little in common with imperial Confucianism or even with the classics. His final age is one of "individuality", in which traditional familial, local, and national bonds dissolve, along with the distinctions on which classical Confucian ethics is based.[39] Kang adds sexual liberation and racial eugenics, late-19th century desiderata without analogs in imperial Chinese intellectual history, to his idea of the freer future.[40] However, Kang is also suggesting that the way to the *datong* lies through the one-nation *guojiao* ideology of Kongjiao. Processual political achievement is not in and of itself foreign to Confucianism; consider the doxology of *Daxue* 大學 2, in which a peaceful empire under heaven is built from an orderly state, a sound family, and an examined self.[41] The difference is that this Daoxue does not posit that Confucianism supersedes the other traditions as humanity undergoes moral, epistemological, and religious evolution as it does in Kang's *datong*. Kang's greater unity does not evidently admit the diversity of the Chinese empire or the religions of the world.[42] We do not need to find that Kang's *datong* is particularly hostile

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[39] Feng, 681.

[40] Kang Youwei 康有為, *"Ta t'ung shu": The One-World Philosophy of K'ang Yu-wei*, trans. Laurence G. Thompson (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1958), 140-68.

[41] See chapter 2 above.

[42] Contrast the futurity of diversity and cooperation conceived in the World Parliament of Religions in the 1893. Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions, or, How European Universalism Was Preserved In The Language Of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 265-73.

to non-Confucian traditions as his anti-*yinsi* iconoclasm to appreciate that his is a future without others.

A precarious translation from Chinese Muslim history

We can have a sense of the newly-uncertain situation of those who followed non-majority *jiao* in China by looking at the reception of a Muslim textual tradition. In 1898, the Yunnanese Muslim scholar Ma Lianyuan 馬聯元 published a selection of Chinese text with an interlinear Arabic commentary. The text was a core excerpt from the *Tianfang xingli* 天方性理 (The philosophy of Arabia) by the Muslim thinker Liu Zhi 劉智 (1660-1739).[43] A preface to the original text by a non-Muslim Chinese official states that "although his book explains Islam, in truth it illuminates our Confucianism."[44] In part, this statement reflects the extent that individuals and communities were legible in terms of multiple traditions. In the late-19th century, this was becoming a harder status to maintain, particularly for Chinese Muslims. Insurrections against the Qing dynasty in Central Asia drew on Muslim religious loyalties, suggesting that Muslims were apart from the empire.[45] Ma's rendering of the Arabic text indicates the extent to which Chinese Muslims wanted to participate in the cosmopolitan religious culture, from which their community had often received texts but to which it had not contributed in

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[43] Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-yü's "Great Learning of the Pure and Real" and Liu Chih's "Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm"; with a New Translation of Jāmī's "Lawāʾiḥ" from the Persian by William C. Chittick* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 28-31.

[44] Quoted in Murata, *Gleams*, 25.

[45] Immanuel Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 318-21.

core Islamic languages such Arabic and especially Persian.[46] I suggest the issuing of this text with its two modes of intelligibility illustrates the precarious binary of Islam and Confucianism structured by majoritarian and identitarian paradigms represented above. The thinkers above believed *jiao* should unite citizens together to pursue the state's modernizing aims, a formula that reifies difference among *jiao* and makes this difference a political issue. Late-imperial China did not present Muslims or others the binaries of being Chinese or Confucian or not.

Part two: Plural communities, traditions, and texts in imperial China
Introduction

In this part, we will explore how Chinese traditions could be understood as distinct, but not separate, from each other. While this question could extend through the history of China and to elsewhere in East Asia and beyond, here we will focus on one set of ethical-political concepts as deployed in the Daoxue movement and its Islamic reception. Those concepts are the "three relations and five constant virtues" (*sangang wuchang* 三綱五常). The five fundamental values are humanity (*ren* 仁), righteousness (*yi* 義), ritual propriety (*li* 禮), wisdom (*zhi* 智), and good faith (*xin* 信), and the three relationships are those between fathers and sons (*fuzi* 父子), husbands and wives (*fufu* 夫婦), and rulers and ministers (*junchen* 君臣). While they can be organized hierarchically, they can never be fully separated without loss of significance. It is in this way that Zhu Xi[47] looks at Chinese traditions, a worldview and rhetorical strategy I will

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[46] Kristian Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 181-95.

[47] 朱熹, *Zhuzi quanshu* 朱子全書 [Complete works of Master Zhu] (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002).

describe as Confucian cardinality. Zhu Xi argues for this integrative contradistinction by analyzing the ethics of Mengzi 孟子 and Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤.[48] Wang Daiyu can then present his own view of human flourishing as an Islamic cardinality. His profession is uniquely capacious among Chinese traditions, but cannot be alienated from them, a foreclosure of the problem of identity that became an issue in the time of Zhang Zhidong and Kang Youwei.

Pluralities of *jiao* and dao under heaven: Fundamental assumptions

Before we turn to the moment of the Daoxue, we should address the socio-political and institutional-textual reasons that the idea of an exclusive *guojiao* was such a radical novelty in the modern period, and we can begin with the socio-political. In part one, I highlight the importance of mass education, without which, I argue, there was not the idea that the whole population needed instruction in one particular, cohesive, and unifying *guojiao*. Before the late-19th century, the *jiao* and dao, in the minimal sense, described particular vocations such as the Confucian *ru*, Daoist ritual specialists, and the Buddhist monastic sangha.[49] Those not associated with these professional categories, the vast majority of society and the imperial court, were not necessarily assumed to "belong" to any of the *sanjiao* or to the variety of other devotional institutions or forms of practice. We should not let our modern conceptions of what

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[48] Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤, *Zhou Dunyi ji* [The work of Zhou Dunyi] (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2002).

[49] This minimalist definition of religious identity, pertaining only to clergy, traditional scholars, or specialists, was the basis for assigning people to the "five religions" (*wu da zongjiao* 五大宗教) in the early Republic of China. Eventually, religion became a potential category for identity for all citizens as legal identity of persons cemented with the modernization of the state; Nedostup, *Religion and Superstition*.

"harmonious pluralism" absent "religious conflict" is like influence our view of imperial China. Furthermore, we should not consider imperial Chinese society necessarily more "enlightened" than post-Reformation societies where religious allegiance is an intermittent source of political strife.[50] If anything, the power of the Chinese empire was so pervasive that the prospect of autonomy and a schedule of rights and obligations for particular communities, as obtained in much of the Muslim world, was not possible. Whether this is greater peace or merely more effective hegemony is beside the point.

More to the point here, Chinese traditions have always exhibited both distinctness and porous and plastic boundaries. For example, Daoists, Confucians, and Buddhists have read and interpreted the Yijing 易經 to express a variety of doctrines in addition to its use as a divinatory text.[51] It is common to think of the Bible, or a broader mythic and textual field of which it is representative, as an inspiration or root of the Qur'ān, and the Qur'ān states that it confirms the scriptures that came before it of its same divine source.[52] However, the texts have different content, and no large group of Muslims has a significant claim on the same Bible Christians use (or even close) as *its* text. In addition, in premodern China, ideas associated with one tradition often appear

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[50] Daniel H. Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe: Religious Conflict, Dynastic Empires and International Change* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 99-134; David Sorkin, "Religious Minorities and Citizenship in the Long Nineteenth Century: Some Contexts of Jewish Emancipation" in *Politics of Religious Freedom,* ed. Winnifred Fallers Sullivan, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Saba Mahmood, and Peter G. Danchin, 115-26, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

[51] Edward L. Shaughnessy, *I Ching: The Classic of Changes* (New York: Ballantine, 1997); Thomas Cleary, trans., *The Taoist I Ching* (Boston: Shambala, 1986); *The Buddhist I Ching* by Chih-hsu Ou-i (Boston: Shambala, 1987); Richard J. Smith, *Fortune-tellers and Philosophers: Divination in Traditional Chinese Society* (Boulder: Westview, 1991).

[52] Qur'ān 10:37.

in others. Though uncontrived action (*wuwei* 無為) is commonly associated with the Daoist "brand" of fluidity, naturalness, and intangible qualities, the term occurs in the Lunyu 論語 (Analects) of Confucius.[53] The stereotypical pairing of wise, ironic Daoists and priggish Confucians can draw on a text such as Zhuangzi 莊子 5.3, which portrays Confucius as pompous and unable to see the truth for his concern with conforming to external models. As this indicates, however, the traditions have partisans like Zhuangzi, Mozi 墨子, Xunzi 荀子, and Mencius.[54] Premodern Chinese intellectual life was not simply free individuals taking eclectically from whomever they chose. As we will see, neither Zhang Zhidong nor even Zhu Xi was inventing the idea that discursive traditions have boundaries.[55] Nevertheless, from the late Tang 唐 (608-907),[56] Confucian scholars committed to delineating their *jiao* and showing that it surpassed others'.

Zhu Xi discerning the dao among others: Mengzi and Zhou Dunyi

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[53] Lunyu 論語 10.5. In a text such as Zhuangzi 莊子 5.3 Confucius is pompous and cannot see the truth for his concern with conforming to external models, perhaps fuel for the stereotype; Edward Slingerland, "Effortless Action: The Chinese Spiritual Ideal of Wu-wei," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 68 no. 2 (2000): 293-397.

[54] Mozi 墨子 39 is titled "*Feiru*" 非儒 (Against Confucians), and Xunzi 23 depicts a debate with Mencius about human moral nature.

[55] Compare Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Arab Studies, 1986).

[56] Han Yu's 韓愈 that charged that Buddhism was alien to China is canonically taken as the beginning of the Confucian reaction of which Zhu Xi is the synthetic conclusion; "*Lun Fogu biao*" 論佛骨表 [Memorial on the bone of the Buddha] in *Han Yu quanji jiaozhu* 韓愈全集校註 [Complete works of Han Yu annotated] vol. 4 (Chengdu: Sichuan Daxue chubanshe, 1996), 2288-2306.

Here I will focus on how Zhu Xi uses two sources to discuss recognition of others and working with their traditions in his own. In his comments on Mengzi, Zhu outlines a Confucian cardinality, arguing his is a fuller representation of others that nonetheless should not be separated from the others, just as some sacred virtues incorporate canons of other virtues. Zhu also commends the philosophical synthesis of Zhou Dunyi, who explains his polyvalent ethical ideal in the Confucian moral politics of the *sangang wuchang*.

Zhu Xi used the Mengzi to determine what it means to be flexibly orthodox. Zhu memorably laid the foundation of state-social Confucian orthodoxy in his Four Books (*Sishu* 四書): the Confucius' Lunyu 論語 (Analects), Mengzi, the Daxue 大學 (Great learning), and the Zhongyong 中庸 (Centered commons). Zhu excerpted the latter two, discussed in chapter 2 above, from the Liji 禮記 (Record of the rites) to make into standalone philosophical works. When Zhu canonized the Mengzi alongside the Lunyu, he makes the claim that the former is the doctrinally-correct reception of the latter. To argue for this it is often said Mengzi (372 BCE-289 BCE), the putative author of the text, learned from Zisi 子思 (481 BCE-402 BCE), the grandson of Confucius in Confucius' home town.[57] The text says "since there have been living people until now, there has yet to be another Confucius" (*zi you minsheng yi lai, wei you Kongzi ye* 子有生民來未有孔子也).[58] There are significant echoes between the texts on themes such ritual conduct (*li*

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[57] D.C. Lau, "Meng-tzu 孟子 (Mencius)," in *Early Chinese Texts: A Bibliographical Guide*, ed. Michael Loewe (Berkeley: Society for the Study of Early China, 1993), 331.

[58] Mengzi 2A2.

禮),[59] the importance of reciprocity,[60] and the ineffectiveness of coercion and force in political leadership.[61] Zhu selected a text that clearly makes a tradition when put alongside the Lunyu; however, for his purposes, it is especially important that the Mengzi presents arguments about what it means to discern and transmit the orthodox dao against narrow extremisms.

Zhu finds in Mengzi an urgency to re-establish the dao against popular, oversimplified dogmas. The Mengzi says the intellectual scene was dominated by Yang Zhu 楊朱 (440 BCE-360 BCE) and Mozi 墨子 (470 BCE-391 BCE). Yang espoused self-interest (*weiwo* 為我), and Mo commended universal love (*jianai* 兼愛). Mengzi says that in their respective essences, Mo and Yang have no concepts of either fathers or noble and worthy people (*wufu wujun* 無父無君). When these ideas mislead people, "the way of Confucius is not manifest" (*Kongzi zhi dao bu zhu* 孔子之道不著), and there is no access to humaneness and justice (*renyi*).[62] Zhu Xi explains Yang is commending ethical egoism (*aishen* 愛身), but can have no account of *yi*-justice, which is inherently about more than just oneself, and is not of the Confucian ideal of the aristocratic worthy person (*junzi*).[63] In contrast, "Mozi's love lacks distinctions" (*Mozi ai chadeng* 墨子愛無差等) and would not recognize the special place due fathers; by implication, his is the

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[59] For example, Lunyu 12.1 on the imperative of ritual and Mengzi 3A2.

[60] Lunyu 6.30; Mengzi 7A4.

[61] Lunyu 2.3; Mengzi 1A7.

[62] Mengzi 3B9.

[63] Zhu, 6:331.

doctrine that lacks *ren*.[64] If we think of *ren* as general philanthropy, then Zhu Xi is being somewhat counterintuitive, but we need to keep in mind that humaneness is defined through other status-attuned virtues such as *li*—ritual propriety[65]—and filial duty (*xiao* 孝),[66] and hence Mozi's indistinct *ai* cannot recognize the respect due to fathers.[67] In essence, for Zhu Xi, Yang and Mo's ethics are very limited and do not cover significant topoi on the moral-political domain.

Clearly, these are extremist ideas that demand a defensive restoration of the dao, and Zhu sees that a time for debate has returned. Mengzi, the eponymous, Socratic main character of the text, says "I do not enjoy arguing (*bian* 辯); it is that I cannot but do so."[68] Just as in Confucius' time, "the dao of the sages had decayed" (*shengren zhi dao shuai* 聖人之道衰), so in his own time amid political chaos "idle scholars have oblique discussions". If scholarly dispute is a common enough complaint among scholars themselves, Zhu Xi explains that in his time, it is specifically the Buddhists (Foshi 佛氏) who are the reductive ethicists. He adds that Buddhists are not as bad as Yang and Mo, but because their divergence from the dao is smaller, they are a greater danger to those who are close to understanding.[69] In other words, Buddhists are not entirely on the

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[64] Zhu, 6:332.

[65] See for example Lunyu 12.1-2; Kwong-loi Shun, "*Ren* and *Li* in the Analects," *Philosophy East & West* 43 (1993): 457–79.

[66] See for example Lunyu 1.2.

[67] Zhu, 6:332.

[68] Mengzi 3B9.

[69] Zhu, 6:332.

wrong track. Mengzi says, “I seek to rectify people’s hearts (*wo yu zheng renxin* 我亦欲正人心), put a stop to errant discourses (*xieshuo* 邪說), and oppose tendentious guidance (*bixing* 詖行)”. At first the comment about bias (*bi*) would not contribute to the argument. Is not all doctrine or guidance biased in some way? Is not Mengzi himself biased against those whom he should be biased? In another passage, Zhu glosses Mengzi’s *bi* as “tending toward one side of the river bank” (*pianbei* 偏陂),[70] and below he makes it clear this is just as much a warning for one’s own than a critique of what is wrong with others. For Zhu the imperative to not succumb to partiality has more significance for how he sees the relationship between true traditions and others.

As Zhu interprets the Mengzi, Yang and Mo’s ideas represent the extremes between which one must discern a correct position, but crucially, one must not limit one’s thinking to this position itself. The text later reintroduces Yang and Mo and says that the worthy Zimo 子莫 mediated (*zhong* 中) between the two.[71] Zhu Xi says that Zimo understood that what Yang and Mo signify is a loss of the *zhong* between positions. However, the text says that “grasping and holding a *zhong*-mediation is only getting close to it” (*zhizhong wei jin zhi* 執中為近之). Zhu explains the “it” is the dao. He glosses this passage with its multiple metaphors as saying that if one persistently adheres to the mediated correct position, one is only partially correct.[72] Mengzi says

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[70] Mengzi 2A2; Zhu, 6:283-84.

[71] Mengzi 7A26.

[72] Zhu, 6:435.

those stuck on the right answer "lack capability" (*weiquan* 為權),[73] because they are "nevertheless grasping on to one thing." Such people are in fact pernicious (*e* 惡) in their monomania and are "lifting up the one but wasting the hundreds" (*juyi er feibai* 舉一廢百).[74] Waste, disregarding the other, is antithetical to *quan*—true power or authority. Zhu explains that this is because despite their extremism, one cannot go *against* the principles Yang and Mo espouse as such: one must not harm oneself or others.[75] In a given circumstance, the *quan* response may well agree with either Yang or Mo. Zhu concludes: "this passage is saying that what is valuable (*gui* 貴) in the dao is the *zhong*, and what is valuable in *zhong* is the *quan*",[76] and *quan* is impotent if it is rigid, dismissive, and arrogant.

At this point, I will refer to the idea of cardinality to try to make sense of the position of Zhu Xi's canon and commentary on the issues of the other. I am treating cardinality as a normative kind of synecdoche. When a part of something is used as shorthand to represent the whole, it is not usually just *any* part. It is supposed to be the

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[73] The term *quan* here refers to discretionary authority, in other words, to authority that the people in authority may choose to exercise or may choose to exercise in a particular way. In Mengzi 1A7 above, *quan* refers to the act of weighing, to a person judging whether something is light or heavy. In Zhang Zhidong's *Quanxue pian*, the term occurs in *minquan* 民權, which refers to subjects' power, or civil rights associated with a republican form of government. Zhang says that at the end of the Qing, the populace is not ready to exercise this form of *quan*, but if they were developed as Confucian subjects through the process of mass education, such a form of government might be possible in the future, as Kang Youwei believes it is. See chapter 2 part 1 for Zhang's discussion of *minquan*.

[74] Zhu, 6:435.

[75] Zhu, 6:435.

[76] Zhu, 6:435.

most important or most representative if the synecdoche is to be understood. We could say that *ren* is the cardinal Confucian virtue, or even that it is the cardinal of the cardinal *wuchang* virtues.[77] *Ren* can represent *wuchang* or even adumbrate them. However, in medieval Christianity, the cardinal[78] virtues are those that were known to the ancient world. They required an entirely supplemental set of theologically Christian virtues; of course the cardinal virtues are indispensable, but they are not enough.[79] Similarly, Zhu Xi says that the Confucian virtue of *xiao* is special and not found in Yang or Mo.

I want to suggest this is how Zhu Xi can say that Confucianism is superior to the other traditions, but those traditions are morally commensurable with Confucianism.[80] It is just that unlike Thomas, Zhu stresses the real danger of succumbing to the partisanship of the best and most judicious. One needs to have *quan* in the sense of being able to change the course, so accordingly, one's *zhong* might not be a consistent *via media* in Western idioms. People possessed of *quan* can be more flexible. I suggest

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[77] Angle and Tiwald describe the *wuchang* as the cardinal virtues; 170.

[78] To consider the Latin and Chinese parallels further, the *Oxford English Dictionary* suggests that "cardinal" derives from the Latin *cardo* or "hinge", where the term *zhong* can refer to a pivot. I would suggest Zhu Xi is using a concept like cardinality to emphasize one aspect of how the ethical *zhong* can be *zhong*—that is in an inalienable relationship with others and other conceptions of the good.

[79] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: An Essay in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 165-80.

[80] Zhu, 6:435.

that in imperial China, *quan* can mean the practical wisdom[81] of knowing what rules apply to what and what aims at what end, but it can also describe people who think in terms of Confucian cardinalities and negotiate a dynamic dao that is among others and contains others. A flexible capability in intellectual practice means a recognition of the way that the correct answer, *zhong*, is among a field constituted by alternatives: it is among them, it is representative of them and it represents them; it is also better than they are because they are more limited or more exclusive. This is cardinality.

As an example of a capacious and *quan*-capable interpretation, Zhu promoted the thought of Zhou Dunyi. Modern scholars believe that Zhu took Zhou from relative obscurity, unlike Mengzi.[82] Scholars also believe Zhu found in Zhou a link of solid Confucian moral politics to the more speculative cosmology associated with other traditions. Feng Youlan argues that Confucians in the Tang and Song drew inspiration from Mahayana Buddhism, with its doctrine that spiritual perfection is broadly open for people to pursue if they are dedicated and cultivated enough, to reinvigorate the idea that ordinary people had the potential to become sages (*shengren* 聖人). Feng calls them

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[81] In the Mengzi, a taboo is described against men and women touching to greet each other. However, the text says, a man who rigidly fears this taboo and to the extent that he would not touch his sister-in-law to save her from drowning is like an animal. To save one's sister-in-law by touch is an example of *quan*; 4A17. By extension I would suggest, *quan* can refer to the practical wisdom to judge where within or outside a tradition to stand, and which tradition might apply. Saba Mahmood makes a similar suggestion when she says that people can exercise phronesis when they judge if it is better to promote women's rights or to oppose domineering, coercive, and progressivist politics. Though Mahmood is thoroughly critical of all feminism and suggests that no feminist project in any social or historical location is innocent of the worst crimes of Western imperialism, this does not foreclose the tradition altogether. Perhaps for Mahmood, feminism is like Yang or Mo's thought; *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 196-99.

[82] *Reconstruction the Confucian Dao: Zhu Xi's Appropriation of Zhou Dunyi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 31.

"Confucian Buddhas". In other words, they are fundamentally at one with the normative constitution of the cosmos and able to articulate the cosmology and the normative dao ordinary people.[83] In classical Confucian sources, the *shengren* are the eminent pillars of tradition.[84] Zhou Dunyi's *shengren* are describable in all these ways: historically and cosmically fundamental while identifiable through worldly moral life.[85] The main connection of moral living to the telos of the *shengren* is through the value of *cheng* 誠. Zhou says "*cheng*, that is the root of the sage" (*Chengzhe shengren zhi ben* 誠者聖人之本).[86] *Cheng* can have a commonplace meaning of "sincerity",[87] but Zhou treats it more like integrity in the sense of integrating many elements of human personhood. If Zhou gives the *shengren* Buddhistic associations of transcendence and responsibility, Zhu

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[83] Feng, 419.

[84] Confucius says "A sage? I'm not someone who could come close to, let alone meet one. I'm someone who could meet a *junzi*, maybe"; Lunyu 7.26. Mencius puts Confucius' exemplar the Duke of Zhou (Zhou Gong 周公) among the *shengren*; 2B3, and says that one who mediates between Yang and Mo is a sage.

[85] Joseph Adler says that in the Daoxue movement "the Confucian way was understood as the ultimate source of moral values, which periodically required the appearance of an individual—a sage—to apprehend anew and resume its transmission. The theory developed by the Song Confucians to describe how their sagely Way was in fact accessible in the present, despite the gaps in its transmission, combined the models used by Daoists and Buddhists. They, like the Chan Buddhists claimed to have a line of ancestors/patriarchs, which they called sages. And like the Daoists, they claimed that the human body/mind/heart was where the *dao* was to be found" *Reconstruction the Confucian Dao: Zhu Xi's Appropriation of Zhou Dunyi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 36-37.

[86] Zhou, 15.

[87] An Yanming and other modern scholars say that *cheng* is particularly difficult to parse over the course of its semantic range across Chinese traditions in history, and it is especially difficult to translate; "The Concept of Cheng and Its Western Translations," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 4 no. 1 (2004): 117-36; "Western 'Sincerity' and Confucian 'Cheng'," *Asian Philosophy* 14 no. 2 (2004): 155-69.

says that because Buddhists oppose their ethical absolutism to the worldly attachments of family and society they cannot be truly *cheng*,[88] they are too far on one extreme so to speak, to be proportionately integrative.

Zhou's account of the *shengren* integrates the Confucian cardinal virtues in his broader description of a cosmology. Zhou is best known for his account of the supreme ultimate (*taiji* 太極), a metaphysics of fundamental polarities with strong Daoist influences that Zhu Xi said was one of the understandings Confucians had always had as part of their dao.[89] The Confucian *shengren* are supposed to transmit such understandings, and Zhou describes their defining *cheng* in terms that resonate with Daoists: "*Cheng* is uncontrived action (*cheng wuwei* 誠無為)."[90] To achieve uncontrived *cheng*, one needs to practice the five virtues, of which he says, "loving (*ai* 愛) is called humanity (*ren* 仁), being appropriate (*yi* 宜) is called justice (*yi* 義), being ordered (*li* 理) is called ritual propriety (*li* 禮), being penetrating is called wisdom (*zhi* 智), and preserving (*shou* 守) is called honesty (*xin* 信). One who is by nature (*xing* 性) like this is *sheng*."[91] A century after, Zhu Xi assents in his commentary that the importance of the five virtues are instrumental to becoming a sage, a perfected part of his *lixue* cosmos.[92]

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[88] Justin Tiwald, "Zhu Xi's Critique of Buddhism: Selfishness, Salvation, and Self-Cultivation," in *The Buddhist Roots of Zhu Xi's Philosophical Thought*, ed. John Makeham (New York: Oxford University Press), 141.

[89] Adler, 35.

[90] Zhou, 20.

[91] Zhou, 20.

[92] Joseph A. Adler, *Reconstructing the Confucian Dao: Zhu Xi's Appropriation of Zhou Dunyi* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014).

Moral integrity sums the five virtues as understood from the oldest Confucian practice, and those *cheng* people can access an expanse of cosmology that is shared Daoists and Buddhists. Go too far into the cosmology without the social ethics, and you have Yang-Mo extremism, and while Confucians is never wrong when abiding by *wuchang*, if they do not appreciate the metaphysics, it is as if they are clinging to their correctness and wasting the possibilities presented by others.

The Han kitāb and questions of belonging

We can now consider how a Muslim scholar claimed *quan* to put forth an Islamic Confucian cardinality. Wang Daiyu is the major representative of the Han kitāb dao. Though he lived in the Ming 明 dynasty (1368-1644), scholars tend to treat Wang's work as an outgrowth of the Daoxue movement, despite other trends in Confucian thought being dominant at the time. His summa is titled *Zhengjiao zhenquan* 正教真詮 (The real commentary on the true teaching).[93] Though he claims Islam is the true *jiao*, he does not cling to it to the exclusion of Confucianism. Like Zhou Dunyi, Wang defines human flourishing in cosmological and historical terms according to the Confucian doctrine of *sangang wuchang*. However, Wang does not argue Islam fits fully within this dao: for example, he makes clear that Muslims have a *wuchang* of their own—the five pillars of

[93] Wang Daiyu 王岱與, *Zhengjiao zhenquan* 正教真 [Real commentary on the true teaching]; *Qingzhen daxue* 清真大学 [Great learning of Islam]; *Xi hen zhengda* 希真正答 [True responses on the rare truth] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1987); *The First Islamic Classic in Chinese: Wang Daiyu's "Real Commentary on the True Teaching,"* trans. Sachiko Murata (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014).

Islam[94]—which are separate from but do not interfere with the Confucian virtues, a Thomas-like assertion of cardinality. With the example of Zhu Xi's rhetoric above, I argue that his text should not be read as an attempt to distinguish Islam from Confucian thought, politics, or society or an attempt to present Islam as compatible with the imposing dominant tradition. Wang invokes the *wuchang* as moral exhortation that resonates with Confucian traditions. His is an exercise in *quan* and meaning-making but not community demarcation.

To understand how Wang understands the ethics and cosmology of *sangang wuchang*, we need to think beyond the modern politics of contradistinction. Perhaps understandably, academic scholars of religion have tended to look at history with modern conceptions of the exclusivity of traditions and the political stakes of religious identity. It is generally well-known among scholars that Liang Qichao popularized the neologism religion—*zongjiao*—and that Kang Youwei specifically argued for a *guojiao* on the basis of its being modern and European. However, insightful modern scholars can inadvertently impart anachronistic political conceptions on to their analysis of the Han kitāb. Consider James Frankel's description of the Sinophone Muslim community: "When assimilation penetrates the surface of material culture into group consciousness, it produces communities that straddle, or blur, civilizational boundaries and participate simultaneously in two or more cultures, often creating a new, hybrid culture of their

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[94] Wang translates shahāda as "remembering" (*jinian* 即念), zakā as "giving" (*shi* 施), the fast of Ramaḍān as "abstaining" (*jie* 戒), ṣalā as "prayer" (*bai* 拜), and the Ḥajj as "assembly" (*ju* 聚). Wang, 82-88.

own."[95] While Kang and Zhang undoubtedly have assimilationist projects, we do not see comparable rhetoric in the late empire that understands Muslim difference as a problem and presents an answer in assimilation, with its attendant suspicions that the minority cannot integrate into the majority and contribute to the efforts of the majority-state. While the Wuxu generation may have thought in terms of civilizational boundaries, the Han kitāb is set in a different dao from Chinese traditions, and the imperial state maintained no boundary against its Muslim subjects. While there is some descriptive value in understanding Wang's cosmology as a hybrid of Confucian and Islamic significations, hybridity implies a prior unmixed state and may impart a stasis, solidity, or homogeneity to "originals" that is not appropriate to Islamic, and particularly not to, Confucian, traditions.

In part, modern scholarly vocabulary and concern with genealogy can make distinctions where differences do not appear in the texts such as those of the Han kitāb. While Zvi Ben-Dor Benite correctly points out that the opposition of "Chinese" to "Islamic" is a 20th-century categorization, he describes Chinese Muslims' "simultaneity" and "diasporicity".[96] The latter term implies that Islam is something removed from its native place and grafted into to an alien, potentially hostile setting. I do not find in Benite's or other scholars' work evidence that imperial China was a milieu that that

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[95] James D. Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name: Liu Zhi's Confucian Translation of Monotheism and Islamic Law* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), xvii.

[96] Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in late Imperial China* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005), 12-20.

harbored suspicion or hostility toward Chinese-writing Muslims.[97] While one can of course be simultaneously Chinese and Muslim, this vocabulary only occurs to us when these are taken as identity-categories of which conflict or concordance are possible negotiations. We do not speak of someone as "simultaneously" Chinese and a young person, if that expression is intelligible, and much less of the "hybridity" of youth and Chineseness. These would be confusing because we do not perceive a potential conflict of these descriptors of different dimensions of life. I argue that Wang Daiyu is not presenting his negotiation of potentially conflicting identity claims. He rather presents his Muslim religious vision of humane thriving in the social and political world commensurate with Confucian thought.

Wang Daiyu's *wuchang*: Confucianism found in the Islamic dao

To understand the role of the *sangang wuchang* in Wang's explication of Islamic thought, we need to look at his Daoxue-inflected human cosmology. Here I will not be outlining the whole of the metaphysics of the Han kitāb, but pointing to how it foregrounds particular ethical concerns. He explains that God—the Real Lord (*Zhenzhu* 真主)—created heaven, earth, and the myriad of things (*tiandi wanwu* 天地萬物), which "are like one great tree. Humanity is the spiritual of the myriad things (*ren wei wanwu*

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97 Kristian Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1-3.

This is not to suggest Chinese Muslims have no interest in accounts of the first Muslims to come to China, or an idea that the first Muslims lived somewhere else. They do. Kristian Petersen cites an 18th-century text that describes a meeting between the Tang Taizong 太宗 emperor (598-649) and the companion of Muḥammad Saʿad ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (c. 595-c. 674). It is more that Buddhism and Christianity must have similar instances when Chinese encountered or adopted these traditions for the first time, and we do not speak of a Buddhist or Christian diaspora in China.

zhi ling 人為萬物之靈). Human nature and character (*ren zhi xingli* 人之性理) are like the seed (*zhongzi* 種子) of the tree."[98] Humanity brings forth the spiritual aspect of creation, and the pattern of human nature is the generative germ of this whole. The term *zhongzi* means "planted offspring", so the term "seed" evokes both what is produced and what produces; reproduction is a key moral and metaphysical concern we will see below. He continues: "Humanity is the nobility of the myriad things (*ren wei wanwu zhi gui* 人為萬物之貴),[99] and the human body (*ren zhi shenti* 人之身體) is the fruit of the tree."[100] In addition to its spiritual qualities, Wang explains that physical humanity is the valuable result of the physical world. While the world has a divine author, bodily and spiritual humanity are its catalyst, which Wang explains through normative and relational personhood.

Because humanity is the defining part of creation, he also compares it to a tree. He says, "if we can speak of this tree, roots and branches, fine and coarse (*benmo jingcu* 本末精粗) parts, we can call it humanity (*yan zhi wei ren* 言之謂人)."[101] From humanity's contrasting aspects, Wang transitions to say that its essence is the cardinal Confucian virtue, the foremost of five constants: "humanity is its humaneness" (*renzhe*

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[98] Wang Daiyu, 64. Quoting Shujing 書經 [Classic of documents] 27.1.

[99] Compare Wang Chong 王充, *Lunheng* 论衡 [Discourses on balance] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1974), 381; *Lun-hêng: Philosophical Essays of Wang Ch'ung*, trans. Alfred Forke (London: Luzac, 1907), 326.

[100] Wang Daiyu, 64.

[101] Wang Daiyu, 64.

ren ye 人者仁也).[102] Wang proceeds to explain this in terms of the unity of humanity alluded to in the tree with contrasting parts, and the etymology of the homophonous character *ren*.

> One human not divided—this is the human ultimate (*renji* 人極)[103]. When one is made two, these are husband and wife (*fufu* 夫婦). The human ultimate in its origin in is one human, yet husband and wife are two humans. One human is just a human (*yi renzhe ren ye* 一人者人也), but two people are humaneness (*er renzhe ren ye* 二人者仁也).[104]

The character *ren* 仁 has two radicals, left and right. The left radical stands for a single human, analogous to the character *ren* 人, and the right radical is the number two (*er* 二). While humanity as *renji* is ultimately one, a divided humanity can realize humaneness in mutuality, in recognition of the other, in love across distinctions. The distinction of the spousal binary echoes the origin of humanity in the Qurʾān,[105] and it also attests the basis for his Confucian moral commendation.

Wang connects his social ethics to the order of creation through the fundamental pair and the place of the human ultimate in the universe. Where Zhou Dunyi invokes the value of *cheng* to encompass *wuchang*, Wang says "the *sangang wuchang*: ruler and

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[102] Wang Daiyu, 64. Zhongyong 20 reverses this expression to say that "humaneness is being a person."

[103] Humanity undivided in the *renji* recalls the undivided and often understood binary *taiji* above.

[104] Wang Daiyu, 64.

[105] The Qurʾān speaks of the angels all submitting to Adam, who knows the names of the creatures and dwells in janna with a partner (*zawj*) until the two are expelled on account of the deception of Iblīs (Qurʾān 2:31-39).

subject, father and son—all are based on the humaneness of husband and wife."[106] The virtue *ren*, the chief among the *wuchang*, is exemplified in the *fufu* binary, which according to Wang is fundamental to the *sangang*. In this text, the main virtue and the main bond have the same cardinal relationship to *wuchang* and *sangang* respectively as humanity has to creation. Humanity is creation's defining constituent part.

Wang continues

> Among the myriad things, it is second to the Real One (that is, God, *Zhenyi* 真一), so nothing is more honored (*zun* 尊) than humanity. As the flourishing grass and trees and the abundance of flowers and fruits are all contained in the seed, so also the greatness of heaven and earth and the multitude of the myriad things are all included in the *renji*.[107]

The human place in the cosmos is exemplified in the *renji*, which through the *fufu* relation, flourishes in the *sangang wuchang*. In the Daoxue, the human ultimate of sagehood is exemplified through the value of *cheng*, which integrates the *wuchang*. Wang is saying that ethical refinement manifests the ultimate state of humanity through the *ren* exemplified in *fufu*. In this respect, he connects *wuchang* as Islamic and Confucian ethics to commensurate ideals of human flourishing. The *renji* and *shengren* are not world-historical prophets as Kang Youwei understands Confucius, and Wang does not seem to model this exemplary person on an Islamic messenger. However, the ethics of *sangang wuchang* do connect the present to the authoritative past.

Wang also believes that these ethics promote a similar intergenerational intelligibility in Islam and Confucian traditions. Wang's cosmology stresses the

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[106] Wang Daiyu, 64.

[107] Wang Daiyu, 64.

importance of physical reproduction— humanity was split to allow the *fufu* bond to take place, and the human body instantiates the order of creation. He concludes his discussion of *fufu:* "The root of the creation (*zaohua zhi gen* 造化之根), the principle of issuing forth and nurturing (*fayu zhi li* 發育之理), the spreading the dao and flourishing human relationships (*hongdao xinglun* 弘道興倫), the *sangang wuchang*—these extend from ancient times without interruption (*gen gu bu xi* 亘古不息)."[108] Here, Wang links the continuity of familial and political lineage (the *fufu* bond) with *ren* and with continuity of social and political practice (the bond of ruler and minister) and ritual observance, as does Zhu Xi above. Wang does not highlight distinctive Islamic deliberations on the nature of the Sunna, the authoritative precedent of Muḥammad and the first communities of believers, so that in this context, lineage and human relationships (*lun* 倫) connect more directly to continuity. For Wang, the ethical practices and primary relationships of classical Confucianism, which associate with the human ideal in Daoxue Confucianism, show a way to being Muslim in a Chinese history and cosmos.

Conclusion

In imperial China, especially from the Song dynasty, the contests and interchange among traditions did not aim at social and political exclusion as in the modern period: the creative orthodox partisan Zhu Xi warns against it. When modern reformists promoted mass education and called for everyone to learn a unifying and modernizing *guojiao*, they explicitly and implicitly marked the other traditions for suspicion. The

[108] Wang Daiyu, 69.

temple seizure campaigns made variant and heterodox forms of practice minority religions in the modern sense of having a precarious belonging in the state and society. Moderates like Zhang Zhidong and iconoclasts like Kang Youwei both promoted Confucianism as the *jiao* of the state and the majority that subsumed its intellectual others (Buddhism and Daoism) as the multitude of beliefs and practices not identified with one or more of those traditions. When the reformists sought to remake the empire's *jiao* places, they made what had been intellectual exercises in the late empire into political questions of who belonged. Wang Daiyu's work, and the Han kitāb tradition, was not subject to these forces. He could draw on Zhu Xi and Zhou Dunyi to articulate a humanistic ideal for Muslims that resonated across different traditions. Above I do not argue that the scholars of the Daoxue and the Han kitāb had freer imaginations or fewer prejudices than modern people have; if anything, Kang Youwei was a much more promiscuous adapter than Zhu Xi. It is rather that a rhetorical ethics of *zhong* and *quan* warned against even the bias of being correct, whereas in a world defined by governance through *jiao* the future is assumed to be at stake.

Chapter 5 deals with another situation in which traditions were interpreted in terms of progressive historicity: the Western academy. We will examine how at the time when Muslim and Confucian reformers were debating how traditions could adapt, the academic category of religion was shaped by the binary of tradition and modernity. At the turn of the 20th century, the framers of the modern scholarly study of religion, and the humanities and social sciences more broadly, attempted to separate confessional Christianity and the biases of their national-imperial locations and embark on a more authoritative and objective study. However, in their approaches to Islam and Chinese

traditions, Western scholars defined these as others to Christianity and modernity. While Confucian and Muslim reformists also understood their own traditions to be guarantors of progress as Western polemics maintained about Christianity and secularism, in the Western academy, knowledge predicated on Christian exceptionalism and civilizational superiority was imagined to exist above and beyond the designs of any particular program of change.

Chapter 5 Bedouin and Mandarin: Islam and Confucianism in the Western Academy at the Turn of the 20th Century

Introduction

In this chapter, I shift the focus to Western academic approaches to Islam and Chinese traditions in the humanities and social sciences. Part one concerns the fields of orientalism and Sinology, which developed in the 19th century both to explore distinctive textual legacies and to establish the grounds of a universal humanity. I focus on how Max Müller (1823-1900) imagined the academic study of religion as at once scientifically rigorous and also oriented toward the human experience of the sacred, at once universally humanistic and reflecting a particular liberal Christian concern. Islamicists and Sinologists of his time tended to mediate between these influences by constructing a historical other to Christianity and a moral other to Christianity respectively. Both such presentations of otherness set up the traditions to be seen as lacking aspects of the paradigmatic religion. Part two focuses on the work of Max Weber (1864-1920) and the origin of modern academic social sciences. Weber's work represents an important bridge between the universalist imaginary and the vision of Western exceptionalism based on an account of secular modernity. Because Weber believed in this exceptionalism, he sees Islam and Confucianism as others to modernity, despite some significant similarities these traditions might present to Weber's interpretation of modernity's origins in Protestant religiousity. Throughout, I read these scholars as primary sources. I do not judge how well they interpreted reality, but focus on how they compared themselves to and distanced themselves from particular others over whom they claimed particular psychological and historical insight.

In this chapter, we examine how Western scholars thought about topics similar to their contemporaries in China and the Arab world. However, we must do so with an eye to their different effects. Scholars in Western universities, the Muslim 'ulamā', and China's imperial scholars (*shi da fu* 士大夫) met different circumstances in the following 20th century and occupied different geopolitical locations and positions of power. All three groups occupied transitional generations of the late-19th century: their occupations had a defined role within specific traditions and institutions aligned with those traditions, and all had a vocational-instructional function to inculcate their successors. In the previous chapters, we have examined how reformist 'ulamā' and *shi* reimagined their own traditions rather than how they responded to Western ideas or political forms. In keeping with this, I locate this chapter at the end not to ignore colonial power-relations but to parochialize the universalisms about human psychology or the nature of change in history which stem from the colonial era.[1] More importantly, Western scholars' universal criteria that define category of religion produced the effect that only Christianity could attest this category fully, as the universal laws of history only allowed for a Eurocentric model of potential for dynamic, progressive change. For many reasons, the innovations in the work of the 'ulamā' and the *shi* did not affect such privileging of Muslim or Chinese frameworks, old or new. I outline the similarities and differences of this study from the previous chapters in a short preliminary discussion between this introduction and part one of this chapter.

Comparing colonial knowledge and education reform: Critical perspectives

[1] Dipesh Chakrabarty, Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3-25.

Western academic religionists and education reformers in Egypt and China discussed ethics, politics, knowledge, and historical change in terms of particular traditions they believed to inhabit particular human societies. They believed that when they addressed topics like psychology or modernity in their Muslim or Confucian contexts, they were addressing all people in that context. In this sense, these groups of scholars had mass social imaginaries. However, while the *shi* and ʻulamāʼ studied in the previous chapters interpreted their traditions in line with particular progressivist political projects such as public education, the Western scholars in this chapter discoursed more in terms of knowledge itself without a clear use in mind. A more important difference between the two groups is that in that time and since, the Western scholars are assumed to be discussing something objective, something real and in the world. Contemporary scholars such as Edward Said have criticized the monopoly on authoritative modern knowledge assumed to reside in the Western academy, and below, we explore the features of the idea of objectivity as developed within the modern university. In this, it is important that we broadly examine claims to knowledge of the other in the colonial period and not only those that align narrowly with explicit colonialist agendas and prejudices.

In their different institutional locations, the academic religionists and the education reformers interpreted whole societies, or large sections of them, as committed to particular traditions. Very broadly speaking, the reformist *shi* and ʻulamāʼ conceived of mass education through taking epistemologies, ethics, and politics that had been specific to their vocation and applying them to whole societies, as explored in chapters 1 and 2. In 3 and 4, the question of difference arises when such reformists' norms of

orthodoxy and political conceptions of intimacy encounter the varieties of social and political forms that existed before modernity. Of course, there are notions such as the "abode of Islam" (*dar al-Islām*)[2] and the empire "under heaven" (*tianxia* 天下)[3], which designate people and geographies through the traditions. It might even be defensibly argued that until the turn of the 20th century, Confucianism was a tradition only truly proper to the ritual scholars referred to in its Chinese name *ru* 儒,[4] if it is clear Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) and Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101) did not think so.[5] The Western religionists, especially the humanists, did the same in assuming that they could examine the work and the histories of a scholarly section of *dar al-Islām* or *tianxia* and from that they could generalize about a Chinese mentality or a Muslim mindset. Indeed, had the Western religionists taken seriously the concerns of the *shi* and 'ulamā' that ordinary people in their societies did not appreciate their traditions properly, maybe the demographic association of "Egypt" or "China" with a normative "Islam" or "Confucianism" would not be so stable. Nevertheless, the generalization is a similar one.

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[2] Giovanna Calasso, "Introduction: Concepts, Words, Historical Realities of a "Classical" Dichotomy," in "*Dār al-Islām*"/"*dār al-ḥarb*"*: Territories, People, Identities*, ed. Giovanna Calasso and Giuliano Lancioni, 1-20 (Leiden: Brill, 2017); "Constructing and Deconstructing the *Dār al-Islam/dār al-ḥarb* Opposition," in "*Dār al-Islām*"*,* 21-47.

[3] Wang Mingming, "All Under Heaven (*Tianxia*): Cosmological Perspectives and Political Ontologies in Pre-modern China" *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 2 no. 1 (2012): 337-83.

[4] Lionel Jensen argues that just as "Confucianism" is an outsider's moniker, so "*Ru*" as in *Rujiao* 儒教 is a modern anachronistic generalization about the tradition for modern political purposes; *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions and Universal Civilization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 14-22; 31-76; 151-216.

[5] See chapter 2 part 2 above.

The important difference is between the progressive power of the would-be social reformers and the colonizing knowledge of the Western academy. To begin with, the Western scholars did not need to apply their findings to a program of social change like the Muslim and Confucian education reformers. Theirs was rather a project of cultural curation, of the advancement of knowledge as such, and they did not have a definite public in mind as in public education. The "public" served by institutions such as Müller's Oxford or Weber's Heidelberg was rather indeterminate.[6] It was believed that this public demanded knowledge, needed its tastes refined and its sensibilities cultivated, but teaching about religion was not assumed to be vital to the survival of public religion or to the security of the state. From the end of the 19th century onward, Western universities were able to largely disembed themselves from their confessional-ecclesial restrictions and assert a high degree of autonomy and continuity,[7] perhaps comparable to that which mosques, madrasas in the Muslim world, or the Chinese

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[6] Reinhart Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1988).

[7] Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China: James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 122-32.

imperial exam system and its academy, had enjoyed before.[8] Because scholars and the general public assumed Western universities were this autonomous, they could more easily believe such places were cosmopolitan in nature and thus that the knowledge produced there was objective. Also, in contrast to the progressive mission of Muslim and Chinese reformers, scholars in the West saw themselves as producing and publicizing knowledge that never needed to be submitted to the needs of particular social projects. This knowledge could change and accumulate irrespective of the fates of those social projects and even large-scale political change. Accordingly, to reflect critically on this purportedly *sui generis* Western academic privilege to speak for others, we need to understand that this putative authority is more than merely imperial will to power, and like progressive power, it has outlasted particular designs and geopolitical ambitions.

To gain a critical perspective on this academic authority, we must not limit our focus to only questions about the role of scholarship in the maintenance or theorization of European hegemony. In the first place, while scholarly fields such as orientalism and sinology arose at the moment of Europe's greatest global hegemony, the importance of scholarship in this process should not be exaggerated. Imperial states worked through a

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[8] George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981); Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

George Makdisi argues that premodern mosques and madrasas exemplified the cosmopolitanism and independence that Western colleges and universities would later strive for in their pedagogy, research practices, and norms of and institutional governance, especially the private financing that supports US institutions. Scholars of *dao xue* 道學 Confucianism such as Benjamin Elman, among others, argue that because the exam system functioned largely independently of influence from the imperial court and other political institutions, it was one element that facilitated long-term cultural and social stability in China since the Song 宋 (960-1279) dynasty.

historical-political system shaped by the Christian mission, the slave trade, abolition, and the facilitation of business affairs and debt-management that long preceded modern academic interest of any kind in non-Christian religions or intellectual histories. Second, scholarly trends were not necessarily indicative of the political moment. Consider Müller's shock that long-serving British premier William Gladstone was particularly interested in a book that claimed Jesus Christ was the inheritor of a secret Buddhist mission to Palestine.[9] Just because Oxbridge credentials might be well attested among Britain's ruling class, it does not mean that industry leaders, missionaries, or colonial administrators would have been especially familiar with rigorous academic orientalism. Finally, it is important not to think of scholars' work in or on the colonies as necessarily the work of colonial administration itself.[10] As is so often noted, the German tradition in Biblical criticism and Islamic studies had no basis in a territorial empire in the Biblical or the Muslim world.[11] Having no empire there did not bar Germans, or others, from assuming that their histories, commitments, and ways of knowing gave them particular insight into others'.

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[9] Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions, or, How European Universalism Was Preserved In The Language Of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 246-47.

[10] Consider Talal Asad, "Afterword: From the History of Colonial Anthropology to the Anthropology of Western Hegemony," in *Colonial Situations: Essays on the Contextualization of Ethnographic Knowledge*, ed. George W. Stocking (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 314-24.

[11] Todd Curtis Kontje, *German Orientalisms* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

Moreover, though Germany and France both held considerable territories in China, the French Sinological tradition is greater than the German, while the German orientalist tradition is generally better-regarded than the French.

Here, we need to keep a critical focus on such assumptions more than on the particular judgments Western scholars made or whether those scholars aligned themselves with the imperial power-formations of the time. This issue was brought to bear by Edward Said, who provoked scholars of Islamic studies and other fields to consider how academic orientalists constructed Muslim others through racist tropes and essentialized interpretations, and by doing so, abetted European imperialism and American hegemony.[12] Bernard Lewis and others took this as an accusation against the Western study of the Arab world and beyond, and to a significant extent, it was.[13] Said argued that Ernest Renan and others contributed to the power structures and justified the violence of their time and of the future through Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.[14] Said focused on striking instances of these tendencies in the languages and academic systems of the colonizing powers. As I argue above, we cannot dismiss his overall critique by pointing out that many significant scholars did not work for or within colonial institutions themselves.

We should rather note that scholarship that reifies the distance between us and others, and is premised on our ability to know them as they do not know themselves, does not need to directly abet colonizers or only deal in derogatory stereotypes. Scholars such as Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921) did not crudely generalize about univocal Muslim subjects, and Müller worked persistently to demonstrate that Europeans did not have a monopoly on conscientious civilization, and indeed, that they shared much that they

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[12] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).

[13] Bernard Lewis, "The Question of Orientalism," *New York Review of Books*, 24 June, 1982, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1982/06/24/the-question-of-orientalism/

[14] Said, *Orientalism*, 123-48.

were proud of with the very people they were subjecting.[15] Nevertheless, they did so in an institutional context which granted them this position to offer these perspectives. Orientalist and Sinologist scholars claimed an exclusive duty and right to provide European audiences scientific knowledge of and critical perspective on non-Western histories and inheritances.[16] Such a vocational assumption parallels the discourse of how Europe's special qualities meant it had the "burden" to civilize others. The critique I outline here in the beginning of this chapter owes much to Said, if it expands the focus beyond overt prejudice and more broadly examines the terms in which non-Christians were seen as worthy or unworthy. Below we examine how particular academic thinkers applied Western hermeneutics and histories to convey familiarity with and distance from others.

Part one: Islam and Confucianism in the humanistic study of religion

Introduction

In this part, I discuss how late-19th century humanist scholars understood Islam and Chinese traditions as others to Christianity. I focus on Max Müller's publication of the *Sacred Books of the East* as a highpoint of the edifying mission of classical religious

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[15] For example, Müller says "the most vital elements of our knowledge and civilisation came to us from the East." *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. 4, *Essays Chiefly on the Science of Language* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., 1876), 325.

[16] In *Orientalism*, Said says of foundational scholars: "Their inauguration of Orientalism was a considerable feat. It made possible a scientific terminology; it banished obscurity and instated a special form of illumination for the Orient; it established the figure of the Orientalist as central authority *for* the Orient; it legitimized a special king of specifically coherent Orientalist work; it put into cultural circulation a form of discursive currency by whose presence the Orient henceforth would be *spoken for*; above all, the work of the inaugurators carved out a field of study and a family of ideas which in turn could form a community of scholars whose lineage, traditions, and ambitions were at once internal to the field and external enough for general prestige" (122).

studies in the late-Victorian milieu.[17] Müller was convinced that scientific philologists could uncover the meanings of the world's "forgotten Bibles".[18] When they did this, Müller thought they were sketching progressively larger parts of a portrait of human psychology. Each scholar working on a vigorously small scale would eventually illuminate a clear picture of the humanity's need for what it cannot find in the world. Müller left other scholars to manage the tension between a demand for fine and focused rigor on the one hand and a grand humanistic vision on the other. What Müller's colleagues and contemporaries tended to portray was something of a middle way: a psychological profile of their tradition's essential characteristics. As Müller's scripturalism and concern for the transcendent marked his high-church Protestant provenance, so the analogy with Christianity hung over the work of the orientalists and Sinologists. Scholars of Confucianism tended to see a moral other to Christianity, and Islamicists tended to see a historical other. However, they thought both families of traditions remained were limited by their essential castes of mind. If they could be considered world religions at all, they were religions of the world. The humanists explicitly and implicitly concluded the traditions they studied could not transcend human phenomena. The point here is not to condemn a Christianist bias as such, or pronounce later scholarship as better because it is less affected by such a bias, but to observe how the Christian-inflected classical humanist model of religion cuts off, rearranges, and confines the traditions scholars used it to represent. Before beginning

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[17] "Sacred Books of the East Index," *Internet Sacred Texts Archive*, accessed November 1, 2018, https://www.sacred-texts.com/sbe/index.htm.

[18] Friedrich Max Müller, "Forgotten Bibles," in *Last Essays: Second Series, Essays on the Science of Religion* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1901), 1-35.

this in full, we need to note some significant influences on the secular turn in the modern academic study of religion.

Before the humanities: Enlightenment and hermeneutics

Here, I discuss how Enlightenment and liberal-Protestant views of the other and Christianity shaped the critical project of the humanities at the turn of the 20th century. As the heir and boundary-marker to the 18th-century European Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant's account of critical religion, with his interest in the abstract, the interior, and the personal, is illustrative of the epistemological priorities and valuations of the later humanists. In practice, many of them drew on modern biblical hermeneutics, which aimed at the uncovering of an original meaning of a text aside from its life within a tradition. These two influences yielded humanistic scholarship in the era of Western hegemony with clear biases about the nature of non-Western traditions. Before that time Europeans did not necessarily believe others were more narrow-minded or less critically rational. For the 18th century, the imaginary of a secular, rational empire in China made Confucius something of a patron saint of the Enlightenment, albeit not an immanent one.[19] Similarly, the likes of Montesquieu and Hume saw openness and tolerance in the Muslim world from which they hoped backward Europe mired in centuries of religious conflict could learn.[20] However, during

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[19] Walter W. Davis, "China, the Confucian Ideal, and the European Age of Enlightenment," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44 no. 4 (1983): 523-48.

[20] Charles de Secondat Montesquieu, *The Persian Letters of Charles de Secondat Montesquieu* trans. John Davidson, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: George Barrie, n.d.); David Hume, . Lest we think Enlightenment *philosophes* were unanimously favorable in their views of Islam, consider an early forerunner of the trope of Muslim extremism and intolerance to critique: Voltaire, *Mahomet the Prophet; or, Fanaticism: A Tragedy in Five Acts*, trans. Robert L. Myers (New York: F. Ungar, 1964).

the Enlightenment and the early-19th century, *philosophes* and scripturalists set the focuses for a view of non-Christian traditions through particular forms of Christianity.

The single work I will focus on here as ancestral to the study of religion in the academic humanities is Kant's *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*.[21] I do not mean to overstate Kant's importance in this field as opposed to others, although he influenced Müller strongly.[22] I also do not suggest Kant's *Religion* is originally important by itself. Rather, it synthesizes and reworks Enlightenment discourses of religion, it serves as a bridge between normative and descriptive accounts, and it attests the ideological bias that runs through both in the 18th and 19th centuries. Kant mainly describes religion through the relationship of human nature and divine grace.[23] Humanity realizes this relationship in history through revelation and in a church, an "ethical community".[24] In history, humanity should naturally develop to more enlightened understandings.[25] This idealized kind of religion is, not surprisingly, rational, individual, and abstract. Humanity can be hindered in its approach to this ideal

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[21] Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, trans. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[22] Friedrich Max Müller, trans., *Immanuel Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason": In Commemoration of the Centenary of its First Publication* (New York: Macmillan, 1907); Müller, "Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*" in *Last Essays: First Series, Essays on Language, Folklore, and Other Subjects* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), 218-50.

[23] Kant, *Religion*, 31-73.

[24] Kant, *Religion*, 108-17.

[25] Kant, *Religion*, 122-47; compare Immanuel Kant, "Conjectures on the Beginning of Human History," in *Kant: Political Writings*, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 221-34.

by religion that is ecclesial, ritual, and legalistic.[26] This lower kind of religion puts itself in between humanity and the divine, when higher religion is about closing the distance. The lower forms of religion are only means to the higher, and if people devote themselves to communal ritual practice or submit themselves to clerical power, without understanding that those are religious facets should only exist to help people become better moral individuals, they are making a category mistake and are practicing primitive fetishism.[27] This term has a long colonial history ahead of it.[28] However, Kant's polemical others are clearly Catholicism and Judaism, which illustrates how the 19th-century discourse of religion will abstract Christian terms for its universal schemes, but remains shot through with liberal Protestant Christian concerns and value-judgments. This is true not only in the character of religion academic religionists thought they would find, but also where they looked for it.

The humanistic study of religion also draws significantly from biblical criticism and textual hermeneutics. Kant says that the fundamental grounding of a religion is its sacred text, which is not surprising given the Protestant cast of his theory.[29] However, the academic religionists of the later classical era could work on this datum because they

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[26] Kant, *Religion,* 151-60; 164-78.

[27] Against what Weber would later say, Kant argues that between a someone who listens to a Shaman in Siberia and a Puritan in Connecticut, "The certainly is a tremendous distance in the *style* of faith, but not in the *principle*; for, as regards the latter, they all equally belong to one and the same class, namely of those who place their service of God in something (faith in certain statutory articles, or the observance of certain arbitrary practices) which cannot by itself constitute a better human being" (*Religion*, 171).

[28] In sum, see William Pietz, "The Origin of the Fetish," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 13 (1987): 23-45.

[29] Kant, *Religion*, 112-17.

drew in large part on textual hermeneutics that developed in the English and German Protestant institutions that had largely secularized by the end of the 19th century. Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768-1834) proposed that scriptural reading was an exercise of constant mediation between individual parts of a text and the whole of the text that they comprise.[30] This is best practiced by one skilled in the original language of the text and in history.[31] Schleiermacher speaks paradigmatically about the Bible but is clear that this applies to all texts, with significant implications for human perception in general. A highly individualized exercise, hermeneutics foreruns the academic concern with original interpretation and analysis. More importantly, it treats the text not only as the primary datum, but as something that retains meaning with an original meaning that matters, altogether separately from a textual tradition, institutions with claims to authoritative interpretation, and indeed other readers, as discussed below.

Humanistic scholars also saw texts as bearers of values and moral ideas, which they could discover through carefully interpreting the expressions of the text and reading deeper to a more fundamental level of meaning. As Kant saw ritual as instrumental toward a higher kind of consciousness, Jonathan Sheehan describes how European Protestant and secular-humanistic scholars came to read the Bible as

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[30] Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher, "General Hermeneutics," in *Hermeneutics Reader: Texts of the German Tradition from the Enlightenment to the Present*, ed. Kurt Mueller-Vollmer (New York: Continuum, 1985), 73-86.

[31] Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher, "Grammatical and Technical Hermeneutics," in *Hermeneutics Reader*, 86-96.

instrumental to convey Christian teachings about the good life.[32] It is not that ecclesial scholars were indifferent to the moral messages of the Bible before, but now fundamental values were an object of scrutinizing reading that could be practiced inside the church or outside it, and the text could be evaluated in terms of those epistemic results. Such a religiously informed but secularized treatment of the text as specimen of a tradition while separable from the tradition informed the humanistic scholarship of the turn of the next century.

Max Müller and the language of religion

Perhaps more than any specialist, Müller shaped the imaginary of the humanistic study of religion in general. With his influences in the German philological tradition, Müller argued for a standard of scientific rigor in textual studies and a commitment to engagement with the Victorian public and the British empire. While Müller hoped missionaries would appreciate philology,[33] he conceived of religious studies as a secular affair—that is, one that did not rely on ecclesial definitions of authority. Once thought was disenchanted in this way, Müller believed that ultimately scientific study would illuminate "the origin, the nature, the true purposes of religion."[34] He believed comparison of world religions would clarify an otherworldly longing in human nature. For later humanists, Müller configured a tension between focused and rigorous work on specific texts and grand ambition of religious understanding.

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[32] Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

[33] Arie L. Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the "Sacred Books of the East"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 151-58.

[34] From "Transactions Of The Second Session Of The International Congress Of Orientalists", quoted in Girardot, 151.

Müller understood that in the imperial moment, Europeans scholars needed to act as preservers and interpreters of, and advocates for, the wisdom they inherited from others. Müller outlined what he thought should be the aims and praxis of scholars of non-Western traditions:

> It [is] the duty of those who have devoted their life to the study of the principal religions of the world…to take possession of this new territory in the name of true science, and thus to protect its sacred precincts from the inroads of those who think they have a right to speak on the ancient religions of mankind…without ever having taken the trouble of learning the languages in which their sacred books are written.[35]

The martial language is particularly striking. However, the soldiers in question are doing double duty: they are taking territory for science and they are protecting it from ignorance. The ignorant people are presuming they can speak for the world's traditions without due preparation—Müller was often critical of amateurism in scholarship. Implicit in this call to protection is also that the people among whom the knowledge dwells, the non-Western scholars and specialists, are not protecting it themselves,[36] or their possession of the territory is not the name of true science.[37] While Müller would

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[35] Friedrich Max Müller, *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1873), 35.

[36] Müller's objectified view of religion does not allow for the question of who is protecting colonial subjects, be they learned in religion or not. It is not as if Müller did not understand the importance of oral tradition. However, Western scholarship concerned with protecting indigenous knowers as well as indigenous knowledge would represent a significantly different epistemology and politics. Friedrich Max Müller, *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religions of India* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1878), 131.

[37] Stephen Prothero describes the career of a scholar of Buddhism who was able to promote his innovative Protestantized Buddhism to considerable interest in Sri Lanka owing in part to his linguistic and textual credentials. *The White Buddhist: The Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1996).

not deny them the right to speak on their ancient religions, he is mainly concerned with establishing this right for Western scholars, as well as the duty of and discipline to exercise it.

The science of philology in the late-19th century developed to discern the epistemic content of texts. The first Biblical critics confronted a text they assumed belonged to a world disconnected from them, and they also sought to distance themselves from their own contexts which had traditions of interpreting the text within the church. This scholarly hermeneutics further dismisses the mnemonists—such as those who memorize the Qur'ān or Vedas in favor of a text accessible to people remote from the context in which it is significant. Since the early-19th century, philologists strived to create their own context for texts,namely the texts' affiliations to their linguistic family tree. Müller's views on race as such are not clear;[38] however, his concern for the Indo-European story organized the world in terms of historical affiliations with Christianity: how distant or divergent are different branches of the textual-religious family tree?[39] This linguistic question also joined with a semantic

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[38] It is sometimes claimed that Müller invented the term "Aryan", and though he meant this in a clearly linguistic or mythic sense, he did not directly contradict its use in race theory, or discuss race theory generally. Molendijk, 108-14.

[39] Müller and others were concerned with cladistic questions about where Chinese traditions stood with respect to Indo-European traditions. All humanity ought to have an identifiable linguistic and mythic common origin if the wisdom of the world was to be intelligible to all, as Müller believed it needed to be. In the 1880s, scholars believed in a "Sino-Babylonian" hypothesis connecting Chinese culture to the Semitic roots of Western civilization (Girardot, 383-96). Müller was also interested in a "Turanian" hypothesis that argued East Asians and Indo-Europeans should have had contact in Central Asia (Masuzawa, 228-43). Scholars have never substantiated these connections, however, here it is important to note that Müller's system requires the aristocracy of book-religions to be linguistically consanguineous, and it says nothing about the peoples of the world without aristocratic book-traditions.

inquiry: What was the meaning of the texts that had endured for so long? Western scholars of non-Western texts created the idea of meaning divorced from their lived context of provenance; it is not that Western scholars were indifferent to the latter kind meaning,[40] but they did in large part, I argue, create the former kind. Müller and others found parts of texts that spoke of the eternal, sublime, and transcendent (at least as recognizable to high-church Protestant Christians), and those which were petty, silly, or ugly.[41] Though Müller did not excise parts of texts which fall into this latter category, distinctions such as this affected which texts he canonized and that process had little to do with how they had been read or conceived before.

Müller edited the *Sacred Books of the East* translation series and brought forth a vision of the cosmopolitan aristocracy of book-religions. Supported by Britain's India Office,[42] Müller published English translations of 50 volumes from Hindu, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Confucian, Daoist, and Islamic traditions.[43] Müller sought to counteract "vague assertions as to their nature and character, whether coming from the admirers or

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[40] Girardot (367) argues that James Legge, who translated Chinese texts for Müller, was especially influenced by the idea that Confucian texts were concerned with moral self-cultivation, which anyone might be able to practice; this idea came to prominence with the commentaries and interpretations of the Song 宋 dynasty (960-1279), particularly those of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200). See also chapter 2 above.

[41] In his preface, Müller laments that in there is attested in the *SBE* at least some "wild confusion of sublime truth for vulgar stupidity," *Sacred Books of the East* vol.1 *The Upanishads*, trans. Friedrich Max Müller, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), xxxvii-xxxviii. He also says they contain "so much that is not only unmeaning, artificial, and silly, but even hideous and repellent" (xii).

[42] Müller wrote of the empire's need for translations of Hindu and Islamic religious materials in the wake of the 1857 rebellion in India. Friedrich Max Müller, *My Autobiography: A Fragment* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), 12-15; see also Molendijk, 15.

[43] Molendijk, 66.

the detractors of those ancient creeds."[44] The unbiased proof of the nature of the different religions came from their equivalents to the Bible. Müller did not intend that each tradition needed a single book, and his bias toward South Asian traditions meant that he included different canons in the *Sacred Books*.[45] However, his selection from Muslim canons included only the Qur'ān,[46] and his selection from China did not include Confucius or Mencius. The history of Western interest in the Qur'ān as an alternate Bible is extensive.[47] However, here I want to highlight how Müller's ideas of a text could not accommodate the range, textual controversy, and meta-textual source criticism that accompanies ḥadīth collections, for example. I would similarly suggest that it is Müller's conception of the profound and enduring that does not promote interest in Confucius, so much of which has to do with performing particular roles, and where the numinous, at least the numinous legible to a liberal Christian, is not a significant factor. I do not mean here to suggest what Islam and Confucianism actually are and pinpoint distortions imposed by the *SBE* canon but rather to show how Müller's concern for profundities of Eastern heritage stood in the way of questions about how canons hold together within traditions and how they might be comparable among traditions.

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[44] Personal letter to the classicist Henry Liddell, quoted Molendijk, 71.

[45] Compare his presentation of 21 volumes of Hindu-Vedic texts, 11 of Buddhist, 8 of Zoroastrian, and 2 of Jain, versus 6 of Chinese, combining the classics and Daoist texts, and only two Islamic texts: specifically the Qur'ān in two volumes. Girardot says "Aside from the flagrant slighting of the rich textual heritage of Islam (particularly the *Hadith* traditions), the most egregious case of shortsightedness concerns the completely inadequate and distorted representation of East Asian religious traditions" (262).

[46] Müller claims that to know Islam "all that is essential is a trustworthy translation of the Koran" (*SBE* 1: xlv).

[47] Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

As Müller emphasized the sacred text as his singular object of ecumenical analysis, so he believed academic scholars would discover significant truths about human psychology. This is to say that although Müller distanced the academic study of religion from its ecclesial, confessional, and missionary heritage, he did not think it should be thoroughly disenchanted. While he premised his *Sacred Books* series on the differences within the aristocracy of book-religions, "Research, however, will show that 'all religions spring from the same sacred soil, the human heart' and that human beings 'yearn for something that the world cannot give'."[48] Here, Müller makes opposites of "all religions" and "the world", which presents interpretive problems for an account of Confucianism as religion in conversation with Müller, as explored below. However, worldly objects, namely texts, disclose this transcendental character in religions. Research, in this sense, has an otherworldly purpose, and marks academic scholars as a clergy of sorts. Scholars, in this formula, are a clergy without a church. They accept their inheritance and protect knowledge but have no vocational commitment to lead or to work in the world. It is also significant that Müller frames his project here as elsewhere as aimed at the human heart: Christian universalism is replaced with a universal psychology with a Kantian interior.[49] However, Müller practiced the study of particular

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[48] Müller, *Chips* 4:345. He thought the paths to this psychic origin point led east, with one exception: "All religions are Oriental, and with the exception of Christianity, their sacred books are all written in Oriental languages" (*Chips* 4:328).

[49] In a lecture to missionaries, he also has a category of universalizing religions more familiar to the one of later generations that groups Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam together. Of these, he says, despite their differences they "could not have achieved what hey have achieved, unless the spirit of truth and the spirit of love had been alive in the hearts of their founders" (quoted Molendijk, 159).

texts and encouraged others to do the same, leaving more general truths about humanity as such to be built on the shoulders of these academic pathfinders.

Müller here sets the terms of religious studies as a universal human science with distinct Christian influences. Perhaps it is understandable that people generalize about their own religious context in framing their thoughts about what religion is as such; this is not limited to Christians in the era of European imperialism. However, the Protestant concern for interior disposition, which is discoverable through the rigorous and complete study of individual privileged texts, can only yield a relatively limited perspective on the sacred soil of the human heart, and it does not permit comparison in the form of hearing how non-Christians might make such inquiries; Müller's interests are *sola scriptura*. The pattern sketched here, in which Müller's Christian-humanist inquiry into the character of other traditions imposes such limits and boundaries on those traditions that they can only be seen as versions of Christianity, holds true for the study of Islam and Confucianism in this period.

Others to Christianity: Humanistic studies of Confucianism and Islam

Müller's humanism laid a basis for late-19th century scholars to construct moral and historical others to Christianity. As discussed above, Müller's method proceeds from two directions: he favors the close reading of texts and careful empiricism on the one hand, while on the other he thinks scientific study aspires to illuminate the human condition as such. Müller has a progressive vision in which knowledge can build on knowledge so that one day the former kind can accumulate to the latter. Like the Egyptian and Chinese education reformers, humanistic scholars at this time had a progressivism that put them in between pasts of ignorance and futures of knowledge.

This historical interstitial space allowed kind of knowledge that is in between fine-detailed text criticism and hopes for transcendence: an ideal type, a generalization of mentality and characteristics of a whole tradition. I do not suggest here that 19th-century humanistic scholars were more naive or chauvinistic than later scholars in their tendency to present broad generalizations about very large polities and groups with very long histories. In this part, I rather mean to highlight how theories and methods like Müller's implicitly call for such abstractions about what whole traditions are like spiritually and intellectually, and at the center for these is an implicit comparison with a rarefied Christianity with a specifically Indo-European history.

James Legge (1815-97), Müller's close friend and translator, worked to promote a favorable view of Chinese traditions, chiefly Confucianism, in Christian terms. Legge engaged in translation as a missionary activity. He learned Chinese to preach the Gospel in China; he was a worker in the process of rendering the Bible in local idioms while gathering intelligence for apologetic and refutation in indigenous terms.[50] However, though this language-work might seem merely instrumental to the church, it is not theologically neutral. In the 1870s, Protestant missionaries argued over how to translate the term "Lord of Heaven" (*Shangdi* 上帝) from the *Yi jing* and other classic texts.[51] Translators who rendered it as "God" implied a kinship of inspiration among Christianity and Chinese traditions, or at least suggested that the latter present a theology intelligible to the former. While Legge was a careful translator who often

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[50] Girardot (58-62) describes the "know thine enemy" discourse of missionary translation.

[51] Douglas G. Spelman, "Christianity in China: The Protestant Term Question" *Papers on China* (Harvard University East Asian Research Center, 1969).

preserves the syntax and verbiage of Chinese texts, he held the traditions he studied in a Müllerian tension between linguistically-specific and universal-humanistic. He overtly suggested their affiliation with Christianity, not least through his translation of *Shangdi* as God.[52] Against such interpreters as Weber, Legge also identified voices such as Confucius and Mencius as prophetic (not that Müller's set of Chinese classics could suggest such an analogy with Christianity because it does not include these texts). Legge saw the Confucian traditions from their inception as telling truths in Chinese history and representing morality with a divine presence if not inspiration. While this thinking was enough to alienate him from his evangelical peers,[53] it did not mean he was entirely an appreciator of Confucianism on its own terms.

Legge understands Confucianism as a lacking Christianity rather than a tradition other and apart from it. In this, a lacking affirms the commensurability of the two while highlighting the lack of fulfillment. In the 1870s and '80s, Legge maintained friendly intellectual correspondence with Guo Songtao 郭嵩焘 (1818-91), China's first ambassador to Britain. In one exchange, Guo bluntly asked Legge to compare England and China in terms of morality. Despite his open-mindedness, Legge said that not only did Victorian society exceed Qing in the five constant (*wuchang* 五常) virtues, humaneness (*ren* 仁), justice (*yi* 義), ritual propriety (*li* 禮), wisdom (*zhi* 智), good faith (*xin* 信), but that Christianity provided life beyond morality as conceivable within East

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[52] James Legge, *Confucianism in Relation to Christianity* (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, 1877).

[53] Girardot, 192-234.

Asian frameworks.[54] In another contrast, Legge argues that while Confucianism encourages contentment with the moral life people can achieve, Christianity inclines to despairing in higher aspiration.[55] Legge resolves this apparent discrepancy by commending that Christianity approach Confucianism "as a friend" only trying to "supply what it lacks".[56] This image of one tradition encouraging the growth and perfection of another illustrates more than an awkward tension between Christian apology and pluralist estimation. Legge imagined that preaching Christianity does not involve the contradiction of any main part of Confucianism, but rather affirms the traditions' intimate affiliation and encouragement on a shared path, an image that occurs also in Legge's exhortation for greater women's rights in China and England.[57] This rests fundamentally on an idea that in a sense Confucianism does not exemplify its own paradigmatic values, and this is the basis of Confucianism's imperfect resemblance to Christianity, the lineaments of which are shaped in the project of academic religious studies.

Where this project opened the possibility of describing moral others to Christianity, it also structured interest in Islam as Christianity's historical other. The tropes of "Judeo-Christian values" and "Abrahamic religions" from later generations have made the historical intersections among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam seem

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[54] Girardot, 304-05.

[55] Legge also refers to the "want of any deep sense of sin, and of any glow of piety in the followers of the Chinese sage." (*Christianity*, 12).

[56] Girardot, 396.

[57] Girardot, 314.

self-evidently significant.[58] However, centuries of anti-Semitism and geopolitical rivalries with Muslim empires did not naturally yield up the idea of Judaism and Islam as Christianity's siblings (compared to the distant Asian traditions) to Europeans. Müller's Aryan imaginary, which emphasized European traditions' shared ancestry with those of South Asia, rather made a problem of the contrast between the Indo-European New Testament and the Semitic Hebrew Bible. In general, among the scholars of Müller's time, difference, rather than affiliation or connection, of history and mentality was the relevant statement to make Christianity and its Afro-Asiatic others.

Orientalist scholars looked to Islam, as a Semitic religion, as a static, historical, and particular other to a transcendent and universal Christianity.[59] Scholars could make descriptions and projections of "primitive religion" from textual traditions before these discourses became more the purview of academic anthropologists' ethnography.[60] William Robertson Smith (1846-94) drew on James Frazer (1854-1941) to outline such a theory for Semitic traditions.[61] He finds that these traditions attest human universals

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[58] Aaron W. Hughes, *Abrahamic Religions: On the Uses and Abuses of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[59] Masuzawa argues that 19th-century orientalism was largely concerned with the question of how universal, salvific Christianity could have emerged from the rigid, local, and unprogressive Semitic world. She concludes that in one form or other, scholars needed to find an Aryan spirit that saved, 186-206.

[60] The latter depart from Edward Burnett Tylor, *Religion in Primitive Culture* (New York: Harper, 1958). On the rivalry between Müller and Tylor's approaches see Girardot, 286-98.

[61] Smith was a leading Orientalist in Müller's time. However, Müller chose Edward Henry Palmer to translate the Qur'ān for the *SBE*, of whom Molendijk writes "He was commemorated as a romantic adventurer-scholar, whose publications were perhaps not the most accurate, but succeeded in conveying a sense of excitement to his readers" (80).

while presenting a consistent set of religious characteristics. In its primal form, religion consists in category mistakes, in blurred distinctions between natural and supernatural, geolocal and transcendent.[62] Muslims and Jews mistake their geographic hearths for metaphysically distinct places, and appeal to spirits such as jinn to account and petition for changes in fortune.[63] These tendencies calcify into legal-ritual codes that bind a community to its context and to its membership. Smith believes religious legalism inhibits historical-spiritual development and expansion of belonging to include other peoples. Because of this, ritual and law have a special heuristic value: scholars can look through them on the past fossilized, on long-term continuity within geographical contiguity. For Islam, this assumption presents challenges, not least of which is the fact that Muslim majorities have histories in so many different places. Smith, like others, declares that outside the regions that, in his time, spoke mostly Arabic, Islam in fact diluted into the ethno-religious characters of those regions where Arabic is not the majority language.[64] In Smith's system, language, location, and religiosity mutually preserve each other, such that Judaism and Islam are living specimens of Babylonia and Phoenicia, and likewise, pre-Islamic cultural traits like totemism and matriarchy must reflect in some way on later traditions in this assumed continuity and consistency. Smith believes that despite Muslims' professions of strict monotheism, they are unable

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[62] William Robertson Smith, *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites: First Series, The Fundamental Institutions* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1894), 28-139.

[63] Smith, 140-212.

[64] Abraham Kuenen echoes this thought, arguing that older traditions are really defining of Muslim societies in South and Southeast Asia. *National Religions and Universal Religions* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882), 42-43. See also Masuzawa, 194-96.

to discard older gods, who become the jinn.[65] For the most part, scholars in this period had less interest in Islam than on the category of Semitic religion, which presented Christianity a particular kind of other.

When orientalists paid attention to Islam as more than one among other Semitic traditions, they took pains to define it as other than a world religion. Tomoko Masuzawa traces the development of the different meanings of the term "world religion", in singular and plural, in the 19th century. Masuzawa analyzes how the term, which has a normative meaning in a largely-German philosophical discourse of Christianity, came into its descriptive use in the English-speaking academy referring to religions other than Christianity that possessed textual corpuses and whose adherents had lived in many places over the world. On the face of it, Islam would seem to fit such a category neatly, better certainly than Confucianism, with its smaller geographical ambit. However, Masuzawa stresses, humanistic scholars tended not to think so.[66] As widely as Muslims brought their religion, scholars such as Smith argued that it indelibly retained its character as parochial to pre-Islamic Arabia. This is a surprising interpretation given the Muslim historiographical view that Muḥammad's message breaks sharply with Arabian religious norms. Ignaz Goldziher, a scholar credited with rigorous and focused scholarship and less inclined than his peers to broad character studies, writes that the Sunna, the authoritative precedent for Islamic belief and practice based in Muḥammad's

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[65] Smith, 120-25.

[66] Masuzawa, 179-206. She also points out that C.P. Tiele was an exception to this rule, arguing that Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam were universalistic "world religions" in his *Encyclopedia Britannica* entry. He says this group is "founded on a law or Holy Scripture, and universal or world religions, which start from principles and maxims, the latter being only three-Buddhism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism" (quoted 110-11).

example, is a uniquely Arab concept.[67] Where Muslims believe the Sunna provides the direction in personal and communal matters, etic scholars can see in it the patterns and norms of Arabia, effectively pre-Islamic Arabia. Scholars such as Abraham Kuenen believed Islam had degenerated from the world religion of Christianity back into ethnic superstition and personality cult.[68] Whether they used such terms or not, when scholars argued about Islam's canonization and its historical relation to Christianity, they tended to consign it to its formative circumstances and not to the realm of a world religion.

In this, orientalists could look on Muḥammad as the Islamic ideal type; that is, Müller's mediation between textual-historical particulars and the psychology of religion. Goldziher writes

> Let us now consider some of the darker sides of Islam. If Islam held itself strictly to historical witnesses, it could not offer its followers the ethical mode of life of one man as an example; an "imitatio" of Mohammed would be impossible. But it is not to the historical picture that the believer turns. The pious legends about the ideal Mohammed early take the place of the historical man. The theology of Islam has conformed to the demand for a picture which does not show him merely as the mechanical organ of the divine revelation and its spread among unbelievers, but also as hero and example of the highest virtue.[69]

The demand for a figure such as Muḥammad shapes the possible image he can effect. So, when orientalist scholars read about Muḥammad, they can see what Muslims have believed throughout their history. While myth and legend might enable reverence of Muḥammad, Goldziher continues, "his character became corrupted by worldly

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[67] Goldziher, *Mohammed and Islam*, trans. Kate Chambers Seelye (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1917), 296.

[68] Kuenen, 1-58.

[69] Goldziher, 21

ambition," which "influenced also the outward form of the higher conceptions of his religion."[70] Muḥammad acts as an upper and outer limit to Muslims' ethical practice and religious thought. Just as Legge thinks the Confucian scholars too content in the world, Goldziher saw Muḥammad as so consummate commander and publican that he limited the religion's focus and thinking to geographic territory and to human affairs. Goldziher is excavating the "true" Muḥammad, a clever politician, from the improbable hagiography the tradition fabricates to justify his standing. When orientalists apply historiographical theories such as these, they are taking Muḥammad as the grounds to study Islam's limitations. The scholars are consigning Islam to a particular place, time, and mentality.

Part two: Islam and Confucianism in the social-scientific study of religion
Introduction

Weber primarily sought to explain away potential similarities with Protestant Christianity in his studies of Islam and Chinese traditions and to explain why those lacked the dynamic and transformative historicity of the West. The humanists above wanted to understand particular religions, or religion as such, in and of themselves. When Weber drew on their work, he was more interested in using religion as a heuristic to understand political structures and economic differentiation, and vice versa.[71] In his *Protestant Ethic*, Weber uses Protestantism as a way to explain secularization and

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[70] Goldziher, 24.

[71] The end to his *Religion of China* shows the structure of his method, and his conclusion holds equally true of Muslim traditions: "the basic characteristics of the "mentality," in this case the practical attitudes toward the world, were deeply co-determined by political and economic destinies. Yet in view of their autonomous laws, one can hardly fail to ascribe to the attitudes effects strongly counteractive to capitalist development" (248).

capitalist modernity, and when he applies this method to the Muslim world and China, he finds that those histories and traditions exhibit many apparently similar features he identifies in northern Germany and New England. However, he concludes these apparent similarities cannot be actual similarities because they appear in "traditionalist" societies, which exhibit a different kind of historicity from modern societies. Western capitalist modernity emerged from processes that each built on each other and contributed to a dynamic whole in which no one point in the history easily indicates the others. However, in non-Western histories, once features assume a form characteristic of that tradition, they calcify and inhibit any further change. Thus, while Weber might find rationalized disenchantment in China and puritanical commerce in the Muslim world, which compare with Western counterparts, they are part of systems with different temporalities. As such, Weber's question as to why others do not modernize, which has remained with the social sciences, inhibits further questioning of modernity and its relationships to tradition, particularly outside the West.

Weber, Islam, and rationalization in history

Weber confronted a significant range of similarities between Islam and Muslim histories and Protestantism in secular modernization. Perhaps the most important for a theorist of the spirit of capitalism was that capitalism, or something very close to it, seemed to flourish in the premodern Muslim world.[72] In terms of religious thought itself, the most prominent aspect of Islamic theology for outsiders to understand is its strict monotheism. By attributing all power to the single god, Islamic theology is more

[72] Patrician Crone, "Weber, Islamic Law, and the Rise of Capitalism," in Max Weber and Islam, ed. Toby E. Huff and Wolfgang Schluchter (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1999), 255.

"rationalized", in Weberian terms, than other traditions' worldviews. Weber sees that people who believe in an omnipotent prime mover can attune their ethics of ends and means better and with more focus than those who see diffuse powers at work in the world.[73] In this light, Islamic law can be seen as an attempt to regulate the world, to make for stable political rule and predictable justice that merchants need to secure property and trust their contractual interests be enforced. Weber believed that the autonomous function of law in the marketplace was a key factor in capitalist development in Protestant Europe. Though the fear of Muslim militancy did not prevail in Weber's time as later, he nonetheless saw the mujāhid as a defining Muslim type.[74] Capitalism and crusade do not necessarily relate to each other, and Weber was not attuned the specific importance of connection between missionary and commercial discourses in the Western empires of his own time. However, he sees in Islam a puritanical will to power, an intolerance of uncertainty and multiplicity that resonates with the all-encompassing ambit of instrumentalist capitalism.[75] Nevertheless, in various works, Weber interprets Islam as inhibiting element that keeps Muslim societies in pre-capitalist traditionalism.

Weber argues that though the premodern Muslim world exhibited commercialism in many forms, Islamic legal thought is a major obstacle to capitalism in the modern sense. Weber's portrayal of fiqh and the sharīʿa reflects contradictory, if

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[73] Wolfgang Schluchter, "Hindrances to Modernity: Max Weber on Islam," in *Max Weber and Islam*, 69.

[74] Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, trans. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 472.

[75] For the latter, see Weber, *Economy*, 523.

long-lived and influential, tropes; he characterizes Islamic law as both hidebound and rigid in addition to arbitrary and anomalous. In the first place, Weber echoes the decline narrative in Islamic intellectual history: legal thought failed to continue innovation after the formative periods of the larger Sunnī legal traditions, their imāms' charisma having been spent.[76] Weber finds that commercial regulation, and Islamic law generally, does not appear flexible to accommodate or perhaps anticipate dynamic commercial invention and capitalist venture in the true sense. He finds that Muslim prohibitions against interest means that Islamic law stands against risk itself.[77] Of course, Weber does not then account for the flourishing of long-distance trade across diverse geographical and historical situations, so much of which took place long after the founders of the main juristic schools. Another caricature might help explain this variation: Islamic law as random, capricious opinion. For Weber as others, the figure of the sulṭān, the oriental despot, and the unquestionable qāḍī dispensing arbitrary justice looms large,.[78] Islamic legal theory, after all, is made by jurists with no definite relationship to a state that could enforce their decisions,[79] and the Muslim umma lacks an equivalent to a church which would enforce, or even expect, consistency among them as a clerical class. Weber finds that Islamic legal thinking does not provide either the flexibility or the consistency businesspeople and business require. He is, of course, leading with this conclusion rather than delving into primary sources. However, the

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[76] Weber, *Economy*, 819-21.

[77] Crone, 255.

[78] Weber, *Economy*, 1116.

[79] Toby E. Huff, "Introduction," *Max Weber and Islam*, 36.

important point here is that scholarship and popular opinion has provided "law" as a literary topos onto which he can project various generalizations about what Muslims are and are not like. Such topoi invariably organize significant contradictions.

Similarly, while Weber identifies a single-minded fanaticism as a Muslim typology, other forms of religious life inhibit its positive potential. In the late-19th century, an Enlightenment-inherited disdain for irrational enthusiasm manifested in fears of primitive superstition and ungovernable colonial subjects. Weber was able to challenge this prejudice in part by suggesting that capitalists' narrow fanaticism of profit had an ancestor in sectarians' will to organize their world around religious doctrine.[80] At the root of both is an intolerance of life subject to different motives and uses of time and energy. Accordingly, Weber does not think that iconoclastic movements within Islam make it a poor fit for the tolerant marketplace; he rather thinks that these movements have not defined the Muslim world on the whole. It is when Weber counters the idea of Muslim fanaticism that he takes examples of the diversity of the Muslim world seriously.[81] While Ṣūfīs can sequester themselves away from family and society and practice ascetic discipline, they are too preoccupied with the supernal and the transcendent to compare with Weber's prosperous Puritans. While Weber recognized resistance to magic in Muslim traditions, those glossed as "high", or cosmopolitan, literate, or orthodox, he understood the variety of local beliefs and practices that included patronage of shrines and veneration of saints, particularly outside the Arabic-

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[80] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 155-284.

[81] Like Kuenen, he finds that Islam tends to dilute itself in its diverse encounters; he says "the propaganda of Islam in Africa rested primarily in the massive foundation of magic, by means of which it has continued to outbid other competing faiths" *(Economy*, 467).

speaking milieu. Here there are clear parallels with Kantian-Weberian stereotypes of Catholicism, a system too traditional, complex, and tolerant of variation to contribute the kind of narrow and unaccommodating caste of mind Weber identifies with capitalism.

Weber finds that while Muslims do not have the urgent will to remake the world because of their belief in the mercy of its author. Weber took particular interest in the degree and nature of the rationalization of religion, which he explains

> To judge the level of rationalization a religion represents we may use two primary yardsticks which are in many ways related. One is the degree to which the religion has divested itself of magic; the other is the degree to which it has systematically united the relation between God and the world and therewith its own ethical relationship to the world.[82]

A rationalized religion admits no diversity of power in the world and directs believers' attention accordingly. Islamic monotheistic theology would seem to be just such a unitary, rationalized worldview whose followers do not admit or appeal to workings of power other than God's. However, for Weber, Muslims' belief in God's mercy sharply distinguishes their theology from Calvinists'. Weber believed that individual Protestant faith rested on acute uncertainty of one's fate in the hereafter. When people feel so destabilized, they turn to conspicuous production and the ceaseless pursuit of wealth, which in sectarian Protestant communities, Weber believes, signifies the very soteriological security people lack individually.[83] For him, a god of manifest mercy

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[82] Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, trans. Hans H. Gerth (New York: Free Press, 1964), 226.

[83] Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, 95-154.

cannot but engender a more insouciant moral theology.[84] If Muslims believe a just god has made clear a way for them to live and will judge them by this standard mercifully, their fear of God is not the overriding inspiration for a worldly work ethic. This judgment might seem a backhanded compliment, given that it is clear Weber found the proto-capitalist worldview extraordinarily harsh,[85] but ultimately, he is looking for a reason for the passivity of the non-West and sees in Muslim theology is a suitable candidate.

Weber, China, and traditional disenchantment

For all the parallels to Protestant intellectual history arguable in the comparison with Islam, China presents some direct potential similarities to Weberian ways of thinking about capitalism and disenchantment. In the crude caricature popular in Weber's time and since, Chinese culture attests unveiled self-interest.[86] In Weberian thinking, this economic and political attitude must in some way reflect on philosophical and religious traditions. Weber continued to privilege Confucian traditions in his

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[84] Weber compares the Puritan with the mujāhid, the latter fighting mercilessly for a merciful god: "Muslims were not confronted with the problem of the certainty of salvation, of the *certitudo salutis*, to as radical a degree as were the Calvinists. The belief in providence did not produce the same measure of uncertainty and fear. Admittedly, fear of death is involved in both cases; however, in one case it is fear of death in the face of the beyond, whereas in the other it is fear of death in the face of battle itself" (*Economy*, 78).

[85] "The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force" (*Protestant Ethic*, 181).

[86] Weber, *Religion of China*, 243-45.

interpretation as Western scholars did in his time and long before. He shared their assessment that these were so secular and disenchanted that their religiousness seemed to obtain in this world,[87] which clearly parallels the distinctive, if questionably religious, the Protestant spirit of capitalism Weber portrays. In his estimation, that work ethic had the disquieting potential to remake the work through its instrumentalist rationalization: like a sectarian or utopian, a capitalist does not want to see energy or attention diverted from a single purpose. While Confucian traditions do not have cultural ideals of ceaseless work or anything like the constant recollection of God, they do have an all-encompassing ritual order and a conviction that self-cultivation is the route to universal harmony, giving microcosmic self-discipline macrocosmic significance.[88] Despite formal and phenotypical resemblances, Weber does not think Chinese traditions share in Protestant qualities that drive the hegemonic world order of secular capitalism.

Weber was somewhat less abstract in assessing living social structures in China, although his assessments remained the same. In addition to having to deal with a social system seemingly predicated on bureaucratic rationality, Weber also took it upon himself to distinguish Chinese "petty capitalism" from the world-inverting kind endemic to Northern Germany and New England.[89] After all, however successful and Chinese merchants were in their commercial, geographic, and historical variety, the Chinese imperial state and society were not organized around promoting enterprise and venerating entrepreneurs. Weber says this is owed to Chinese concern for patrilocal

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[87] In China, "the central force of a salvation religion conducive to a methodical way of life was non-existent" (*Religion of China*, 170).

[88] Consider the doxology of the *Da xue* 大學 (Great learning) in chapter 2.

[89] Weber, *Religion of China*, 243-49.

extended families and the radiating circles of consideration that embedded an individual within concentric spheres of giving and dependence.[90] It is debatable whether the portable, independent nuclear family is an effect of industrial capitalism rather than a cause. However, in any case, what Weber identifies as inhibiting modernization: the multi-generational patriline conceived in Confucian ritual practice[91] is identified with religion, or mentality, just as the rationality that, apparently, does not leads to capitalist productive despair, is a "Confucian" one. In some respects, we might call Lee Kuan Yew's "Asian values" discourse,[92] which attributes contemporary prosperity in the region to patriarchal family values and scholarly work ethic, a "vulgar" Weberianism, but in another sense, Lee and others are only reworking Weber's assessment that East Asian routinization and capitalism were not the *right* kind to one that says they represent simply a *different* kind. Assessments can change, but the judgments remain.

For Weber, Chinese traditions, meaning Confucianism and Daoism, lacked the dynamic contradictions that enabled Protestant dissatisfaction, historicity, and will to change. In Müller's humanistic inquiry, religions are objects to be discerned primarily in sacred texts, and below individual religions, there is the need and capacity of the human heart. However, for Weber, religion is more a way to interpret political and economic power and differentiation; religion is a way to explain epistemological objects rather

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[90] Weber, *Religion of China*, 84-104; Jack Barbalet, "The Religion of China and the Prospects of Chinese Capitalism" in *The Anthem Companion to Max Weber*, ed. Alan Sica, 207-27 (London: Anthem, 2016): 220-25.

[91] Weber, *Religion of China*, 84-90.

[92] See William Theodore de Bary, *Asian Values and Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998). It is worth noting that Lee's worldview of distinctive civilizations bound by values that can at once be said to be specific and generic anticipates Samuel Huntington and Francis Fukuyama.

than primarily the object itself. As such, Weber primarily wants to understand religion among other social elements and in particular historical processes. Where in the *Protestant Ethic*,[93] he asks a positive question about how and what kind of religion contributed to what he perceives as a unique spirit of capitalism, in his later work, he asks this in the negative: why does no *other* tradition seem to inculcate similar attitudes? Having characterized modernity through disenchantment, routinization, and action in the domain of this-worldly history, he clearly encounters problems in characterizing Chinese traditions through just such features. His solution is not entirely persuasive. He says: "Puritan rationalism meant rational mastery of the world." but "Confucian rationalism meant adjustment to the world."[94] Quite similarly to Legge, Weber says Chinese traditions exhibit a sense moral satisfaction and resignation, which for him means that Confucians and Daoists lack the destabilizing need to ceaselessly strive to dominate markets and people to verify divine satisfaction,[95] which to good Calvinists can never come in this world. Weber sees a rather more placid spiritual-intellectual life in East Asia, where good integral functioning inhibits the radical transformations of the modern world.

In his most extensive work on a single non-Western location, Weber takes the space to purchase discourses of Eastern passivity with his distinctive tragic account of traditionalism. For Weber, traditionalism—those precapitalist, non-Protestant

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93 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribner, 1958).

94 Max Weber, *Religion of China*, 248.

95 Consider that Weber says "Nothing conflicted more with the Confucian ideal of gentility than the idea of "vocation"" (*Religion of China*, 248).

worldviews—represents too much of a good thing. If Wolfgang Schluchter is correct and Weber is significantly interested in an "axiological turn"[96] in which the theological, political, and personal fit together and a world tradition exhibits rationalization, traditionalism, for Weber, is complacently remaining in this state.[97] Weber China takes this to an extreme: "The whole of Confucianism became a relentless canonization of tradition."[98] In this way, Chinese rationalization gives rise to a stultifying discipline of actions. Weber says "Immeasurable ceremonial fetters surround the life of the Chinese, from the stage of the embryo to the cult of the dead."[99] Lest we see such single-mindedness as parallel to the severity and constriction of the Puritan lifestyle, Weber clarifies that this is not the right kind of discipline practiced; its ends are worldly and relative. Precisely because one can imagine performing Confucian "consummate personhood" (*ren* 仁) or becoming a "worthy person" (*jun zi* 君子)[100] in this world, it is a standard that can be met. Christianity's concern for the other world and its doctrine of grace yields a tension which can lead to the "breakage" of radical Protestantism, in which believers strive to meet a standard while avowing they can never know whether

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[96] Schluchter, 69.

[97] Weber, *Religion of China*, 169ff.

[98] Weber, *Religion of China,* 164.

[99] Weber, *Religion of China*, 234. Consider also this flowery comparison between the Muslim mujāhid and the Confucian *shi*: "In contrast to the passion and ostentation of the feudal warrior in ancient Islam we find watchful self-control, self-observation, and reserve. Above all, we find repression of all forms of passion, including that of joy, for passion disturbs the general equilibrium and the harmony of the soul." (156)

[100] Roger Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr., trans., *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (New York: Ballantine, 1998).

they are doing so fruitfully or even meaningfully.[101] Just as Legge says that Chinese are satisfied with this world and do not challenge themselves, so Weber can claim that Confucian traditions are complete within the world, forming an integrated intelligible whole and limiting individual desire to what can be achieved within it. Such a mindset would leave China's Confucian elite passive before capitalism and European hegemony.

Conclusion

Weber synthesized a generation of humanistic scholarship on non-Christian traditions and inflected it with his particular senses of temporality. Accordingly, while his work appears thoroughly disenchanted compared with the missionaries and psychologists of Müller's time, it replicates the same essentializing moves. For all, the non-Western others in spirituality and history are legible through their scriptural traditions. While it is not inaccurate to say Confucian texts mattered in China and that the Muslim canon was of utmost importance in the Muslim world, there is considerable diversity within these traditions that is reduced or excluded, to say nothing of how these traditions intersected and connected with others. Apart from the "fundamentals" of the sacred texts, Müller, Weber, and their contemporaries in the Western academy also tended to choose rather eclectically from a range of historical situations, perspectives, and experiences to generalize about this object called mentality. The mentality-object tended to be historically static and showed limits in its spiritual-intellectual plane of engagement. In these ways, scholars established Christian provenance and the Western academy as privileged grounds for interpreting others' religious traditions: Christianity transcended them and institutions shaped by it imbued a unique sense of history and

[101] Weber, *Religion of China*, 235.

historicity. In previous chapters, I have discussed the effects of political and institutional privilege in the Muslim world and the Chinese imperial state. So, I am not on firm ground to argue that the biases of modern academic epistemologies take especially pernicious advantage over others. I rather seek in this chapter to illuminate how Western scholars conceived the grounds of their right to speak for others and how they saw the limits of them speaking for themselves. The effects of this taking of privilege have persisted beyond the time in which scholars staked it.

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