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Educational Development and the Pace of Religious Change: How the Sequence of Institutional Change in China and Japan Shaped the Emergence of Modern Religious Policy

Cole Carnesecca https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4562-3514

Chung Yuan Christian University

cole.carnesecca@gmail.com

Abstract: In the mid 1800s, both China and Japan began reform movements in order to face the threat of increasing Western encroachment. Central to that reform were adaptations of the educational systems that helped prepare the revolutionary leaders of the Meiji Restoration in Japan and the Xinhai Revolution in China. As part of the subsequent state formation process, each country determined the role that religion would play in the new modern state. The policies each chose were significantly influenced by the educational context out of which those new leaders had emerged. Yet those leaders were shaped by the pace and sequence of educational reform relative to the timing of political revolution. Japanese leadership in the Meiji era reflected the *Kokugaku* and Confucian education they had received. Similarly, Nationalist leadership exhibited the Euro-American educational context, whether threw study abroad or at Western schools at home, in the policy choices they made.

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Encounters between Euro-American powers with China and Japan initiated a process of reassessing many institutional and cultural forms. It was this process that brought into elite debate such questions as the need for modernization and what that would entail, the improvement of technical capacity (particularly military tactics and technology), and the strengthening of industry and the national economy. Unsurprisingly, the figures engaged in this debate were shaped by the thinking and beliefs of the education institutions out of which they emerged. In both countries, educational systems were dialectically incorporated into these broader debates — forming and being formed by the ongoing question of how to adapt, how to modernize, and how to fend off Western aggression.

By mid-19th century, leading Chinese officials and the Manchu government could no longer ignore the problem of Western imperial aggression and the rather insurmountable technology gap placing the Qing government at perilous disadvantage.[1] Japan, having observed the unfolding problem in China was soon to face their own moment of crisis. The First Opium War in China (1839-1842) and the arrival of Perry's fleet in Japan (1843) further destabilized political circumstances that had become increasingly untenable. While some form of "Western learning" had existed in both China and Japan before,[2] it was not until this period in the latter half of the 19th Century that the pace of incorporation of this new learning began to quicken. As that pace quickened, educational development both fueled and was driven by emerging revolutionary movements.

Prior to this period of transformation, schools proved crucial in the revolutionary and reform movements of China and Japan as well as in the eventual emergence of “modern” religious policies particular to both countries. Not only was educational reform seen as the primary way of closing the technology gap, existing educational institutions were the intellectual training ground for the key players vying for control of the state building process.

The twin goals of the educational systems in China and Japan were to both train officials for government service and to develop the moral faculties of those officials. Such education assumed certain things about the world – the role of heaven, the nature or persons, the existence of and role of supernatural powers — and it was this fundamental and arguably religious basis of the educational system that came under threat from the implications of Western incursion and

[1] Early on, the Qing sequestered Euro-Americans to Canton, far from important political and cultural centers.

[2] During the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Jesuit missionaries like Matteo Ricci and later Johann Adam Schall von Bell gained national prominence, while “Dutch Studies,” (*Rangaku*) garnered from Dutch and Portuguese traders, had long existed in Japan.

formed the ideological framework on which activists and institutions involved in the revolutionary process drew. In short, education was also a theological and ideological project. And there were a variety of frameworks that informed the state building process and out of which particular approaches to religion at the state level emerged.

Yet, as we will see below, it was not merely the fact of education, reform, revolution, and ideological formation, but that these each happened at particular times and in particular sequences. It was not just the relationship between causal mechanisms, but the order in which they occurred, that had a decisive role in the future of religious policy in both countries. When and how institutions formed/reformed influenced cadres at disparate times to engage in the process of revolutionary change. As a result, institutions, actors, and resources were more or less available, or more or less central to key moments of policy formation, based on when such changes in education took place.

Educational Reform and the Timing of Revolution

Major trends in historical sociological research point to the importance of timing, sequence, events, and path dependency[3]. Social change is historically situated, depends on recent as well as formative yet chronologically distant causes, is shaped by the structural transformation of major events, and yet remains significantly contingent. Of these findings, two in particular help explain the differing outcomes of modern religious policy in China and Japan as a result of educational system reforms. The first is work on the timing and sequence of events, and the second comes from studies on how the context of political change has far reaching effects on structural and cultural elements beyond the directly political.

Educational reform in China and Japan offers an illuminating pairing when compared over their respective periods of revolutionary state formation. Both countries confronted a significant technological gap with the West and attempted to close, or at least arrest the growth, of that gap through educational reform. Similarly, schools were important training grounds for would be revolutionaries as well as their more successful competitors who eventually helmed programs of political transition and state building. Yet the *timing* of these events and projects differed substantially in both countries and helped

[3] Abbott, Andrew *Time Matters: On Theory and Method*, 1st edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). Goldstone, Jack A. "Initial conditions, general laws, path dependence, and explanation in historical sociology." *American journal of sociology* 104, no. 3 (1998): 829-845. Mahoney, James "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 4 (2000): 507–48; Pierson, Paul *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Sewell Jr, William H. *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

shape the process of religious change.

In Japan, at the time of the Restoration, the younger crop of revolutionaries stepped out of comparable educational settings. Confucian education remained the centerpiece, but this was increasingly supplemented by studies in "Dutch learning" and the increasingly popular *Kokugaku* and Mito ideologies that centered on the uniqueness and importance of the Imperial cult and the sacredness of Japanese territory. Yet the impact of Western education remained limited, especially for those who became the "Meiji Oligarchs."[4] Widespread introduction of Western styles and topics in education, such as scientific subjects focused on the production of industrial citizens rather than Confucian imperial subjects, were a product of and not a catalyst for the Meiji Restoration. As such, and as I will show below, that educational system, while unarguably more "Western," was formed and guided by institutional changes and elite reformers steeped in ideologies of Confucian and Shinto lineage.

China's case was remarkably different. In comparison with Japan, China's revolution took an additional 40 years to come about (1911 in China and 1868 in Japan). During that time, the Qing government largely stayed committed to the examination system and the traditional educational structure that fed into it. But this did not mean that a Western educational system was absent. In fact, the spread of Western styled education increased substantially as schools were opened and students went overseas for further studies.[5] The increase in Western education was aided by structural and economic changes beyond the control of the state that required students to have something more than a traditional education (i.e. chemistry, engineering, foreign language). The result was a changing educational system distinct from the interests and efforts of the state and that fostered an anti-Confucian, Western/secular vision of political change. When the Nationalist revolution finally succeeded, the resulting government, the one that would shape religious modernity in China, was filled with graduates of mission schools, Western styled universities of Chinese founding, and schools in France, the United States, and Japan.[6] Education reform shaped, rather than was shaped by, the revolution and, subsequently,

[4] "Oligarchs" typically refers to a cadre of leaders of the Restoration who subsequently played dominate roles in the early Meiji state. They most often came from Satsuma or Choshu, the leading provinces in the Restoration.

[5] Biggerstaff, Knight *Earliest Modern Government Schools in China.*, First Edition (Cornell University Press, 1961). Keenan, Barry "14. Lung-Men Academy in Shanghai and the Expansion of Kiangsu's Educated Elite, 1865-1911," in *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600-1900*, ed. Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside (University of California Press, 2023), 493–524, Johnson, Eunice V. *Timothy Richard's Vision: Education and Reform in China, 1880-1910*, ed. Carol Lee Hamrin, (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

[6] Notably, this was after Japan had instituted their own Western educational system.

the emergence of Chinese religious policy.

In this regard, the relationship of educational reform and revolution strongly supports Abbott's[7] claim that causation does depend on an element's context in time, that "the order of particular events is the center of interest".[8] Abbott describes sequences of events as "careers" and notes that, "the only narrative assumption that need be made is that an event can affect only events beginning after it in the career".[9] Given this, what we would expect and do find is that it is not immaterial when programs of educational reform take place. In his discussion of "positive feedback processes" Pierson makes a similar claim, emphasizing that "different sequences may produce different outcomes."[10] Which actors and institutions gain access to the formative stages of educational development wield enormous influence on the cultural practices it engenders. And it is just these types of turning points that represent the structural changes and events that determine path dependent trajectories.

The importance of timing and sequence become even more significant when we consider how events and historically specific causal processes shape culture and practice. Sewell's work on the structural significance of events is perhaps best known. He argues that, "Events bring about historical changes in part by transforming the very cultural categories that shape and constrain human action."[11] Yet we would be wrong to conclude that conceptual categories like "revolution" or "state formation" are uniform processes. They are in fact highly contingent and malleable. Robert Fishman's work on democratic transition on the Iberian peninsula provides useful theoretical leverage on this point. He finds that, "[r]egime transitions hold the ability to change not only the basic rules linking governmental institutions to the broader populace, but also a variety of social practices and understandings."[12] And it is not merely the fact of transition but that those transitions have important qualities to them that they carry over into the process of institutionalization. In considering revolution, Fishman's study shows not only *that* revolution leads to political transition, but *how* it does so has important cultural implications for both political practice and cultural tastes.[13] If revolutionary change is contextual

[7] Abbott, Andrew *Time Matters: On Theory and Method*, 1st edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[8] *Ibid*, p. 177
[9] *Ibid*, p. 176
[10] Pierson, Paul *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*, First Edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 18
[11] Sewell Jr, William H. *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). P. 101
[12] Fishman, Robert M. "Democratic Practice after the Revolution: The Case of Portugal and Beyond," *Politics & Society* 39, no. 2 (June 1, 2011): p. 2
[13] Fishman, Robert M. and Omar Lizardo, "How Macro-Historical Change Shapes Cultural Taste:

and contingent and if it carries through specific peculiarities into resulting structures and practices, then it is important to identify any patterns involved in such transmissions.

The central point is this: in the universe of possible influences exerted on the educational system that *could have* shaped religious policies in China and Japan, the *timing* of revolution determined which *did*. Differing sequences of revolution and educational reform advantaged different projects of ideological reproduction. In these specific cases, the early period of educational reform was crucial as it was a significant moment of institutionalization — for the purposes of the state in Japan, or in opposition to the imperial dynasty in China. More significantly, patterns of institutionalization opened certain opportunities by strengthening developmental paths and structurally weakening others. As such, there were two keys mechanisms through which educational institutions shaped the emergence of religious policy.

First, the *ideological context* of activist education determined *how reform and revolutionary elites and institutions conceived of the modern*. Put differently educational institutions significantly impacted the emergence of religious policy by developing the ideological communities that drove the political reform process and constituted the discourse on modernity.

Second, the *timing* of educational reform relative to political transformation determined *which ideologies obtained broader reach in the educational system*. Encounters with Western imperial aggression revealed significant technological gaps that brought into question the effectiveness of prevailing educational institutions and ideologies. However, educational changes unfolded at very different paces in China and Japan and that *pace of change* led to different manifestations of a "modern" educational system.

In what follows, I will elaborate on the historical process of educational change in China and Japan and map its significance for the emergence of each countries approach to “modern” religious policy.

Education from Tokugawa to Meiji

Education under the Tokugawa existed primarily for the purpose of supporting the existing political structure. While private schools existed in continuously increasing numbers, the *han* 藩 [38] and *bakufu* 幕府 [39] remained the

Legacies of Democratization in Spain and Portugal,” *American Sociological Review* 78, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 213–39

[38] The political-familial leadership of Japanese domains. They were more like mini kingdoms than territories of a larger kingdom - something akin to late medieval/early modern German states.

[39] The military government headed by the Tokugawa household which led the various Japanese domains.

primary "employers" of educated samurai and it was to their purposes that the educational system was shaped. As Rubinger describes it, "These [official] schools, as institutions of feudal administration of the *bakufu* and *han*, were expected to conform to the best interests of the state. Until the end of the period their primary purpose remained the training of moral attitudes considered a necessity for a hereditary ruling elite."[14]

The earliest roots of the Tokugawa system started under Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川 家康(1543-1616). It was his encouragement that led to the creation of libraries, founding of *bakufu* schools, and printing of books. The Shogun, Ieyasu, also appointed Hayashi Razan 林羅山(1583 – 1657) as an education advisor for the Tokugawa. Razan was a Confucian scholar who helped to promote Confucian studies. He opened his first school in Edo (Tokyo) in 1630 and his lineage became the centerpiece of the Tokugawa educational system.

Beyond the schools specifically linked with the ruling Tokugawa, there were a variety of educational institutions spread out across the Japanese landscape. *Shijuku* 私塾, *terakoya* 寺子屋, and *hankō* 藩校 were the most prevalent educational institutions, and Rubinger lists the *gōkō* 合考 as a fourth. *Hankō* were largely concentrated in cities and regional capitals whereas *shijuku* and *terakoya* were more geographically distributed. Gōkō were the least numerous and most functionally specific of the schools. There were primarily two types of *gōkō*. The first of these were branches of *han* schools for rural samurai who lived far from the castle towns in which most *hankō* were located. Secondly, they functioned as schools that targeted commoners and offered general moral instruction.

Another school type that is, for our purposes, less relevant, was the *terakoya*. These were alternatively referred to as *tenarai-sho* 手習い所. *Terakoya* drew their name from being typically located in temples (*tera* 寺) and were primarily, though not exclusively, for non-samurai commoners. Merchant children were especially common at these types of schools. They taught basic Confucian content, focusing on literacy, proper expression, and Confucian morality. As schools for samurai helped to institutionalize proper loyalty to the Shogunate, the *terakoya* helped to instill models for basic levels of discipline and morality across broad swaths of the populace.

More relevant to our question were the *hankō* and *shijuku*. *Hankō* were the educational institutions of the individual *han*. Their central task was to prepare samurai for service within the feudal court. The instruction emphasized the

[14] Rubinger, Richard. *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007). P. 7

Confucian classics. Readings and recitations formed the foundation for later study of reading, expression, and moral development. *Hankō* were initially somewhat slow to catch on, but they grew in number and significance throughout the Tokugawa era, with the periods of reform in the 19th century being especially important times of growth and expansion. *Hankō* were less likely to adopt more cutting-edge styles of learning (particularly Dutch Learning, but even *Kokugaku* and related subjects) though such subjects were occasionally present. Additionally, they were only marginally responsible for producing the eventual leaders and activists of the *bakumatsu* 幕末 period.

Shijuku are the most amorphous and yet more significant category of educational institution. *Shijuku* are most easily understood as private schools (as opposed to the more official *hankō*); however that understanding was not as readily apparent during the period. Nevertheless, Rubinger provides a useful summary definition:

> *We can, however, isolate the shijuku as a type on the basis of: (1) administrative structure – they were privately run...(2) the curriculum — it was free from official control and dependent solely on the particular interests and training of the headmaster... (3) the constituency – the shijuku imposed no geographical or class barriers to entrance.*[15]

Shijuku, being free from direct links to the han governments, were not beholden to the same necessity of transmitting proper Confucian morals and Neo-Confucian political philosophy. While most still emphasized some sort of Confucian training, the flexibility made *shijuku* successful forums for engaging with newer forms of study and learning. As a result, Western learning and especially *Kokugaku* found *shijuku* to be a welcoming homes and hothouses for spreading and developing their ideas. They also served as intra-*han* network nodes in a way that the *hankō* never were able to. Even though relationships between *han* were generally cordial, it was simply far less of a priority for *hankō* to develop or facilitate such relationships. *Shijuku* thrived on them. As a result, *shijuku* were able to have an important impact on national networks of schools and ideological groups.

Throughout the course of the Tokugawa era, the number of schools increased significantly, with particularly large jumps coming in the years just before the Restoration. The majority of these gains came from *terakoya* expansion, but *shijuku* grew proportionately. Rubinger puts the count at around 1000 *shijuku* and 220 *hankō*.[16] Platt's numbers are even larger, with 1500

[15] *Ibid.* p. 8-9
[16] *Ibid.* p. 5

shijuku and 276 *hankō* by the end of the Tokugawa.[17] Fief schools (*hankō*) saw enormous increases at the end of the 18th century, and the growth of the closing decades of the 1700s continued through to the restoration.[18] In the late decades of the Tokugawa, a growing number of fief schools included *Kokugaku* teachers which was likely due to the increasing importance of education and "aesthetic expertise" for samurai as economic conditions deteriorated.[19]

With the growth and expansion of schools, their content also became more standardized.[20] Given their role as stepping stones for fief employment, most of the education at fief schools centered on preparing samurai for their role within the feudal system. The primary means by which this was accomplished was through a Confucian curriculum. This would include the study of classic Confucian writings, with an eye not only to styles of writing and expression, but, more importantly, as a way of transmitting moral instruction. It was also in the classics that aspiring samurai officials learned about both their role in society and their duty to fief and the *bakufu*. The classics also were a treasure trove of political philosophy from which students would be expected to draw. All of this was packaged within a very particular cosmology that defined relationships of people to each other, to their government, and to Heaven.

Fief schools and *shijuku* composed what were also called the *"bun,"*文 or literary, side of learning. Instruction methods were mainly *sōdoku* 総読, or readings/recitations, and *kōshaku* 講釈, or lectures on the readings. Schools often operated their own printing presses and both schools and students were subsidized by the fief itself. As might be imagined, this led to rather rigid reproductions of the accepted ideology:

> *Designed though it was to heighten the student's sense of the seriousness of the business of learning, it was hardly conducive to spontaneity or intellectual adventurousness, the more so since, from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, all texts used were those of the Sung Confucianist school and no discussion of varying interpretations was expected or even permitted.*[21]

It wasn't until the 1850s that Western learning made its way into the fief schools and even then it was limited to navigation, gunnery and medicine. At the main *bakufu* school, Western subjects were separated and largely unofficial.

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[17] Platt, Brian. *Burning and building: schooling and state formation in Japan, 1750-1890*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center. 2004): p. 4

[18] Dore, Ronald. *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (London: Routledge, 2010)

[19] Platt, Brian. *Burning and building: schooling and state formation in Japan, 1750-1890*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center. 2004)

[20] This and the following are mostly drawn from Dore.

[21] Dore, Ronald. *Education in Tokugawa Japan* (London: Routledge, 2010): p. 83

Western learning *shijuku* certainly existed before the Restoration, as did a negligible number of mission schools, but they were not significantly widespread. *Shijuku* could vary widely in their content and focus. This was dependent on the instructor's background and interests. Confucian works remained entry level requirements, but beyond that the direction of instruction could diverge significantly. It was in these schools that the ideas that fueled the Restoration developed.

Among *shijuku* that contributed to the Restoration and to the reassertion of the primacy of the imperial cult, Yoshida Shoin's 吉田 松陰 (1830-1859) Shōka Sonjuku 松下 村塾 stands out.[22] Shoin took over control of the school in 1857 and he quickly became a major force on the political scene and an extremely controversial figure. In fact, his subversive machinations would lead to his death. But before that, he helped educate and form the ideological commitments of a litany of stars of the Restoration. Among them were Kido Koin 木戸 孝允 (1833-1877), Ito Hirobumi 伊藤 博文 (1841-1909), and Yamagata Aritomo 山縣 有朋(1838-1922), just to name a few of the best known.

Shoin's teachings, which he gleaned from Mito Scholars among others, elevated the role of the Emperor and the imperial cult as well as the sacral uniqueness of Japan as a nation. The importance of these beliefs, which while not explicitly of the *Kokugaku* school they certainly share many similarities with them, can best be seen in how they became the rally cry for the Restoration movement and the explicit goals of the Meiji state. Shoin muses on them in a number of letters:

> *The family law of the Sugi's [Shoin's birth house] has really great advantages over other family laws, namely it prescribes ancestor worship, without which any family will soon go to pieces, worship of the [g]ods, charity towards relatives, study of literature, to avoid being submerged in Buddhism and finally it prescribes agriculture" (Yoshida Shoin, quoted in van Straelen).*[23]

> *We must worship the Gods. Yamato is called the land of the [g]ods. Therefore nobody who has been born in this sacred country should despise the [g]ods'. But there are many among the common people who are far from the true attitude of mind, although they believe in the [g]ods. Those who come for worship and clasp their hands and pray for success, a long life, wealth and honours these people err indeed. The [g]ods love sincerity and purity. Therefore if one worships the [g]ods, he should have a true and sincere heart, clean his body and worship without any*

[22] Van Straelen, Henry. *Yoshida Shoin, Forerunner of the Meiji Restoration* (Leiden: Brill, 1952).
[23] *Ibid*. p. 17-18

other purposes. Only this is real piety" (Yoshida Shoin, quoted in van Straelen).[24]

In reading Shoin's exhortations, it is quite clear that these were not merely political concerns. He writes as if composing theology. And it was out of this theologically rich context that many important Restoration leaders emerged and it was exactly these ideas that many of them endeavored to enact. While Shoin and his school were somewhat exceptional, they were not alone as sources for revolutionary ideologies. Similarly important is the fact that these contexts, whether they were *Kokugaku*, Confucian, or more radical versions of support for the imperial cult, they were all located within ideological and religious lineages that had historical roots in Japan. Even the growth of Western learning took place as an addendum and not a significant subversion of these lineages.

Martial schools, most commonly schools of swordsmanship,[25] were another important area of education through which ideas rapidly spread. As their title implies, martial schools were centers of physical education, but they were not separated from the moral expectations and philosophical musings of the educational system. They were the *bu* 武 of the *bun/bu* pairing that structured samurai training. Thus, the discussion of philosophical principles and contemporary politics was commonplace. More importantly, as one of the few locations to which samurai could gain unrestricted access across domainal borders, swordsmanship schools were critical network hubs. As the *sonnō jōi* 尊王攘夷 movement[26] grew in the early years of the restoration efforts, it is in the swordsmanship schools that activists, like Takechi Zuizan 武市瑞山 (1829-1865) and Sakamoto Ryōma 坂本龍馬 (1836-1867), transmitted and fanned Mito and *Kokugaku* ideas.[27] The leaders cultivated in these schools and those like Yoshida Shoin's academy were the same leaders who would later help to build the modern Japanese state. Yet here we have a more religious (or deeply cosmologically aware) education training the modernizers of Japan.

Shoin's Sonjuku and the martial schools were not the only ones that began to break from the standard educational formula. Chinese studies – the study of the Confucian classics — remained important, but they increasingly became primers for studies elsewhere. Students studying Western learning would still begin with the Confucian texts and then move on to naval studies, medicine, or

[24] *Ibid.* p. 69

[25] These are often referred to as fencing schools. While technically correct, the name conjures up unhelpful images of Western style fencing and the class distinctions that go with it. Similarly, anyone who has seen a kendo match can attest to the dramatically different aesthetic.

[26] "Revere the emperor and expel the barbarian" became a slogan for radical restorationists.

[27] Jansen, Marius B. "Takechi Zuizan and the Tosa Loyalist Party," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 18, no. 2 (1959): p. 1971

language. As Marius Jansen observes, "In late Tokugawa and early Meiji times the term ""investigation of principles," *kyūri* 究理, changed in content from the study of Neo-Confucian universals of [Zhu Xi] to the "science" of the West."[28] While this would seem to imply that there was a significant departure from the Japanese ideological lineages, thus undermining the possibility of the emergence of a Japanese religious modernity (as will be the case in China), yet that many of the most important students of Western learning were heavily influenced by *Kokugaku* and Mito studies. Fukuzawa Yukichi 福澤 諭吉 (1835-1901), Saigo Takamori 西郷 隆盛 (1828-1877), Kido Koin, Ito Hirobumi, Inoue Kaoru 井上馨 (1836-1915), and Katsu Kaishu 勝海舟 (1823-1899), among many others, all studied in Nagasaki for significant periods of time.[29] Most of them are notable as driving forces behind restoring the Imperial cult despite their exposure to and interest in Western learning.

As *Kokugaku* expanded as an intellectual movement its impact on education in Japan grew apace. By the 1830s and 1840s, fiefs increasingly incorporated *Kokugaku* into their school programs. It was during that time period, which coincided with Hirata Atsutane's 平田 篤胤 (1776-1843) emergence as the most visible leader of the movement, that *Kokugaku* took on a more decidedly political and overtly religious role. The movement always had had implications for both religion and politics with its emphasis on returning to the Shinto textual tradition and elucidating the foundational myths of the country and the imperial household.[30] However it had sustained its roots as a philological movement through most of Motoori Norinaga's 本居 宣長 (1730-1801) life.

By Norinaga's death, *Kokugaku* had become an accepted part of the Japanese intellectual landscape and its headway into fief schools grew to match its significant foothold among *shijuku*. It was also during the 1830s and 1840s that many early disciples of the movement, particularly those of Atsutane, transitioned to roles as teachers at various levels of the educational system.[31] *Kokugaku* scholars and teachers were also known to travel extensively, teaching and lecturing around the country to gatherings of students and their reach to the broader public expanded through their rather unique efforts at an early

[28] Jansen, Marius B. *Sakamoto Ryoma and the Meiji Restoration*, First Edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971). P. 19
[29] Rubinger, Richard. *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007). P. 112
[30] Masahide, Bitō. "Religion and Society in the Edo Period, as Revealed in the Thought of Motoori Norinaga," *Modern Asian Studies* 18, no. 4 (1984): 581–92.
[31] Platt, Brian. *Burning and Building: Schooling and State Formation in Japan, 1750-1890* (Cambridge : Harvard Univ Asia Center, 2004).

form of correspondence education.[32] By the time Perry's flotilla arrived and the movement to topple the Shogunate and restore imperial rule gathered pace, *Kokugaku* was a source of ideological and religious formation both in the *hankō* and the growing number of *shijuku*. It was this positioning that provided the movement with a platform of influence and recruitment that helped shape the Restoration and the subsequent Meiji state.

With the success of the Restoration, the new Meiji state began to expand and standardize the educational system. Schools were modeled more along the lines of Europe and the United States, with math, science, and literature replacing the centrality of Confucian studies and the *Bun*/*Bu* training. The state also continued to support a limited, but influential, cadre of students who studied abroad. Around 200 students studied overseas at the government's expense from 1868 – 1870, but these numbers dwindled to only 58 from 1875 – 1885.[33]

The early years under the Meiji saw a flurry of local efforts to open up schools and provide local education. The state actually allowed a significant amount of initial freedom in founding schools and they called on local leaders and elites to spearhead this movement. The range of freedom was eventually curtailed with sate movement to incorporate and standardize educational content. Local officials had little choice but to respond to the demands of the state regarding incorporation and standardization, but they were not without space to affect the process.[34]

The Meiji Fundamental Code on Education (1872) was the first major codification of educational law under the Meiji and helped flesh out the structure of early Meiji education. The Fundamental Code (*Gakusei* 学制) established eight university districts directly under the Ministry of Education – headed at this time by Mori Arinori 森有礼 (1847-1889). These universities would come to play an important role as pathways to power and influence within the Meiji state. Most important of these was Tokyo Imperial University which, by the 1880s, was one of the most important conduits to powerful job placement and influence in Meiji society.[35]

The Fundamental Code codified the basis for education under the

[32] Rubinger, Richard. *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).
[33] Byron K. Marshall, "Professors and Politics: The Meiji Academic Elite," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 3, no. 1 (1977): p. 74
[34] Platt, Brian. *Burning and Building: Schooling and State Formation in Japan, 1750-1890* (Cambridge : Harvard Univ Asia Center, 2004).
[35] Byron K. Marshall, "Professors and Politics: The Meiji Academic Elite," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 3, no. 1 (1977): 71–97

university level as well. Under the eight university districts were 32 middle school districts and 210 primary school districts. At the middle school district level, officials called *torishimari* 取り締まり were given oversight powers. These officials exercised significant power as policy agenda setters and organizers of reform at the intermediate level.[36]

The Fundamental Code also established a system of teacher training and education. Of the structural changes, this was perhaps the most significant. Up until the promulgation of the Fundamental Code, many local teachers were drawn from pre-Meiji educational institutions. This meant they were most likely Confucian teachers, emphasized readings/recitations and lectures on Confucian texts, or were one of the many *Kokugaku* teachers dotted throughout the country. The Fundamental Code established normal schools and required teachers to pass through one in order to teacher within the official school system. As would be expected, this move on the part of the Meiji state leadership helped to gain more control of education at a local level.

While the legal and structural changes to the educational system were a significant part of the formation of Meiji education, the struggle between intellectual groups over control of this new system had a more direct impact on the emergence of religious policy in Japan. Marshall describes the ideological conflicts of this period as between three primary groups:

> *1) the Confucians who had served as intellectual elite under the Tokugawa regime; 2) the nativist scholars of the National Studies (Kokugaku) who laid claim to the Restoration as their own on the basis of their long championship of the Imperial Throne; and 3) the specialists in Western area studies.*[37]

Of these three, the two with the most significant impact on the ensuing struggle for power were the "Nativists" and the proponents of Western education.

In the immediate aftermath of the Restoration, it would have seemed most likely that *Kokugaku* scholars were positioned to reap the benefits of their contribution to the revolution. It had been their ideas that carried forward the pro-Imperial thinking of earlier Mito scholars. Their investigation into and support for the mythical roots of the imperial household fleshed out claims to the uniqueness and rightful centrality of the imperial cult as a unifying force in the new Japan. And their scholars lead the way in writing about and theorizing

[36] Platt, Brian. *Burning and Building: Schooling and State Formation in Japan, 1750-1890* (Cambridge : Harvard Univ Asia Center, 2004): 167

[37] Byron K. Marshall, "Professors and Politics: The Meiji Academic Elite," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 3, no. 1 (1977): p. 73

concepts like the *tennosei* 天皇制, the *kokutai* 国体, and the *saisei itchi* 祭政一致 – all of which became the defining policy of the Meiji state.

In one sense the *Kokugaku* movement got what it wanted. However, *Kokugaku* scholar's themselves quickly saw their influence wane. After the Restoration, three *Kokugaku* scholars were named to important posts within the education system – including Atsutane's heir, Hirata Kanetane 平田鉄胤 (1799-1880). But any early gains were quickly lost as *Kokugaku* scholars were frozen out from important positions in key universities and within the Ministry of Education. These scholars responded by establishing their own school, the Kogakusho 国学所, after their initial attempts to Shinto-ize the Meiji educational system failed. Although by the mid-1870s the influence of *Kokugaku* thought could be seen at most levels of the new Meiji state, the influence of *Kokugaku* scholars was largely invisible.

However, this did not mean a clear win for the proponents of more Western education. Figures like Fukuzawa Yukichi and movements like the developmental educationists (*kaihatsu-shugi* 開発主義) exemplified this group. As spiritual successors to leaders in Dutch Studies and Western learning, activists in this tradition had been important supporters of the Restoration and of the reformation of the educational system along Western, Enlightenment lines. This made them important competition for the *kokugaku* scholars as "[Enlightenment positivism] encouraged the formation of alternative conceptions of nature, humanity, knowledge, and their relationship to one another."[38] Given the religio-mythical commitments of *kokugaku*, this group of Western scholars represented the possibility for a very different version of religious policy to emerge – one decidedly less Shinto and religious.

The fate of developmental education serves as a representation of the fate of Enlightenment positivism's fate as a whole. As early as the 1870s, developmental education began to exert considerable influence over educational reform given its attention to practical aspects of pedagogy. Early in the Meiji period, developmental education's ideas and instructional techniques were disseminated through teaching materials and translated works on education.[39] Teachers affiliated with the movement gained influence at normal schools and the movement published a number of periodicals with translated works on developmental education and comments on ongoing debates at the level of national policy.

[38] Mark Elwood Lincicome, *Principle, Practice, and the Politics of Educational Reform in Meiji Japan* (University of Hawaii Press, 1995): 24
[39] *Ibid.* p. 27

However, their influence was only slightly less short-lived than that of the *Kokugaku* movement. By the end of the 1880s, the reassertion of Meiji statist ideology – in particular the centrality of the Imperial cult – precipitated a decline in the influence of developmental education. During the early 1880s, the movement provided a dominant voice on educational policy, espoused primarily through its different publications and via leaders of the movement who held important posts within universities and the Ministry of Education. However, Enlightenment positivism was never able to overcome the foundational role of *Kokugaku* ideology in the formation of the state and the continued role of those formed by it in the pre-Meiji years. As the imperial cult further solidified as the *raison d'etre* of Meiji Japan, developmental education's ideological commitments - their cultural conception of modernity - became increasingly untenable.

Throughout the process of educational reform, it was a more moderate group of supporters of the Imperial cult that guided the establishment of Meiji educational policy. While both the *Kokugaku* and development movements provided the ideological frameworks for the debate about the future of Japanese education, it was actors like the Meiji oligarchs and institutions of the state that monopolized political power and could turn the ideas of the movements into policy. In fact, few of the activists mentioned throughout this chapter who were trained in late Tokugawa schools and who drove the revolutionary movement were directly affiliated with any discernible ideological movement. However, their beliefs and priorities were clearly shaped more by the thinking of *Kokugaku* and Mito scholarship than by Enlightenment positivism or Western thought.[40]

The role of these political activists can be most clearly seen in the support for the *tennosei* and its translation into the educational system. It is worth quoting Platt on this process: "The silencing of alternative educational visions, accomplished decisively through the suppression of the Popular Rights Movement, then allowed for the extension of the "emperor system" (*tennosei*, 天皇制) into the realm of education, resulting in "emperor system education" (*tennosei kyoiku* 天皇制教育)".[41] The most illuminating element of Platt's observation is exactly that idea of emperor system education. The actors and institutions responsible for institutionalizing the Meiji educational system were committed to supporting the *tennosei* and to translating it into a prevailing

[40] Kido Takayoshi, *The Diary of Kido Takayoshi: 1868-1871*, trans. Sidney Brown, vol. 1 (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1983).; Arinori Mori, *Education in Japan: A Series of Letters Addressed by Prominent Americans to Arinori Mori* (New York: D. Appleton, 1873).

[41] Platt, Brian. *Burning and Building: Schooling and State Formation in Japan, 1750-1890* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ Asia Center, 2004): 10

"*tennosei kyouiku*." It was this commitment that distinguished them from both the *Kokugaku* and developmental movements. *Kokugaku*'s commitment to restoration went too far in the eyes of many Meiji leaders and threatened to undermine the fragile peace they needed to maintain in order to secure the fledgling Japanese state. However, the commitments of movements like the development educationists put them fundamentally at odds with the ethos on which the state was built and by which Meiji leaders were motivated.

Debates concerning the educational system were effectively closed with the promulgation of the Rescript on Education *kyouiku ni kansuru chokugo* 教育ニ関スル勅語 (1890). "As the Imperial Rescript on Education made abundantly clear, by 1890 loyalty and patriotism had been elevated in educational discourse from the category of emotions whose importance for national survival had been rationally determined to the category of moral virtues willed by the emperor upon his subjects".[42] The Rescript on Education differed markedly from the Fundamental Code in role and intent. Where the Code set out legal guidelines, the Rescript established the moral tenor of the educational system. It gave education a revised purpose that put the welfare of emperor, nation, and family (the component parts of the *kokutai*) at the center of schooling. While many of the virtues it extolled (filial piety, proper regard among the five relationships, etc.) were drawn from the Confucian tradition, much of the language reinforced the cosmological precepts of the Shinto revivalists (the *kokutai*, the imperial ancestry, everlasting descent of the imperial line). The emphasis was that while the subjects taught in the classroom were not specifically drawn from the imperial cult, their purpose was to be used to that end.[43]

More important than the mere language of the Rescript (which, like the constitution, firmly anchored the ideas of Shinto revivalism in the structure of the state) was the use to which the Rescript was put. Schools were required to have copies of the Rescript, to often recite it, and to place it, along with the image of the emperor, at the center of regular school rituals. This last point is particularly interesting, because here a part of the imperial cult was resurrected by the population as an aspect of the educational system. Ritual veneration of the emperor and the Rescript carrying his sacred instructions were the product of state efforts and worked toward the goal of strengthening the modern Japanese state. Here again, while thoroughly modern, the educational program of Meiji Japan involved elements that were profoundly religious.

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[42] Lincicome, Mark Elwood. *Principle, Practice, and the Politics of Educational Reform in Meiji Japan* (University of Hawaii Press, 1995): 183

[43] Shimazono Susumu and Regan E. Murphy, "State Shinto in the Lives of the People: The Establishment of Emperor Worship, Modern Nationalism, and Shrine Shinto in Late Meiji," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 36, no. 1 (2009): 93–124.

The Progress of Revolution and Education in China

Education in China shared many characteristics with Japan. The similarity was based both on the shared focus on the Confucian classics as well as Japan's rather explicit borrowing from China's educational model. However, developments during the Qing, particularly during the latter years of the dynasty, led to a gradually diverging educational context that significantly shaped the course of revolution and the resulting form of religious policy.

The Chinese educational system under the Qing included a hierarchical structure of schools. At the top of this system was the Imperial Academy at the national level and the Hanlin Academy 翰林院 at the curricular center. Imperial edicts helped to fill out the lower levels of this system, with a 1652 order calling for the establishment of schools in rural areas[44] and a 1733 order creating academies in every province.[45] While teaching positions at upper level schools were filled with higher degree holders, the lower levels schools became a fall back for failed lower degree holders. Students, teachers, and bureaucrats created a cyclical system by which the Qing educational program was reinforced.

Learning the classics began early, with recitation and brushwork forming the basis for later learning. Students were not expected to understand what they were reciting but to simply internalize it so that, it was assumed, the works would develop the student even before and then in combination with deeper understanding of the text. Students also often began with primers like the *Thousand Character Classic* 千字文, *Trimetrical Classic* 三字經, and the *Hundred Names* 百家姓. These helped with improvement of literacy while also contributing moral lessons. Once students could read well enough, the four books and 5 classics became the focal point of the educational process.

Not all schools were the product of government order. Outside provincially sponsored schools a number of different private schools also operated. Similar to Japan's *terakoya* in goal if not in scope, China had a number of charitable schools that were privately run and emphasized broader basic literacy. A more prevalent form of private school was the clan school. These were operated and financed by local family groupings or villages and were also largely focused on literacy rather than preparation for the exams. By the end of the Qing, many villages had some form of educational institution, though these

[44] Rawski, Evelyn S. *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'Ing China* (Ann Arbor: Univ of Michigan Press, 1979): 33

[45] Keenan, Barry. "14. Lung-Men Academy in Shanghai and the Expansion of Kiangsu's Educated Elite, 1865-1911," in *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600-1900*, ed. Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside (University of California Press, 2023): 500

were often focused on literacy. However, that was not exclusively the case, as some degree aspirants would start at small village schools with a *tong sheng* 童生 or *sheng yuan* 生員 teacher and pass the initial levels of the exam.[46]

Most important of the private schools were the private academies or *shuyuan* 書院. *Shuyuan* doubled as both intellectual and educational centers and had a history of being the homes of important intellectual movements. These operated in a fashion similar to the Mito educational center in Japan. While devoted to education, they were also largely research centers where scholars would locate and investigate texts at greater length. It was here that the possibility of educational and intellectual streams outside the examination system had the greatest hope of sprouting up. However, given their politically volatile history, they were often banned, including for much of the Qing reign.

While Confucian studies across all schools aimed at an imminently pragmatic goal (acquiring a position in the dynastic bureaucracy) the content was not areligious. At its core, Confucianism treats deep metaphysical questions that are intertwined with practical aspects of living. The concept of Heaven (*tian* 天) was central to the Confucian metaphysic, as was its relation to earth and mankind. Heaven was understood as being "above" but also was an operating force in and through all things.[47] Ritual practice, the Emperor's role as the "son of heaven," and the mandate of heaven which bestowed or confirmed rulership formed the metaphysical as well as political basis of Confucian study. Beyond these fundamental principles, Confucian schools typically had shrines to the Great Sage around which periodic rituals were performed.

And it was exactly this metaphysical world which the educational structure reproduced and reaffirmed as the gatekeeper of the national bureaucracy. While this reflects a surface level similarity with the Japanese system, it is also the point of greatest departure. Where the Japanese system prepared would be officials for their roles working within their own *han*, the Chinese system prepared students for the examination system as the primary means of becoming a scholar-official. While the Japanese system allowed for more leeway in educational content (though it was still mainly Confucian, there was a lower hurdle for adapting the curriculum), there was far less incentive to

[46] Harrison, Henrietta. *The Man Awakened from Dreams: One Man's Life in a North China Village, 1857-1942*, (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2005).

[47] Hiroshi Watanabe, *A History of Japanese Political Thought, 1600-1901*, trans. David Noble (Tokyo: International House of Japan, 2012): 10; Lagerwey, John. *China: A Religious State* (Hong Kong University Press, 2010).

learn anything but the required works for the imperial exam in China.[48]

As the mechanism for reproducing the ideology of the empire, the exam system created a bureaucratic elite whose fortunes were tied to that of the state. Thus, whether believers because of their educational upbringing or based on more utilitarian reasons, the exam and its content held significant sway over the actors and institutions on the scene. And it produced them in tremendous quantities. Estimates for the number of clerks – lower level positions for minor degree holders – reached 300,000 and that was only for local posts.[49] The number of officials bloated over the period of the Qing Dynasty, as exemplified by a 30 percent increase in the number of *sheng yuan* degree holders over the course of the Qing.[50] This created a growing surplus middle strata — similar to lower/mid samurai in Japan in the late Tokugawa years – but who were still folded into the system with either clerical work or lower-tier education.

This process of recreating the imperial ideology and implied religious commitments was not dramatically altered until the Tongzhi Restoration 同治中興 in the years following the disasters of both the first and second Opium Wars. The Restoration also coincided with the waning years of the Taiping Rebellion and was equal parts attempt to strengthen the country in the wake of the devastation and to further address the growing problem of foreign dominance. A major component of the Tongzhi Restoration was the Self-Strengthening Movement 自強運動, which aimed to enable the Chinese state to match the pressure from the Euro-American powers by narrowing the technological gap. Much of the work of the movement's leaders focused on developing industries and new educational opportunities (particularly in the technical fields related to the production of arms and in military sciences).

Many of the leading figures in petitioning the Qing to open new schools with "Western" subjects, as well as those who played an important part in founding new schools were the leaders of the Tongzhi movement (同志運動). Comparatively, these figures were akin to their contemporaries in Japan who helped push forward the Meiji Restoration. Both were essentially cultural conservatives who saw the need for adopting the technical skills of their Western antagonists.[51] Figures like Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901), who we

[48] Elman, Benjamin A. *Civil Examinations and Meritocracy in Late Imperial China* (Harvard University Press, 2013).
[49] Rawski, Evelyn S. *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'Ing China* (Ann Arbor: Univ of Michigan Press, 1979): 9
[50] Keenan, Barry. "14. Lung-Men Academy in Shanghai and the Expansion of Kiangsu's Educated Elite, 1865-1911," in *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600-1900*, ed. Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside (University of California Press, 2023): 493
[51] Wright, Mary Clabaugh. *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T'ung-Chih Restoration, 1862-1874*

will see played an important role in the establishment of modern government schools, and Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811-1872) were committed to the Confucian logic of the state. Zeng, in fact, continued to write to his children about their Confucian education while he was leading Qing forces against the Taipings. Zeng was even involved in debates about Han and Song learning, which was one of the more prominent intellectual discussions of the period.[52] Leaders in the Self-Strengthening Movement were not merely bureaucrats but were members in good standing of the Confucian intelligentsia.

Early educational reform efforts included Qing sponsored government schools. At the center of these were the Tongwen Guan 同文館 ("Combined Learning") schools in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou whose primary role was training scholars for positions in the Zongli Yamen 总理衙門 which handled foreign affairs. The Beijing school was the first and was founded in 1862. Students at the Tongwen Guan were still required to study the Confucian classics and were typically drawn from degree holders. At the Tongwen Guan students focused on language study and scientific courses given that their later duties would include translation or industrial development. After the establishment of the first school in Beijing, Li Hongzhang petitioned the throne in 1863 for the creation of the two additional schools in Shanghai and Guangzhou.[53]

The development of new government sponsored schools during the Tongzhi Restoration and Li Hongzhang's involvement in the process continued well beyond these efforts in the early 1860s. Tianjin became another major center for the founding of new schools. In the early 1880s this included a telegraph school (1880) the Tianjin Naval Academy (1881 for deck officers, 1882 for engine room officers), and a military academy (1885). As Biggerstaff notes, "Between 1861 and 1894, schools were opened to train interpreters, engineers (shipyards and arsenals and mining), telegraph operators, as well as naval and military academies and medical schools."[54] This movement to found and run schools with Western subject matter began as a supplement and then grew into an independent track of educational attainment through the course of the second half of the 19th century.

While this represented a small shift numerically, the development of

(Stanford: Stanford Univ Press, 1978).

[52] Liu, Kwang-Ching. "Education for Its Own Sake: Notes on Tseng Kuo-Fan's Family Letters," in *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600-1900*, ed. Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside (University of California Press, 2023): 76–108

[53] Biggerstaff, Knight *Earliest Modern Government Schools in China.*, First Edition (Cornell University Press, 1961): 52

[54] *Ibid.* p. 31

Western schools altered the composition of reformist and revolutionary activist groups in the coming decades. One reason for this transformation comes from a stark contrast with the Japanese pre-Restoration approach to Western studies. Where in Japan Western studies were grafted into the Japanese educational structure as a subject, in China it became a parallel instructional track with its own separate institutions. Whereas leading Japanese activists in the late Tokugawa sought out instruction in Western learning (i.e. Kido Koin, Ito Hirobumi, Saigo Takamori), successive waves of Chinese reformers passed before students of these early schools themselves became the vanguard of the revolutionary movement. Even though they represented only a small part of the developing sites of Western education, the government schools had a significant impact by training a number of important figures involved in the 1911 Revolution and its aftermath. Yan Fu 嚴復[55] (1853-1921) graduated from the Foochow Naval Academy. Li Yuanhong 黎元洪[56] (1864-1928) graduated from the Tianjin Naval Academy, as did Zhang Boling 張伯苓[57] (1876-1951) (in addition to graduating from St. John's). Wu Peifu[58]吴佩孚 (1874-1939) and Feng Yuxiang 冯玉祥[59] (1882-1948) were both Tianjin Military Academy graduates as were Cao Kun 曹锟 (ROC President, 1862-1938) and Duan Qirui 段祺瑞 (also ROC President, 1865-1936). Here it is also important to point out how the Western schools, with their emphasis on military or naval technology and tactics, fed into a growing alternative center of power: the professional armed forces.

The establishment of government schools with Western curriculum also marked a push against the Confucian moral education that had so long dominated the Chinese educational system. Practical education – seen as craftsmanship and not the work of a scholar – began receiving support, particularly from leaders in the Self-Strengthening Movement such as Zeng Guofan, Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠(1812-1885), and Li Hongzhang. Biggerstaff relates the gist of this movement in paraphrasing the Zongli Yamen's propositions for founding Western schools. "It was completely unrealistic, the [Zongli Yamen] declared, to argue that the foreign threat could be counteracted by relying solely upon the Confucian virtues of propriety and righteousness."[60] But such sentiments did not represent any desire to replace the cultural

[55] Famous scholar and cultural critic
[56] Leader of the 1911 Xinhai Revolt and later President of the Republic of China.
[57] Founder of Nankai University.
[58] Beiyang Army general and warlord.
[59] One of the major post-Qing warlords known as the “Christian General” for baptizing his troops with a firehose.
[60] Biggerstaff, Knight *Earliest Modern Government Schools in China.*, First Edition (Cornell University Press, 1961): 21

centrality of the Chinese educational system.

Despite the justifications of the new educational modes, conservatives within the Qing government remained in adamant opposition. Led by the elder statesman Woren 倭仁 (1804-1871), groups of Confucian adherents maintained their argument that subjects like mathematics, astronomy, or shipbuilding were best left to lesser minds and ordinary men. The role of the scholar was to be an exemplar of Confucian morality. This argument persisted despite imperial support of the subjects as more than mere crafts to which the best Chinese minds should attend. Some of the criticisms took on more religious connotations – with which we are especially concerned – claiming that teaching foreign content had incurred the wrath of Heaven and was responsible for a spate of recent droughts. Their mere existence was an offense to Heaven.[61]

Within the Qing government, moves to incorporate the goals of increased Western education outside the existence of the Zongli Yamen were few and far between. This did not significantly change until 1887 when the national exam included aspects of modern learning.[62] More problematic was the lack of professional placement for these new graduates. The Qing bureaucracy was, until 1905, still dependent on the examination system (or the purchase of degrees) for government appointment. Those with Western educations were thus frozen out of the Qing bureaucracy. Many of them found roles with the leaders of the Self-Strengthening Movement in their provincial offices, employment with the growing educational system that operated outside the Qing's control or concerns, or positions in the emerging industrial and economic system. And it was out of these fields that the bulk of the revolutionary movement came.

It was only with the abolition of the examination system in 1905 that the educational changes that had been taking place for decades were incorporated into the state structure. However, at this point two problems emerge. The first is that by ending the exam system, the Qing disenfranchised many of their ideological supporters from employment or even relevance.[63] While many Confucian students and scholars found involvement at a local level through the local assemblies,[64] another Qing creation, they were increasingly cut off from national politics and the national debate. Second, support for alternative routes

[61] *Ibid.* p. 119
[62] *Ibid.* p. 73
[63] Harrison, Henrietta. *The Man Awakened from Dreams: One Man's Life in a North China Village, 1857-1942* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2005).
[64] Thompson, Roger R. *China's Local Councils in the Age of Constitutional Reform, 1898-1911* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 1995); Duara, Prasenjit. *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900-1942*, 1st edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1991).

of education advantaged those who were already invested in them. The problem this created for the Qing (and for the possibility of religious policies that drew on the Chinese cosmological tradition) was that now the state needed to draw on the abilities of students who had little commitment to the ideological system in which past generations of scholars had been formed. Worse, in moving to a system of Western education, the government was significantly behind the development of schools setup outside their own auspices. They had negligible impact on the ideological formation of the next generation of leaders.

The most significant contribution to the shifting context of education and ideological formation came from the growth of mission-sponsored schools, unaffiliated Western schools, and study abroad. Over the same period that the Qing government was establishing the Tongwen Guan, a substantial number of colleges sprang up and became influential parts of the process of social change in China. Many of these schools became the foundation of the university system in China. The curricular content was based primarily on Euro-American models, though most schools also included topics on Chinese literature and the Classics. Contrary to the upper level Chinese schools which were prohibitively expensive and therefore furthered class distinctions, mission schools often drew students of rather impoverished backgrounds who showed academic talent.[65] Although the number of students who became Christians while in the mission schools was not exceptional, all of the students produced in Western schools (whether missionary run or otherwise) were educated in a dramatically different ideological context and were taught sets of values that drew heavily on Enlightenment and Christian priorities - one of which was often the freedom of religion and its separation from the state in a modern and representative government.

Study abroad was another important means by which generations of Chinese leaders developed their ideological leanings outside of the Chinese educational system. The earliest of these students, and one of the first sent by the self-strengtheners to gain better insight into Euro-American technology, was Yung Wing 容闳 (or Rong Hong, 1828-1912). He, and others like him, came back to apply their knowledge to the Self-Strengthening Movement, largely as assistants and advisers. The pattern of study abroad increased rapidly in the post-Boxer Rebellion years. This was in part due to programs (most commonly linked to the United States) whereby China's indemnity payments were

[65] Dunch, Ryan. *Fuzhou Protestants and the Making of a Modern China, 1857-1927*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Song Shangjie, *The Journal Once Lost - Extracts From The Diary of John Sung* (Singapore: Armour Publishing, 2008); Wong Ming-Dao, *A Stone Made Smooth* (Robesonia, Pa.: O M F Books, 1981).

funneled into educational opportunities. However, it was also largely linked to the growing fear that China was truly and disastrously behind Europe, the United States, and now Japan and needed to catch up. Substantial numbers of students went to the US, France, England, and Japan.[66] This influenced not only the Qing to Republic transition, but continued to shape the Republican government as major cultural and political leaders, such as Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936) and Zhou Enlai 周恩来 (1898-1976), continued to graduate from foreign schools and continued to press for increasingly radical ideological goals.

By the 1890s and on through to the Revolution in 1911, these institutions became increasingly important. With the abolition of the examination system in 1905 the transition was complete as Confucian schools lost their *raison d'etre* and couldn't offer skill sets that would benefit students in the new China. It was not that traditional schools ceased to exist, but they no longer held the social and political power and potential that they had formerly enjoyed. An illustrative example of this comes in the form of Liu Dapeng 劉大鹏 (1857-1942), the central figure of Henrietta Harrison's picture of life in late Qing/early Republican North China. Liu's traditional education and lower degree put him in a difficult position. Though, as a respected member of the community, he saw some success as a local public figure for a time, his was "a second-class education with few prospects" that made him "merely...a relic of an earlier age."[67] There was no draw for students to seek Confucian education and no structure to support the power of a Confucian cosmology centered on the court.

A useful, contrasting example is that of Li Denghui 李登輝 (1873–1947). Li was educated in a Western school in Dutch controlled Indonesia. Having impressed the missionaries involved with his education, he was later sponsored and sent off to Yale University for his higher education. Upon returning home, and though his Chinese was poor at best, Li moved to the mainland to take up the leadership of the newly founded Fudan University. Li brought with him a personal Christian commitment and democratic ideals and would apply them in his time as president.[68] Li took a leading role in the growing associational life of the early Republican era, helping with established groups like the YMCA and heading up an anti-opium organization.[69] He also threw his support behind student movements in Shanghai. During one such

[66] It is important here to note that Chinese students in Japan came after the restructuring of the educational system to match Western formatting and, given that they were not Japanese citizens, came without the religious commitments of the imperial cult.

[67] Harrison, Henrietta. *The Man Awakened from Dreams: One Man's Life in a North China Village, 1857-1942* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2005): 91, 163

[68] Qian Yimin 钱益民, *Li Denghui zhuan 李登辉传* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2005).

[69] Zhou Yongming, *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China* (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999).

movement, Li accepted into Fudan students who had been expelled from their schools due to their political agitation.[70]

Republican era reforms sought to consolidate the educational system that had already grown up on its own. Schools that predated the government were required to register with and adhere to sets of state standards that would regulate their relationship with the state and the nationalist party. As most of the KMT leadership had grown up out of these institutions, there was little overt need to alter their patterns of instruction. As opposed to the Japanese case where the newly established government was able to restructure the educational system to meet their desired ends, the Chinese state grew up into the educational system that had emerged, adapted, and then produced the revolutionary movement.

Discussion and Conclusion

The trajectories of religious policy development in China and Japan highlight the role timing plays in who is able to influence religious change during the process of state formation. In the cases of China and Japan, this had significant implications for the fate of religion and religious policy in both nations.

Education has the reputation of being one of the forces of modernization that inevitably leads to the decline of religion. In the cases of China and Japan, that process appears to be have been more varied and dynamic. Rather than an engine of secular change, the output of modernized educational structures relies on differing inputs. For Japan, that input remained Japanese, with distinct Confucian and Shinto influences onto which a modern educational system was grafted. China's experience was starkly different. There was a far more influential and structurally separate network of Western schools founded by both missionaries and Western educated Chinese. In addition, the Chinese educational context drew more heavily and explicitly on Enlightenment elements, leading to views of the state and the modern that required a cordoning off of religion from the political.

The overhaul of the educational system in Japan took place immediately following the Restoration. Though it was not until 1889 that the Rescript on Education enshrined the imperial cult as a daily element of education, schooling had long been tailored to that effect. The *Kokugaku* movement may have failed to mold the educational system in their image, but the spirit of their reverence for the Emperor was injected into the ethos of the educational system

[70] Wasserstrom, Jeffrey N. *Student Protests in Twentieth-Century China: The View from Shanghai* (Stanford University Press, 1991).

and the state at large. China, conversely, experienced a fractured, longer-term transformation of education. The persistence of the examination system and the entrenched position of Confucian conservatives in the Qing bureaucracy inhibited the possibility of changes along the lines of those seen in Japan. Instead, Western education grew as an separate system and source of ideological frames on which to found the new state. It was students of these schools who became the leaders of the 1911 Revolution and Republic. And it was the same students who pushed for the separation and subordination of religion vis-à-vis the state in public life.

Both of these mechanisms – the ideological educational context of revolutionary actors and institutions and the timing of revolution relative to educational reform – shaped not only the path of state formation, but the resulting religious policies that came to define "modern" statehood in both countries. As those contexts and timing proved significantly different, so also was the difference between modern religious policy in China and Japan substantial.

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