Sun Yat-sen on China's Place in International Society



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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that Sun Yat-sen's intellectual engagement with China's entry into international society should be seen through the prism of *tianxia wei gong* (all-under-heaven is shared by all), the crown jewel in his ideas on international relations. While the literature on the expansion of international society essentially frames China as a passive recipient of the standard of civilization, Sun's conceptualization of *tianxia* shows an active in-depth engagement with worldviews emanating from aspiring entrant nations which have hitherto been neglected. His conceptualization of *tianxia* rests on his belief in the possibility of equality and justice between nations, including those yet to attain full membership in international society, anchored by a moral hierarchy centered around *wangdao* and self-rectification. The analysis of Sun's *tianxia* presented here suggests that standards of civilization are far more multi-dimensional and nuanced than the existing literature portrays. In essence, the standard of civilization should not be seen merely as a one-dimensional checklist of objective and discrete items to be checked off one by one. Sun's ideas on *tianxia* and international relations suggest that there is more agency on the part of new entrants than commonly assumed. However, Sun's privileging of the moral over the political dimension of self-rectification, while being the defining characteristic of his ideas, is also its key weakness, because Sun never effectively addresses the issue of what happens in the event that countries start prioritizing their immediate political or economic interests over morality. Finally, it is open to question whether nations not rooted in Confucian culture or familiar with the concept of *wangdao* could ever self-rectify and center themselves in Sun's *tianxia*.

KEY WORDS: Expansion, International Society, *Tianxia*, Standard of Civilization, Sun Yat-sen

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Chapter 1: Introduction: Why Sun?

Introduction

The "Wilsonian moment," argues Erez Manela, "began the process that Hedley Bull called the 'expansion of international society' in the twentieth century."[1] The Wilsonian moment refers to the final months leading up to the end of the First World War, when US president Woodrow Wilson's dramatic speeches and proclamations created widespread expectations in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa (much of which was then either directly colonized or not yet fully admitted as members of a Eurocentric international society) that they too would gain full membership in this society following the end of the war. Specifically in the case of China, Manela argues that this sparked a process that created a clean break from China's past mentality and conception of international relations:

> The widening horizons of educated Chinese shaped a new consciousness of national and international spaces, and the spread of nationalism among Chinese elites marked a shift from the traditional perception of China as *the* civilization – 'China as the world' – to imagining it as one of numerous, notionally equivalent 'national' units...[2]

Reflecting this argument, Gerrit Gong also argues that by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "China's standard of 'civilization' came to reflect the dominant European standard of 'civilization'".[3] Finally, Manela concludes that Chinese and other nationalists inspired by the Wilsonian moment anticipated the creation of an international order based on liberal, Wilsonian principles. The failure to establish a liberal Wilsonian international order, Manela argues, spurred the creation of the radical revisionist nationalist movement in the twentieth century.[4]

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[1] H. Bull and Watson, A. (eds) *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).
[2] E. Manela, 2007, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 106.
[3] G.W. Gong, "China's Entry into International Society," in *The Expansion of International Society*, eds. H. Bull and A. Watson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 171–183, 172.
[4] Manela, 225.

Similarly, in his study of Sun Yat-sen and Japanese pan-Asianists, Marius Jansen argues that while Sun and his Japanese friends shared a belief in pan- Asianism as the cornerstone of regional order, Sun Yat-sen accepted wholesale the ideas of his Japanese pan-Asianist friends, and that Sun and other Chinese revolutionaries were ready to abandon any belief in the ancient superiority of the Chinese over the Japanese in favor of accepting the "ready-made synthesis of Western tools and Eastern values which Japan professed to offer."[5] He goes on to assert that Sun's own philosophical positions were incoherent and attempted to remove Chinese Confucianism as its base, but did not adequately replace them with Western substitutes. Mirroring the approach of Manela and Gong's arguments on how China was a passive object of an expanding international society and liberal Wilsonian ideas on international order, Jansen similarly depicts Sun and his followers as passive recipients of Japanese pan-Asianism and its "ready-made synthesis" of the East and West.

Examining the rise of pan-Asian and pan-Islamist movements during the interwar period more generally, Cemil Aydin argues that the rise of pan- Asianism relied in part on the influential Romanticism movement in Europe and the United States, "the content and discourse of the Asian civilization's alternative nature to the West was shaped partly by self-reflection and self- critiques within the West," and that the pan-Asian and pan-Islam movements arose predominantly due to the hypocrisy of the West in applying its own standards of civilization to the rest of the world.[6] Aydin argues that the goal of these movements was to have the West abide by their own standards of civilization. Similar to the arguments of Manela, Gong, and Jansen, Aydin's argument assumes that leaders like Sun passively accepted Western standards of civilization and that their actions were geared toward

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[5] M. B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), 213.

[6] C. Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York Columbia University Press, 2007), 196.

getting the West to apply these standard uniformly and consistently, denying them any proactive conceptual agency. This also denies the possibility that they may not have accepted these Western standards of civilization wholesale, or that Sun's pan-Asianism may be rooted in the more traditional basis of Confucianism.

This Chapter introduces the main arguments of this thesis, justifies the choice of Sun as the subject, and explains how the relevant cross-cultural issues will be dealt with. This thesis seeks to question the above arguments in the context of China by studying Sun Yat Sen's ideas on international relations, which framed China's entry into international society through the *tianxia* worldview, centered on the idea of self-rectification. This worldview and its applicability to Sun's ideas on international relations are explicated in detail in Chapter 2. The central argument of this thesis is that Sun's engagement with the expansion of international society through his ideas on international relations should be seen, and was *part of,* his larger overarching vision for China to eventually move back toward the center of this new *tianxia* through self- rectification. Thus, the standard of civilization should not be seen merely as a one-dimensional list composed of discrete, objective items that are ticked off one after another. Rather, the standard of civilization currently described in the expansion literature should be viewed as one layer of Sun's vision for China to move back toward the center of this new *tianxia*, which itself had changed fundamentally both in its scope and in its nature as a result of the expansion. Moreover, the imposition of the standard on China raised not only very serious political questions, but also led to the wholesale questioning and doubt regarding China's self-understanding of the very essence its moral-political identity. Seen through this prism, this suggests that entry and the relevance of the standard of civilization were not just a one-off historical events, that entry when refracted through the lens of self-rectification is an on-going process, and that standards of civilization can change in their content as time progresses and should be viewed as one layer in the

context of *tianxia*. This then potentially opens up the conceptual space for human agency and creativity in adapting to the standard of civilization as part of one's efforts toward self-rectification. This, in turn, also opens up the conceptual space not only for the content of standards of civilization to change through time, but, perhaps even more importantly, as a dislocating and decentering insight relevant to the English School tradition, for the *direction of travel* of standards of civilization to change.

Furthermore, Sun's response to the expansion of international society as conceptualized through *tianxia*, which prioritizes the moral dimension over the political dimension of self-rectification, may have significant implications for how Chinese view their process of entry into international society, as well as for what they consider China's proper place within international society thereafter. For instance, those who subscribe to Sun's moral-political view of the world would potentially have felt aggrieved on a highly personal and moral level were it perceived that China's efforts toward self-rectification had not been or were not being sufficiently recognized. Moreover, this sense of grievance would be further heightened were it perceived that the criteria and goalposts for self- rectification and for moving toward the center of *tianxia* were being moved constantly even after China had made efforts to adapt and self-rectify, thereby in effect potentially denying due recognition for China's efforts toward self-rectification. Furthermore, it is highly conceivable that this sense of grievance could be further heightened by memories of the coerced nature of China's entry into international society.

Finally, while the prevailing Western scholarship on Sun has taken the position that he was a man of action and practicality and not a man of intellect, in that his ideas were second-rate and unworthy of serious intellectual consideration, this thesis argues that the opposite is true in *both senses*. His ideas on international relations, and in particular his *tianxia*-framed engagement with the expansion, should be taken seriously because they constituted a direct,

coherent, and culturally situated response to the expansion of international society. In addition, they shed light on a number of decentering insights that have previously been obscured or ignored by the expansion story as it is currently presented in the existing literature, as well as serving as a bridge toward several key concepts in the developing Chinese School of International Relations Theory.

However, self-rectification under the *tianxia* framework involves both a moral and a political component respectively, as the next chapter explicates in detail, and throughout his ideas, Sun clearly prioritizes the moral over the political. When seen through the prism of *tianxia*, the main flaw in Sun's ideas is that even though he never explicitly says so, he assumes that the moral and political dimensions are always essentially aligned. In the event that they do conflict with one another, he assumes that countries should and would prioritize morality over immediate political and economic considerations. Therein lies the potentially fatal flaw in Sun's *tianxia*-framed engagement with the expansion that is never effectively addressed by him. Therefore, this thesis argues that, contrary to the prevailing Western scholarship, Sun was a man of intellect, and his ideas on international relations, which are explicated, analyzed, and critiqued in the subsequent chapters of this thesis, are worthy of serious intellectual consideration. However, I also argue that Sun actually was *not* a man of action or practicality, because at least with regards to *tianxia* and his ideas on international relations, he was rather utopian in that he never really thought of any practical solutions to resolving this central question, which I subsequently refer to here as the Paradox of Self-Rectification. This central question is what happens when, as is likely to happen at some point, countries start prioritizing the political over the moral. Do *tianxia* and his *tianxia*-framed engagement with the expansion of international society remain relevant?

This thesis argues that the answer to this last question is yes, because Sun's *tianxia* approach to engaging with entry and the expansion has never previously been the subject of

exegesis, analysis, and critique. Furthermore, even bearing in mind the Paradox of Self-Rectification, Sun's approach is still theoretically significant because it complements the English School rules and institutions- based approach to studying entry, the expansion and international relations in general. Sun's *tianxia*-framed set of ideas on China's engagement with the expansion of international society was highly original in the theoretical sense and highly significant historically, but when put into actual practice, it is highly apparent that it is far from perfect. However, that is not the standard that he or anyone else should be judged against.

The next section addresses a pivotal question: Why is Sun as an individual, so worthy of study? This issue is also further addressed in relation to the intellectual value of Sun's ideas in the later part of Chapter 2.

Why Study Sun

Sun is undoubtedly and indisputably regarded as *the* founder of modern China. Chairman Mao said that "all modern Chinese... are inheritors of Mr. Sun's revolutionary career," and called himself the inheritor of Sun's revolutionary career as well.[7] Professor Ambrose King, the former vice-chancellor of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, summed up Sun's unrivalled position as the one and only pioneer of China's modernization and its relevance to contemporary China:

> Basically, Sun's theory is the theory of China's modernization. Because China in the process of reform lacks a theoretical basis and only relies on 'crossing the river by feeling the stones,' Sun's Three Principles of the People... already provide a theoretical and practical basis for China's modernization. Thus, the Chinese Communist Party's renewed emphasis on Sun and his ideas are a natural phenomenon... Post-Mao, China's modernization has lacked drive and direction, and is afflicted by a serious deficiency of any theoretical basis. I believe that Sun's theory of

[7] J. Y. Lin, *Sun Zhongshan yu jindai Zhongguo de Juexing (Sun Yat-sen and the Awakening of Contemporary China) (*Zhongshan Daxue Chuban she, Guangzhou, 2014), 28, 35.

> modernization is a rich source for [such] theory, and that therefore the reason behind the current particular emphasis that the Mainland Chinese academia has placed on Sun's theory of modernization is obvious.[8]

This view is shared by other leading Chinese academics studying Sun's ideas.[9] Professor Shen Zhi Hua put it even more bluntly and trenchantly: "No one would argue over Sun being the founder of modern China simply because there is no one else."[10] The fact that Sun's ideas are widely viewed as being highly relevant to the direction of contemporary China is also evidenced by the recent proliferation in China of publications dedicated to his life and ideas.[11]

Sun (1866–1925) is widely acknowledged as the leader of the revolutionary movement that ended over two millennia of dynastic rule in China, culminating in the overthrow of the Qing dynasty in 1911 and the founding of the Republic of China the following

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[8] L. L. Zhao, "Sun Zhongshan sixiang de zhexue jichu yu zhexue tixi (*The Philosophical Basis and System of Sun Yat-sen's Ideas*)," in *From Confucius to Sun Yat-sen: The Inheritance and Development of Chinese Culture*, eds. Sun Zhongshan ji Jin Hui and Zhongguo Renmin Daxue Kongzi Yanjiu Yuan (Beijng: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2011), 208–221, 209.

[9] Chen, J.H. and Jiang, X.L., "Sun Zhongshan sixiang yu quanqiu hua (Sun Yat-sen's Ideas and Globalization)," in *Kan qing shijie yu zhengshi zhongguo*, eds. J.Y. Lin and M. Li, (Tianjin: Tianjin Guji Chuban She, 2005), 53–70. Lin, J.Y., *Sun Zhongshan yu Zhongguo jindai hua dao lu yanjiu (Research on Sun Yat-sen and the Path to the Modernization of China)* (Guangdong: Jiaoyu Chuban She, 1999). Zhang, L. (ed.) *Sun Zhongshan yu Zhongguo jindai hua - jinian Sun Zhongshan dan chen 130 zhou nian guoji xueshu taolun wen ji (Sun Yat-sen and the Modernization of China: An International Symposium Commemorating a Hundred and Thirty Years since the Birth of Sun Yat-sen* (Beijing: Remin Chuban She, 1999).

[10] O. Chou, "Hong Kong Philharmonic 'awkwardly' out of tune in debate over legacy of 'father of modern China' Sun Yat-sen," *South China Morning Post*, August 11, 2016.

[11] M.T. Huang, *The Constructive Philosophy of Sun Yat-sen: the Outset and Application of the Modern Chinese Systematic Thinking* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2006). Huang, M.T., Zhang, B. and Zhang, S.W., *Sun Yat-sen's Confucian Complex: The Heritage and Transcendence of Chinese Culture* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2010). M. T. Huang and C. J. Lu, *Sun Yat-Sen's Economic Thoughts: Precursor's Thoughts of Construction in China* (Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2006). Sang B., *Sun Zhongshan de huodong yu sixiang (Sun Yat-sen's Activities and Ideas)* (Guangzhou: Zhongshan Daxue Chuban She, 2001). J. K. Li, *Sun Zhongshan de sheng ping ji qi shi ye (Sun Yat- sen's Life and Career)* (Guangzhou: Zhongshan Daxue Chuban She, 2001).

year. He is the only figure that is revered on both sides of the Taiwan Strait as the founding father of the modern Chinese nation. In Taiwan, the Kuomintang, which he founded, and which continues to regard him as the father of the nation, is a major political force. In Mainland China, he is widely regarded as having set the stage for the establishment of the People's Republic of China by his overthrow of the Qing dynasty and his cooperation with the communists during his lifetime. In fact, his portrait is hung alongside Mao's at Tiananmen Square every year on China's national day. Harold Schiffrin opens his study of Sun by arguing that:

> Sun Yat-sen belongs to this elusive category of national heroes. As the symbol of China's quest for resurgence, he was retroactively co-opted by almost every possible political persuasion. The scramble for his mandate, which began with his death in 1925, attracted – among others – the right, left and center factions of his own party, the Kuomintang; their Communist rivals; and pan-Asian Japanese expansionists and their Chinese collaborators during World War II.[12]

More pertinent to this thesis, however, is the fact that Sun led and came to represent China's move away from the inertia of its dynastic past and toward modernity and engagement with the wider world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As Marie-Claire Bergère argues, "Sun himself was fashioned by the historical context in which he lived and which he has come to embody: that of China moving toward modernity."[13] However, despite Sun's critical role in China's turn to modernity and engagement with international society, his ideas have received little attention and seldom been the study of systematic study in Western scholarship.[14] Bergère notes that, despite the publication of many of Sun's own writings in the past three decades, he and his ideas have "received almost no attention from

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[12] H. Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary* (Boston and Toronto: Little and Brown, 1980), 3.
[13] M. Bergère and J. Lloyd, *Sun Yat-sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 5, 417.
[14] Z. Zheng, "Introduction," in *Sun Yat-sen's Doctrine in the Modern World.* ed. Z. Zheng (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), 1–11, 1.

Western historians," and that "Western studies on Sun Yat-sen seem to have got stuck in an impasse."[15]

Prior to the 1980s, this move to modernity by Sun and the revolutionary movement he led has generally been portrayed in Western scholarship as representing the victory of Western political values in China, both domestically, in terms of the key role of nationalism in Sun's Three Principles of the People, and in China's conception of international relations, marking a clean break with and the final death of the Confucian political tradition. For instance, John Fairbank wrote of Sun:

> By 1905 he began to assume a sage-like posture. His rise to leadership at a national level thus dramatized the bankruptcy of the specifically Confucian political tradition represented by K'ang Yu-wei...
> Here was a major Chinese leader who spoke English and knew his way around San Francisco, New York, and London... In short, Sun represented the generation in China that turned to us in the then dominant West for help and inspiration, not once but many times...
> The West, like Japan, was a primary factor in his rise to leadership. Indeed, Sun Yat-sen in himself represented much that was positive in the outside world's impact on China...[16]

Similarly, Schiffrin emphasizes the Western origins of Sun's political thought, and argues that his "faith in Europe was based mainly upon his intellectual commitment to the higher values which he thought that Western civilization, including Christianity, stood for."[17] Martin Wilbur in his biography of Sun Yan-sen echoes a similar argument, writing that while his thought was definitely influenced by ethical Confucianism, his "dominant ideas were derived from Western political thought."[18]

However, recent scholarship has begun to question these arguments. Wang Gung Wu argues that Sun was China's first modern politician. However, he also observes that at no time

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[15] M. Bergère and J. Lloyd, *Sun Yat-sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 2.
[16] H. Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1998), xi.
[17] Ibid., 146.
[18] C. M. Wilbur, *Sun Yat-Sen: Frustrated Patriot* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 7.

did "Sun Yat-sen succumb to the idea of *quan pan xi hua* (wholesale westernization) as a pre-condition of modernity," and that he attempted to "formulate a clear vision of the ideals from the West that could be grafted onto the traditions that still mattered to the bulk of his Chinese followers," and that:

> He saw modernity in the West as something that came out of the work of sifting, rejecting and improving on its very rich traditions. In that China that he knew, there had not been the opportunity to do that. Instead, the West had thrust its values on a weak and corrupt China. The struggle therefore was to adapt to their challenging modern values without abandoning the traditions that people needed in order to retain their self- respect.[19]

Similarly, Zhu Yuan Zheng and David Wei Chang share Wang's argument that Sun attempted to graft elements of the modern international order onto the foundation of China's history and its traditional values, both arguing that Sun believed that the rejuvenation of China and China's future contribution to the world order would be unique and should be built on the foundation of its Confucian civilization.[20] In particular, Zheng argues that Sun was strongly influenced by the concept of *da tong* (the Great Harmony) and the universalist tradition of Confucianism, and that "once China had regained its self-determination and had risen to the rank of a major power, its duty was to revive the Confucian tradition of 'helping the weak and curbing the strong.'"[21]

What were Sun's core ideas concerning China's place and its future influence on the international order? This thesis will argue that there were four core ideas. For Sun, his highest ideal of what a political community of nations should resemble is the idea of *tianxia wei gong*, or all-under heaven is shared by all. *Tianxia* is a center-periphery framework

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[19] G. Wang, "Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of Modern Chinese Politics," in *Sun Yat-Sen, Nanyang and the 1911 Revolution*, eds. L.T. Lee and H.G. Lee (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2011), 1–14, 13.
[20] D. W. Chang, "Sun Yat-sen's Doctrine and the Future of China," in *Sun Yat-sen's Doctrine in the Modern World*. ed. Z. Zheng (Boulder Westview Press, 1998), 276–294, 290.
[21] Zheng, 8–9.

wherein the goal under this center- periphery framework of *tianxia* is either to engage in modeling by serving as the moral exemplar for others to emulate, or to engage in restoration by restoring the moral characteristics required to be a model.[22]

Sun amalgamated the universal with the national by conceptualizing the Chinese nation as the exceptional nation endowed with the requisite moral qualities and promise returning from the periphery back to the center of this new, expanded *tianxia*. Chapter 5 highlights how Sun's conceptualization of Chinese nationalism is heavily imbued with the moralistic and universalistic concept of *wangdao*. The qualities and values that form part of the concept of *wangdao* not only constitute the ideal international community for Sun, but also define to a large extent the essence of Chinese nationalism itself. It has been remarked by scholars in relation to Chinese international relations theory that there is a "lack of awareness of international-ness" in that tradition, but this thesis will show that Sun's ideas demonstrate how *tianxia* is inherently and highly adaptable and can readily accommodate nationalism and become an *international or inter-state* worldview while retaining the integrity of its conceptualization of the world as a universal moral community which lies at the heart of *tianxia*.[23] Therefore, while the adoption of nationalism by Sun was undoubtedly partly to meet the standard of civilization imposed by the Western powers and to gain entry into international society, it was in fact much more than that, for it also represented the attempt to self-rectify on China's part in order to move from periphery and to the center of this new *tianxia* in Sun's ideas.

Chapter 6 on state capitalism discusses the economic dimension of the expansion of international society, in the form of global capitalism and its political counterpart of

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[22] C. Shih, *Civilization, Nation and Modernity in East Asia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 199.
[23] Y. Qin, "Why is there no Chinese international relations theory?", *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific,* vol. 7, no. 3 (2007), 313–340, 322.

imperialism, a dimension of the expansion story that is often neglected by the expansion literature. That chapter highlights Sun's early recognition of global capitalism and imperialism in the context of Western inter-state rivalry and its effects on the extra-European world and China in particular. Sun's model of state capitalism was an attempt not only to adopt and satisfy the economic dimension of the standard of civilization, namely to become a modern industrialized economy, but also to transcend it in the sense that Sun presented his model of state capitalism as a *morally more justifiable* model for economic development and participation in global capitalism. This moral dimension and justification was presented and highlighted by Sun in relation to both its domestic and international dimensions, or in terms of the social justice implications of his model domestically within China, as well as its implications internationally. Sun argued that his model of state capitalism constituted a morally superior model internationally because it was non-imperial, thereby breaking the then-existing link between global capitalism and imperialism. This highlights Sun's agency in the sense that he chose not to blindly follow the then prevailing standard of civilization *in full* in relation to participation in global capitalism through imperialism as Japan had done.[24] Instead of fully conforming to the then prevailing standard for a civilized and developed power, which was imperialist, Sun developed his own model of state capitalism which fit with his moral- political conception of this new *tianxia* and *wangdao*. In other words, the effort and vision of developing a modern industrialized economy through his model of state capitalism was not *only* to meet the standard of civilization, but rather it was part of a larger overarching effort to self-rectify and move China from the periphery to the center of this new *tianxia*.

Finally, Chapter 7 is an analysis of Sun's ideal international community through an

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[24] S. Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (London: Routledge, 2009).

exposition of the concept of the Great Harmony. Sun demonstrated an acute awareness of the multiplicity and diversity of nationalisms and cultures, but he tied this diversity to the underpinning of the universalistic moral community of *tianxia* through the concept of the Great Harmony. Instead of imposing one standard of civilization as the sole and complete criteria by which states can strive to move from periphery to center, the Great Harmony recognizes the possibility and creates the conceptual space for many variations of such criteria. Furthermore, at the heart of the Great Harmony lies the idea that accepting and respecting the plurality and diversity of others *itself* is a fundamental moral quality and prerequisite for legitimately claiming the status of the center of this new *tianxia*. In this way, the Great Harmony finely balances the particular and the universal. Sun's veneration of the Great Harmony as the ideal international community therefore, shows that he accepted the plurality and diversity of nation-states not only because national statehood was a prerequisite and integral part of the standard of civilization, but also because the act and value of respecting such plurality and diversity *in itself* was a pre- requisite for the self-rectification of China and her promise of moving from periphery to center of this new *tianxia*.

Why is it important to study Sun and his ideas on international order? This thesis argues that there are three main reasons why such a study is important. First, it is important to take a historical approach and study the history of ideas if we are to understand whether anything of the old, China- centered Confucian order or mentality remains today. As mentioned above, there has been a dearth of Western scholarship on Sun, or Chinese ideas about global and regional order during this period of history. As Bergère puts it forcefully, "Sun Yat-sen's omnipresence in Chinese historiography contrasts starkly with his almost total erasure from the historiography of the Western world."[25] This stands

[25] Bergère, 3.

in marked contrast to the number of works that have been devoted to the parallel strands of intellectual history of either individuals or schools and traditions of thought more generally in Japan during this period.[26]

Indeed, David Kang makes a strongly affirmative case that there does exist a link between the past and the present, and that East Asian identities and interests are a direct function of their own history. He further argues that the "Westphalian system was never a complete and universal system and, while East Asian states may accept the most basic elements, it is not clear whether they have internalized Westphalian ideas as deeply as Western states have done."[27] In particular, he posits that the Confucianism of East Asia's pre-modern order continues to influence how states in the region define their identities and interests today, and that this set of shared beliefs explains the lack of balancing against a rising China today.[28] This phenomenon, he argues, is part of the puzzle of the wider and more general question of whether culture is a key factor in the international relations of the East Asian region, in light of the fact that it is debatable whether East Asia operates in the same way as Western international relations predict.[29] Alastair Iain Johnston has also raised a similar point and the importance of studying this divergence and that of moving away from the skewed Atlantic bias of the discipline and of factoring East Asia back in.[30] If these arguments are

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[26] E. Hotta, *Pan-Asianism and Japan's War 1931-1945,* Palgrave Macmillan, New York, Nakano, R. 2012, *Beyond the Western Liberal order: Yanaihara Tadao and Empire as Society,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). S. Saaler and J. V. Koschmann, (eds.), *Pan-Asianism in Modern Japanese History: Colonialism, Regionalism and Borders* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[27] D. C. Kang, "An East Asian International Society Today? The Cultural Dimension," in *Contesting International Society in East Asia*, eds. B. Buzan and Y. Zhang (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 73–92, 82–83.

[28] D. C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[29] Kang (2014), 74.

[30] A. Johnston, "What (if anything) does East Asia tell us About International Relations theory?" *Annual Review of Political Science,* vol. 15 (2012), pp. 53-78.

valid, then it is important to study these ideas that emerged during China's first encounter with the expanding Western-global international society in order to understand which, if any of them continue to survive and operate in the region today.

This brings us to the second reason, which relates to why study of this particular historical period is important. The latter half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century was a pivotal period in China's history, as the old Confucian East Asian order centered on China collapsed in the face of the expanding European international society.[31] While the Western powers began battering China's Confucian order down with beginning with the First Opium War, Shogo Suzuki argues that it was not really until the First Sino-Japanese War in 1895 that the tribute system in East Asia was truly dismantled.[32] It was rather ironic that the final death knell of China's tributary system was delivered not by a Western power, but by Japan, which was previously itself an enthusiastic recipient and follower of Confucian norms, and had intermittently been a part of this pre-modern China-centered order. As Suzuki argues, the war "represented a clash between two international orders, and was more than simple Sino- Japanese rivalry."[33] Suzuki argues that as part of its rush to become fully accepted as a member of European international society in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Japan attempted to show to the world not only that it had itself adopted the standards which Europe believed distinguished a civilized nation from the uncivilized, but also that it, like the European imperial powers, would export these standards to its uncivilized neighbors, by force and imperialism if necessary.

While one order was delivered its final lethal blow through the First Sino- Japanese War, it was unclear what sort of order would fill the void created by the collapse of that order. The

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[31] S. Suzuki, "Imagining 'Asia': Japan and 'Asian' International Society in Modern History," in *Contesting International Society in East Asia*, eds. B. Buzan and Y. Zhang (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 51-72. Suzuki (2009).
[32] Suzuki (2009).
[33] Ibid., 141.

various powers with interests in the region had ideas of their own and attempted to reconstruct a semblance of order in the region in the first decades of the twentieth century, particularly after the First World War. There has been considerable scholarship devoted to the efforts of the Western powers and Japan to construct such a new order, undoubtedly in part to serve their own interests. These efforts mainly consisted of attempts to establish a concert of powers or consultation mechanism involving the main Western powers with extensive interests in the region and Japan in order to provide them with a forum to discuss common issues and mediate disputes.[34] However, such efforts largely came to naught as the Western powers had divergent interests in many areas, and were also preoccupied with events occurring in different parts of the world. Moreover, these efforts were hindered by the fact that despite the key role that China occupied in all these powers' considerations, China itself remained politically weak and divided, and could not participate fully in these efforts.[35] As mentioned above, there has also been considerable scholarship detailing Japanese ideas, efforts and intellectual currents on what shape this new order should take, and how to establish such a new order during this period. However, similar scholarship in regards to China remains conspicuously lacking. This thesis will aim to show through the study of Sun and his intellectual evolution that such ideas and debate did exist in China. In formulating these ideas, Sun exhibited agency by drawing heavily on China's Confucian past, adapted them to the realities and circumstances brought forth by the expansion and even attempted to morally transcend them, He therefore, was not merely a passive recipient of foreign ideas.

This brings us to the third reason of why this thesis focuses its study on the ideas of

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[34] A. Iriye, *After Imperialism: the Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921-1931* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1965). I.H. Nish, *Japanese Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period* (London: Praeger Publishers, 2002). D. Borg, *The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-1938: From the Manchurian Incident Through the Initial Stage of the Undeclared Sino-Japanese War* (Cambridge Harvard University Press, 1964).
[35] Iriye.

Sun in particular. As argued in the beginning of this chapter, Sun is widely regarded as the one and only father of modern China. There were several other figures during Sun's lifetime whom also attempted to grapple with the transition of China into modernity, but none of them articulated a vision of how the core of China's pre-modern Confucian ideas could be adapted and put into practice in the modern world. Zeng Guo Fan and Zhang Zhi Dong, two of the most famous officials of the Qing dynasty, both wrote about the reform of China, but only did so within the limits of the Qing's rigid Confucian and politically correct orthodoxy and worldview, and did not address how this orthodoxy could plausibly be put into practice in modern international society. Kang You Wei, a constitutional monarchist and one of the most prominent thinkers advocating reform, also failed to provide a viable vision on how Confucian ideas could be adapted to the modern global order. In fact, his vision was for a cosmopolitan utopia where the nation-state would disappear and private property and even the family unit would be abrogated. Even his most famous disciple, Liang Qi Chao, was heavily critical of Kang's work. The views of these latter two figures will be discussed in Chapter 2 to highlight why Sun's views stand out and should merit serious intellectual consideration.

There were undoubtedly many different intellectual currents in China during Sun's lifetime, and China remained politically fragmented when he died in 1925, only to be largely reunified by his successor Chiang Kai-shek following the Northern Expedition in 1928. This thesis does not argue that Sun's ideas are representative of the entirety of China's intellectual currents during this period. However, it does argue that his ideas represent the undisputed landmark of China's ideas on its engagement with the expansion of international society and its place in international society. Moreover, in terms of his status and influence both during this lifetime and his status with Chinese around the world today, Sun continues to occupy a relatively unrivalled and unparalleled position. Moreover, Sun was, in the words of Bergère,

"the very epitome" of transcultural border crossers in his time whom were extremely mobile, steeped in and lived their lives astride a number of cultural frontiers.[36] This makes his insistence on the continued applicability of *tianxia* and the values behind it all the more striking, and puts him in a unique position to formulate a vision on how such an order could be put into practice in the context of modern international society. The next sections will also address the methodological issues raised by the existing literature on engagement between cultures. These issues are brought up by the central argument of this thesis, that China's agency and position within a cross- civilizational process of the negotiation of the principles of international order has been misconstrued and neglected by the classic expansion thesis.

Cross-Cultural Methodological Issues

This thesis draws primarily on the primary writings, speeches, correspondence, publications and other primary materials of Sun Yat-sen compiled in the *Complete Works of the Founding Father* (*Guo Fu Quan Ji,* hereafter referred to as "GFQJ"), a twelve-volume collection of Sun Yat-sen's most famous and important speeches, publications, and correspondence compiled in 1989 by a special committee of experts in Taiwan.[37] This collection is readily available online, and is one of the two most authoritative collections available in the Chinese-speaking world. There is a mainland Chinese version of this collection, but as far as I am aware, there are no huge discrepancies between the two collections, apart from the fact that some material included in one may not be included in the other, and the former is published in traditional Chinese while the latter is in simplified Chinese. Although significant parts of the GFQJ have been translated into English, many parts

[36] Bergère, 393–394.
[37] X. Y. Qin and Guofu Quanji Banji Weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee of the Collected Works of the Founding Father), *Complete Works of the Founding Father* (Taipei: Jindai Zhongguo Chuban She, 1989).

have not been. Secondary sources, both in English and Chinese, have also been employed in this thesis. Regarding the Chinese language material, I have always attempted to translate the relevant passages and material into English in the way that most faithfully reflects its meaning. Although some other English language secondary works have translated certain terms in a slightly different way from the specific terms that I chose (believing they more-accurately reflected original meaning and context), there have not been significant differences that would affect or distort the general meaning. A few examples of comparisons of translations of Sun's core ideas into English will serve to illustrate this. For instance, in translating a passage of Sun quoting an excerpt from *The Great Learning*, Marie- Claire Bergère's translation[38] and my translation[39], although phrased slightly differently, essentially conveys the same original meaning faithfully and accurately. Bergère and I use the identical terms to translate and express Sun's distinction between the traditional political philosophy of China juxtaposed against the "material civilization" of the West, where Sun said that China had fallen behind.[40] Finally, in translating a prominent passage where Sun talks about using the power of the Chinese one day to establish the Great Harmony, our translations, while using a different choice of words, also convey the same general meaning in a faithful way.[41] These are of course just a few examples of translation of Chinese language

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[38] Bergère's translation reads: "Search into the nature of things, extend the boundaries of knowledge, make the purpose sincere, regulate the mind, cultivate personal virtue, rule the family, govern the State, pacify the world," at 368.

[39] My translation reads: "to study the nature of things in order to acquire knowledge; to acquire knowledge in order to cause one's thoughts to be sincere; to cause one's thoughts to be sincere in order to rectify one's heart; to rectify one's heart in order to cultivate one's self; to cultivate one's self in order to regulate one's family; to regulate one's family in order to rightly govern one's state; to rightly govern one's state in order to pacify *tianxia."*

[40] Bergère, 368.

[41] Bergère's translation reads: "We shall operate on the basis of the moral values and the desire for peace that are peculiar to us, so as to unite the world and found the government of the Great Harmony," 369. My translation reads: "Using our intrinsic morals and peace as a foundation, to unify the world under the Great Harmony."

material into English, but the hope is to convey that the intention throughout was to faithfully and precisely translate the meaning of the original Chinese language material into English.

While the translation of both the primary and secondary sources used in this thesis do not raise any major methodological issues and are relatively straightforward and non-controversial, the real methodological challenge involved in this thesis seems to be how one goes about performing non-Eurocentric, de-centering, and cross-cultural analysis in a sensitive manner. In her article "What Does Heaven Ever Say," Leigh Kathryn Jenco masterfully discusses the problem of Eurocentrism in Western political theory. The main problem is that, oftentimes, the Academy often examines non-Western cases merely for the purpose of proving the applicability of Western theories and to supplement pre-existing Euro-centric pre-occupations. For instance, key non- Western texts and traditions are mined for their potential applicability and compatibility with contemporary democratic practices, rather than explored for the distinct questions they raise in the first place. The whole approach is primarily driven from a Euro-centric perspective, under which everything non-Western is assessed for its usefulness to augmenting or supplementing issues related to those pre-existing preoccupations. As Jenco describes it, this approach results in "merely the addition of culturally diverse voices to established parochial debates."[42]

Christopher Goto-Jones highlights the same problem, arguing that a lot of scholarship in comparative politics is "problem driven," mainly concerned with understanding the conditions under which categories of Western political theory may or may not be viable outside the West.[43] Non-Western cases are merely used as data points to confirm Euro-centric

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[42] L. K. Jenco, ""What Does Heaven Ever Say?" A Methods-centered Approach to Cross-cultural Engagement", *American Political Science Review,* vol. 101, no. 4 (2007), 741–755, 741.

[43] C. Goto-Jones, "Comparative political thought: beyond the non-Western," in *Ethics and World Politics*. ed. D. Bell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 219–236, 221.

theories:

> ... comparative politics... [reduces] the ' non-Western' into objects of study for the so-called West, denying the vast majority of the globe its subjectivity and positing it as only a source of data (for the West to analyse in its own terms) and not of innovation or theory.

Writing specifically about cultural intermediaries and the agency of non-Western intellectuals and actors like Sun, Vanessa Smith points out that the exact same problem applies. Cultural intermediaries are often subjected to rhetorical and discursive imperatives that diminish their agency and transform them from subjects into merely objects of knowledge, she concludes.[44] Cemil Aydin further argues as follows:

> Thus, Ataturk, Sun Yat-Sen, and even Gandhi become avatars of Eurocentrism, even though their agency and ideas may have shaped modern international history... Did non-Western actors and intellectuals have a role beyond actualizing a potential that already existed in Eurocentric values or beyond reinterpreting ideas originating in Europe?[45]

The expansion thesis as applied to China is, in fact, a perfect example of this. As Chapter 4 will argue, the expansion thesis portrays China as a case highlighting the almost-perfect applicability of the thesis, which is that ultimately all nations and civilizations will succumb to the blessings of the European standard of civilization in order to gain entry into international society and ultimately settle into a peripheral place within it. In this instance, China is merely used as a case study to highlight the applicability of this thesis and the salience of its Euro-centric preoccupations. China is only the object of this thesis, and therefore by implication cannot in itself be the origin or subject of any theoretical innovation, pose questions distinct from the pre-existing occupations of the thesis or posit an international society that looks very different from the Euro- centric one put forward by the expansion

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[44] V. Smith, "Joseph Banks's Intermediaries: Rethinking Global Cultural Exchange," in *Global Intellectual History*, eds. S. Moyn and A. Sartori, (New York Columbia University Press, 2013), 81–109, 82.

[45] C. Aydin, "Globalizing the Intellectual History of the Idea of the "Muslim World"," in *Global Intellectual History*, eds. S. Moyn and A. Sartori, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013) , 159–186, 160.

thesis. As highlighted above, Western scholarship on Sun reflects this, focusing only on him as, in Aydin's words, an avatar of Euro-centrism, and portraying him largely as such.

How does one, then, transcend this problem of Euro-centric parochialism? Jenco argues that one must completely depart from one's home tradition and immerse oneself in the foreign tradition that one is attempting to understand. She argues that one must embark on "culturally situated methods of inquiry," and that instead of merely aiming for the addition of non-Western voices to parochial Western debates, or even merely conversation between traditions, one must be prepared for complete conversion to the foreign tradition in order to truly understand and penetrate it. The goal is not only to look for substantive ideas in the foreign tradition, but also to ask entirely new questions raised by the alternative frames of reference highlighted by that tradition.[46]

To illustrate this, Jenco uses the classical Chinese works of Wang Yangming and Kang Youwei to show that their methods of enquiry were entirely distinct and self-sufficient, even when both of them were consciously engaging with new ideas from the West, and that both their methods of enquiry led to an entirely novel mindset and set of questions. However, Jenco argues that complete conversion is a pre-requisite to making this transition:

> The presumption that truth or insight is always partial and irreducibly situated inhibits the passage from conversation to *conversion*: an event many different traditions expect and even welcome in the course of learning something new. Some forms of understanding require us to consider the possibility that we may have to abandon our current beliefs completely and *become* something we now are not, committed to a new Way… the possibility of "conversion," however limited, invites a host of new constructive possibilities for cross-cultural theorizing.[47]

All in all, Jenco argues that while this does not mean that the outsider abandons a critical stance, he or she must be open to full conversion in order to go beyond simply the adding of non-Western voices to already established Western debates. This entails a

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[46] Ibid.
[47] Jenco, 753.

complete departure from one's home tradition followed by a complete immersion in a foreign tradition in what is essentially a one-way process. However, I do not believe a methodological approach as radical as Jenco's is appropriate for this thesis. There are two main reasons for this.

First, the main aim of this thesis is to question, critique, and ultimately recast the expansion thesis, not to completely abandon it. Where China is located in international society, how China views itself as having become part of this society, and what China views as the operational rules of international society are as much the preoccupations of the expansion thesis as they are of this thesis. This thesis does not aim to completely abandon these issues in favor of an entirely novel set of issues. It however, argues that the way the expansion thesis treats these issues in relation to China is sorely inadequate and one-sided. As Chapter 4 will argue, even in its current form, the expansion thesis still usefully explains parts of what occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Therefore, this thesis aims not to completely depart from the English School tradition, but rather to go beyond it and return with something that can hopefully improve it and the classic expansion thesis.

Secondly, Sun himself was not engaged in an entirely novel and different set of preoccupations completely divorced from those underlying the expansion thesis. In fact, he was largely responding to what he perceived as the injustices and inadequacies of the expanding Euro-centric international society from a Chinese perspective. Therefore, the methodological approach that this thesis should aim for is not complete conversion or departure from the English School. Rather, the crux of the issue is how to extract Sun's relevant ideas, situate them properly, and then return to the English School framework in order to critique, recast, and improve the expansion thesis.

Thereby, the main purpose of this exercise is to assess both the ideas of Sun and the expansion thesis from an objective, critical standpoint. As Jenco notes, there is an ethical imperative that different traditions be heard but this does not mean that the scholar

abandons a critical stance when approaching these traditions.[48] Goto-Jones sets out this point even more forcefully, arguing that "it is not the case that the subaltern is always *right*, even if there is an ethical imperative that the subaltern be heard."[49] He uses this to point out that his consideration of the Kyoto School's vision of an ideal political system does not necessarily make it better than liberal democracy.

Similarly, in relation to this thesis, the theoretical and ethical payoffs from Sun's ideas in questioning, critiquing, and recasting the expansion thesis do not mean that his vision is necessarily better or normatively preferable. This thesis does not argue in favor of a Sunist or a Confucian international society. This is neither the purpose nor the argument of this thesis. However, this thesis does argue that Sun's ideas bring forth a series of serious dislocating and decentering insights to the expansion thesis has been applied to China.

How then, is this to be achieved methodologically if Jenco's conversion approach is too radical to be appropriate for this purpose? This thesis argues that Farah Godrej's dislocation and relocation approach is best suited to these purposes. In examining why comparative political theory has thus far failed to be truly cosmopolitan in her opinion, Godrej argues that previous scholarship has assumed that "a series of assorted encounters with otherness and a general incorporation of otherness into our existing practices, conventions and discourses over time occasions a more cosmopolitan mode of theorizing."[50]

Godrej argues that this approach is haphazard, lacks coherence, and fails to establish how one should engage methodically with foreign ideas and thinkers in the first place. In essence, the same can be said about the classic expansion thesis's treatment of China. It has merely attempted to incorporate China into its premises in the same haphazard, ill thought-out

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[48] Jenco, 742.
[49] Goto-Jones, 224.
[50] F. Godrej, *Cosmopolitan Political Thought: Method, Practice, Discipline* (Oxford: Oxford University Press (2011), 8–9.

manner, as one of a number of assorted encounters.

Essentially, what Godrej is saying is that the addition of random assorted encounters in itself does not make a theory truly cosmopolitan. What is first needed is a methodological approach that creates the space for such cosmopolitanism in the first place. Godrej's diagnosis of this problem mirrors Jenco's observation that past scholarship has largely consisted of "merely the addition of culturally diverse voices to established cultural debates."[51] Godrej argues that the root cause of this problem is primarily the prevalence of Euro-centrism in our approach to knowledge and theory, which he defines as the "cognitive hegemony of epistemic categories emerging from Western European and American experience. In much scholarly literature, Eurocentrism is seen as a projection of 'the West' and its disciplinary categories as a universal standard of knowledge against which all others are measured."[52]

The results of this Euro-centric approach are two-fold, Godrej argues. Firstly, this failure to have a thoughtful methodological approach to the study of "others" in the first place, and its consequent framing of all theory and enquiry through Euro-American modes of thought, results in a power disparity in all theory and knowledge production. Essentially, the West and its theories become solely empowered in the realm of knowledge production, while non-Western intellectual resources merely become their constituent objects and fiefdoms.[53]

Secondly, this often leads to a very heavily liberal bias in Western political theory. Godrej describes this resulting situation as one in which "political theory continues to be narrowly preoccupied by liberalism's central concerns and has rarely been able to break free of the confines of its basic presumptions. It may be, then, that a cosmopolitan political

[51] Jenco, 741.
[52] Godrej, 13.
[53] Godrej, 14.

mindset adopts the posture of deliberate challenge toward liberalism's presumptive centrality to the project of political theory."[54]

Though Godrej was not writing specifically in relation to the classic expansion thesis or China, her diagnosis is absolutely spot on. Firstly, Chinese intellectual resources such as Sun do not feature at all in the expansion thesis and have no influence at all on how its one-sided, scripted story plays out. Secondly, the ending of this pre-scripted event is predictably the consummation of a liberal, Euro-centric international society into which China is obediently subsumed.

How, then, does one begin to go about the process of making a theory cosmopolitan? Godrej proposes a three-step approach. The first step is one of existential understanding and self-dislocation. This requires the scholar to dislocate himself from his home discipline and "[bring] oneself as close as possible to the 'world' of the other text... In this first hermeneutic moment, the reader enters an entirely new world, traveling outside one's own subjectivity and learning to read the text from within the cultural framework of the text itself."[55] It is crucial during this step that the scholar immerses himself completely within the cultural framework of the text, as opposed to just gazing at it from a distance in order to achieve scholarly objectivity in his understanding. Rather, the scholar should aim to become one with the ideas in the text.[56] In actuality, this step is largely similar if not essentially the same as Jenco's conversion approach. What separates the two approaches, however, is Godrej's next two steps, which emphasize the subsequent relocation of the scholar back toward his home discipline and audience.

The second step is to make the text, previously unfamiliar to Western audiences, comprehensible to that audience in order to dislodge settled Western understandings of

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[54] Godrej, 22.
[55] Godrej, 54.
[56] Ibid.

political theory. The scholar translates his immersion experience from step one in a way that is comprehensible to Western audiences in step two. This is done through "attempting to put forth a cultural account that captures the experiences that shed light on the text."[57] The key here is translating the existential experience that the scholar has undergone in step one into language that Western audiences find clear, easily comprehensible, and concise in step two.

Thirdly, and arguably the most important step of Godrej's three-step approach, is the final step of self-relocation. Since the whole initial purpose of this exercise is to dislodge settled and previously unquestioned Western understandings of political theory, the final step necessitates the bringing of any **dislocating insights** derived from the first two steps back into the scholar's home theory and on that basis to challenge that theory. This step is important because it is akin to the final moment when a footballer kicks the ball into the goal, and the theoretical payoffs of this journey of dislocation and relocation are finally consummated. Godrej describes this final step as follows:

> But a cosmopolitan political theory is also one in which theorists struggle with the demands of bringing these dislocating insights into one's own familiar contexts and of articulating these insights within the discourse of familiar theoretical terms, precisely so that they may challenge the self- understandings that define these terms... The articulation of the insights of lived experience through the creation of cultural accounts **must lead to a final hermeneutic moment** in which the adherent or fieldworker turns back into a theorist, by articulating how these insights challenge our theoretical understandings...
> Self-dislocating existential engagement alone cannot complete the task of a comparative political theorist: it must be followed by the project to disturb familiar modes of knowledge through speech and discourse.[58] (emphasis added)

Two points should be highlighted in relation to this final step. First, it reminds us of the initial purpose of this whole exercise, which is to dislodge the Euro-centrism inherent in the scholar's home theory. Second, the scholar, at the end of however long a process of empirical investigation or fieldwork he has undergone, ultimately morphs back into the role of a

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[57] Godrej, 62.
[58] Godrej, 66.

theorist in applying the dislocating insights he has gained from this process to the correction and dislodging of settled and previously unquestioned Western understandings of his home political theory. It is precisely for these two reasons that this approach is so appropriate to aims and arguments set out in this thesis. This thesis aims to dislodge the one-sided Euro-centrism of the expansion story through the dislocating insights of Sun's work, and to dislodge the previously settled story of how China was subsumed into international society and of its subsequent place therein. This is fully in accordance with the methodological approach set out by Godrej's approach of dislocation and relocation. As Godrej notes, dislocation and relocation are essentially two sides of the same coin.[59] The former provides the empirical and existential fuel for the latter, while the two taken together "represent the effective potential for disturbing Westcentric political theory's settled categories and presuppositions."[60]

Godrej's methodological approach not only represents the most appropriate way forward in how Sun's ideas should be studied, but the rationale and purpose behind the design of this methodology also serve to further re-enforce why Sun is such an appropriate subject of study for this thesis in the first place. As mentioned above, the primary purpose behind the execution of Godrej's methodological approach is to dislodge the Euro-centrism of a theory such as the expansion thesis. Godrej argues that a scholar should pick the subjects that have the greatest potential and make the greatest impact toward furthering this purpose.

Euro-centrism is essentially a view that sees knowledge as emerging primarily from the West, and that "frames all other ways of knowing and being according to its presuppositions, locating subjectivity and agency to know in the West."[61] This includes for

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[59] Godrej, 76.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Godrej, 100–101.

instance, the hegemony of liberalism in political theory.[62] Godrej argues that the most natural and obvious place from which to launch a coup against this Euro-centrism is from non-Western traditions and communities of scholarship that are highly autonomous and self-sufficient, such as Chinese or Islamic political thought. Such autonomous traditions are defined as ones that "independently raise problems, [create concept] and creatively [apply] methodologies without being intellectually dominated by another tradition... [raise their] own problems and [develop] concepts and methods that are appropriate to the treatment of [their] problems."[63] Jenco also essentially raises the same point, and as an example focuses her study on Wang Yang Ming and Kang You Wei from the Confucian tradition.

The aim of launching such a challenge against Euro-centrism is to bring the non-Western origin and site of this coup back to intellectual life and relevance. Godrej argues that sadly even in non-Western universities and academia, few have perceived their own traditions as sources of concept formation and theory building, nor used them as resources for contemporary critical thought.[64] They have been seen as "objects of scholarship, rather than as sources of conceptual and theoretical innovation."[65]

Most importantly, Godrej argues that the way to dislodge Euro-centrism is neither to recover the pure or "unpolluted" pieces of theorizing prior to the arrival of large-scale Western influence and hegemony, nor is it to completely reject and write-off a political theory as a product of Euro-centrism. Rather, the way to dislodge Euro-centrism should be to examine carefully how, for instance, certain classical non-Western thinkers and texts asked certain questions and addressed certain problems contemporary to them in novel ways presented by the hegemony of Euro-centric thought by drawing on classical resources from

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[62] Godrej, 125.
[63] Godrej, 104–105.
[64] Godrej, 108.
[65] Ibid.

their own traditions. Godrej argues that, in this way, pre-modern resources can be brought back to intellectual life and relevance through these thinkers by "excavating and reconstructing their relevance to problems of contemporary political experience."[66] Moreover, Godrej argues that often times, the most appropriate levels at which to do this are at the mid (the entire corpus of a thinker) or the micro (certain specific ideas of a given thinker or text) levels.[67]

The use of Sun's ideas in an attempt to recast and dislodge the Euro- centrism inherent in the expansion thesis fits all of these aims animating Godrej's methodological approach. The aim of this thesis is not to recover the "unpolluted" Confucian portions of Sun's thought, nor to completely write off the expansion thesis as an unredeemable byproduct of Euro- centrism. Rather, Sun himself was confronted with and thought very carefully about how to draw on *tianxia* and other classical resources from the Confucian tradition to respond in novel ways to the dilemmas posed to China by the expansion of European international society. The study of Sun's ideas, therefore, not only serve to bring *tianxia* back to intellectual life and relevance, but also (more importantly) has the potential to recast and enrich the expansion thesis without having to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

Having set out why the case for using Sun's ideas to critique the expansion thesis is so compelling, as well as Godrej's methodological approach on how to do so, there is still the question of which of Sun's ideas are the most relevant and appropriate for this task. In this respect, this thesis uses Goto-Jones' concept of theoretical discontinuities to select which of Sun's ideas have the most potential to recast and add value to the expansion thesis. Goto-Jones argues that theoretical discontinuities are essentially major fault lines in thought, or major

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[66] Godrej, 108-110.
[67] Godrej, 78–79.

"discontinuities in our structures of thinking about politics."[68] Drawing on David Runciman, Goto-Jones further elaborates on what constitutes a theoretical discontinuity as the "discarded options in the history of political thought, the forgotten periods during which people in whom we can recognize something of ourselves construed the predicament in which they found themselves quite differently from the way we construe ours."[69] Goto-Jones further draws on Charles Taylor in characterizing such discontinuities as the recovery of previous articulations that have been lost.[70] Goto-Jones points out that these fault lines exist not only between Western and non-Western thought, but also within Western thought, which is itself highly pluralistic. He goes on to use the Kyoto School as an example of a school of thought which has major theoretical discontinuities with mainstream European political theory.

Which, then, are the major conceptual fault lines between Sun's ideas and those behind the expansion thesis? This thesis will focus on three. The first concerns China's place in international society. Whereas the expansion story portrays China's adoption of nationalism as part of its efforts to gain entry into international society, this thesis argues that while the adoption of nationalism by Sun was undoubtedly partly to meet the standard of civilization imposed by the Western powers and to gain entry into international society, it was in fact much more than that, for it also represented the attempt to self-rectify on China's part in order to move from periphery and to the center of this new *tianxia*.

Moreover, while the expansion story largely sidesteps the moral dimension of global capitalism and its political counterpart, imperialism, Sun's model of state capitalism was an attempt not only to adopt and satisfy the economic dimension of the standard of civilization, namely to become a modern industrialized economy, but also to transcend it in

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[68] Goto-Jones, 220.
[69] Goto-Jones, 231.
[70] Ibid.

the sense that Sun presented his model of state capitalism as a *morally more justifiable* model for economic development and participation in global capitalism.

Finally, while the expansion thesis is a story of a single standard of civilization being imposed on the rest of the world, the Great Harmony is one characterized by an acute awareness of the multiplicity and diversity of nationalisms and cultures; however, he tied this diversity to the underpinning of the universalistic moral community of *tianxia* through the concept of the Great Harmony. Instead of imposing one standard of civilization as the sole and complete criteria by which states can strive to move from periphery to center, the Great Harmony recognizes the possibility of and creates the conceptual space for many variations of such criteria. Furthermore, at the heart of the Great Harmony lies the idea that accepting and respecting the plurality and diversity of others *itself* is a fundamental moral quality and prerequisite for legitimately claiming the status of the center of this new *tianxia*.

Contemporary implications

As discussed above, the Chinese leadership and academia are already turning to Sun's ideas for inspiration. In the West, plenty of recent scholarship revolves around the issue of predicting whether China's rise thus far is as a status quo or revisionist power.[71] Among them, even those who argue that China is a status quo oriented rising power acknowledge that there are many significant areas where it is unhappy with the current order and where it

[71] A. I. Johnston, "Is China a status quo power?", *International Security,* vol. 27, no. 4 (2003), 5-56. J. J. Mearsheimer, "The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US power in Asia", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics,* vol. 3, no. 4 (2010), 381–396. W. C. Wohlforth, "Unipolarity, Status Competition, and Great Power War", *World Politics,* vol. 61, no. 01 (2009), 28-57. B. Buzan, "China in International Society: Is 'Peaceful Rise'Possible?", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics,* vol. 3, no. 1 (2010), 5–36.

would like to push for change and modification. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert Ross for instance, ask "is China a dissatisfied power? Arguably not much of one anymore," calling this China's "status-quoization"[72] However at the same time, the authors point out that despite China's "significant accommodation of the status quo norms... it remains revisionist regarding power, status, and territory... In these issue areas, unlike in economics and, to a certain extent, unlike in global and regional security institutions, the post-Mao quest for modernity has not dramatically altered China's goals."[73]

Randall Schweller and Xiaoyu Pu, while also agreeing that China for the time being remains content to work within the existing order, also argue that China is working hard to develop alternative ideas about the world order, which although at this point remain inchoate and contested within China itself, will likely become more and more coherent as China's power and prestige grows.[74]

The authors point out that one of the main schools of thought within China on what such an alternative world order would look like draw heavily, like Sun's ideas, on the belief that Chinese traditional philosophy provides a superior and fairer framework for the international order in the modern world, and that US or Western hegemony has lost its legitimacy while China should establish a global order based on the Confucian concept of the Great Harmony instead.[75] This school of thought is reflected by the efforts of Chinese scholars to build a Chinese school or theory of international relations based on ideas from China's pre-modern political philosophy.[76] There has also been a growing interest in Western

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[72] A.I. Johnston and R . S . R o s s , *Engaging China: the Management of an Emerging Power* (London: Routledge, 1999).
[73] Ibid.
[74] R. L. Schweller and X. Pu, "After Unipolarity: China's Visions of International Order in an era of US Decline", *International Security,* vol. 36, no. 1 (2011), 41–72, 52.
[75] Ibid., 59.
[76] Qin (2007), 313–340.

scholarship focusing on China's pre-modern international relations, reflecting perhaps a more general interest of the scholarly community in whether this pre- modern past can offer clues as to how China would reconfigure international order when in a position to do so.[77]

No one in this school of thought however, seriously believes in the re- establishment of the tributary system. China remains one of the staunchest supporters of national sovereignty, modern diplomacy, and most of the basic elements of the current international order. However, what unites this school of thought is clearly the belief that the core ideas of China's pre-modern political philosophy and international relations can be adapted and put into practice in the modern context to produce a superior and more equitable international society that incidentally also serves China's interests, accords with its potential future status, and addresses its revisionist aims regarding power, territory and status. In fact, Sun's ideas already represent a first and comprehensive attempt to combine a belief in the superiority of China's pre-modern political philosophy with modernity and modern international order. Studying them will undoubtedly give a sense of what such a combination could look like in the future.

In fact, ever since Deng Xiao Peng explicitly called for greater study of Sun and his ideas in 1979, Chinese scholars have devoted considerable attention to Sun. Moreover, the major themes of Sun's ideas and vision of China's place in the world and in its future remaking of international order continue to be articulated today in China's foreign policy. The emphasis on nationalism and the regaining of China's proper place in international society, as well as the belief that it can offer an alternative, fairer, and more pluralistic model of international relations that is not based on hegemony, are themes that have consistently been repeated by the Chinese Communist Party since China's rise was sparked by its economic reform policies

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[77] D.C. Kang, *East Asia Before the West: Five Centuries of Trade and Tribute* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

under the leadership of Deng, more than half a century after the death of Sun.

Methodology and Structure of the Thesis

With all of the foregoing discussion on the choice of Sun as the subject, the selection of the three empirical topics based on the concept of theoretical discontinuities, and the issues surrounding cross-cultural methodological issues in fact already constitute the main methodological choices of this thesis. As Cornelia Navari notes, just because the English School traditionally had a "classical" methodology that defies more conventional description does not necessarily mean that it lacks a methodology per se.[78] Wight, for instance, developed a historical comparative method aimed at discerning large-scale, transnational, social understandings underpinning the very idea of international society.[79] Others meanwhile, have "developed the notion of practice, involving the interrogation of agents' self-understandings, in order to flesh out the norms underpinning diplomatic conduct."[80] Indeed, according to Robert Jackson, it is this focus on the discernment of the normative content of political life in the context of international order that defines the English School methodology the most.[81] This study of Sun fits comfortably within this tradition. What the following chapters will highlight is that the adoption of the requirements of the standard of civilization should be considered part of a larger, over-arching effort of self-rectification and China's movement back to the center of this new *tianxia*. This approach, as highlighted in the discussion on cross-cultural methodological issues, mandates

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[78] C. Navari, "Introduction: Methods and Methodology in the English School," in *Theorising International Society: English School Methods*. ed. C. Navari (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 1–20, 2.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 3.

that the analyst positions himself close to the subject of analysis so that he can understand their actions on their own terms, but not so close as to be unable to reflect on the subject's meanings and normative orientations.[82]

The remainder of this work is organized as follows. Chapters 2 and 3 will discuss in detail the concept of *tianxia,* how Sun adapted and re-interpreted the concept to meet the realities and circumstances brought for by the expansion of international society, and why Sun's ideas on international relations are of serious intellectual merit, contrary to opinion of the majority of past scholarship on Sun. Chapter 4 will discuss the theoretical issues raised by the inadequacies of the classic expansion thesis. Chapters 5 to 7 constitute the empirical chapters of this study corresponding to the three theoretical discontinuities set out in this chapter (i.e., Chinese Nationalism, state capitalism, and the Great Harmony). Chapter 8 constitutes the conclusion of this study and sets out what the dislocating and decentering insights of this study are for the expansion story specifically, and for the English School more generally.

[82] Ibid., 4.

Chapter 2: Sun's Tianxia

Sun's most famous saying is carved on the imperial-style entrance gate to his mausoleum in Nanjing, reading *Tianxia Wei Gong*, or all under-heaven is shared by all. This, claimed Sun, was the highest ideal of what a political community of nations should look like.[83] This Chapter will first explicate how the term *tianxi*a has historically contained and included within it a number of connotations, chief among which include *tianxia* as a geographical, political, and cultural space. The concept of *tianxia*, far from being a monolithic and undifferentiated construct, has historically been a flexible and complex concept that has connoted one or several different meanings depending on the political context. The concept originally evolved from *sifang*, which purely denoted a unified geopolitical space, into the original conception of *tianxia*, which was essentially an egalitarian and inclusive family conceived to restore a sense of order and harmony between the bitterly competitive rival polities of the Warring States period following the collapse of the Zhou dynasty. Finally, following the political unification of China by the Qin dynasty, the notion of *tianxia* took an imperial-culturalist turn. Its worldview was based on a stratified structure wherein China was essentially assumed to be the political, cultural, and moral heart of *tianxia* as an all-encompassing geopolitical space.

While *tianxia* evolved from an inclusive and egalitarian family of Chinese polities into its latter imperial-culturalist form, what unites both of them is what was referred to by Luo Zhitian as an attitude of introversion, which combined intensive knowledge and dealing with the near abroad with serene and partially willful neglect of the undiscovered and yet unknown parts of the world which nevertheless, theoretically constituted part of *tianxia*. These

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[83] GFQJ, vol. 1, 230.

ungoverned or undiscovered parts were theoretically recognized as part of *tianxia* even though they were not explicitly discussed.[84] This conceptual versatility and conscious ambiguity immanent in the concept of *tianxia*, and in particular this willful blindness to the unknown periphery, however, was not seen to impact the stability of the political center of *tianxia*, namely the dynasty itself.[85] This, in turn, constituted the conceptual bedrock upon which the ruling dynasty's stability of civilizational identity and political order both domestically and vis-à-vis the wider world rested. *Tianxia* therefore, existed as a concept that held within it a sense of ambiguity which nevertheless when understood as such, retained its own immanent sense of conceptual integrity.

However, as a result of the expansion of international society, it was simply no longer possible to continue to ignore the "far abroad" following the onslaught of the Western powers into East Asia while maintaining the conceptual integrity of *tianxia*.[86] More crucially however, it became untenable either to maintain the myth that China, as the theoretical center of *tianxia,* could retain its introverted and stable sense of civilizational and political order regardless of the political conditions or its knowledge of the far abroad. It is precisely here that Sun's concept of *tianxia wei gong* departed from these previous usages of *tianxia*. This chapter argues that Sun's concept of *tianxia* is characterized by a sense of immanent inclusivity which extends far beyond China's domestic political space to encompass all nation-states, including those yet to gain full entry into international society, matching the globalization of international society as a result the expansion.

This immanent inclusivity is characterized by its all-encompassing, familial nature as

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[84] Luo Z., *Minzu Zhuyi yu jindai Zhongguo Sixiang* (*Nationalism and Contemporary Chinese Thought*) (Taipei: Sanmin Shuju, 1998), 19.
[85] Ibid., 5.
[86] See also: S. Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (London: Routledge, 2009).

the term *tianxia* itself implies. *Tianxia* therefore, while being such a theoretically unified space in the context of Sun's ideas, drew from the pre-Qin concept of *tianxia* in the sense that it tolerated and even encouraged the existence of difference.[87] What was novel about Sun's *tianxia* when compared to the pre-Qin concept of *tianxia* however, was its emphasis on the inequalities existent not only within China, but more fundamentally on the inequalities existent within international society where China and other entrant countries were only conferred a certain equality.[88]

While Sun's emphasis on inequalities within his conception of *tianxia* was novel, the way he structurally conceived of *tianxia* as a space with a center emanating outwards was not. Indeed, this is evidenced most clearly by his citation with approval of the *Great Learning,* which conceptualizes *tianxia* as emanating from the perfection of the moral self and extending ultimately outwards toward the pacification of *tianxia*. Citing this passage from the *Great Learning*, Sun said:[89]

> China has a very systematic political philosophy, that politicians in the West have not seen…which is what it says in the Great Learning as 'to study the nature of things in order to acquire knowledge; to acquire knowledge in order to cause one's thoughts to be sincere; to cause one's thoughts to be sincere in order to rectify one's heart; to rectify one's heart in order to cultivate one's self; to cultivate one's self in order to regulate one's family; to regulate one's family in order to rightly govern one's state; to rightly govern one's state in order to pacify *tianxia*.'

While Sun's *tianxia* theoretically conferred a certain equality on China and all aspiring entrants, he also at the same time projected his concept of the perfection of the moral self radiating outwards onto international society. He clearly believed in the superiority of

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[87] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54; GFQJ, vol. 3, 25: GFQJ, vol. 1, 381.
[88] GFQJ, vol. 3, 470.
[89] GFQJ, vol. 1, 49; GFQJ; vol. 3, 303; GFQJ, vol. 1, 423. See also pages 47-48 below for a discussion of how Sun's reading of the Great Learning points to a tension between the inclusive and egalitarian versus the moral hierarchical strands of his thinking in relation to his use of the term *ping*.

wangdao as opposed to *badao*, specifically in relation to the core of international society:[90]

What is unique about Sun's conceptualization of *tianxia* is that while he envisaged China's entry into international society as an equal member, he also placed China at the center of a moral hierarchy centered on self-rectification through adherence to *tianxia*.[91] This is quite remarkable in a number of senses. First, as opposed to passively accepting the standard of civilization, Sun's *tianxia* constituted the existence of a worldview that the objective requirements of the standard of civilization and the expansion literature largely ignores. Second, Sun's placement of China at the center of his conception of *tianxia* is also quite remarkable, given that during the process of China's entry and during Sun's lifetime, China remained a semi-sovereign nation yet to gain full entry into international society. Finally, considerations of notions of morality and justice are largely absent from the expansion literature, much less those emanating from aspiring entrant countries yet to attain full membership in international society.

This sense of moral hierarchy coupled with the idea of self-rectification is explained by Chih-yu Shih, who argues that *tianxia* is an epistemological frame that divides the world into center versus periphery rather than self versus other.[92] This center-periphery framework defines one's identity in terms of one's distance from the center. This moral-political identity therefore, has at its core a moral component, for example to act selflessly and with self-restraint, but also an image component, for example to be accepted as such.[93] The goal under this center-periphery framework of *tianxia* is binary: it is either to engage in modeling by serving as the moral exemplar for others to emulate, or to engage in restoration by

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[90] GFQJ, vol. 3, 538–539; GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54.
[91] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54.
[92] C.Y. Shih, "The West That Is Not The West: Identifying the Self in Oriental Modernity," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2010): 537–560, 537.
[93] Ibid., 544.

restoring the moral characteristics required to be a model.[94]

Because this epistemological frame only distinguishes between center and periphery instead of self versus other, the enemy is always internal rather than external, and the goal is always self-rectification (i.e., to restore one's place in the center). Therefore, no transcendence of the difference between self and the other nor conversion of the other is required in this epistemological frame.[95] Under this framework, the search for a way to determine self-identity does not involve an external other, but rather is dependent on one's distance from the center, which is in turn dependent on the prevailing moral-political criteria freely accepted as legitimate by members of this framework. Although the center of this framework was traditionally occupied by China in East Asia for the most part, this is not necessarily the case in this framework in theory. The center is in fact constituted by whatever powers that serve as models for cultural emulation, and therefore is an inherently flexible and adaptable concept of moral-political order.[96] Shih's reading accords with the ideas of Sun, which explicitly state that his conception of the Chinese Nation must self-rectify and re-center itself in the context of his conceptualization of *tianxia* in accordance with the values of *wangdao*.[97]

Far from being a static concept therefore, *tianxia* has historically evolved, depending on the prevailing political conditions in and surrounding China. This chapter will first set out the historical trajectory of how the concept of *tianxia* evolved. It will then explicate the relationship between Sun's egalitarian *tianxia* and the moral hierarchy centered around *wangdao*. Finally, the tensions between these two aspects of his conceptualization of *tianxia* will be discussed.

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[94] C.Y. Shih, *Civilization, Nation and Modernity in East Asia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 199.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Shih (2010), 536.
[97] GFQJ, vol. 1, 37.

The Development of the Concept of Tianxia

The term *tianxia* first appeared during the early Zhou dynasty, but it was preceded by a number of related terms which highlighted the elasticity and ambiguity of how the term was used in practice depending on the context.[98] The first term to appear during the Shang dynasty was the term *sifang*, which can literally be translated as the four directions of east, south, north and west of the earth. The origins of this concept sprang from the fact that the location of the ancestral shrine where sacrifices were made was marked as the center of the earth. Therefore, *sifang* was conceived of initially not only as a geographical concept, but also as a cosmological concept whereby the heavenly gods would be asked to bless the earth in order to ensure a fertile harvest.[99] However, although not wholly apparent at the time, this conceptualization of the world also carried a political connotation, as the center was referred to as z*hong shang*, or the seat of the dynasty's political power. According to Xing Yitian, the conceptualization of space through *sifang* constituted their worldview, which was characterized chiefly by the existence of four directions radiating outwards from the political center (i.e., the east, south, north, and west).[100] This, then, laid the structural foundation for the concept of *tianxia* that came into prevalent use later on.

The concept of *sifang* distinguished between the outer and the inner, clearly demarcating the boundaries of what was contained within this domain.[101] During the Western Zhou, however, the term *tianxia* rapidly overtook the term *sifang* in terms of prevalence of

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[98] Luo, 18.
[99] Xing Y., *Qin Han Shi Lungao* (*A Treaties on Qin Han History*) (Taipei: Sanmin Shuju, 2019), 6-8.
[100] Ibid., 9.
[101] You Y. F., "Sifang, Tianxia, Junguo - Zhou Qin Tianxia Guan de Gaige yu Fazhan (The Four Corners, All under Heaven, Commanderies and Kingdoms: Transformation and Development of Views of Tianxia in Ancient China)*"* (master's thesis, National Taiwan University, 2009), 55.

usage due to the collapse of the Shang and Zhou dynasties. During the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, the previously unified rule of the Shang and Zhou dynasties collapsed and the geographical area previously covered by these dynasties fragmented into a number of independent and highly competitive polities. In order to address the overriding need to reestablish order and a sense of familial harmony between these independent polities, the term *tianxia* replaced the term *sifang* as the former connoted a sense of openness, inclusivity and tolerance. It ranked the four directions of *sifang* equally, but more importantly, *tianxia* became a neutral, all-inclusive term that was inclusive and tolerant of the various polities within the geopolitical areas previously governed by the Shang and the Zhou.[102] The immediate practical purpose of this term, however, was to re-establish and consolidate a sense of order amongst these polities and rival centers of power *within* this theoretically unified geopolitical space.[103] While in practice the rival polities constituting the geopolitical space of the *tianxia* family bitterly fought amongst themselves, the conceptual and theoretical power of this novel concept nonetheless took hold and by the Warring States period, *tianxia* replaced *sifang* to become the conceptual lens through which everyone in these polities came to view the world.[104]

However, following the unification of China by the Qin and Han dynasties, this need for the maintenance of internal harmony disappeared; however, the concept and worldview of *tianxia* remained and subsequently evolved into an imperial-culturalist form. The concept of *tianxia* became externally directed toward neighboring non-Han "barbarian" polities following the unification of political power by the Qin and Han. As the political power of the dynasties waxed and waned, *tianxia* was interpreted liberally to refer to those areas beyond the dynasty's actual control in order to retain them at least theoretically within the same

[102] Ibid., 57; Luo, 17.
[103] You, 62.
[104] Ibid., 67.

geopolitical realm. Furthermore, even parts of the world not yet fully known to the dynasty were also included within the geopolitical space of *tianxia* in the theoretical sense.

Considering the above, the concept of *tianxia* was used in a highly adaptable manner, depending on the prevailing political conditions and balance of power between China and its immediate neighbors. As Luo puts it, the borderlands of *tianxia* were where reality and the imagined met. As one ventured further and further out beyond the dynasty's known world, one's knowledge of the known world was naturally extended, but what lay beyond continued to be conceptualized as part of the theoretical and imagined realm of *tianxia*.[105] While *tianxia* was used to refer to the known world within which the dynasty's political power extended in practice, it was also used flexibly and variably in some contexts to also refer to the undiscovered parts of the world, highlighting the breadth, versatility, yet ambiguity immanent within the concept of *tianxia*.[106]

This attitude of intensive knowledge and dealing with the near abroad was combined with deliberate neglect of the further abroad. The further abroad was theoretically and consciously recognized as part of *tianxia* despite not being explicitly discussed.[107] However, this conceptual versatility and conscious ambiguity vis-à-vis the undiscovered and ungoverned geographical parts of *tianxia*, was not seen to impact the stability of the moral-political center of *tianxia* (i.e., the dynasty itself).[108] *Tianxia* therefore, existed as a concept that that held within it a sense of ambiguity which nevertheless when understood in this sense, retained its own immanent sense of conceptual stability and integrity.

Beginning with the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods but especially following the unification of China by the Qin dynasty and subsequently the Han, this

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[105] Luo, 4, 8.
[106] Ibid; You L.F., *San Song Tang Zi Xu (The Autobiography of San Song Tang)* (Taipei: Sanmin Shudian, 1989), 281–282.
[107] Luo, 19.
[108] Ibid., 5.

conception of *tianxia* took an outward turn and became externally oriented vis-à-vis the barbarian polities neighboring China. According to Xing, the concept of *tianxia* took an imperial-culturalist turn in the sense that while these neighboring barbarian polities were bound tighter to China in the context of *tianxia*, *tianxia* became a moral-politically stratified concept and geopolitical space. Confucianism was used by China as the standard against which these neighboring polities were measured, and these neighboring polities were cosigned to a lower social status due to their non-Confucian origins.[109] According to Huang Li Sheng, this form of Confucian *tianxia* was adopted by China as its highest political framework and worldview.[110]

This turn toward this external and imperially oriented form of *tianxia* marked a significant change from the previous internally oriented and relatively egalitarian conception of *tianxia.* This was the natural result of the changed political circumstances following the unification of China by the Qin and the Han dynasties. What remained the same however, was the idea that *tianxia* included not only the known and discovered parts of the world, but that the undiscovered parts of the world were also theoretically part of the *tianxia* family.[111]

Sun's Tianxia and the Moral Hierarchy of Wangdao

The flexible, creative and adaptive use of *tianxia* in response to internal and external challenges is thus widely acknowledged by scholars, and in that sense, Sun was no exception. Sun's *tianxia* was characterized by its inclusive nature extending in scope to members, semi-members, and non-members of international society alike. However, it was perhaps even more fundamentally characterized by its fight against injustice and inequality both

[109] Xing, 24-25; Huang, 257.
[110] Huang, 268, 275.
[111] Xing, 26; See also Huang, 258.

domestically and internationally, while being balanced by its strong sense of moral hierarchy centered around the concepts of *wangdao* and *self-rectification.*

This inclusivity in Sun's *tianxia* was anchored chiefly by the concept of *ping*, which he uses to characterize all matters in the universe, including his ideas on international relations. In a letter he wrote in 1903, Sun said:

> All matter covered by *tianxia* exist based on the principle of *ping.* For example, education exists in order to balance the distribution of knowledge; dwellings and clothing exist in order to balance the temperature of the body. By extension, this logic applies to all other matters. Therefore, the inequality that exists today in Europe and America will inevitably result in massive conflict, trending towards equality, this can be predicted.[112]

The concept of *ping* is quite crucial because it can be interpreted in a number of ways and carries within it a number of connotations when used in the context of *tianxia*. Literally translated, *ping* means a sense of balance, but extended metaphorically, this term can also mean a sense of equality, justice, fairness, and inclusivity. Speaking on the topic of his Three Principles, Sun contextualized all three of them upon this interpretation of *ping*. In a speech he gave in 1924, Sun told a group of his supporters that:

> Considering [my] Three Principles of the revolution, these are [my] principles of Chinese Nationalism, Democracy, and Peoples' Livelihood, these are what is known as the Three Principles of the People. [The purpose of my] principle of Democracy, is to achieve now **equality of status on par with that of the Great Powers**; [The purpose of my] principle of Chinese Nationalism is to achieve **equality of status internationally on [par with the Great Powers]**; [The purpose of my] principle of Peoples' Livelihood, is to ensure a state of equality in terms of the peoples' livelihood and in terms of their economic interests. Therefore in this reading of [my] Three Principles of the People, if we can implement them, China can also keep up with the progress of the Great Powers, and can become a new, wealthy and powerful China.[113] (emphasis added)

Contextualized and set out as such, this shows that Sun understood the concept of *ping* in terms of this reading which heavily implies equality and fairness, both in the domestic and international contexts. Speaking to another group of supporters also in 1924, Sun said:

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[112] GFQJ, vol. 4, 33.
[113] GFQJ, vol. 3, 470.

> What are [my] Three Principles of the People? It is **the equality of nations,** [my] principle of Democracy and [my] principle of Peoples' Livelihood. What methods [should one use] to implement these Three Principles? [My] principle of Chinese Nationalism is used to **combat inequality in terms of [China's status] vis-a-vis foreigners**... What method [should one use] to implement my principle of Democracy? It is used to combat inequality within the nation. For thousands of years we in China have always been an absolutist country, with only the emperor being the master, the people were his slaves, and the people were the private property of the emperor alone... the absolutism of the past has been overthrown [as a result of the Xinhai Revolution]… What method [should one use] to implement my principle of Peoples' Livelihood? It is used to combat the iniquity of tycoons. Within a country if tycoons exist, the wealth of the country will be monopolized by them... **Therefore, [my] principles of Peoples' Livelihood and Chinese Nationalism [and] Democracy all follow the same logic, which is to take on matters that are unfair, and to [take action] to make them fair.**[114] (emphasis added)

This further shows that when set against the backdrop of Sun's Three Principles, combating inequality and injustice both domestically and internationally was the cornerstone idea of his conceptualization of *tianxia*. The traumatic process of China's entry into international society due to its semi-sovereign and unequal status during Sun's lifetime and set in the context of this new and expanded *tianxia* probably spurred Sun to conceptualize *tianxia* as such.

However, the term *ping* could also be translated as the act of pacifying through establishing a state of harmony throughout *tianxia* beginning with the act of self-rectification. In its more aggressive undertones, the meaning of this term can also shade into not only establishing a state of harmony, but the acts of conquering and controlling.[115] The interpretation of taking action to pacify and establish a state of harmony throughout *tianxia* is reflected in the following passage from the Great Learning, which Sun quotes with approval:

> To study the nature of things in order to acquire knowledge; to acquire knowledge in order to cause one's thoughts to be sincere; to acquire knowledge in order to cause one's thoughts to be sincere; to cause one's thoughts to be sincere in order to rectify one's heart; to rectify one's heart in order to cultivate one's self; to cultivate one's self in order to regulate one's family; to regulate one's family in order to rightly govern

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[114] GFQJ, vol. 3, 433–434.
[115] Sun Z.F., Dao H., and Zhen J. X., *San Min Zhuyi Yanjiu (Research on the Three Principles of the People*) (Taipei: Yutai Gongsi Zhonghua Yinshua Chang, 1984), 296.

one's state; **to rightly govern one's state in order to pacify *tianxia*.**[116] (emphasis added)

When used in this sense of taking the initiative to establish a state of harmony through influence, control, or conquest, *ping* implies the existence of other spaces that need to be actively pacified. This markedly departs from the original conception of the familial concept of *tianxia*, which connoted the existence of a relatively egalitarian and all-encompassing family of polities constituting *tianxia*.

The historical context of how *ping* evolved as a concept also mirrored the historical trajectory of how *tianxia* took a more outwards, imperialist turn following the unification of China by the Qin and Han. Prior to the establishment of the Qin dynasty, *ping* was used more in the sense of internal pacification, implying the re-establishment of order and harmony through the conquest of Qin Shihuang's rival polities within China following the effective dissolution of the Zhou. The immediate goal was the unification and annexation of these rival polities, but the theoretical possibility of extending this "pacification" outwards toward China's immediate barbarian neighbors and beyond was already raised, despite recognition that this had not yet been actually achieved in practice.[117] Similarly, the Han dynasty's Wendi considered himself not only as the emperor of China, but also the Son of Heaven, whose mandate and responsibility extended to the pacification of areas well beyond his immediate political control to include far abroad, beyond the world then known to China.[118]

However, when set in the context of Sun's *tianxia wei gong*, it is clear that it was based on the ideals of inclusivity and equality rather than active pacification through control or conquest. In another speech he gave in 1924, Sun explicitly links his Three Principles in both their domestic and international dimensions to this reading of *ping* and his

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[116] GFQJ, vol. 1, 49.
[117] Xing, 28.
[118] Xing, 30.

conceptualization of *tianxia*. He said:

> [My principle] of Chinese Nationalism is to combat injustice vis-a-vis the outside world, [and my principle] of Democracy is to combat injustice domestically. What injustice exists within [our] nation? What is the gravest injustice within [our] nation? It is [the injustice of] authoritarian rule by the emperor, warlords and [their] bureaucrats, [our] four hundred million peoples are hence unable to participate in our national politics, and remain enslaved to this minority. [This type] of injustice resulting from oppression, is the same as our oppression by foreigners. Therefore to the combat injustice within the nation resulting from [our] authoritarianism, [we] need to implement my principle of Democracy and the promote the rights and interests of our people. The promotion of the rights and interests of our people, is indeed in accordance with the logic of all under heaven belongs to all. The logic of all under heaven belongs to all versus the logic of all under heaven belongs to one are opposites. **Under *tianxia wei gong*, everyone's rights and interests [become] very equal. [When] all under heaven belongs to one, there exists inequality in the rights and interests of the people. This type of unjust authoritarianism, is the same the authoritarianism imposed on us by foreigners. Therefore the fight against inequality against foreign races, [must be pursued] by the advocacy of [my principle] of Chinese Nationalism. To combat injustice within the nation, one must promote my principle of Democracy**.[119] (emphasis added)

His use of the term *ping* and his explicit linkage of the concept to both the domestic and international dimensions of his Three Principles suggests that Sun's conceptualization of *tianxia* can be characterized in the main by its sense of fairness, inclusivity, and justice. In this context, Sun's ideas stand out for their unique amalgamation of *tianxia* and his conception of Chinese Nationalism in his response to China's entry and place in international society. Sun was first and foremost a nationalist, but he also continued to subscribe to the *tianxia* worldview and in particular its moral component. Discussing the concept of morality is an inherently dangerous and slippery exercise, for morality has such a broad meaning and is by its very nature highly subjective. However, for the purposes of this thesis and in the case of Sun, he defined morality in the context of international relations, chiefly by distinguishing *wangdao* (the kingly way) from *badao* (the hegemonic way). The kingly way refers to states whom lead others through virtue, exercising self-restraint and through the force of example and are freely accepted and acknowledged by others states as such. Sun himself

[119] GFQJ, vol. 3, 427–428.

defines the hegemonic way as states that impose their will on others through force, although Yan Xuetong refines this concept further by adding that such states dominate others through a combination of being strategically reliable and the use of great force, even though their morality falls short.[120] Describing this distinction in a speech he gave in 1924, Sun said:

> ... from this we can see that Europeans think that their own culture is orthodox, and regard themselves as masters of culture, outside of Europe, [if] there is any culture that develops, [if] there is any independent thought, [they] therefore view it as rebellion; therefore in comparing the European and Oriental cultures, they naturally think that European cultures are in accordance with humanitarianism, and Oriental cultures are not in accordance with humanitarianism…
> But we in the Orient have always viewed *badao* with contempt. There is another way, **culturally superior to *badao***, the nature of this type of culture, is **benevolence and morality**. Using this culture of benevolence and virtue, is to enlighten people, not to oppress people; its [purpose] **is to cause others to [willingly] embrace virtue, not to instill fear in them**. This type of culture that makes others embrace virtue, we in China historically termed it '*wangdao*'... since the flourishing of Europe's material civilization, and since the way of *badao* [took over], the morality of various countries around the world, therefore has been regressing day by day.[121]

Sun's interpretation of *wangdao* therefore, clearly implied the existence of a moral and culturally based hierarchy of values in which *wangdao* reigns supreme. The responsibility of causing others to willingly embrace virtue as embodied by *wangdao* was acknowledged by Sun as part of China's "heavenly ordained duties," implying a sense of destiny and an indispensable role for China in upholding the values of this moral hierarchy. Speaking to a group of his followers, Sun said:

> In the future in order to rightly govern our state and pacify *tianxia*, we must first restore Chinese Nationalism and the status of our nation. Using our intrinsic morals and peace as a foundation, **to unify the world under the Great Harmony, this indeed is the grave responsibility of our four hundred million people**.[122] (emphasis added)

This passage succinctly reflected the manner in which Sun situates his principle of Chinese Nationalism within his conceptualization of *tianxia*, linked to a sense of immanent moral confidence

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[120] Xuetong Y., "A Comparative Study of Pre-Qin Interstate Political Philosophy," in *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power*, eds. D. A. Bell and Z. Sun (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2011), 65, 71, 74, 75, 78.
[121] GFQJ, vol. 3, 538–539.
[122] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54.

and indispensability. Indeed, this sense of moral confidence centered on the concept of *wangdao* was reflected not only through his principle of Chinese Nationalism as applied to China, but also in his conceptualization of how nations are, or should be, constituted. Explaining to his audience the essence of what constitutes a nation and how that differs from states, Sun said:

> Foreigners say that there is a distinction between the nation and the state, the English term for this being [nationalism]. [Nationalism] has two meanings: one [refers to] the nation, and one [refers] the state… We must distinguish between the two, but how do we do so? Simply put, nations are created by natural forces, while states are created by force. Using China's political history as evidence, the Chinese say, *wangdao* [occurs] in the course of nature. **In other words… groups created through the use of *wangdao* are nations, force is *badao*, and groups created through the use of *badao* are states.**[123] (emphasis added)

If nationalism is a foreign import resulting from the expansion, then Sun's conceptualization of how nations are constituted reflect the fact that despite the acceptance by China of the objective benchmarks contained the standard of civilization, Sun's ideas show that China's entry into international society did not necessarily result in the convergence of worldviews. This suggests that standards of civilization therefore, are multi-dimensional and remain divergent and substantially fragmented, contrary to the narrative set forth in the expansion literature.

Sun Yat-sen, Kang You-wei, and Liang Qi-chao on the Relationship between Tianxia and the Chinese Nation

Sun of course was not the only intellectual-practitioner who attempted to re-conceptualize the relationship between *tianxia* and the Chinese nation in response to the changed circumstances brought forth by the expansion of international society. Others before him, such as Kang You Wei and Liang Qi Chao, have also endeavored to do so.

As Shih points out, the intrusion of European imperialism and the breakdown of

[123] GFQJ, vol. 1, 3–4.

the tributary system induced competition among Chinese intellectuals and revolutionary leaders to restore China's status at the center of *tianxia* by adopting Western ideas, science, and institutions.[124] It also involved making sense of what tianxia could mean in the context of the modern international order resulting from the expansion. Many of these intellectuals and revolutionary leaders, including Kang You Wei, Liang Qi Chao, and Sun were major players in this effort. Their intellectual development and political careers in turn, all took place in the context of the re-interpretation of Neo-Confucianism and the rise of the so-called Statecraft School in the late nineteenth century. Tracing the development of the Statecraft School of Confucian learning, which emphasized practical statesmanship and which made a resurgence in the late nineteenth century among Chinese intellectuals, Hao Chang sets out the nature of this moral-political orientation of *tianxia*. He points out that aside from the traditional Confucian emphasis on self-cultivation at the individual level, the "political" signifies an awareness and a concern with the outer, wider sociopolitical world, whereas the "moral" means that this outward-directed "political" awareness and concern for the wider world must take on a moral cast in two senses. First, "it involves a key role for the moral cultivation of the individual in the process of sociopolitical action in the outside world. Further, the ideal community envisaged is a supra- national moral order as epitomized in the idea of 'all under-heaven'."[125] The ideal of self-cultivation or self-rectification thus is paired with the ideal of practical statesmanship based on this moral-political understanding of the world, and which admits but subsumes the legalist pursuit of *fu qiang* (wealth and power) to the Confucian pursuit of a universal moral order, and in particular its moral concern with stopping aggression and protecting the weak.[126] The Statecraft School tradition

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[124] Shih (2012), 199.
[125] H. Chang, *Chinese Intellectuals in Crisis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 16.
[126] Ibid., 18-19.

and its conceptualization of *tianxia* therefore, combines the universalistic and moralistic nature of *tianxia* with an attitude of awareness toward changing political realities and the pragmatic pursuit of material interests. As Chang points out, the Statecraft School departs from the traditional and previous Confucian scholarship's sole emphasis on self-cultivation on a personal level by emphasizing that this had to be supplemented by institutional arrangements, despite this having been meant to refer to administrative arrangements rather than the wholesale political renovation which Sun advocated.[127] It was therefore still very much a School that operated within the traditional parameters of political thought.

That the Statecraft School rose to prominence in the late nineteenth century is hardly surprising. This was a time of tumult and transition for China, both geopolitically and intellectually, as a direct result of the expansion and large-scale Western intrusion into East Asia. The collective effort in pursuit of wealth, power and achievement was already present in the Qing's dynasty Statecraft School before China's encounter with the West, but it gained widespread acceptance as a result of the Self-Strengthening Movement and under the aegis of the existential Western challenge.[128] It was this School and its intellectual orientation that formed the backdrop under which various intellectuals and revolutionary leaders competed to come up with ways to restore China's status at the center and re-conceptualize and reorient the concept of *tianxia* in the context of China's entry.

Kang was notable not only for his reinterpretation of the classic Confucian texts, but also for his vision for a utopia in his *Book of the Universal Commonwealth.* According to Liang, his student, Kang taught men to study the Confucian classics so as not to "seek out the trivialities of commentary on isolated phrases" or to study them for minute details, but for the general meaning, and in particular for the basic ideas they contain regarding how men

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[127] H. Chang, *Liang Ch'I-Chao and Intellectual Transition in China, 1890-1907* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 26-27.
[128] Ibid., 30-31.

initiated laws and established institutions. Kang argued that Confucius wrote the Confucian classics (instead of just having edited them as the orthodox view held) for the very purpose of advocating reform and establishing new institutions in his era.[129] This is hardly surprising, given that Kang was setting out this re-reading as historical justification for what he viewed as China's need to urgently reform in light of the expansion and the unprecedented challenge from the West. While still firmly within the Confucian tradition by arguing that his proposed institutional reforms were justified on the basis of antiquity, Kang's ideas were creative and novel in the sense that he departed from previous Confucian scholars by arguing that the Confucian classics should be read and interpreted purposively, thereby opening up new frontiers in the academic world for those that followed him. This implicitly opened up room for debate and critique in contrast to a literal or rigidly orthodox reading of the classics. Moreover, Liang points out that since Kang in his earlier works argued that the entire corpus of the Confucian classics were actually created by Confucius under the pretense of their antiquity, this actually also caused scholars to adopt a more critical and intellectually curious view toward the orthodox Confucian canon, in contrast to the previous prevailing attitude which regarded these classics and their provenance at face value as sacrosanct, inviolable and above being questioned critically.[130] This, combined with Kang's call for these texts to be read and interpreted purposively, fostered a general spirit of critique that had not blossomed previously.

Aside from his impact on intellectual world, while Kang's was still firmly located in the Confucian tradition despite having radically reinterpreted the Confucian classics, he took this further in a radical direction when discussing his version of the ideal moral-political order. He did so by emphasizing the moral component of an ideal moral-political order, so

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[129] C. C. Liang, *Intellectual Trends in the Ch'ing Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 94–95.
[130] Ibid.

much so that his interpretation of an ideal world, or a world that had achieved the state of Great Harmony, was a utopian one in which the state and even the family were to be abolished. The Confucian five cardinal values were often a major point of departure for Kang's discussion of moral values- *ren* (humanity), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *zhi* (intelligence) and *xin* (faithfulness), but humanity was always held out as the primary and leading value, ahead of *yi*, which is "self-regarding as opposed to other-regarding," and which is informed by an authoritarian and inhibitory spirit as opposed to the more "positive spirit of love, liberality and openness" that characterizes *ren*.[131] Kang played both the roles of practical reformer and utopian thinker, and alternated between the two, but it is clear that his proposed political reforms cannot be understood and read apart from his greater, comprehensive new interpretation of a universal Confucian moral order.[132] Although his works fostered a general spirit of critique and reinterpretation of the Confucian canon and tradition, Kang ultimately did not take his reinterpretation toward a nationalist direction like Sun did. As Chang explains:

> ... Kang... could not be characterized as a nationalist, because his political reformism did not stand alone. It was part and parcel of a comprehensive, new interpretation of Confucianism that he sets forth between the early 1890s and the early 1900s… In this new interpretation, he was also able to reconcile his two basic concerns, his political concern for the survival of his country and his moral-spiritual concern for meaning, which up to this point had remained separate. He now integrates them into an overarching moral-historical view, which contains nationalism as an element but in its intentionality as a whole, is governed by an overriding, universalistic concern with the moral perfection of individual and society.[133]

Although Kang's ideas lay squarely within the Confucian tradition in one sense, his reinterpretation of it in fact took him in a radical direction that completely leapfrogged

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[131] Chang (1987), 29-30.

[132] K. C. Hsiao, *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-Wei, Reformer and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1975), 410. See also Chang (1987), 35.

[133] Chang (1987), 35.

nationalism and was even more radical than Immanuel Kant in many ways. In his *Book of the Universal Commonwealth*, Kang proposed a universal social order based on his reinterpretation of Confucius that would have abolished nations entirely, to be substituted by a single world government with democratically elected regional governments; families and clans would also be abolished entirely; men and women would cohabit with each other for no more than a year before switching mates; all children would be brought up in state-run nurseries, and would be assigned jobs once they came of age.[134] Therefore, although notable for his radical reinterpretation of the Confucian canon and for fostering a sense of unprecedented critique toward it, Kang's reinterpretation of *tianxia* was done in a way that completely leapfrogged and transcended nationalism in favor of a universal moral community and did not speak directly to the realities of Western intrusion and the expansion. In a sense, it could be said that the logical conclusion of Kang's ideas were not dissimilar to the complete pacification of *tianxia* through control or conquest.

Kang was an intellectual giant of his times and his ideas did form the context under which his student, Liang Qi Chao formulated his own ideas. Liang in his early years shared Kang's commitment to institutional reform as the way to realize the ideal of practical statesmanship advocated by the Statecraft School.[135] However Liang subsequently did not follow Kang's radical reinterpretation of a Confucian socialist utopia, and instead later took his ideas in another completely different direction. While Kang was completely opposed to Sun's revolutionary activities and set up the Protecting the Emperor Society in 1899, Liang his student initially adopted a more ambiguous attitude toward Sun and was even inclined to befriend Sun in his earlier years, meeting Sun and his disciples in late 1898.[136] However, Sun and Liang fell out in 1900 when Sun wrote Liang an angry letter complaining that Liang's

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[134] Liang, 96-97; Chang (1971), 52–53.
[135] Chang (1971), 73.
[136] Ibid., 135–136.

campaigning on behalf of the Protecting the Emperor Society in Hawaii was being done at the expense of Sun's pro-revolutionary Revive China Society by competing for their financial support and otherwise, to which Liang replied that the best and most realistic way forward was to support the overthrow of the Empress Dowager in favor of her son and heir-apparent Emperor Guangxu, who was more progressive and reform-minded. The two probably never made contact after that, and this marked the end of contacts between the revolutionaries and the constitutional monarchists.[137]

While the early Liang's ideas were still largely consistent with his teacher Kang's, Liang later radically changed his ideas to advocate an almost relentlessly dynamic and competitive nation-state in the Social Darwinist mode with the moral component receding way into the background to make way for this dynamic political component of the nation-state, although the moral component did not completely disappear from his ideas. By 1901:

> Liang had already explicitly criticized the ideal of such a universal community as impractical. By the time he wrote the *New Citizen* he vehemently attacked the concept as a hindrance to the development of China as a state. **In Liang's view, the ideals of internationalism, great harmony, and universal love, though morally sublime, were antithetical to the value of competitiveness which Liang now learned was so essential the progress of society. In this way [*tianxia*] was rejected and [*guo-jia*] was exalted as the ultimate focus of loyalty**. Liang said it would be a sign of barbarism for human loyalty both to stop short of and to go beyond this focus. In this way, the nation-state became for Liang the 'terminal community.'[138] (emphasis added)

In this spirit, world order as perceived by Liang was essentially characterized by competitive struggle and in particular multi-state competition resulting in progress.[139] In a dramatic break from Kang, Liang argued that even *Ren* (humanity), the crown jewel of the five Confucian values that Kang emphasized, was an impediment to progress because it overemphasized the importance of securing harmonious relations with others while

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[137] Ibid., 139.
[138] Ibid., 156–157.
[139] Ibid., 169.

discouraging the full assertion of one's own rightful sphere of action and interest.[140] Although Confucianism was not the sole target of Liang's attacks, he was very critical of Chinese tradition in general as he viewed it as an impediment to the competitive strength of China. However, his questioning of the usefulness of Chinese moral tradition for the modern citizen inevitably meant that Confucian moral tradition was frequently the target of his criticisms. In a letter he wrote to Kang arguing against the latter's reverence for Confucianism, Liang wrote "[in] the opinion of your disciple, there is nothing more urgent than to change the Chinese mind by introducing new theories. However, in the beginning there is bound to be some destruction. There is much in Confucianism that does not fit the new world. In case one continues to advocate its preservation, that would only mean working against one's own intentions."[141]

Although Liang took his ideas in a radical direction by arguably completely departing from the very ideal of a moral-political order by turning away from the idea of the universal moral community of *tianxia* and arguing that the nation-state was the terminal community, he did not completely break with Confucian (and Buddhist) tradition in the realm of private morality, which he argued were of great value to the realm of personal conduct and family ethics. Therefore, Liang was not a complete cultural revolutionist as distinct from the May Fourth Movement, which adopted an "iconoclastic and totalistic" attack on not just Confucianism and Taoism, but also Buddhism, and which viewed Chinese tradition in all its richness as being essentially irreconcilable with the modern world.[142] However, from the starting point of the practical statesman approach of the Statecraft School, Liang then took his ideas in almost diametrically opposite direction from his teacher Kang by painting the modern world as a Social Darwinist multi-state competition in which

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[140] Ibid., 196.
[141] Ibid., 229.
[142] Ibid., 300–301.

the concepts of *tianxia*, the Great Harmony or *ren* had no place.

While both Kang and Liang both began their intellectual trajectories from the starting point of the Statecraft School, its moral-political approach and their quests to develop a vision and a response to large-scale Western intrusion, teacher and student ended up taking their ideas in radically different directions. Kang was reform minded but still heavily faithful to the dynasty and its conservative world-view, but his vision for a modern Confucian-socialist utopia completely leapfrogged the issue of nationalism and highlighted his heavy emphasis on the moral component at the expense of the political, and in particular the realities brought forth by the expansion of international society. Liang on the other hand, was a nationalist in the sense that his overwhelming concern was the survival and success of the Chinese nation-state, but his emphasis on Social Darwinian competition meant that he overwhelmingly emphasized the political component at the expense of the moral. As argued in the beginning of this section, *tianxia* is an inherently adaptable concept, and it was clear that by the late nineteenth century, the scope and nature of the *tianxia* that China had known for centuries had suddenly changed beyond recognition. Chinese intellectuals like Kang and Liang as well as the May Fourth movement all responded to this in very different ways. However, Sun stands out for his conception of *tianxia* characterized by its grand inclusivity centered around the concept of *ping*, which meant the equality of all nation-states including those yet to gain full entry into international society, while being balanced by its strong sense of moral hierarchy centered around the concepts of *wangdao* and *self-rectification.*

Furthermore, in context of the moral hierarchy centered around the concepts of *wangdao* and self-rectification, Sun's *tianxia* was characterized by a sense of moral confidence centered around the concept of *wangdao,* reflected not only by his principle of Chinese Nationalism as applied to China, but also in his conceptualization of how nations are

or should be constituted.

Conclusion

If nationalism is a foreign import resulting from the expansion, then Sun's conceptualization of how nations are constituted reflects the fact that, despite the acceptance by China of the objective benchmarks for the standard of civilization, China's entry into international society did not necessarily result in the convergence of worldviews. This suggests that standards of civilization therefore, are multi-dimensional and remain divergent and fragmented at best, contrary to the narrative set forth by the expansion literature. If this is the case, they may remain divergent well into the future, highlighting the fact that entry is a process rather than a one-off event.

Sun's interpretation of *ping* characterizes his conception of tianxia and constitutes it in theory as a global, unified geopolitical space characterized by the equality of nations and the fight against inequalities of political and economic power. However, while Sun's *tianxia* is in the main characterized by this sense of inclusivity, openness and justice, it also contained at its core a firm sense of moral hierarchy based on *wangdao* and the act of self-rectification. This is not to say that China did not make fundamental adjustments upon its entry into international society, or that it failed to adopt the standard of civilization as portrayed in the expansion literature. Rather, Sun's conceptualization of *tianxia* and his vision for China's re-centering within this new and expanded *tianxia* was the prism through which Sun's understanding of China's entry into international society should be viewed. This being the case however, it is open to question whether nations not rooted in Confucian culture or familiar with the concept of wangdao could ever self-rectify and center themselves in Sun's *tianxia*.

Chapter 3: Re-evaluating Sun

Although previous scholars' approaches to studying Sun naturally differed in their respective evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of Sun's character, his career, and most importantly, his legacy, they all largely shared the over-arching view that Sun was a man of action and practicality instead of a man of intellect, and that his substantive ideas, including his ideas on international relations, are second rate and do not need to be taken seriously. This thesis on the other hand, argues that Sun should be taken seriously and that his ideas on international relations should be re-excavated, particularly in relation to his re-conceptualized *tianxia* view of world, based on the following reasons. However, this thesis also argues that he was actually *not* a man of action or practicality because at least with regards to *tianxia wei gong* and his ideas on international relations, he was rather utopian because he never thought of any practical solutions to address the Paradox of Self-Rectification.[143] Note that while Sun's ideas, like those of Kang and Liang, evolved through his career, the focus in this thesis are on his ideas toward the end of his career when they were crystallized and fully formed. His ideas were a realistic, direct and coherent response to the to the realities and circumstances imposed on China by her forced entry into international society. The circumstances included the pressing needs for China to formulate a cohesive national identity, to become a modern nation-state that could take her place among the ranks of the other sovereign members of international society, and to develop a viable industrial economy in the shadow of Western imperialism.

This response however, was formulated by Sun in a way that remained intricately and culturally situated and contextualized in the context of China's imperial past, which was guided by the values of Confucian orthodoxy and the *tianxia* worldview, which served

[143] Supra., 6-7.

both as the basis of China's self-identity and the of the conduct of her diplomacy for the most part of her dynastic past. As discussed in the last section, he combined the *tianxia* worldview with what for him were profoundly modern and contemporary criteria for determining the nature and epicenter of this modern *tianxia* in a novel and morally inspiring way. Yet, his ideas also both drew on those of his contemporaries but departed from them in fundamental and radical ways, such as those of Kang You Wei and Liang Qi Chao, as well as other contemporaries and forebears. Therefore, his ideas, while entirely unique and novel, were able to subsequently attract a large following. This was partly because they were also carefully grounded and contextualized both in China's dynastic past, as well as in contemporary debates concerning China, the modern international order taking shape around her, and her appropriate place within such an order, allowing his ideas to resonate and inspire large parts of the Chinese population.

Such cultural re-assertion and synthesis was foreshadowed by Hedley Bull in "The Revolt against the West," where Bull discusses the cultural dimension of this revolt in terms of the non-Western world's desire to re-assert their cultural autonomy following the end of the Second World War. The question he poses in relation to the cultural dimension of this revolt is whether it was a revolt against Western values as such, or rather it was a revolt carried out in the name of the presumably Western value and right to cultural autonomy for members of international society. Sun's re-interpretation of *tianxia* and his ideas on international relations show that he addressed this question in a culturally situated and contextualized way around twenty-five years earlier than Bull asserts. Sun's starting point was not based on the ostensibly Western value of cultural autonomy, although whether this value is in itself Western is questionable. Rather, his starting point was the *tianxia* worldview itself, which he then re-interpreted and adjusted to the needs and values of the expansion of international society. Therefore, Sun's approach shows that he thought about this issue not

really in terms of the assertion of cultural autonomy or even in terms of a revolt against the West. For him, the *tianxia* worldview seems prior to the question of cultural autonomy. This accords with the argument presented in the beginning of this chapter, that *tianxia* is not inherently centered around China, nor is it the exclusive property of China, and is on the contrary inherently adaptable and all-inclusive. Moreover, he re-interpreted *tianxia* in a way that made it adaptable to the needs and values brought forth by the expansion of international society.

Sun also developed his ideas in a nuanced, enlightened and morally informed manner. His re-interpretation and modernization of the *tianxia* worldview discussed in the previous section was essentially Sun's unique way of adapting the traditional Chinese worldview to the realities of China's forced entry into international society. This allowed the *tianxia* worldview to avoid the wholesale marginalization and fossilization which would have befallen it had it failed to adapt to the realities of the expansion of and China's forced entry into international society, while at the same time also avoiding the wholesale iconoclasm and Westernization advocated by the May Fourth Movement, therein lying the nuance of his ideas. Sun's ideas on international relations were also enlightened in the sense that they were a sophisticated and self-conscious amalgamation of the *tianxia* worldview, the moral characteristics and imperatives of *wangdao* and the requirements of entry and success in modern international society.

As Rana Mitter highlights, the tension between order and justice is one of the key themes in the Confucian world-view: order, encapsulated by the concept of *tianxia*, is supposed to be tempered by *ren,* often translated as "benevolence."[144] Sun mirrors this tension by emphasizing that his re-interpretation of *tianxia* is paired with its moral component of *wangdao*.

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[144] Mitter, 210.

This thesis argues that the fact that Sun addressed this tension in a culturally contextualized way and as a direct response to the normative and material dilemmas raised by China's forced entry into international society, shows that his ideas on international relations should be re-excavated and taken seriously, contrary to the general opinion of previous scholars whom have studied him. Moreover, the fact that this tension is one of the classic dilemmas that scholars working in the English School tradition continue to study and wrestle with highlights the fact that not only should his ideas on international relations be taken seriously by international relations scholars in general, but also by English School scholars in particular. As Andrew Hurrell argues, "[given] these well known difficulties, we need to move quickly from a discussion of order versus justice and instead consider how order *and* justice are to be related *within* different, and often conflicting, conceptions of world order."[145]

The *tianxia* worldview that formed the basis of Sun's thinking is a good illustration of him directly addressing the issue of how the value of order is situated in relation to an ethical view and therefore a view of justice. This issue is of direct relevance to the English School literature. As Hurrell, RJ Vincent and Ian Harris all argue, English School approaches in general and Hedley Bull's work in particular do not explicitly locate order in a satisfactory scheme of values and nor do they specifically set out its relation to Justice. This issue is even more relevant in the context of the expansion of international society, given that different conceptions of world order would have different and probably conflicting ways of viewing and addressing the relationship between order and justice. Indeed, this issue seems to be largely neglected in the expansion literature, though certain works that are not written in

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[145] A. Hurrell, "Order and Justice in International Relations: What Is At Stake?," in *Order and Justice in International Relations*, eds. R. Foot, J. Gaddis and A. Hurrell, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) 24–48, 29.

the context of the expansion do study these different conceptions from various non-European parts of the world in illuminating ways.[146]

Sun's *tianxia* worldview clearly emphasizes the moral dimension of his ideas on international relations. In fact, this dimension takes clear precedence, at least in Sun's rhetoric, over the material dimension for Sun. This is highlighted by his view that a rich and powerful China should not pursue the path of *badao*, even if she one day successfully adapts to the realities of modern international society and becomes rich and powerful. His conceptualization of China's new moral-political identity within this new *tianxia* is one that heavily emphasizes *wangdao* and the moral dimension. While Sun's re-interpretation of *tianxia* was intellectually enlightened in that it adapted the *tianxia* worldview to the new reality and circumstances resulting from the expansion, his ideas clearly privilege the moral dimension over the political. This stands in clear contrast to Bull's view, that order is a prerequisite of and therefore logically prior to justice. This would clearly have implications for the process of the expansion and integrating China into international society if indeed the Western core viewed order as being prior to justice, while China conceptualized the relationship in the reverse, although this thesis recognizes that Sun cannot be said to speak for China, nor is it possible for this thesis or perhaps any piece of scholarship to claim to provide an authoritative "Western" view on the matter. Mitter argues that China was and remains an outsider in international society in many respects, and continues to find engagement with international society frustrating not because she rejects the order of international society *per se*, but because she finds that this order has been and remains unjust.

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[146] K. Bajpai, "Indian Conceptions of Order and Justice: Nehruvian, Gandhian, Hindutva, and Neo-Liberal," in *Order and Justice in International Relations*, eds. R. Foot, J. Gaddis and A. Hurrell, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 236-261. R. Mitter, "An Uneasy Engagement: Chinese Ideas of Global Order and Justice in Historical Perspective," in *Order and Justice in International Relations*, eds. R. Foot, J. Gaddis and A. Hurrell, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 207–235.

A worldview that places a premium on justice as opposed to order, even though it does not conceptualize the two as being mutually exclusive, would clearly lead to increased levels of such frustration and widen the chasm with those who prioritize order over justice, particularly in the context of China's coerced entry into international society.

Although Sun's ideas on the amalgamation of *wangdao* and morality with the expansion and *tianxia* are in this sense intellectually enlightened and provide a clear answer and view on the tension between the moral and political dimensions of self-rectification in the *Chinese* context, Sun fails to effectively address the wider question of what happens in the likely event of Paradox of Self-Rectification arising in the wider context of *tianxia*.[147] Although he never explicitly said so, his conceptualization of China's new moral-political identity and the wider context of his new *tianxia* in general both assume that the moral and political dimensions of self-rectification are basically always aligned *for everyone else in general*. This is unlikely to be the case, and while Sun also never explicitly said so, he then in turn assumes that China, under its new moral-political identity based on his principle of Chinese Nationalism as explicated in Chapter 4, would and should privilege the moral over the political in the event of a conflict. That is fine in the case of China under his principle of Chinese Nationalism, but it is highly apparent that those two assumptions are unlikely to hold simultaneously for very long for other members of international society in general. It is both likely and foreseeable that countries would start prioritizing immediate political and economic considerations over the moral at some point.

On that count, Sun's ideas do fall short. However, this thesis argues that his *tianxia wei gong* engagement with the expansion is still highly relevant and enlightening because, as Qin points out, what he terms the rules-based and relational-based governance models can and do complement each other. He wrote:

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[147] Supra., 6-7.

> Empirical evidence, at the first glance, seems also to show that governance needs to be both rule-based and relational... For any governance to be effective in practice, rules and relations should be simultaneously at work. Interest and trust, for example, are both indispensible to governance in any society, and results and processes are perhaps equally important for order... **They are not substitutes, but rather are complimentary**.[148] (emphasis added)

Sun's *tianxia wei gong*, the underlying logic of which essentially accords with Qin's relational-based governance model, and international society, the underlying logic of which essentially accords with Qin's rule-based governance model, are not mutually exclusive, and in fact as Qin highlights, are complementary. This is especially true given the rules and institutions-based approach that the English School already adopts toward the study of entry, the expansion and international relations in general. The priority that Sun gives to justice is further highlighted by the fact that even order itself, in his *tianxia* worldview, is partially determined according to considerations of justice. Because Sun's *tianxia* worldview conceptualizes the epicenter of *tianxia* as being occupied by states that successfully self-rectify themselves morally, culturally, and materially, a wealthy and powerful state nevertheless lacking in morality would not be able to claim the status of being the epicenter. The principle that order itself is partly determined by considerations of justice is not unique to Sun's thinking; Harris argues precisely this point in general terms instead of the context of any particular worldview.[149]

Moreover, the very notions of international society and the standard of civilization both necessarily implicate an ethical view as to how order and international society *should* be structured. This thesis argues that one of the main dimensions lacking in the expansion literature as it stands is an interrogation into how these two are related in the context of different worldviews, particularly those held by major historical figures from

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[148] Qin, 320–328, 349–351.
[149] I. Harris, "Order and Justice in 'The anarchical society'", *International Affairs,* vol. 69, no. 4 (1993), 725–741, 732.

entrants like China. This thesis does not argue that in favor of one worldview or another. Rather, the point here is that this debate has largely been obscured from the expansion literature, and more potently, the fact that Sun's ideas directly address this issue, although in an incomplete way, has also been obscured not only by the expansion literature, but also by previous studies on Sun. This partly explains why these latter studies argue that his ideas on international relations lack the depth to merit serious intellectual consideration. This in turn, is the reason why this thesis argues that by revealing this dimension of Sun's thought which had previously been neglected, Sun's ideas in fact do merit serious intellectual consideration, and that previous evaluations of him have been unfair to him on this basis.

As this already partially shows, Sun's ideas on international relations also merit serious intellectual consideration due to their relevance to the expansion thesis and to the English School tradition more generally. He was a major historical figure who did not fully accept or advocate trying to mimic the standard of civilization or conduct of a major Western power. This contrasts with the case of Japan, which Shogo Suzuki argues, successfully internalized and incorporated the Western standard of civilization into her foreign policy, culminating in Japan becoming an imperial and great power herself.[150] His adaptation of *tianxia* to the realities of the expansion however, coherently combined these two into comprehensive ideas on the development of China as a modern nation-state, on her development into a modern national economy, on the framework of her foreign policy and on her relationship and place in culturally diverse international society. Sun's ideas on international relations therefore, are a story of cultural negotiation and contestation taking place in the context of the expansion. This process of negotiation and contestation is further highlighted by the fact that Sun consciously aimed to distinguish his ideas on international

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[150] S. Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (London: Routledge, 2009).

relations from the conduct and Western standard of civilization at the time. Sun's updating of the criterion for being at the epicenter of *tianxia* is evidence of the fact that the Confucian worldview had not been discarded in his ideas on international relations. Rather, the objective and material needs and requirements brought forth by the expansion had been grafted onto this worldview, and the workings of this worldview were adjusted accordingly.

Sun's ideas show that standards of civilization and civilizing are multi- layered and multi-faceted, can combine and amalgamate in different ways and furthermore are ongoing processes of negotiation and contestation rather than one-off events. All of these conclusions from Sun's ideas on international relations are obscured by the expansion literature as it stands. Therefore, these ideas should be re-excavated because they broaden the scope of our understanding of the expansion and add to the depth of the expansion literature and the English School tradition.

Furthermore, Sun's ideas are also theoretically significant because they serve as a potential bridge between the still underdeveloped Chinese School of International Relations Theory ("IRT") and IRT as it stands in mainstream scholarship. This thesis does not take a position on the existence or viability of a Chinese School of IRT, as it is a piece of work focused on the re-examination of the expansion in the English School tradition. Scholars studying the emergence of a potential Chinese School of IRT such as Feng Zhang and Yaqing Qin both argue that there is not, as of yet, a Chinese School of IRT because what has been developed so far lacks a systematic and distinctive approach coupled with a signature method and arguments.[151] Both these scholars however, as well as Yan Xuetong, the doyen of an emerging Chinese School, recognize that the significant work has already been produced in this tradition already possesses several signature concepts and arguments which could serve as

[151] F. Zhang, "The Tsinghua Approach and the Inception of Chinese Theories of International Relations", *The Chinese Journal of International Politics,* vol. 5, no. 1 (2012), 73-102, 75. Qin (2007), 313–340, 322.

the basis for the further development of this potential School.

Scholarly works produced in the tradition of this budding School thus far all emphasize the central prerequisite of morality as a necessary condition of upholding interstate order.[152] This tradition also makes a conceptual distinction between humane authority (based on leadership freely accepted and recognized by others) and hegemony, which is another form of leadership based on a mixture of morality which falls short of the standard of humane authority, but which is in turn supplemented by the use of force and the quality of strategic reliability. To these two concepts, Yan adds a third model of tyranny, which is a model of leadership based on brute force alone. They are ranked in this order both in terms of their normative desirability as well as in terms of their objective effectiveness and sustainability.[153] Finally, whether a state is recognized as a responsible leader or great power is not a matter that a state can decide for itself, but must be judged by other states.[154]

While these signature concepts alone are not enough to constitute a distinctive school of IRT by themselves, they could enrich and broaden the scope of IRT as it currently stands in international relations. This thesis agrees with the position advocated by Amitav Archaya that the goal should not be to displace existing or future IRTs, but rather to take the steam out of some of their claims about universal validity and to examine "the relative merits of the different ways of knowing" the international.[155] Sun's ideas on international relations and his adaptation of *tianxia* enriches IRT and serves as a bridge to these signature concepts in this budding Chinese IRT tradition. *Tianxia* has traditionally been associated with a rigidly hierarchical form of international society encapsulated historically by the

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[152] Yan, 39.
[153] Yan, 71, 88.
[154] Yan, 65.
[155] A. Acharya, "Dialogue and Discovery: In Search of International Relations Theories Beyond the West", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 39, no. 3 (2011), 619–637, 620, 636.

tributary system. It remains unclear how this could be squared with modern international society, based on the principle of sovereign equality. Sun's adaptation of *tianxia* to the realities of the expansion bridges this gap between the Chinese IRT tradition and the English School tradition. It retains the emphasis on morality and humane authority, while recognizing like the English School tradition that hard power also matters in global order, as well as the fact that authority and legitimacy are social institutions that depend on recognition and affirmation by others.

Furthermore, Sun's ideas arguably remedy the perceived "lack of awareness of international-ness" in the Chinese IRT tradition, or the perception that this tradition of thought is not actually a theory of *international* relations, by adapting *tianxia* to China's entry into international society as a nation-state and member of this society.[156] They engage and enrich IRT in a way that retains the signature ideas put forth by this Chinese IRT tradition, while avoiding the potential pitfalls of the excessive nationalism or parochialism due to the creation of a Chinese School of IRT. Therefore, Sun's ideas on international relations broaden IRT and the expansion thesis in particular to incorporate these signature ideas from the budding Chinese tradition of IRT without necessarily requiring the building of an entirely new and separate school of IRT.

This thesis therefore argues that Sun's ideas on international relations should be re-excavated and re-examined, and that he was a man of intellect whose ideas should be taken seriously, contrary to previous major scholars whom have studied and written about Sun. Three major scholars from different periods whom have done landmark studies on Sun share and are representative of the contrary argument, that Sun was a man of action and practicality instead of a man of intellect, to varying degrees. Lyon Sharman's *Sun Yat-Sen: His Life and Its Meaning* was one of the first major studies undertaken on Sun and published in 1934

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[156] Qin, 322.

just shortly after Sun's death. Her main thesis is that far from being the prophet and demigod that Sun was constructed as shortly after his death, Sun's ideas and schemes were an ad-hoc and arbitrary mixture of ideas from East and West taken out of their original contexts by Sun such that they were grandiose, impractical and incoherent. The cult of Sun, Sharman argues, was mainly built on the symbolic value accorded to him by his followers following his death: Sun as a symbol of the unity of the Kuomintang, as a symbol of disinterested love in his country, as a symbol of China's goal to reconstruct herself along modern lines following the model of the West and as a symbol of an unfinished revolution, which his followers were determined to realize.[157]

In other words, this cult was an ex post facto creation built by his followers instead of on the merits of Sun himself. Sharman further argues that this cult of personality obstructs objective study and evaluation of Sun's life, and furthermore represented the triumph of orthodoxy over free thinking which would have the effect of halting intellectual debate and advancement in China.[158]

Sun's strength lied in his ability to attract people, both Chinese and foreign, coupled with a dramatic sense of publicity and for capturing the attention of the press.[159] With regards to his ideas and intellectual inspiration though, Sharman argues that Sun was a typical example of the impact of Western ideas on China.

The ideas he referenced from the West were half assimilated by him and taken from their original historical and cultural contexts in a superficial manner, and modernization to Sun invariably meant the introduction of Western science, institutions of government and methods in industry. Moreover, being overly sensitive to the backwardness of China, Sun was

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[157] L. Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen, his life and its meaning: a critical biography,* (New York: John Day, 1934), 317.
[158] Ibid., 319.
[159] Ibid., 321, 325.

constantly seeking shortcuts to the utopia of modernization. All this rendered his ideas and plans for China grandiose, half-baked and incoherent. The last thing that could be said of Sun, Sharman argues, is that he was a realist in politics, in that he grossly underestimated the time required to carry out these ideas and plans. Summing up her evaluation of Sun, Sharman argues as follows:

> His was a pedestrian and stumbling progress. Slowly he made his way in spite of intellectual limitation, crude intrigue, bad judgment, faulty coordinations, and wild misreckonings of the human equation. Yet in all Sun Yat-sen's unrealized plans the core was an indisputably laudable ideal. That is what makes the popular acclaim of him so inescapable...
> If we are compelled to admit, as I feel I must, that Sun Yat-sen in his lifetime fell short of being a great leader of his people, is it possible to believe, as the Chinese people do at present, that Sun Yat-sen remains the undying leader of the future into which he projected his plans?
> ... Persistent as I have been in trying to learn from Sun Yat-sen, I am one with many Westerners who fail to find in him either a profound or very original thinker. I see in him an effective propagandist of the elemental ideals of democracy; I see him as a stubborn protagonist of his own articulated program; I recognize his service in propagating varied Western ideas that were novelties to the Chinese; and I have taken notice that in his later, as well as in his earlier years, he fanned smoldering prejudices into passionate resentments. **But as a thinker, Sun Yat-sen's leadership of China has not been clarifying**.[160] (emphasis added)

The main basis on which Sharman bases this evaluation of Sun is the purportedly undue influence that the Soviet Union and Mikhail Borodin exercised on him. Sharman argues that Borodin saw in Sun a lack of original ideas but a top rate talent for influencing people by public address and the written word. Therefore, Borodin pushed Sun into the light while he hid in the shadows and subtly, but comprehensively, influenced his thinking.[161] However, even Sharman herself acknowledges that Sun ultimately repudiated communism, but attempts to explain this away by arguing that Sun's writings were phrased such that they were amenable to be used by communists after his death, and that his rejection of communism was done with "friendly, outstretched, and welcoming hands."[162]

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[160] Ibid., 335–336.
[161] Ibid., 270.
[162] Ibid., 281.

More than thirty years after Sharman published her study on Sun, Harold Schiffrin published his first major study on Sun in 1968 and the second in 1980. Schiffrin's first study, *Sun Yat-Sen: The Origins of the Chinese Revolution*, studies the earlier years of Sun's career between 1895 and 1905. Though his evaluation of Sun is more positive than Sharman, he also concluded that Sun was a man of action, a politician instead of an intellectual:

> The search for Sun Yat-sen's "true" doctrine is the less rewarding because **he was not a great thinker**. He was an improviser, not a political philosopher. But neither his role in history nor his political heroism need be diminished by our recognition that it was his personal style, not his ideas, which made him unique.[163] (emphasis added)

Shiffrin labels Sun as an "entrepreneurial leader," or a leader who has no original ideas but possesses the qualities to achieve what everyone else thinks is required. Schiffrin's main thesis in *The Origins of the Chinese Revolution* is that Sun was chosen as leader in his early years for this reason. Hailing from a peasant background, having been rejected by the establishment Confucian literati in his earlier years and having received a Western education, he built his support base in these early years from overseas Chinese workers and students. This support base combined the dynamics of lower class anti-dynasticism with the political orientations of the small Western-oriented counter-elite and by choosing Sun as the leader of *Tong Meng Hui*, a predecessor organization of the *Kuomintang* ("KMT"), these groups believed in a non-Confucian vision of nationalism demonstrated through their diminished faith in Confucian leadership by choosing a leader from outside of it.[164] Even though Schiffrin did not think Sun was a great thinker, his assessment of Sun's ability to understand and adapt then-prevailing Western ideas to the Chinese situation was markedly more positive than Sharman's. He argues that Sun demonstrated familiarity with the latest Western trends, and transformed these through his expository and communication skills into nationalist

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[163] H. Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 2.
[164] Ibid., 9.

metaphors that resonated with his Chinese audience.[165]

Schiffrin's description of Sun's early life is a story of a man who having tried very hard to overcome his background to join the Confucian elite and having been given short shrift, set out in the ensuing decades to doggedly, persistently and tirelessly set up his revolutionary organization to overthrow the Qing dynasty. Sun did not receive a systematic Chinese education, his formal schooling only beginning when he moved to Hawaii in his early years, probably explaining why he was later unceremoniously rejected by the Confucian elite. Following his education abroad, Sun had actually tried to secure a meeting with Li Hong Zhang and even submitted a letter to him outlining his suggestions that the dynasty should implement. Schiffrin believes that Sun had sincerely hoped to join the gentry reformers and be accepted into their ranks, believing that his Western education was an intellectual accomplishment in its own right given the onslaught of Western powers at China's doorstep. However, he was never given an interview with Li, and it is doubtful whether Li ever read Sun's letter. Schiffrin surmises that had Li given him an interview and employed Sun in some capacity, Sun may have been coopted into the service of the reformist officials still loyal to the dynasty, and the course of history may have turned out very differently had he done so. However, that was not to be. To the Confucian elite, Sun was always seen as ex-peasant with a foreign diploma.[166]

This bitter rejection radicalized Sun, and he proceeded to found the first predecessor organization to the KMT, the *Xing Zhong Hui* (Revive China Society). The first manifesto issued by the Revive China Society did not explicitly call for the overthrow of the Qing. However, this was obviously implied by its stress that all foreign models should be considered and that any found to benefit the nation should be adopted, even sweeping reforms that were

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[165] Ibid., 8.
[166] Ibid., 10–39.

not justified by Chinese tradition as defined by the Confucian elite. This included the call in the manifesto for the widespread diffusion of knowledge to the entire Chinese population, contrary to the tradition (and interests) of the Confucian elite.[167]

This evolution from a spurned quest to be accepted into the Confucian elite to revolutionary leader in the making is also evidenced by Sun's changing attitude toward Li. In 1894, he wanted to be a mentee and protégé to Li; in 1900, he still wanted Li as a partner; and by 1903, Sun joined student nationalists opposing Li due to his failure to drive out the European invaders.[168]

Although Schiffrin focuses on Sun's referencing and adaptation of prevailing Western intellectual trends in his work, he also refers to the fact in a tantalizingly few pages that Sun was already emphasizing that the ultimate basis of China's identity was her traditional civilization and her moral power. In an article published in 1903, Sun asserted that China eschewed military conquest and instead exercised cultural hegemony over her neighbors, attributing China's weakness instead to the floundering of the Qing court.[169] Responding to his constitutional monarchist critics in 1904, Sun also argued that patriotism ought to mean ultimate loyalty to the state, not the dynasty. He also observed in the same rebuttal published in a newspaper article that there was only the authority of force and not the expounding of morals, benevolence or righteousness in then then-prevailing climate of international relations.[170]

This early emphasis on traditional civilization, moral power, and patriotism set in the context of his early advocacy of Western-style reforms would set the stage for Sun's ideas later on, and traces of his adaptation of *tianxia* are already apparent here. Schiffrin's second

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[167] Ibid., 52–53.
[168] Ibid., 310.
[169] Ibid., 310.
[170] Ibid., 316–317.

major study, *Sun yat-sen: Reluctant Revolutionary*, focuses on the subsequent years of his life. His main thesis in this study is that Sun's unique status and enduring value to many Chinese were due to his audacity, optimism, resilience, monumental self-confidence, image of probity and selflessness, but most importantly the fact that his personality and style speaks to the crisis-mood that has characterized modern Chinese nationalism. [171]

However, he essentially does not change his previous evaluation of Sun:

> As a man, Sun was without doubt extraordinary, but personal inadequacies, no less than objective constraints, hampered his pursuit of heroic ambitions. Most people fail to realize the full potential of their endowed ability; Sun tried to go way beyond his. He chose revolution as his vocation – he was China's first professional in the field, and never left it – **but persistence rather than brilliance distinguished his performance**. He was neither a great strategist nor a profound ideologist.[172] (emphasis added)

Schiffrin argues that Sun's later years was a story of failure, but also of unrivalled optimism and determination. Ceding the office of the presidency to Yuan Shi Kai, who had Song Jiao Ren assassinated before then declaring himself emperor, Sun spent the remainder of his life trying to finish the revolution he inspired, drifting from place to place. However, he remains a national hero to many Chinese because he was active in the most tragic period of modern Chinese history but "insisted that this was an unnatural state of affairs, and that by an act of will the nation could quickly assume her rightful place in the world. No one had more confidence in China's potential than Sun, nor tried harder or more selflessly to realize it."[173] Like in his first study, Schiffrin highlights the role of Western ideas in Sun's thinking, as well the role of Japan as a model. He goes as far to say that there was no Chinese political figure that has ever been as open to outside influence as Sun was.[174]

However, 1919 was a clear turning point for Sun and the development of his ideas in

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[171] H. Z. Schiffrin, *Sun Yat-sen, Reluctant Revolutionary* (Boston and Toronto: Little and Brown, 1980), 4-6, 269.
[172] Ibid., 4.
[173] Ibid., 269.
[174] Ibid., 270.

Schiffrin's account of Sun's later years. The decision of the Paris peacemakers to endorse Japan's takeover of the German possessions in Shandong peninsula spurred the May Fourth Movement. Sun did not agree with the iconoclasm behind the movement, and Schiffrin muses that it was perhaps due to Sun's status as an outsider (i.e., of the Confucian elite) that caused him to hold tradition and the Confucian classics in mystical attraction. Schiffrin cites a few instances in which Sun's defense and showcasing of *wangdao* became increasingly apparent. In response to Japan's attempt to seize Shandong, Sun told a Japanese newspaper that its behavior was worse than that of the Western empires, comparing it to a younger brother who joins a gang of thieves to rob his own older brother and then complains that his elder brother hates him more than the rest of the gang.[175] During his years in Guangzhou when the government of Yuan Shi Kai in Beijing was recognized as the legitimate government by the Western powers before the nation was split and ruled by various local landlords, Sun received Soviet advice and aid in order to set up and reorganize the KMT. While professing admiration for Soviet aims however, he quoted Confucius and argued that Soviet methods were unsuitable for China.[176]

The most recent major scholarly work on Sun is Marie-Claire Bergère's *Sun Yat-sen*, a French work (subsequently translated into English) published in 1994. Bergère's assessment of Sun's ideas and intellectual capabilities are significantly more nuanced and positive than those of either Sharman or Schiffrin. She wrote that Sun was that he was a "media genius" and an excellent communicator who knew how to "sell China," and he remains revered today because he embodies the movement of China toward modernity.[177]Her main evaluation of Sun however, is that not that his personality or persistence were his strengths instead of his intellect. She argues that Sun was an archetypal boundary crosser and cultural intermediary

[175] Ibid., 210–211.
[176] Ibid., 225–226, 244.
[177] M. Bergère, and J. Lloyd, *Sun Yat-sen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 5.

of his era. Intellectually, this is evidenced by his loyalty to certain core aspects of Confucian culture paired with his pursuit and conversion to modernity. He sought to discover the modern world through his many travels without breaking with Chinese civilization. "He thus looked upon the politics and society of his native country with the critical perspective of a cosmopolitan observer, but without the detachment; he judged China as an outsider but loved it as a son," Bergère observes.[178]

Bergère, like this thesis and unlike Sharman or Schiffrin, also bases her assessment of Sun's ideas primarily on his final works, and in particular *The Three Principles of the People* of 1924. She does not conclude outright that Sun was not a man of great intellect like Sharman or Schiffrin. Her evaluation of Sun however, implies that he was better at transmitting and adapting ideas rather than creating them. She wrote of Sun:

> It is not among the elites of scholarship or power that cultural intermediaries or "boundary crossers," of whom Sun Yat-sen presents the perfect model, are recruited, but on the contrary among the half-rejected, the self-taught borne along by faith and great-heartedness, familiar with several cultures but masters of none… **His views on nationalism, democracy, and socialism were less trenchant than those of any number of contemporary Chinese intellectuals, yet it was through Sun that the inhabitants of Canton, Shanghai, and Peking learned of the ideologies and institutions of the West**...
> What *The Three Principles of the People* conveys of Sun Yat-sen's personality is essentially the force of his temperament. It remains a fundamental work, for it crystallizes the questions, ambitions, and ideas that fueled the debates of the first quarter of this century. It was through this text, later to become canonical, that several generations of Chinese were to come to grips with the modern political thought of their country.[179] (emphasis added)

However, Bergère also argues that despite this, Sun's writings do amount to political philosophy consistently organized around a handful of major axes and themes.[180] Bergère emphasizes one theme that is consistently evoked and invoked by Sun is the universalist Chinese tradition, or *tianxia*, and that it is this very basis that forms the foundation of Sun's

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[178] Ibid., 6.
[179] Ibid., 7, 354.
[180] Ibid., 291.

thinking and gives it cohesion, despite other aspects of his thinking also being very modern at the same time.[181]

She briefly describes Sun's thinking on the relationship between *tianxia* and modern nationalism in a few pages, the key parts of which are worth setting out in full:

> He thus like to regard himself as a **re-founder rather than a grave digger of the old order**... closer to the great scholars of the transition period than to the iconoclasts of the new generation…
> It was a matter not of saving the tradition by means of modern nationalism, or of installing that nationalism in tradition's place, **but rather of constructing a national identity that would make use of the tradition and at the same time transcend it.** For Sun Yat-sen, the currents that were projected by the two antinomic poles represented by, on the one hand, the nation, and, on the other, traditional culture, were not mutually alien or invariably hostile. Their interpenetration engendered a dynamic force upon which the formation of the national consciousness both could and show draw...
> At the heart of this paradigm lies the humanist and nationalist postulate that **considers the order of the world to be a moral order founded upon the perfecting of the individual**. "Such a deep, all-embracing theory," Sun Yat-sen declared, "is a nugget of wisdom peculiar to China's philosophy of State and worthy to be preserved."[182] (emphasis added)

Nevertheless, Bergère concludes that the value of *The Three Principles of the People* and of Sun's ideas in general lies not for their intrinsic intellectual value, but in its contribution the diffusion of ideas and to the history of transcultural border crossing, the history of communication between on tradition and civilization with another. She bases this evaluation on the premise that the major themes around which Sun's ideas are organized faithfully reflect the thought of intellectuals such as Kang You Wei and Liang Qi Chao, and that he borrowed from intellectuals such as Kang and Liang their adaptations of Western concepts instead of coming up with his own.[183]

Therefore, although Bergère's evaluation of Sun is considerably more nuanced than that of Sharman or Schiffrin, at the end, she also concludes that Sun's ideas on international

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[181] Ibid., 356.
[182] Ibid., 365–368.
[183] Ibid., 392–393.

relations should not be taken seriously. She argues this on the basis that, in essence, he did not have any original ideas, and the ones that he diffused so successfully were borrowed from others. For the reasons set out in the previous section on Sun's adaptation of *tianxia* and in this section, this thesis argues otherwise.

Not only does this thesis argue, contrary to the above scholars, that Sun was a man of intellect, it also argues that he was actually *not* as a man of action and of practicality as they claim he was. For one, he was not even physically in China during Wuchang Uprising that led to the overthrow of the Qing and to the founding of the Republic, which he subsequently was elected the first president of. Sun was in the United States drumming up financial and diplomatic support for the revolutionary cause when these events unfolded. He subsequently returned to China and was elected the Republic's first president, reaching the zenith of his political career, but he quickly and voluntarily resigned and made way for military strongman Yuan Shi Kai. When Sun passed away in 1925, China had still not been reunified under the Republic. Therefore, if a man of action and practicality is defined as an agent who directly effects change on the ground, Sun was actually not a man of action and practicality. As the Paradox of Self- Rectification shows, Sun had big ideas that were original and hugely inspiring, but he did not really bother to think through the means and methods that would make them work in practice.

However, this actually supports my argument as set out in this chapter and the last, that Sun was a man of intellect rather than a man of action. He was not physically in China when the 1911 revolution happened, yet his ideas were powerful and inspiring enough to induce others to take action and overthrow the Qing on the ground in China from half-way across the world and then to attribute the revolution to him by electing him the Republic's first president. He did not live to see the reunification of China under the Republic, yet his ideas were inspiring enough to induce his successors to largely reunite China under the

Republic through the Northern Expedition. In addition, even though he is now long gone, his ideas continue to be a source of inspiration for many Chinese in both Mainland China and in Taiwan. The prior conception that he was a man of action but not a man of intellect does not fit with this history. A well-oiled political machine devoid of big ideas does not inspire others to fight for it, whether it be from half-way across the world or over a hundred years following its demise. However, a dreamer with grand ideas that resonates with and inspires others does. That is why this thesis argues that Sun was a man of intellect and not of action, contrary to the prevailing Western scholarship on him.

Chapter 4: Beyond the Classic Expansion Thesis and China's Entry into International Society

This Chapter sets out the expansion story as documented by the existing English School literature, and explains how many important aspects of this story are either obscured or altogether ignored. It begins by summarizing the classic expansion of civilization and entry thesis as it has been applied to describe China at the turn of the twentieth century, before then going on to point out the major gaps of this approach. The next section discusses the major critiques of the classic expansion and entry thesis more generally, and it links them specifically to the case of China to highlight what is wrong with this thesis. The third section then argues that, rather than "entry" into international society, China's relationship with European international society should be re- characterized as a process of engagement that is contested and on-going. This section lists four major themes that should form the basis of this new approach. The final section then discusses the main implications of the theoretical arguments presented in this chapter, if valid, on the English School more generally.

What's Wrong with the Classic Expansion Thesis as Applied to China

The standard work on the classic expansion thesis is Gerrit Gong's *The Standard of Civilization in International Society*. Gong, defining the standard of civilization, argues that it consisted of five criteria. Firstly, a civilized state guarantees basic rights such as life, dignity, property, and freedom to travel to its own and foreign nationals alike. Second, it is run by an organized and efficient bureaucracy and state machinery. Third, it adheres to international law, including the laws of war, and maintains a competent system of courts and laws at home. Fourth, it maintains adequate and permanent international system of diplomatic

communication. Lastly, and most pertinent to the arguments of this thesis, that it "by and large conforms to the accepted norms and practices of the 'civilized' international society."[184] While the first four requirements are relatively objective and easy to measure, Gong argues that the last requirement is categorically different from the rest:

> The fifth requirement of the standard of 'civilization' was **its most elastic, and most subjective**. Not all of what it took to be considered 'civilized' could be neatly categorized as the protection of basic rights, political organization, adherence to international law, or maintenance of permanent diplomatic relations. The demand that a country conform to 'civilized' norms represented an intuitive effort to guarantee the general acceptability of its cultural practices before declaring it 'civilized'... it was expected that members of the same society of 'civilized' states would **share sufficiently in fundamental, underlying assumptions about the world**... so as to feel part of a common society and a shared civilization. Drawing the fine lines between a universal standard of civilization, a European standard of 'civilization', and a standard of European civilization was one of the problems of defining and applying the standard of 'civilization'.[185] (emphasis added)

Therefore according to Gong's own formulation, the standard of civilization was not just a matter of applying the objective tests set out by the first four criteria, but included the fifth, much more subjective and tacit test in order to distinguish those that belonged to a particular society and those that did not.[186] In fact, Gong himself argues that it is precisely this fifth subjective component that makes the application of the standard of "civilization" so difficult, which is humiliating to those on the receiving end and potentially unjust, as no country willingly submits to cultural imperialism.[187] He characterizes the expansion of Europe into the non-European world in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as not merely a clash of political institutions, laws, economics, or even military conflicts, but as primarily a "confrontation of civilizations" that applied different standards

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[184] G.W. Gong, *The Standard of Civilization in International Society* (New York Oxford University Press, 1984), 14-15.
[185] Ibid., 19, 21.
[186] Ibid., 3.
[187] Ibid., xii.

of civilizations and worldviews to their conduct of international relations.[188] However, Gong only discusses the first four criteria, completely ignoring the fifth, to conclude that China employed the European standard and entered international society as a "civilized" state by 1911.[189] No attempt was made to investigate whether China sufficiently adopted the same fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations as European international society.

This omission is highly consequential, because it exposes the fact that the expansion story Gong documents potentially obscures many elements of the story that are not captured by his account of the standard of civilization. A useful analogy can be made with Stephen Walt's analysis of how states evaluate and weigh the threats they face. based on four factors: a state's aggregate power, geographical proximity, offensive power, and aggressive intentions. Out of the four, Walt plainly argues that it is the aggressive intentions test that matters the most. Even a state with relatively little aggregate power will cause states to balance against it if it is perceived as being aggressive.[190] The intentions test is the most important because it is what you do with your objective attributes that matters most. Without taking into account the intentions test, it is simply impossible to give a full account and understanding of the story.

The glaring nature of this omission is all the more obvious given the fact that Gong also emphasizes that China did not enter international society consensually, but was forcibly drawn into it.[191] If China did not enter European international society or adopt the European standard of civilization consensually, then it seems illogical to assume that her fundamental, underlying assumptions about the world and international order would become sufficiently

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[188] Ibid., 3.
[189] Ibid., 147–157.
[190] S. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca Cornell University Press, 1987), 22–26.
[191] G.W. Gong, "China's Entry into International Society," in *The Expansion of International Society*, eds. H. Bull and A. Watson (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1984), 171–183, 172, 183.

European overnight, even if she adopted the objective criteria on Gong's list. In fact, Gong himself acknowledges the possibility that non-European entrants to European international society may only have adopted its norms and institutions superficially, and that their own historic standards of "civilization" may not have completely disappeared.[192]

Mirroring Gong's formalistic and institutional approach to documenting and dating China's entry into international society are Immanuel Hsu and Yongjin Zhang, who both like Gong rely on the application of objective benchmarks. Hsu argues that China entered international society by 1880 because China had established a permanent diplomatic network and actively employed international law in her dealings with the Western powers.[193]

In a tantalizingly brief passage at the end however, he alludes to the fact that China's pre-modern heritage as a Confucian empire still "lingered in the Chinese mind, and their residual effects were clearly discernible" without substantially discussing what these residual effects are.[194] Therefore, implicit in this brief passage is the possibility that "entry" into international society is not a binary, all or nothing choice between entry or exclusion. On the other hand, it cannot be dated to a particular moment, but is rather a much more contested process where elements of the old order are combined with the new by the entrant in an attempt to adopt the standard of civilization without completely renouncing its own cultural heritage, worldview, or fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations.

Both Gong's and Hsu's arguments largely paint a picture of China learning and passively fulfilling the objective requirements of the European standard of civilization, arguing that there was a particular point in time when it successfully fulfilled these requirements and entered into international society. Zhang adopts a legalistic and institutional approach similar

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[192] G. W. Gong, *The Standard of Civilization in International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 11.
[193] I. C. Hsu, *China's Entrance into the Family of Nations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 207–209.
[194] Ibid., 210.

to Gong's and Hsu's, and he argues that China's entry into international society occurred between 1918-1920 in the aftermath of the First World War. That is, when China actively argued that the principles of international law such as self-determination and equal sovereignty should be applied equally to China, and that the system of unequal treaties and treaty ports which had been imposed on her by the Western powers should be dismantled.[195]

Zhang's characterization of China's engagement with European international society is more nuanced than Gong's and Hsu's, in that he clearly carves out a role for Chinese agency. Zhang argues that there was "a rebellious nature in this acceptance [of international law and the rules of international society]: it was predicated on the condition that they must be equally applied to China."[196]

Rather than just being the passive recipient and fulfilling the objective requirements of the European standard of civilization, Zhang points out that China realized that the rules of international society were being applied to her in an unequal and discriminatory fashion, and actively rebelled and campaigned to be treated as an equal. While this is undoubtedly a more nuanced and sophisticated approach than the ones applied by Gong and Hsu, Zhang's account of the expansion story in the case of China still fails to account for a number of important aspects of the expansion story, which are also ignored and obscured by the rest of the expansion literature.

First, Zhang's approach also ignores whether China came to sufficiently share in European international society's fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations, and largely assumes that by meeting the objective requirements of the standard of civilization, China automatically came to share sufficiently in the same fundamental, underlying assumptions about the world and international order as the Western powers. Zhang

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[195] Y. Zhang, *China in the International System, 1918-20: the Middle Kingdom at the Periphery* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1991), 4–5.
[196] Ibid., 192.

argues that the intrusion of the West into East Asia in the mid-nineteenth century brought about not only the collapse of the Sino-centric order of states, but also eradicated "the Chinese belief in the cultural and moral superiority of Chinese civilization, deserving universal application."[197] He further argues more generally in respect of the non-Western entrants into European international society that:Western entrants into European international society that:

> The non-Western countries also acknowledged or had to acknowledge the central role and dominating position of Europe in the universal international system. Their acceptance of unequal terms dictated by the Europeans in their mutual relations... their efforts at Westernization or modernization of their foreign relations institutions, economic activities and legal systems, their looking to Europe for intellectual inspiration, their changes, adaptations and adjustments to the modern world shaped by the Europeans, their attempts to meet the standard of "civilization" so as to enter the "Family of Nations" formerly exclusive to Europeans – all this demonstrates that, from a non-Western perspective the role of Europe as political and probably also cultural centre of the global international system was also accepted and acceptable...
> To sum up, the core-periphery divide in the nineteenth-century international system was, in cultural terms, found in the confrontation between Europe and other indigenous cultures. **While the European culture claimed its superiority and asserted its leading role in the nineteenth-century world, the other cultures, trying to preserve their own identity, nevertheless acquiesced in its superiority**...[198] (emphasis added)

However, Gong, Hsu and Zhang's recounting of China's acceptance of the objective benchmarks of the European standard of civilization which form the crux of their expansion story, leave out the highly important question of whether China also came to sufficiently share in the same fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations as the Western powers. The satisfaction of the objective criteria cannot be assumed to automatically translate into satisfaction of the fifth subjective one, which Gong himself emphasizes is categorically different from the first four. As Chapters 1 and 2 have argued, *tianxia* and self-rectification constituted the context under which the standard of civilization was adopted into Sun's ideas on international relations. While attempting to define what constitutes

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[197] Ibid., 21, 26.
[198] Ibid., 31–33.

fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations is an inherently risky exercise due to the broad and highly subjective nature of the concept, for the purposes of this thesis, it refers to Sun's conceptualization of *tianxia* in this study of Sun's ideas on international relations as set out in Chapter 2.

This thesis argues that standards of civilization are not just one- dimensional, objective lists composed of discrete items which are ticked off one after another. Rather, the standard of civilization imposed by the Western powers on entrants as described in the existing expansion literature should be viewed *as a layered part of* and *in the context of* the *tianxia* worldview and conceptual framework. The adoption of the standard of civilization formed *part of* the new moral-political identity and order which Sun felt China had to construct for herself in order to make sense of the new *tianxia* brought about by the expansion of international society. The adoption of the standard of civilization as part of this new moral-political identity and purpose were also *part of* what was necessary to achieve self-rectification and to improve upon China's peripheral position in this new *tianxia*, the center of which China suddenly discovered was occupied by the Western powers. However, Sun's adoption of the standard of civilization was not the whole story, because he also tried to transcend it in a morally informed way within the framework of self- rectification and *tianxia*, thereby demonstrating the agency of Sun.

This thesis argues that it is only by examining whether intellectuals and leaders like Sun came to sufficiently share in the fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations that the multi-layered and multi- dimensional nature of standards of civilization can be understood and exposed. Moreover, if China did not share sufficiently in the same fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations as European international society, then this also means that it is conceptually unhelpful and inaccurate to characterize and date entry as a one-off event. Rather, it should be characterized as a

contested and ongoing process. In the context of Sun's ideas, this process is through the constant and ongoing efforts of all parties to either serve as models for moral and political emulation, or to self-rectify in order to obtain the characteristics associated with the desired moral-political model. Furthermore, this also means that entrants into European international society at the turn of the century may have adopted its norms and institutions much more superficially than has been characterized in the past, and that the concept of entry which implies a binary choice between being in or out of international society is also conceptually unhelpful and inaccurate. Rather, as Sun's ideas on international relations highlight, it is more fruitful and enriching to view entry as question of who was where and in relation to whom in international society. This also opened up the conceptual space for intellectuals and leaders like Sun for agency and creativity, engaged in self-rectification during this process of adoption, adaptation, and possible transcendence, an approach that recognizes and returns the power of agency to them which expansion story had largely written off. This approach, it is submitted, brings back the full richness and texture of the expansion story which the existing literature has largely obscured and ignored.

Critiques of the Classic Expansion Thesis

The purpose of the previous section is not to disprove the classic expansion thesis. There is obvious value in the pioneering works of Gong, Hsu, and Zhang in that China did in fact change the structure of its government, its laws, increasingly accepted international law, and established a permanent diplomatic network, all of which were undeniably significant changes. Its purpose is merely to point out that by turning to a blind eye to the question of whether China and its most prominent leaders and intellectuals like Sun did in fact come to sufficiently share in the same fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations with European international society, the expansion story that is documented by the

existing literature ignores and obscures the important aspects and of the story raised in this and the previous three chapters, thus denying scholars and readers the full and rich understanding of the expansion story that they deserve. As argued above, whether leaders and intellectuals like Sun did in fact come to share sufficiently in the fundamental underlying assumptions of international society is a matter that should be investigated empirically, rather than asserted, assumed, or ignored. Furthermore and more generally, this chapter aims to draw on more recent English School scholarship which has critiqued the classic expansion thesis to question the utility of the whole concept of entry into international society. Rather than entry, I argue that China's engagement of European international society at the turn of twentieth century should be re-characterized as a process of contestation and negotiation that is still ongoing and continues to have significant implications for the place of China in contemporary international society.

The more recent body of English School scholarship has highlighted a number of major problems with the concept of entry and the classic expansion thesis. Firstly, the expansion thesis is founded on what John Hobson calls the "Eurocentric *big bang theory* Eurocentric *big bang theory* of world politics," a theory that is based on a logic of immanence by painting a picture where the rise of modernity in Europe and European international society is portrayed as "an endogenous journey that passes through a familiar series of European way-stations."[199] This perspective, which Hobson argues both Hedley Bull and Adam Watson espouse, essentially argues that there was a two-stage process whereby modern Europe and the society of states it founded came into being through a process that was entirely self-constituting and exceptionally different from any other region or period in history, and then expanded outwards and onto the non-European world. This ignores the fact

[199] J. M. Hobson, *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 223.

that the emergence of modern Europe and the European society of states was itself shaped by its centuries of pre-modern and modern interactions with the non-European world in the first place.[200] Watson argues in *The Evolution of International Society* that the Europeans created the first international system to span the globe, which was then exported and universalized as the entire world came to share the same basic assumptions of the European society of states.[201] Moreover, despite the fact that the goal of *Evolution* was to set out and compare a variety of pre-modern non-European international societies and to examine what impact they may have on contemporary international society, two-thirds of *Evolution* is actually devoted to the development and expansion of European international society. In addition, even in the section on ancient states systems, he argues that classical Greece "occupies a more central position in the evolution of modern international society than any other system… and deserves our more detailed attention."[202] Bull, while admitting that European international society did not develop in complete isolation, but was influenced by Asian international practices among others, nonetheless also concludes that:

> [It] cannot be denied that the Europeans in shaping an international society of worldwide dimension has been a special one. It was in fact the European powers and not the powers of Asia, Africa, or the Americas the came to occupy a dominant position in the world as a whole... The non- European and non-Western majority of states in the world today... played little role in shaping the foundations of international society to which they now belong…[203]

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[200] J. M. Hobson, "The Twin Self-Delusions of IR: Why 'Hierarchy' and Not 'Anarchy'is the Core Concept of IR", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 557–575, 563–564. See also J. M. Hobson, *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). C. H. Alexandrowicz, *An Introduction to the History of the Law of Nations in the East Indies : (16th, 17th and 18th Centuries)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967). A. Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[201] A. Watson, *The Evolution of International Society : a Comparative Historical Analysis (*London: Routledge, 1992), 214.

[202] Ibid., 1, 47.

[203] H. Bull, "The Emergence of a Universal International Society," in *The Expansion of International Society*, eds. H. Bull and A. Watson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 117–126, 123-124.

The conceptual utility of "entry" is clearly dubious if what is being entered into, namely European international society, was itself constituted by centuries of interaction with polities outside Europe. Moreover, it is clearly questionable whether the influence of pre-modern international orders has been completely extinguished and plays absolutely no role in the foundations or the operation of international society today. As both David Kang and Evelyn Goh argue, hierarchy rather than balancing remains the structuring principle of East Asian regional order today.[204] However, perhaps more directly relevant to the case of China and the arguments advanced in this thesis are the following criticisms. The second major critique of "entry" and the expansion thesis is that it largely wrote off any room for non-Western agency, as entrants are largely assumed to have passively adopted the fundamental underlying assumptions about international order as the Western powers. This seems to have been the approach taken by Gong, who sets out the fifth subjective criteria on fundamental underlying assumptions about the world as part of the standard of civilization, but then neglects to discuss whether this did in fact occur in China. Kalypso Nicolaidis also highlights how agency denial was a key prerogative of the members of European international society, as non-members simply had no standing whatsoever.[205] Hobson argues that this narrative casts the West as the pioneer and invests it with pioneering agency, while Eastern agency is either circumscribed as conditional, in the sense that it is only limited to

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[204] D.C. Kang, "Hierarchy, Balancing, and Empirical Puzzles in Asian International Relations", *International Security,* vol. 28, no. 3 (2004), 165–180. D. C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010). E. Goh, 2013, *The Struggle for Order: Hegemony, Hierarchy, and Transition in Post-Cold War East Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[205] K. Nicolaidis, C. Vergerio, N. F. Onar, and J. Viehoff, "From Metropolis to Microcosmos: The EU's New Standards of Civilisation", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 718-745, 725-726. See also D. Stroikos, "Introduction: Rethinking the Standard (s) of Civilisation (s) in International Relations", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 546–556.

assimilating the institutions and practices delivered to them courtesy of the European civilizing mission, or decried as predatory, when the East's revolt against the West and refusal to fully Westernize gives rise to the "Eastern Problem" and the destabilization of global order.[206] The East then becomes an entity largely lacking a sane mind of its own, as it is either cast as child-like and compliant or irrationally seeking to overturn a stable order that largely delivers benefits to it.

This largely mirrors the point raised by Manela and discussed in the last chapter: that the failure to establish a liberal Wilsonian order, or a fully Westernized order following the end of the First World War, spurred the creation of "radical revisionist movements" which as Hobson argues casts the East as predatory and destructive.[207] Under this narrative, there is no room for states like China to possess an agency that is neither conditional nor predatory and to chart a middle path that may not be fully Western yet does not destroy global order. It becomes a case of the Western way or the highway. I argue, drawing on Sun's ideas, that this is not necessarily the case.

Closely related to the second is the third major critique, which is that entry and the expansion thesis hides the role that coercion played in the "entry" of the non-European entrants. Andrew Phillips, comparing the imposition of the European standard of civilization in the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries with the construction of Mughal India and Qing China's standards of civilization, argues that what sets the European standard apart is the way it way it was imposed by force in a top-down fashion.[208] More important however, is the fact that the expansion thesis does not then engage in any significant discussion on how

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[206] Hobson (2012), 214–215.
[207] E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 225.
[208] A. Phillips, "Civilising missions and the rise of international hierarchies in early modern Asia", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 697–717, 714.

coercion may affect the degree to which entrants adopt or do not adopt the same fundamental, underlying assumptions about international order, leading Gong to muse that non-European members of international society may have adopted its norms and institutions only superficially.[209] If "entrants" only entered because they were forced to, it is highly questionable whether they would sufficiently adopt the same fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations as the Western powers. If these assumptions continued to diverge, then this would justify an empirical investigation into how they continued to diverge, what the possible effects of such divergence are, and this would throw into question the whole utility of the concept of entry and attempts to put a date on the moment of entry, as Gong, Hsu, and Zhang have done. Closely related to this point is the fact that there is little discussion in the entry thesis on how coercion affects the place that the coerced subsequently choose to occupy in international society. As Ivan Neumann argues in relation to Russia's place in international society, memories of its past engagement with the Tartars and with Western Europe have affected Russia's place in international society, and in many ways it has remained on the periphery of European international society.[210] Similarly, with China, memories of its proud pre-modern past followed by the Western intrusion into East Asia and the following "century of humiliation" have been and continue to remain central to China's narrative of where it came from, who it is today, and where it aspires to be in international society.[211] Yet the expansion story, by adopting an in-or-out approach, as well as a rather one-sided perspective on the engagement and interaction between the two sides, largely ignores and forecloses inquiry into how coercion has affected the response of states like

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[209] G. W. Gong, *The Standard of Civilization in International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 11.
[210] I. B. Neumann, "Entry into International Society Reconceptualised: the Case of Russia", *Review of International Studies,* vol. 37, no. 2 (2011), 463–484, 463–464, 470–471, 484.
[211] Z. Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation: Historical Memory in Chinese Politics and Foreign Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012). W.A. Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

China to its forced "entry" into European international society, and how this has affected or continues to affect the place it chooses to take in international society.

The last major critique of entry and the expansion thesis relates to how this thesis portrays the expansion of European international society as a normatively desirable project. Edward Keene argues that the key difference between an international system and international society as set out by Bull is really a normative one, for Bull clearly presents global international society, which as we have seen he argues is a direct product of European international society, as a "hard-won, often fragile" achievement, an advancement from a Hobbesian system that must be protected.[212] However in pursuing this narrative, Keene points out that Bull paints an "overly benign picture of what a society is: it exaggerates the cultural unity and normative consensus that societies possess, and understates the importance of unequal, exploitative and conflictual relationships to any existing social order."[213] He goes on to argue that the entry thesis and its portrayal of the expansion as normatively desirable hides the ways expansion has reproduced hierarchies through social interaction in international society. Nicolaidis also argues that the reproduction of hierarchy in favor of the West as the civilizer was a key component of the European standard of civilization.[214]

In essence therefore, the expansion story in asserting the normative desirability of the values underpinning European international society, not only occludes enquiry into whether those being expanded upon perceived these values as normatively desirable and in fact adopted them, but is also silent on the largely corresponding relationship between civilizational and power hierarchies in international order more generally. China, both in its

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[212] E. Keene, "The Standard of 'Civilisation', the Expansion Thesis and the 19th-century International Social Space", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 651-673, 658.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Nicolaidis et al. (2014), 727–728.

pre-modern past as well as in the present, is a state that cares deeply about its status and place in the international hierarchy of states.[215] If being a setter of civilizational norms is closely linked to higher status and a higher place in the international power hierarchy, then it is highly unlikely that leading intellectuals and leaders like Sun from China would be content with being merely a passive recipient of civilizational norms dictated by and exported from the West. This is because of its proud pre-modern past as the center of the East Asian order as well as its strong desire to regain its position at center of *tianxia.* In fact, pre-modern China already had centuries of experience in using its position as the standard setter of Confucian civilization to buttress its role at the top of the East Asian power and status hierarchies, long before the large-scale European intrusion into East Asia in the nineteenth century.[216] Long recognizing this link, which the expansion story largely does not mention, it would only be natural for China to revive this role as its power grows.

This section has raised four major criticisms of the entry thesis and linked these critiques in particular to China and East Asian order. The goal is not to disprove the entry thesis, which is valuable in and of itself. However, while the entry thesis is a useful prism through which to analyze why China made changes to its government, laws, and diplomatic system along Western lines in the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, it also hides or occludes enquiry into other very important aspects of China's engagement with European international society. This engagement process actually started long before China's classical "entry" into international society, which for instance the first critique on mutual constitution highlights, and continues to be an ongoing and contested process today,

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[215] Kang (2010). A. S. C. Kwan, "Hierarchy, Status and International Society: China and the Steppe Nomads", *European Journal of International Relations,* vol. 22, no. 2 (2016), 362–383. Y. Deng, *China's Struggle for Status: the Realignment of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[216] Kang (2010), Phillips (2014).

precisely because of the roles of coercion, Chinese agency, and the link between civilizational and power hierarchies. As Yongjin Zhang has argued more recently in regards to standards of civilization more generally in the global context, "civilising international society is historically an incomplete process and will always be an unfinished business."[217] By focusing on narrowly defined objective criteria for "entry," the expansion story tells a teleological story from a one-sided perspective that largely takes for granted the response of the "entrants". Moreover, it only explains certain aspects of the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the case of China. However, by approaching the study of the expansion through an inquiry into whether leading intellectuals and leaders like Sun did in fact come to sufficiently share in the same fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations, this opens up the conceptual space to see the expansion and standards of civilization in all its multi-layered and multi-dimensional complexity, richness and cultural amalgamation. Moreover, seen in this light, the concept of entry as a one-off event then becomes amenable to being re-characterized a contested and ongoing process of engagement instead.

Re-characterizing China's engagement with the West

I argue that the re-characterization of China's engagement with European international society, or Western-global international society as Buzan and Zhang term it, as a contested and on-going process consists of four major themes.[218] First, this approach must recognize that international society is stratified along multiple layers and dimensions of civilizational standard, instead of a singular, one-dimensional standard that is usually defined from one

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[217] Y. Zhang, "The Standard of 'Civilisation' Redux: Towards the Expansion of International Society 3.0?", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 674-696, 679.

[218] B. Buzan, and Y. Zhang, "Introduction: Interrogating Regional International Society in East Asia," in *Contesting International Society in East Asia*, eds. B. Buzan and Y. Zhang, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1–28.

perspective by just one power or set of powers. The existence of multiple layers and dimensions entails not only the existence different civilizational norms and standards in different issue areas, but also probably that of competing standards, particularly in regards to what Gong terms the fundamental, underlying assumptions about the world, since these assumptions are usually heavily rooted in history and culture.

In this regard, there are likely to remain competing conceptions as to the fundamental underlying assumptions about the world and international order as these are heavily rooted in history and memory. Analyzing Russia's engagement with European international society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Neumann argues that Russia's stance toward European polities was heavily influenced by its memory of being part of the suzerain system dominated by the Mongol Golden Horde.[219] Russia's fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations, informed by this history, continued to be based on the belief that the key to international relations was to situate oneself at the center of the system and at the top of a hierarchical system. Arguing that Russia never really let go its memories of being at the center of its own suzerain system, Neumann argues that it and many other polities with long histories like China, therefore, feel that they do not presently receive the recognition and status that should be due to them. Highlighting the importance of where polities come from prior to their engagement with European international society and the continuing impact this has on contemporary international society, Neumann argues:

> To Watson and the early English School, although there may be set-backs and even reversions, the concept is a process where one party imposes its order on the other, with little or no residue and without being itself changed by the experience. But if there were no residue, how to explain that Russia is still, some five hundred years after international society may be said to begin to congeal, in its outer rim, regardless of its traditional Christianity... To take another example, in his chapter on China in *The Expansion of International Society*, Gong approvingly quotes Mary Wright's book *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism* to the effect that China 'accepted and mastered the principles and practices of Western diplomacy [and succeeded] in using them as the main bulwark of Chinese sovereignty". Well yes, but if

[219] Neumann (2011), 463–464, 470–471.

> that were the whole story, with no residue left, then how to account for the fact that it is still an open question in what degree and in what contexts China accepts these principles and practices today?[220]

Like Neumann, Filippo Costa Buranelli also argues in relation to Russia that where you came from still mattered, "even if you [like Russia] shared the predominant rules and institutions of [European international society]."[221] If this is the case with Russia, which historically shared in the workings of many of the rules and institutions of European international society, then surely this is even truer in the case of China, which up till the mid-nineteenth century did not share in their workings at all. Moreover, polities like China and Russia believing that they do not receive their due recognition and status is probably also indicative of the fact that their fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations continue to be informed by their pre-modern pasts, when they were ranked higher on the international hierarchy defined by their own civilizational standards. In the case of China, this thesis will show that Sun's adoption of the standard of civilization into his ideas about international relations were part of his larger and overarching efforts for the self-rectification of China so that it could one day reclaim its place at the center of this new *tianxia*..

Kang, emphasizing the unique history and culture of East Asia, also argues that the global expansion of the Westphalian format of international relations has plainly not erased its historically rooted values, norms and worldviews, citing for instance the lack of balancing behavior and unique economic development model in this region. Drawing on Buzan's syncretist view of the expansion of European international society and cultural transmission, Kang wrote:

This leads to an important question: have East Asian countries, peoples and leaders

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[220] Ibid., 469-470.
[221] F. C. Buranelli, "Knockin' on Heaven's Door: Russia, Central Asia and the Mediated Expansion of International Society", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 817–836, 835.

> completely internalized and been socialized into Western, Westphalian ideas? East Asian view, identities and expectations – as influenced as they are by the West – emerged from their own historical experiences and intellectual worldviews. It might thus be surprising to expect that their beliefs and norms about state behavior would completely derive from a Western model... it might be worth asking whether these Western values have penetrated to the core of East Asian beliefs... While Western norms and ideas have had a profound influence on East Asia, it is also fairly easy to conclude that East Asian societies retain much of their own distinctive culture and worldviews.[222]

In particular, Kang emphasizes the standard-setting role that China has played for centuries as the civilizational center of East Asia, arguing that the question is not whether China has completely adopted the Western worldview or fundamental assumptions about international relations – the answer is plainly no. However, how it will draw on its own historical narratives and reconcile these with its rising power in the context of contemporary standards of civilization in international society?

Moreover, instead of asking a simple binary of question of whether or not a state is a member of international society, it is more fruitful to ask where the member is situated in international society. This point draws heavily on Keene's argument that the concept of entry should be replaced by the concept of stratification, and that international society is stratified along multiple axes. Keene's first move is to replace the concept of expansion with the concept of stratification, changing the question from "who was a member of international society?" to "who was where within international society?"[223] Keene argues that in the nineteenth century, the Western powers constituted a privileged core, a charmed circle of civilized nations situated at the heart of international society. This self-defined club of the family of nations restricted membership based on civilizational standards it defined and tried

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[222] D. C. Kang, "An East Asian International Society Today? The Cultural Dimension," in *Contesting International Society in East Asia*, eds. B. Buzan and Y. Zhang (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 73–92, 83–84, 87. B. Buzan, "Culture and International Society", *International Affairs,* vol. 86, no. 1 (2010), 1–25.

[223] Keene (2014), 652, Neumann (2011), 466. C. Schulz,"Civilisation, Barbarism and the Making of Latin America's Place in 19th-Century International Society", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* vol. 42, no. 3 (2014), 837–859, 838–839, 858–859.

to unilaterally impose these on those desirous to join its ranks. Keene's second move is to argue that within this core and in international society generally, members were stratified along multiple axes, of which he argued there were three: differences in material power, differences in legal rights, and differences in prestige, or those held in high esteem by international society based on the possession of common civilizational standards. In his analysis of the nineteenth century social space, Keene focuses largely on the European core, which he argues was defined largely by the third element. This core was largely held each other in high esteem and respect because their similar political and judicial organizations, their assumptions on the conduct of international affairs, and their common "style of life" made them a definable and coherent group.[224] This is despite the fact that even within this core, there were members of widely varying material power and legal rights, ranging from fully sovereign great powers like Great Britain to semi-sovereign German principalities. What held them together and what made them a coherent group within which they interacted according to their own unique rules vis-à-vis those outside this group was the fact that they held each other in mutual high- esteem based on their common civilizational standards.[225] Carsten-Andreas Schulz, in his study of Latin America's place in nineteenth century international society, mirroring Keene, also argues that "entry" ought to be replaced by "stratification" and that international society was "heterarchical" in the sense that there were multiple dimensions of stratification and hierarchy at work.[226]

The two moves to replace the concept of entry with stratification and to posit that international society is stratified along multiple axes are undoubtedly an improvement on the classical expansion story and partially address the defects discussed in the last section.

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[224] Keene (2014), 664–665.
[225] E. Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[226] Schulz (2014), 838–839.

However, I argue that this approach still has two shortcomings. First, while Keene paints a picture of what international society looked like in Europe in the nineteenth century, it largely discusses and judges the allotment of esteem based on the standard and from the unilateral perspective of the European states. It is still a picture of who was where within international society from the vantage point of Europe. Moreover, it seems to imply that there is only one global standard against which to judge esteem, only this club is capable of conferring high esteem, and everyone outside the club is desirous of such conferral and thus will emulate wholesale the civilizational standards of this club. This is unsurprising given Keene's empirical focus on the nineteenth century core of the European states.

However, when placed in the context of critiquing the classical expansion story in its global and historical context, I argue that this is not necessarily the case, and in fact there coexist multiple competing conceptions of what constitutes high esteem and what is deemed civilized. This leads to my second criticism, which that is in actuality, while extra- European states were probably more willing to buy into the more objective and superficial European elements of civilization, such as political and judicial organization, they had capacity and agency not to buy into others. This was especially so when their own historically and culturally rooted fundamental underlying assumptions on international relations were impinged upon. Those not in the core may continue to have very different ideas as to what constitutes the appropriate civilizational standards and high esteem. One of the most compelling things this thesis will try to reveal through the study of Sun's ideas is that this was true in the case of China, even when it was at the nadir of its material power at the turn of the twentieth century.

Finally, this opens up the conceptual space for non-European states to reclaim their agency by retaining and adapting their own fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations, which may differ markedly or even be at odds with those held by

the Western powers. This, however, does not mean that they did not become entrants of international society or that the standard of civilization was not important, especially if we replace the concept of entry with the concept of stratification. What it does mean is that there was and remains ample space for non-Western members of international society to keep, alter, or discard as they see fit their own historic fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations, while adopting, combining, or even transcending the standard of civilization in ways that are consistent with the moral-political underpinnings of these fundamental underlying assumptions. As Zhang argues in his *Millennium* special edition article, "the classical story has largely neglected a simple fact, that is that the classical [civilizing] project gave a particularistic interpretation and a truncated meaning to [civilization] in international relations, which is decidedly Westphalian rather than European/Western."[227] This creates the conceptual space, and explains the reality, that differing fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations continue to exist in the modern world, as this thesis shows in the case of China at the turn of the twentieth century, without discarding the most important aspects of the classic expansion and entry story.

The second major theme of a new characterization of China's engagement with Western-global international society, which is closely related to the first, is that culture remains central to the positioning of states in relation to the Western core. Yannis Stivachtis argues that while it was the logic of anarchy, or the requirement of becoming a state to survive in the modern world, that drew many states into becoming members of European international society, it is subsequently the logic of culture that determines their place and the degree of integration with European international society. His main case study is the War of Greek Independence, and he argues that while the strategic considerations of the European powers vis-à-vis the declining Ottoman Empire caused them to support independence, statehood and

[227] Zhang (2014), 678.

the admission of Greece into European international society in the first place, Greece was subsequently tightly integrated and accorded a privileged position at the core of European international society not afforded to the Ottoman Empire and the Afro-Asian states because of the Hellenic and Western roots it shared with Europe.[228] He further argues that the requirement to become a state in the Westphalian sense caused both Russia and America to become members of international society, but the logic of culture explains why they occupy such differing positions from the perspective of European international society.[229] This argument plainly also applies to the case of China. While the logic of anarchy and the need to survive in the modern world forced China to become a Westphalian state and a member of international society, the logic of culture means, as I argue in this thesis, that it continued to hold fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations that differed markedly from European international society, and hence occupies a different place in international society from say the United States or the Latin American countries.

The third major theme of this new approach recognizes and emphasizes China's long history as a standard setter of civilizational norms. It suggests that China never ceased to strive to be a standard setter even when it was relatively weak, and this role will probably only become more and more pronounced as its material power grows. For instance, Henry Kissinger has argued that Mao's theory of endless revolution was actually intended to produce a quintessentially traditional Chinese outcome of imbuing China with revolutionary moral authority swaying "All Under Heaven."[230] Feng Zhang, writing on Chinese exceptionalism, also traces a consistent and uninterrupted thread of civilizational standard-setting from China's imperial past to its revolutionary Maoist era through to its

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[228] Y.A. Stivachtis, *The Enlargement of International Society: Culture versus Anarchy and Greece's Entry into International Society* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 194.
[229] Ibid., 189–190.
[230] H. Kissinger, *World Order* (New York Penguin, 2014), 222.

contemporary present. Imperial Chinese exceptionalism was based on the premises of the centrality of China and of including all other polities in its foreign policy domain and promoting their development under the influence and template of Chinese civilization and its *tianxia*.[231] Revolutionary Chinese exceptionalism under Mao in fact drew heavily on its imperial past and attempted to blend this with communist ideology. Mao also believed in the centrality of China, and that it was endowed with superior morality vis-à-vis the West because it truly understood the plight and aspirations of the weak and oppressed countries around the world, having itself been a victim of Western imperialism. He also believed that China could provide a fairer and more equitable model of international relations based compared to the West, and that others should recognize China's virtue and its exceptional qualities.[232] Finally, contemporary China's brand of exceptionalism also overlaps heavily with its imperial past and is based on the premise of China's indispensable role in international relations as a great power, but a unique great power that will not repeat the violent and disastrous paths of rising Western powers in history. Zhang summarizes this contemporary brand of Chinese exceptionalism:

> An implicit assumption is that for China – an ancient, proud, and in many ways superior civilizational state – to follow the Western precepts of great power politics is at best inappropriate and at worst self- humiliating... In short, China's great power reformism is the exceptionalist claim that China as a great power will challenge the historical trajectory of power rise, redefine the meaning of being a great power, and reform world politics through the development and practice of its unique international relations principles and ideals.[233]

All in all, Zhang argues that there exists a consistent and uninterrupted strand of Chinese civilizational standard-setting that can be traced through its imperial, revolutionary and contemporary eras. Moreover, he argues that this strand draws very heavily from and

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[231] F. Zhang, "The Rise of Chinese Exceptionalism in International Relations", *European Journal of International Relations,* vol. 19, no. 2 (2011), 305–328, 308–309.
[232] Ibid., 309–310; 315–316.
[233] Ibid., 311.

cannot be understood apart from its Confucian heritage and the premise of China's centrality.[234] This thesis will attempt to show through the study of Sun that this was true even when China was at its weakest and during the formative years of its encounter with modern international society. In fact, the very self-identity of China prior to the massive Western intrusion into East Asia the mid-nineteenth century was defined to a large extent by its role within *tianxia*. One major gap in the expansion story and entry thesis is that it assumes that within the space of approximately fifty years, China largely abdicated from this role which lay at the heart of its identity and which it held onto for close to two millennia almost without interruption. The weakness and political division of China at the turn of the twentieth century may have meant that its own fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations and how they could be reconciled with the modern system of international relations may not have had an obvious immediate impact on international society during those years. Nevertheless, this does not mean that these ideas did not exist, nor that these ideas will not make a more meaningful impact on international order as China's power grows. In fact, these concepts lay at the heart of Sun's ideas.

The last major theme of this new approach is to highlight the close link between power, hierarchy and civilizational standards. Like Keene, who highlights the importance of unequal, exploitative and conflictual relationships in Bull's overly benign picture of international society, Andrew Hurrell highlights the social aspects of power and the crucial links between power on the one hand and norms, rules and institutions on the other. He argues that a major weakness in Bull and Watson's thinking was that they categorically separated the Grotian element of international society from the Hobbesian element of power, whereas in reality the two are inextricably linked.[235] This thesis will attempt to show that, even when

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[234] Ibid., 316-317, 321, 323.
[235] A. Hurrell, *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International*

China was at its weakest in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Sun's fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations drew heavily on *tianxia*, and that the standard of civilization and expansion story as documented by the existing literature neglects this and other rich and important aspects of the expansion story. Zhang traces a consistent thread of Chinese exceptionalism through its pre-modern and modern history, also argues that even though China's power fluctuated greatly from its apex during the imperial era to its nadir during the late Qing and early Republican eras, through to its peripheral state during the revolutionary Maoist era and on to its contemporary ascendance. In addition, its leaders consistently without exception believed in China's centrality and attempted to assert China's superior morality and fundamental assumptions on international order in its foreign policy.[236]

Perhaps the tenacity of China's assertiveness in regards to insisting on the superiority of her own fundamental assumptions on international order can be attributed to her long history and tradition as the undisputed arbiter of civilizational standards, as well as her recognition of the inequality inherent in the West's ability to largely play this role following China's entry into modernity. In light of the close relationship between power, hierarchy and civilizational standards however, it is most probable that China will continue to assert her own assumptions on international order, but with increased vigor and actual influence on international society as her power continues to grow. Indeed, this is what makes the study of these ideas, in particular during the formative years of her initial encounter with European international society, all the more important and pressing.

Society: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) 13, 20.

[236] Zhang (2011), 315–316.

Conclusion and the Implications for the English School

If the arguments presented in this chapter are valid, then the main implication for the English School is that expansion story as documented by the existing literature, where entrants like China are portrayed as having entered into international society by sole virtue of having adopted and satisfied a singular, one-dimensional standard of civilization composed of a list of discrete objective criteria, constitutes an incomplete and partial story that obscures and ignores important aspects of the expansion story and fails to do justice to its full richness and complexity. Not only did Bull and Watson mischaracterize the process whereby entrants like China engaged with European international society; they were probably intrinsically driven to do so because they believed that the picture of all these entrants wholeheartedly embracing the fundamental assumptions held by European international society was a normatively desirable development. Speaking in 1984 about the revolt of the Third World countries against the West, Bull lamented as follows:

> There is, however, a more disturbing side to these adjustments. The Western countries are asked to accept not merely the ending of their privileges, but also a reduction of their power. This is what the revolt against Western dominance is chiefly about, more than it is about national self-determination or human rights or closing the gap between rich and poor. As Third World countries develop their economies, their societies, their polities and their military strength and reduce or eliminate their vulnerability to Western (and Soviet) intervention, they will create an international system, the political structure of which will be vastly different from that to which the Western peoples have long been accustomed. Their own ability to shape it, for better or worse, will be much reduced.[237]

Bull then went on to paint a silver lining by repeating that even though the power of the non-West will grow, they too are not hostile to international society and have cooperated in the workings of its institutions.[238] However, if participation in diplomacy, international law, and

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[237] H. Bull, "Justice in International Relations: The 1983 Hagey Lectures (1984)," in *Hedley Bull on International Society*, eds. K. Alderson and A. Hurrell (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 206–245, 243.
[238] Ibid.

international organizations, those matters roughly corresponding to Gong's first four criteria were all that mattered, and the non-West was generally on board in these matters, why would the rise of the non-West be disturbing? Perhaps what's not being said is that when the non-West rises, they will either interpret and operationalize or even change the institutions of international society entirely. The argument of this thesis is that this is because "entrants" like China never fully bought into the same fundamental assumptions on international order that informs the operation of and indeed forms the crucial context for the operation of these institutions. Hurrell makes a similar point writing about the global contemporary context, arguing as follows:

> One does not have to believe in clashing civilizations or in radical incommensurability to believe that human diversity and value conflict remain important and that perspectives on issues of international order vary enormously from one part of the world to another... the premium is on understanding those different world views and appreciating the difficulties of communication. It seems highly unlikely that any single ideology or world view will provide an overarching framework or meta- narrative for values and ethics in the twenty-first century.[239]

Just as Hurrell argues that a single world-view coalescing around liberal imperialism is likely to prove unstable, fleeting and transient, I argue that in fact the seeming coalescence of world views around European fundamental underlying assumptions about international relations at the turn of the twentieth-century which forms a central part of the narrative put forward by Bull and Watson was also illusory, superficial and fleeting.[240] In fact, there has probably never been any coalescence of this sort, and if Hurrell's argument is correct, it is probably imprudent to expect there to be one at any time in the foreseeable future. The illusory coalescence painted by Bull, Watson and Gong was underpinned largely by the overwhelming preponderance and vigorous exercise of mainly European power at the turn of the twentieth century. However, it is undeniable that this has disappeared, and the

[239] Hurrell (2007), 314–315.
[240] Ibid., 315.

illusion can no longer be maintained. Writing in 1980 that the United States and the Soviet Union were no longer performing their roles as Great Powers in a satisfactory manner and describing them as the "Great Irresponsibles," Bull describes in a condescending fashion that both, especially the United States, erroneously believe that the menacing power of their preponderant power is cancelled out by their virtuous purposes – the spread of democracy and liberty in the case of the United States and the liberation of workers worldwide in the case of the Soviet Union.[241] He also laments that they are "both societies... that are self-absorbed and inattentive to values and perspectives other than their own, in a way that only very large societies can be (China and India also have this characteristic)."[242]

I argue that, in fact, Bull already foreshadows one of the main arguments made in this chapter in the context of the US and Soviet Union, that the spread of the Westphalian format of international relations from European expansion has not been accompanied by the wholesale adoption of European fundamental underlying assumptions on international relations., If this is true in the case of the United States, I argue that this argument applies with much greater force in the case of China, which is culturally and historically much more alien to Europe than it is to the United States or even Russia, and this thesis will attempt to show that in the case of Sun, his adoption of the standard of civilization was part of his efforts and vision for China's self-rectification in order to move toward the center of this new *tianxia*.

As Kissinger ponders in *World Order,* "[all] of the major centers of power practice elements of Westphalian order to some degree, but none considers itself the natural defender of the system. All are undergoing significant internal shifts. Can regions with such divergent

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[241] H. Bull, "The Great Irresponsibles? The United States, the Soviet Union, and World Order", *International Journal: Canada's Journal of Global Policy Analysis,* vol. 35, no. 3 (1980), 437–447, 441.
[242] Ibid., 442.

cultures, histories, and traditional theories of order vindicate the legitimacy of any common system?"[243] While the Westphalian format of international relations is no doubt here to stay, so too are the existing widely divergent fundamental underlying assumptions concerning international order. The question then becomes not how to maintain an international order based on European or Western fundamental underlying assumptions concerning international relations, but rather how to understand and peacefully manage the widely divergent assumptions that exist in the context of a rapidly changing balance of power and international hierarchy.

[243] Kissinger (2014), 8.

Chapter 5: Chinese Nationalism

Chapters 1 and 2 described how as a result of the expansion of international society and the imposition of the standard of civilization, the resulting fundamental changes to both the nature and the scope of *tianxia* meant that the nation-state had become the sole legitimate form of political organization in international society. James Mayall, in his book *Nationalism and International Society*, points out that after 1918, the dominant political form had become the nation-state rather than the multi-national empire, and that nothing else could replace national self-determination as the ordering principle of international society. [244] To be legitimately accepted as a member of international society, a state at least had to have a plausible claim to represent its people, the nation.[245] Therefore, Chinese intellectuals and leaders like Sun had to search for a new moral-political identity which could effectively serve as guidelines for self-rectification, with the ultimate purpose being the restoration of China's place at the center of this new *tianxia*, and for international society to recognize it as such.

Sun's search for a new moral-political identity for China through his adoption and adaptation of nationalism is the subject matter of this chapter. This chapter analyzes Sun's conception of Chinese nationalism, and argues that while the adoption of nationalism was undoubtedly part of Sun's efforts to satisfy the standard of civilization, this was in fact part of a much larger and overarching effort toward China's self-rectification efforts to reclaim its place at the center of this new *tianxia*., Sun sought to not only copy or adopt existing models of nationalism, he also sought to morally *transcend* nationalism and the narrow national interest by constructing a moral-political Chinese nationalist identity that heavily

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[244] J. Mayall, *Nationalism and International Society,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 45.
[245] Ibid., 148.

emphasized and prioritized the moral component of *wangdao*. In other words, the adoption of nationalism and the standard of civilization was necessary in order to turn China from a disintegrating empire into a modern nation and member of international society, and this formed *part of* the new moral-political identity which Sun felt China had to adopt in order to make sense of the new *tianxia* brought about by the expansion of international society. However, it was also *part of* a larger, overarching effort to achieve self- rectification and to improve China's peripheral position in this new *tianxia*, the center of which, China suddenly discovered, was occupied by the Western powers.

This chapter highlights how Sun's conceptualization of Chinese nationalism is heavily imbued with the moralistic and universalistic concept of *wangdao*. The qualities and values that form part of the concept of *wangdao* not only constitute the ideal international community for Sun, but also define to a large extent the essence of Chinese nationalism itself. It has been remarked by scholars in relation to Chinese international relations theory that there is a "lack of awareness of international-ness" in the tradition of *tianxia*, but Sun's treatment of Chinese nationalism show how *tianxia* is inherently and highly adaptable and can readily accommodate nationalism to become an *international or inter-state* worldview while retaining the integrity of its conceptualization of the world as a universal moral community which lies at the heart of *tianxia*.[246]

Therefore, while the expansion story presents the spread of nationalism as a ready-to-wear and discrete model which entrants passively adopted, this chapter argues, through an examination of Sun's ideas, that the standard narrative obscures and ignores many important aspects of an otherwise much richer and complex story. This chapter argues that Sun's adoption of nationalism should be seen as *part of* and *in the context of* self-rectification and the *tianxia* worldview and conceptual framework. Moreover, Sun not only tried to adopt

[246] Qin (2007), 322.

nationalism as part of the standard of civilization, but also tried to *morally transcend* it by emphasizing the universal moral community of *tianxia* and by articulating the place of Chinese nationalism within it, thereby enabling China to move back toward the center of this new *tianxia* as part of its efforts toward self-rectification. This then, opens up the conceptual space and highlights how Sun possessed agency and creativity in this process of adopting, adapting, and possibly transcending nationalism which was adopted as part of the standard of civilization.

Nationalism as Part of the Standard of Civilization

The spread of nationalism as part of the standard of civilization came about as a result of the fact that the sovereign nation-state became the only legitimate form of political organization in international society and for participation in institutions such as diplomacy and international law. [247]

According to Ernest Geller, nationalism is the idea that the political unit, the sovereign state, should be congruent with the national unit, the nation.[248]

According to Max Weber, the state is essentially the agency within a society which possesses a legitimate monopoly on violence, constructed largely in the image of the centralized, well-ordered Western state.[249] However, while the task of defining what constitutes a state seems relatively straight forward, the same cannot be said when it comes to the task of defining what constitutes a nation.

As Eric Hobsbawm argues, nations are not primordial entities which have existed since

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[247] G. W. Gong, "China's Entry into International Society," in *The Expansion of International Society*, eds. H. Bull and A. Watson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 171–183, 179. Mayall, (1990).
[248] E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 1.
[249] Gellner, 3–4.

time immemorial. Rather, there is inevitably an obvious "element of artefact, invention and social engineering which enters into the making of nations."[250] As Gellner also put it, nationalism is not the reawakening of ancient but dormant forces already existent in any given society. Rather, it is the an entirely novel form of social organization which has sprung into being all over the world in response to the consequences of far-reaching socio-economic changes in the modern world.[251] The fluidity of national boundaries and of what constitutes the essence of the nation is demonstrated in the context of James Millward's study of the Qing's ethnic policies in Xinjiang. In his study, Millward's main thesis is that the idea of what constituted "China" as a nation was by no means settled. Rather, what constituted the Chinese nation was heavily influenced by fluid social constructions and ideas regarding what constituted the borders and proper ethnic and cultural composition of the nation.[252]

In contrast to John King Fairbank's depiction of the tributary system and the Chinese world order, which heavily emphasized its universalistic and moral components, Millward traces the evolution of the Qing's moral-political identity through its racial policies in Xinjiang.[253] Initially, the Qing portrayed the five major races of the empire, namely the Han, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, and the Turks as being equal and united under heaven by the dynasty itself. The five races existed in parallel to one another, with no single race occupying a privileged position amongst the five, but these parallel relations all converged

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[250] E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 10.
[251] Gellner, 46.
[252] J.A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass : Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in QingCentral Asia, 1759-1864* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998). See also: E. Gellner, "Nationalism and Modernization," in *Nationalism*, eds. J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 55-63, 62. Kedourie, E. "Nationalism and Self-determination" in *Nationalism*, eds. J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 49–55, 53.
[253] J. K. Fairbank, and T. Ch'en, *The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).

and centered upon the dynasty as the unifying hub akin to a hub and spokes model.[254] However, due to the increasing economic power of Han Chinese merchants in Xinjiang, continuing military skirmishes with Turkic tribes, and the perception that the Han Chinese merchants from China proper but operating in Xinjiang were now indispensable in shoring up the Qing's rule in Xinjiang, the Qing's narrative changed from the conceptualization of one that placed all five races in a state of parallel equality to one which increasingly favored the Han in Xinjiang, and as a result leading to the Qing allowing large scale Han immigration into Xinjiang.[255] Moreover, partly as a consequence of this, Xinjiang was increasingly became thought of as part of China proper and not as a separate region in itself. Millward's study therefore shows that both the physical and social borders, and consequently the moral-political identity of China, were already in a state of flux well before the arrival of nationalism via the standard of civilization through the expansion of international society.

David Laitin highlights the important role of what he terms "cultural entrepreneurs" in this process. He defines cultural entrepreneurs as people who offer up new identity categories (e.g., race, sex, or region) to "buyers," or members of the public who constitute their target audiences and who are usually searching for new identities, or whose identities are in a state of flux Sets of beliefs, values, principles, and commitments are usually part and parcel of these identity categories.[256] With the expansion of international society and the spread of nationalism, part of Sun's adoption of nationalism was motivated by a desire to adopt the standard of civilization and to catch up with the more advanced lands of the West, as Tom Nairn argues was frequently the case.[257] However, this chapter argues that

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[254] Millward, 201.
[255] Ibid., 241–251.
[256] D. D. Laitin, *Identity Formation: The Russian-speaking Populations in the Near Abroad* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 11.
[257] T. Nairn, "The Maladies of Development," in *Nationalism*, eds. J. Hutchinson and A. Smith, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 70–75, 74–75.

while this was undoubtedly *part of* the story, it obscures and ignores Sun's agency and creativity in adapting and morally *transcending* nationalism by defining Chinese nationalism largely in terms of *wangdao*, as elaborated below. Gellner himself highlights that nationalisms are essentially different ways, depending on the actual circumstances of the society concerned, of taking pre-existing cultures and worldviews and turning them or inventing them into nation-states.[258] By refracting the adaptation of nationalism through the lens of *tianxia*, self-rectification and *wangdao*, Sun's ideas on Chinese nationalism should be seen as part of larger overarching effort to enable China to move back toward the center of this new expanded *tianxia*.

The Construction of a New Moral-Political Identity

Sun, in one of his more famous sayings, remarked that when Westerners looked at China, what they saw was a sheet of loose sand (*yi pian san sha*), the reason being that Chinese lacked a sense of nationalism.[259] The first principle in his Three Principles of the People therefore, which served as the bedrock of his ideas on China and its place in the world, is his principle of Chinese Nationalism. His landmark lecture series given in 1924 elaborating upon this principle was devoted to explaining to his followers why China needed to adopt nationalism, the roots and essential characteristics of his principle of Chinese Nationalism, and what made Chinese Nationalism unique, distinctive and morally inspired.

The consequence of being in his words, "a sheet of loose sand," was that China's status in international society had fallen to a historic low. Exhorting his followers to support his cause of Chinese Nationalism with the greatest sense of urgency, Sun told his followers:

Others are [like] butchers' knives, and we are [like] fish meat. Our international

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[258] Gellner, 47.
[259] GFQJ, vol. 1, 3.

> status at this time is at its most precarious, if we do not focus and promote nationalism, combining our four hundred million [people] into a strong nation, China as a state and as a race faces ruin and extinction. In order to save ourselves from this peril, we must promote nationalism, and use the national spirit to save our country.[260]

Even though China was not formally colonized like Korea or Indochina, Sun told his followers that China's position was even worse than that of formal colonies, because rather than being subservient to and a supplicant of just one master, China was in fact subservient and at the mercy of every colonial power, who all had interests and competed with each other in China. Hence, China's status in international society was not merely semi-colonial, he told his listeners indignantly; China's status was that of a sub-colony, even worse than that of formal colonies like Korea and Indochina.[261] Thus, the immediate impetus for Sun's adoption of nationalism was indeed due to China's new status—more accurately, its non-status—at the very periphery of international society, because this precarious situation constituted a direct threat to the very survival of China.

Sun also pointed to Woodrow Wilson's promotion of national self- determination and the fact that this was a global and irreversible trend, explaining to his listeners that:

> [Following the defeat of Germany in World War I], Wilson advocated 'national self-determination'... allowing every small and weak nation the chance to henceforth be independent; therefore, this proposal was welcomed all around the world... We in China were also encouraged by the United States... At the time when Wilson called for the maintenance of world peace [following the end of the war], and proposed the Fourteen Points, among those the most important one was to allow each nation self-determination. When the result of the war had still not yet been decided, the United Kingdom and France both agreed to this, but when the war ended and the peace conference began to meet, the United Kingdom, France and Italy felt that Wilson's open [attitude] to national self-determination was too at odds with [their] imperial interests... [following the conclusion of the peace conference] the small and weak nations of the world were not only denied self-determination, henceforth the level of oppression they faced became even more severe than before... **But after Wilson's proposals were publicized, they could not be taken back... [the small and weak nations] have all been awakened**...[262] (emphasis added)

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[260] GFQJ, vol. 1, 6.
[261] GFQJ, vol. 1, 16.
[262] GFQJ, vol. 1, 31.

Sun was very aware of the fact that nationalism, as explicated at the beginning of this chapter, was both a modern and a European import that had largely been foreign to the Chinese. Explaining to his audience what nationalism meant, Sun said:

> Foreigners say that there is a distinction between the nation and the state, the English term for this being [nationalism]. [Nationalism] has two meanings: one [refers to] the nation, and one [refers] the state... We must distinguish between the two, but how do we do so? Simply put, nations are created by natural forces, while states are created by force. Using China's political history as evidence, the Chinese say, *wangdao* [occurs] in the course of nature. **In other words… groups created through the use of *wangdao* are nations, force is *badao*, and groups created through the use of *badao* are states.**[263] (emphasis added)

What is most interesting here is the fact that while Sun was telling his followers that nationalism was indeed a very modern and foreign concept, he immediately began drawing equivalences between the nation versus the state and *wangdao* versus *badao*. The equivalence Sun drew between the nation and *wangdao* is critical, because this forms the core of his construction of China's new moral-political identity through his principle of Chinese Nationalism. By sleight of hand, Sun began his process of turning nationalism, which he himself acknowledged to his listeners was a foreign import, into his principle of Chinese Nationalism, which he grounded on the concept of *wangdao*. This foreshadowed his later lectures, in which he defined the cultural and historical essence of Chinese Nationalism as largely in accordance with the moral values of dynastic China and in the context of *tianxia*.

There is undeniably something arbitrary about the connection that Sun drew between *wangdao* and the Chinese nation at the outset. One can only speculate as to why this was the bedrock upon which he chose to construct his principle of Chinese Nationalism upon, but it seems safe to wager that this was due to a genuine conviction on Sun's part, that *wangdao* and the cultural and historical essence of China's former moral-political identity *should* form the core of his principle of Chinese Nationalism for moral and normative

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[263] GFQJ, vol. 1, 3–4.

reasons. This was probably also combined with his belief that drawing such a connection would better enable his followers to understand and buy into Chinese Nationalism by framing nationalism, a foreign import, in a context with which his followers were highly familiar. While there is undoubtedly an element of arbitrariness to the drawing of this connection, this element of arbitrariness was not unique to Sun, but in fact historically pervades nationalisms all over the world. According to Elie Kedourie, there is no fixed or logical reason why people who speak a particular language, or for that matter those of one ethnic or cultural grouping should be thrown together in one state.[264] Gellner points out that the boundaries of the nation are never pre-existing nor immutable.[265] The ways these boundaries are drawn could be susceptible to a huge variety of variables, including being based on class interests,[266] elite negotiation and bargaining,[267] in the case of Sun's ideas, partly in order to adopt the standard of civilization and to catch up with the West.[268] Highlighting the potential arbitrariness inherent in the drawing of such boundaries, John Breuilly wrote:

> Nationalist ideology never makes a rational connection between the cultural and the political concept of the nation because no such connection is possible. Instead, by a sort of sleight of hand dependent upon using the same term, ' nation,' in different ways, it appears to demonstrate the proposition that each nation should have its nation-state. In this way it can superficially appear to have provided an answer to the problem of the relationship between state and society.[269]

Gellner puts this point another way by stating that nationalisms are essentially different ways, depending on the actual circumstances of the society concerned, of taking pre-

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[264] E. Kedourie, "Nationalism and Self-determination," in *Nationalism*, eds. J. Hutchinson and A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 49–55, 53.
[265] Gellner (1994), 55–63, 62.
[266] Hobsbawm.
[267] P. R. Brass, "Elite Competition and Nation-Formation," in *Nationalism*, eds. J. Hutchinson and A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 83–88, 86–87.
[268] Nairn, 74-75.
[269] J. Breuilly, "The Sources of Nationalist Ideology," in *Nationalism*, eds. J. Hutchinson and A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 103–112, 109.

existing cultures and turning them or inventing them into nation-states.[270] In this sense, Sun was merely an example of Laitin's "cultural entrenpreneur", in the sense that he was a key figure who offered up a new identity category, Chinese Nationalism, to his followers, whose identities were in a state of flux as a result of the expansion of international society and the transition from the old *tianxia* to this new expanded *tianxia*. However, it is precisely this last point, and his equation of Chinese Nationalism with *wangdao*, that speaks to the issues raised in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 in the context of the expansion story.

The relationship between *tianxia* and nationalism constituted the key axis along which Sun explicated and expounded upon his principle of Chinese Nationalism. *Tianxia* played a huge role in Sun's thinking not only about China's dynastic past, but also in its present and future. Explaining to his listeners the relationship between *tianxia* and nationalism, Sun asserted that what Westerners called "cosmopolitanism" was the equivalent of what the Chinese have historically termed *tianxia*.[271] The relationship between cosmopolitanism and *tianxia* on the one hand, and nationalism and group identities that pre-date modern nationalism on the other, were similar, according to Sun's reasoning, in that the existence and healthy functioning of the former requires a robust sense of the latter. Expounding upon the relationship between *tianxia* and nationalism, Sun said:

> Today, **we must recover China's lost national spirit**, and using the strength of our four hundred million people to right the injustices of this world: this is the heavenly ordained duty of our four hundred million people... we as an oppressed people, must first recover the free and equal status of our people, only then would we deserve to speak of cosmopolitanism... [do] we know where cosmopolitanism comes from? It comes from nationalism. In order for us to develop cosmopolitanism, [we must] first consolidate [our sense of] nationalism; if [our sense of] nationalism is not consolidated, cosmopolitanism will not develop either. From this, **we therefore know that cosmopolitanism is hidden within nationalism**.[272] (emphasis added)

Therefore, according to what Sun told his followers, it is apparent that the route to this

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[270] Gellner (2006), 47.
[271] GFQJ, vol. 1, 26.
[272] GFQJ, vol. 1, 33-34.

new *tianxia*, which he equates with cosmopolitanism, necessarily passes through the creation of a strong and coherent sense of nationalism, and his principle of Chinese Nationalism in particular. Without a consolidated and coherent sense of national identity, or what Sun termed the "national spirit," *tianxia* becomes, in essence, a directionless void devoid of moral direction wherein the group loses itself, destroying the very basis of *tianxia* itself as the lack of group identity means that the agency and group awareness that comes with learning, adaptation, and self-rectification in order to move from center to periphery is replaced with blind following and the loss of a sense of self. It is safe to say that Sun did not genuinely believe that cosmopolitanism and *tianxia* were the exact equivalents of one another. However, it is not difficult to understand the logic between the parallel he was making to his listeners, many of whom probably did not understand the concept of cosmopolitanism or have even heard of it. According to Sun's logic, a universal moral community is premised firstly on the existence of cohesive groupings in both modern and pre-modern times. His main point here was to exhort his followers to urgently take up the cause of Chinese Nationalism. However, he also, as the passage above highlights, believed that such groupings are ultimately bound together in a universal moral community.

Not only is it apparent that Sun linked his principle of Chinese Nationalism to *tianxia*, he also explained to his listeners that the loss of China's former cohesive pre-national group identity to the Manchu invaders whom conquered China proper and set up the Qing dynasty resulted in the loss of China's former moral and cultural virtue and standing. In other words, the first step toward self-rectification and restoring China's place in the center of this new *tianxia* following the expansion of international society was to regain this cohesive Chinese national identity, specifically through his principle of Chinese Nationalism. Sun told to his followers:

> In Europe, cosmopolitanism has only recently been published, [but] two thousand years ago in China, [people were already talking about it.] Europeans still do not see

> our inherent culture, but in terms of political philosophy [in the course of human civilization], our four hundred million people since former times had already discovered a lot... **but because of the loss of nationalism, therefore [our] inherent moral civilization has become un-commendable, and by now has started to regress**... [If] we want to protect [*wangdao*] and further expand it, what should we use as its foundation? **[We must] use nationalism as its basis… so in the future if we speak of cosmopolitanism, we must first speak of nationalism, as it is said, in order to pacify *tianxia,* one must first rule and administer your own state.** To recover our sense of nationalism that we lost before and revive it, and even more to further develop it, and after that to speak of cosmopolitanism, is indeed [the most] practical.[273] (emphasis added)

This passage clearly shows that Sun emphasized the moral component of the new moral-political identity he was advocating, Chinese Nationalism, by deducing that part of the reason for China's loss of moral standing and therefore its fall from grace in *tianxia* was due to the fact the Qing had caused the loss of China's cohesive pre-national identity as an externally imposed dynasty and had failed to effectively administer it. Furthermore, he explicitly placed this in the context of *tianxia* by saying that becoming a modern nation was now a prerequisite to participation in this new *tianxia* and that, therefore, in order to self-rectify and recover its standing at the center of this new *tianxia*, China must first become a modern nation. Further emphasizing his point on the need to become a strong, cohesive nation as a precondition for a place in this new *tianxia* resulting from the expansion of international society, Sun told his followers:

> The slogan for our revolution is *minzu* [nationalism], *minquan* [democracy], *and mingsheng* [peoples' livelihood]. Actually, what is the difference between our Three Principles of the People and the slogan of 'liberty, equality, and fraternity?' As I have said, our [principle of] nationalism can be said to be the equivalent [their principle] of liberty, because the point of implementing the principle of *minzu* is to fight for the liberty of our country. At the time in Europe however, the fight for freedom was for freedom of the individual, and therefore freedom is used differently in the two contexts.... If [freedom] is applied to the individual, [China] will become **a sheet of loose sand**, [therefore] freedom must definitely not be applied to the individual, it must be applied to our country. The individual must not be too free, while the state must be completely free... Why does our country need to be free? It is because China is being oppressed by the great powers, has lost its status, is not even a semi-colony, and actually has already become a sub-colony... in order to revive our

[273] GFQJ, vol. 1, 37.

country, **[we] need to gather our freedom and become a strong group… when China is free, only then will the Chinese nation be free.**[274] (emphasis added)

This also echoes the earlier discussion in this chapter regarding Sun's adoption of nationalism due to his realization that China's political survival depended on it, and that the nation-state had become the only legitimate type of unit that could become a full member of international society. In his lectures and other works, Sun sometimes referred to his principle of Chinese Nationalism, which he himself explained to his followers was a new and foreign inspired concept, interchangeably with China's "national spirit" and former imperial identity by using the term nationalism (*minzu zhuyi*) to refer to them both, and by speaking about the "loss" of China's national spirit and its former "nationalism" prior to the Manchu invasion of China proper and the establishment of the Qing dynasty.[275] This can seem confusing at times, since losing something that is just being newly introduced is obviously logically contradictory. However, since he himself explained to his followers that nationalism, an idea that had arrived in China as a result of the expansion of international society, was a new and foreign import, it is safe to deduce that he was not saying nor did he himself genuinely believe that his principle of Chinese Nationalism had already existed long before and was subsequently vanquished by the Manchu invasion.[276] What he was referring to rather, was the loss of a pre-modern but consolidated and cohesive lineage of Chinese group identity. One can only speculate as to why he used them interchangeably in this manner, but it was probably due to a combination of genuine conviction on Sun's part, that *wangdao* and in particular the moral component of China's former moral-political identity *should* be preserved and form the core of his principle of Chinese Nationalism for normative reasons, as well as his probable belief that drawing such a connection would better enable his followers to

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[274] GFQJ, vol. 1, 75.
[275] GFQJ, vol. 1, 22.
[276] GFQJ, vol. 1, 3-4, 6.

understand and buy into Chinese Nationalism by framing nationalism, a foreign import, in a context that his followers were highly familiar with. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, while there is undeniably an element of arbitrariness and illogicalness in such a move, this was not unique to Sun's construction of his principle of Chinese Nationalism, for, as Gellner observes, nationalisms are all essentially different ways of taking elements of pre-existing cultures and turning them into modern nation-states.[277]

As Gellner and others also suggest, the boundaries and what characteristics define or constitute the nation are never pre-existing or immutable, and there are a variety of ways these boundaries being drawn could be susceptible to a huge variety of variables.[278] In constructing a new moral- political identity for China through his principle of Chinese Nationalism, Sun heavily emphasized the moral component of this new moral-political identity, and directly tied China's international standing to the revival of *wangdao* and China's ability to once again be a moral exemplar for others to follow. This heavy emphasis on the moral and the direct linking of the nation's international standing with its ability to set a moral example for others to follow, attracting and transforming others by setting an example, is the very essence of *wangdao* and the *tianxia* framework. Therefore, Sun's repeated emphasis on *wangdao*, the revival of the national moral spirit, and the recovery, through becoming once again the moral exemplar for others, of China's international status constituted the bedrock of his vision for China to move back toward to the center of this new *tianxia*. This was fully reflected in the way that he defined what constitutes Chinese Nationalism:

> China's past success in achieving a very strong position [internationally], was not caused by any single factor. Generally the reason a country becomes strong, initially is due to the development of its military might, then following that relies on the various developments of its culture, only then can it succeed. But in order to retain the nation and country's long- term status, there is still the issue of morals. A country

[277] Gellner, 47.
[278] Supra., footnotes 253 and 254.

> that has sound morals will be strong and tranquil for long... In order to recover the past status or our nation, aside from uniting all Chinese to become one cohesive national group, we must first revive our intrinsic morality from the past. With our intrinsic morality, only then can our national status be restored.[279]

While Sun advocated the establishment of a completely new moral- political Chinese identity through his principle of Chinese Nationalism therefore, he defined the moral component of Chinese Nationalism as being largely in accordance with the moral values of dynastic China. For instance, he specifically highlighted the values of loyalty (*zhong*), humanity (*ren*), trust (*xin*), and peace (*he ping*). The China and the social and political climate that Sun lived in was very much one in a state of flux, with new cultural, social and political ideas flooding into China along with the forceful arrival of the Western powers in Asia. As discussed in Chapter 2, this caused leaders and intellectuals inspired by the Statecraft School to urgently search for a new moral-political identity for China. However, these foreign ideas were also discussed widely amongst the Chinese populace, some of whom were iconoclasts who believed that the same moral values that Sun held dear were in fact holding China back from progress and should be discarded entirely. Sun responded by saying that while there was indeed a lot that needed be changed in this search for a new moral-political identity, China's historic emphasis on its moral values most definitely should be retained, as this was the very thing that put China at the center of *tianxia* in the first place.[280] Making the case for putting morality at the very heart of Chinese Nationalism and tracing these moral values far back into Chinese antiquity, Sun said:

> China is an ancient country with over four thousand years of civilization, its people have been had over four thousand years of moral education, and its moral civilization is a thousand times superior to those of the West, [what China] is lacking is simply in the material aspects of civilization... [in terms of] our moral civilization, the West is far and away lagging behind us... once we have caught up [in the material aspects of civilization], China will not only gain a seat amongst the great powers, but will surpass them, this much is foreseeable.[281]

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[279] GFQJ, vol. 1, 46.
[280] GFQJ, vol. 1, 46.
[281] GFQJ, vol. 3, 124.

At the very heart of what Sun refers to as China's "moral civilization" is not only the idea of self-rectification, but also the ideal of *wangdao*. Chapter 2 briefly introduced this concept, translated as the kingly way in English, as juxtaposed against *badao*, or the hegemonic way. In a lecture he gave in Japan on the topic of Pan-Asianism in 1924, Sun explained the difference between the two:

> ... from this we can see that Europeans think that their own culture is orthodox, and regard themselves as masters of culture, outside of Europe, [if] there is any culture that develops, [if] there is any independent thought, [they] therefore view it as rebellion; therefore in comparing the European and Oriental cultures, they naturally think that European cultures are in accordance with humanitarianism, and Oriental cultures are not in accordance with humanitarianism…
> But we in the Orient have always viewed *badao* with contempt. There is another way, culturally superior to *badao*, the nature of this type of culture, is benevolence and morality. Using this culture of benevolence and virtue, is to enlighten people, not to oppress people; its [purpose] is to cause others to [willingly] embrace virtue, not to instill fear in them. This type of culture that makes others embrace virtue, we in China historically termed it '*wangdao*'... since the flourishing of Europe's material civilization, and since the way of *badao* [took over], the morality of various countries around the world, therefore has been regressing day by day.[282]

Aside from conceptually distinguishing between the two, Sun also traced the practice of *wangdao* back to the historical example of the Chinese tributary system, telling his listeners that smaller states paid tribute to China because they genuinely bought into and were attracted by China's *wangdao* and faithful adherence to this ideal in the pre-modern East Asian international society.[283] He cited the example of Nepal, a former Chinese tributary state, that continued to attempt to make tributary payments to China even after the collapse of the Qing dynasty. On the other hand, he said that even though Britain was the paramount power at the time, it had only achieved and was able to maintain that status through imperialism and force. Because it had only achieved its status though *badao* instead of *wangdao*, Sun pointed out that its colonies, like Egypt and India, were already agitating for independence

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[282] GFQJ, vol. 3, 538–539.
[283] Ibid.

from Britain, only being temporarily suppressed because of Britain's military might. Emphasizing the unsustainable nature of this order, Sun presciently predicted that in less than fifty years, Britain would decline and Egypt and India would then be bound to achieve their independence.[284] Castigating his Japanese audience for their government's behavior and failure not only to set an example of *wangdao*, but to go completely against it with its military aggression, Sun said to his audience:

> Speaking of Righteousness, even during the era when China was very strong it never decimated other peoples' countries. For instance, even though Korea was nominally a vassal state of China, in reality and in substance it operated as an independent country. Twenty years ago, Korea [was still] an independent country. Twelve years ago, Korea lost that independence [as a result of Japan's invasion]... China was strong for thousands of years and yet Korea still existed, while Japan has been strong for less than twenty years and yet it has destroyed Korea. From this, we can see that the good faith and righteousness of Japan is inferior to China, [and in terms of] the good faith and righteousness that the Chinese refer to, China much more advanced than the West.[285]

It is apparent from these passages that *wangdao* was a core component of Sun's principle of Chinese Nationalism. He heavily emphasized the moral component of this new moral-political identity, and though he traced this moral component back to practice in Chinese antiquity, he incorporated this moral component into the new moral-political identity of Chinese Nationalism, set in the context of this new *tianxia* and self-rectification. Summarizing the relationship between *tianxia*, *wangdao*, and his principle of Chinese Nationalism, Sun said:

> Those that oppress others are going **against the way of heaven**, not acting in accordance with the way of heaven; our resisting of the great powers is **actually in accordance with the way of heaven**... [we should] promote nationalism, first uniting among ourselves, put ourselves in others peoples' shoes, and then unite all the small and weak nations... and together use [this] truth to bring down the great powers...[286] (emphasis added)

The above passages clearly show that for Sun, the moral component played a major

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[284] GFQJ, vol. 3, 572.
[285] GFQJ, vol. 1, 48.
[286] GFQJ, vol. 1, 29.

role in his principle of Chinese Nationalism. By contrasting *wangdao* and *badao*, which he thought characterized the West and their imperialisms, Sun in effect was saying that they were unworthy of claiming to be at the center of *tianxia* because their actions were immoral and unworthy of emulation. Moreover, the fact that he criticized the ways of the great powers as being "against the way of heaven" and on the basis of their immorality shows the *tianxia* logic at work. This mirrors his criticism of Chinese iconoclasts who wanted to abandon the moral values that Sun held dear. Therefore, it is apparent that while modern nationalism, a foreign concept that had arrived in China as a result of the expansion, was one of the direct impetus for his principle of Chinese Nationalism, his principle of Chinese Nationalism as a new moral-political identity heavily emphasized and was to a large extent characterized by this moral dimension, encapsulated in the concept of *wangdao*, which Sun traces back to Chinese antiquity. However, while he emphasized this moral component of Chinese Nationalism, the principle also contained a political component. As Chapter 2 pointed out, the political in moral-political signifies an awareness and concern for the wider world.[287] When Sun was giving his landmark lecture series to a hall packed with his followers and saying that China had lost but that it needed to recover its "national spirit," he was not only referring to *wangdao*, but also to the political wisdom and knowledge of the past. He told his listeners the following:

> Our intrinsic morality, besides the fact that they should be revived**, there is also the wisdom from the past, which should be revived too. Ever since we have been conquered by the Qing, our four hundred million people have been asleep, even our wisdom has been asleep**. Today, in order to revive our national spirit, [we need to] not only reawaken our intrinsic morality, our past wisdom should be reawakened. What past wisdom did China possess?... China has a very systematic political philosophy, that politicians in the West have not seen… which is what it says in the Great Learning as "to study the nature of things in order to acquire knowledge; to acquire knowledge in order to cause one's thoughts to be sincere; to cause one's thoughts to be sincere in order to rectify one's heart; to rectify one's heart in order to cultivate one's self; to cultivate one's self in order to regulate one's family; to

[287] Chang (1987), 16.

> regulate one's family in order to rightly govern one's state**; to rightly govern one's state in order to pacify *tianxia*."**[288] (emphasis added)

This passage from the Great Learning, one of the most important Confucian classics, quite fittingly encapsulates the idea of the universal moral community, which begins from the hearts and minds of every individual and passes through the state, all ultimately being bound together and being part of *tianxia*. Since the political in the moral-political signifies an awareness and knowledge of the wider world, it is apparent in this passage that Sun was castigating the Qing for its abject failure to stay abreast of the political ideas and changes that had taken place in the wider world. The isolation that the Qing imposed on China had led not only to its loss of the country, but also to the loss of its place in *tianxia*.[289]

By citing the Great Learning, Sun linked his principle of Chinese Nationalism as part of this cosmic chain, linking nationalism to *tianxia* in the context of the expanded international society. Furthermore by pointing out this link in his sixth and final lecture on Chinese Nationalism, Sun provides evidence that he saw his principle of Chinese Nationalism through the prism and logic of this new *tianxia*. As this passage and the title "the Great Learning" also suggests, "pacifying" or moving toward the center of *tianxia* is not just a matter of moral self-cultivation and improvement. Self-rectification also involves the acquiring of knowledge in order to rightly govern one's own state. This included the adaptation of nationalism, which, as a result of the realities brought forth by the expansion and standard of civilization, had become a prerequisite for rightly governing one's own state. Sun also referred to the strengths of the West or its "material civilization," which he admits was superior to that of China.[290] This will be explicated in detail in the next chapter; however, suffice it to say at this point that all of this should be seen as part of Sun's vision for a new

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[288] GFQJ, vol. 1, 49.
[289] GFQJ, vol. 3, 123.
[290] GFQJ, vol. 1, 52.

moral-political identity so as to enable China to move back toward the center of this new *tianxia*. This focus on the recovery of China's status at the center of this new *tianxia* therefore recurs repeatedly when Sun discussed his principle of Chinese Nationalism. Reminding his listeners of a time when China was at the center of *tianxia,* Sun said:

> And what was the status of China in the world in ancient times? China was then a very strong and civilized country, and was the predominant power in the world. The position it occupied was much higher than those currently occupied by today's great powers such as Great Britain, the United States, France and Japan. This is because China was the sole superpower in the world. Our ancestors had already achieved this status, but speaking of now our status is that of a sub-colony. Why was our status so high back then, but now has suffered such a disastrous decline? The most important reason, as we have said before, is because we have lost our national spirit, and therefore our country is regressing day by day. In order to recover the status of our nation, we must first recover our national spirit.[291]

As this passage suggests, Sun reasoned that the loss of the national spirit, which to a large extent is defined by *wangdao* and the moral component of Chinese Nationalism, was the main reason why China had lost its place at the center of *tianxia*. This was not only due to the Qing dynasty's own failings, but also because the scope and nature of *tianxia* had fundamentally changed as a result of the expansion. In order to self-rectify and move back toward the center of this new *tianxia*, as the Great Learning suggests, China also needed put its own house in order and learn from the West. Sun exhorted his followers to do so by saying:

> We must learn from the West, not to trail and follow them, but in order to catch up and to surpass them. For instance in science, we must surpass them, in order to make up for over two hundred years of lost time. We having [fallen] to our status today, if we continue to sleep, do not struggle, and do not know to recover the status of our country, from now on our state will be ruined and our race extinguished. Now that we know to follow global trends and are learning what the West is good at, we will definitely be able to do these things even better than the West, and so- called catch up from behind... Japan is a good example [of this]... [and] has become one of the great powers in merely a few decades… China has a population ten times that of Japan and a land mass thirty times its size... if China follows Japan's example, China's strength will equal that of ten great powers... At that time, China will recover its pre-eminent status.[292]

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[291] GFQJ, vol. 1, 45.
[292] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53.

Although Sun's focus on the recovery of China's place at the center of *tianxia* included learning from what he termed the "material civilization" of the West, which he acknowledged was superior to that of China, on the whole, it is clear that he emphasized moral worthiness and virtue as the most important qualities for earning a place at the center of *tianxia*. According to Sun's reasoning, no matter how advanced a country was in its "material civilization," this could not compensate for its moral dereliction and bankruptcy under the *tianxia* framework. Explaining to his listeners what China must do when it recovered its place at the center of this new *tianxia*, Sun said:

> But when China does recover its pre-eminent status, what would it do? In ancient times, China frequently spoke of, 'aiding the distressed and supporting the tottering,' it is because China had this excellent policy, that she was strong for several millennia, and Annam, Myanmar, Korea, Siam and such small countries were able to maintain their independence. Now the European winds are blowing East, Annam has been destroyed by the French, Myanmar by the British, Korea by the Japanese. So, if China becomes strong again, we must not only restore the status of our nation, but we must also fulfill our grave responsibility to the world. If China is unable to bear this responsibility, then [even if] China becomes strong, this would only bring great harm to the world, not great benefits. What responsibility does China owe to the world? Currently the path that the great powers are set on is that of destroying others' countries; if China becomes strong, and also goes and destroys other peoples' countries, also mimics the imperialism of the great powers, taking the same path, this would merely be repeating their mistakes. Therefore, we must first decide on a type of policy, to aid the distressed and support the tottering, **only this would amount to fulfilling our heavenly-ordained duties**. When dealing with the small and weak nations... we must support them, when dealing with the world's great powers we must resist them, if everyone in the nation sets this as their resolution, only then can the Chinese nation prosper. If we do not first set this as our resolution, the Chinese nation will have no hope. Today as we have not yet prospered, [we first] resolve to aid the distressed and support the tottering, in the future when we are strong, and we think back to the pain we have suffered as a result of the great powers' political and economic oppression, **in the future if small and weak nations also suffer such pain, we must then wipe out such imperialism, only then would we have rightly governed one's state and pacified *tianxia*. In the future in order to rightly govern our state and pacify *tianxia*, we must first restore Chinese Nationalism and the status of our nation.** Using our intrinsic morals and peace as a foundation, to unify the world under the Great Harmony, this indeed is the grave responsibility of our four hundred million people.[293] (emphasis added)

This passage nicely encapsulates the logic and spirit of *tianxia*, and its relationship

[293] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54.

with *wangdao*, Sun's principle of Chinese Nationalism, and the cosmic chain that begins with the cultivation and rectification of every citizen's heart and mind, runs through the nation, with all ultimately being bound together by *tianxia* as explicated in the Great Learning. This begins by characterizing the essence of the Chinese "national spirit" as being generous, benevolent, and in accordance with the setting of the highest moral standards as required by *wangdao*, and traces this back to what Sun refers to as China's historical policy of aiding the distressed and supporting the tottering. He then framed this as China's "heavenly ordained duty," a clear reference to what he thinks is required of a large nation like China under the *tianxia* framework. In this case, the moral duty is clear: that large countries should not trample on small ones, but furthermore should aid and support those that are weak and tottering.

He then measured the future success of the Chinese nation based on its future ability to hold true to this standard of morality, which forms the core of the moral-political identity of his principle of Chinese Nationalism. Success, therefore, would be defined by the Chinese nation's ability to self-rectify and move toward the center of this new *tianxia*. In effect, he reminded his followers that the adoption of nationalism, while necessary to "rightly govern one's state" as it was said in the Great Learning, was also won at great cost and in the face of very substantial opposition and oppression from the great powers during the process of the expansion. Therefore, China not only had a duty to set an example and rightly govern its own state by adopting modern nationalism, it also had a moral duty to help others do the same if they so desired. Only then, reasoned Sun, would Chinese Nationalism, defined in terms of *wangdao* and its ability to move back toward the center of *tianxia*, be considered a success story.

Conclusion

When Sun described China as a being akin to "a sheet of loose sand," he was of course exhorting his listeners to support his revolution and his principle of Chinese Nationalism with the greatest sense of urgency, because China's very survival as an independent political entity depended on it. However, in addition to this, the *tianxia* which China and the Chinese people had known for centuries had suddenly vanished before their eyes in what must have seemed like a very short space of time. The expansion of international society and the imposition of the standard of civilization had suddenly brought about an entirely new *tianxia* that most Chinese people must have found incredibly difficult to comprehend. In order to be accepted as part of this new *tianxia*, the very first and primary requirement was to become a modern nation-state, a concept that in and of itself was completely foreign most Chinese. Sun understood this, and this chapter has analyzed the way he formulated, explained, and justified a new moral-political identity for China through his principle of Chinese Nationalism to his followers and fellow Chinese. Although the adaptation of nationalism was undoubtedly a direct response to the requirements and new reality brought forth by the expansion and the standard of civilization, that was only *part of* the story; Sun's principle of Chinese Nationalism went far beyond this by morally *transcending* nationalism and the narrow national interest through constructing a moral-political Chinese nationalist identity that heavily emphasized and prioritized the moral component of *wangdao*. While the adoption of nationalism and the standard of civilization formed *part of* the new moral-political identity which Sun felt China had to adopt in order to become an accepted member of this new *tianxia* brought about by the expansion of international society, it was also *part of* a larger, overarching effort to achieve self-rectification and to improve upon China's peripheral position in this new *tianxia*, the center of which China suddenly discovered was occupied by the Western powers.

Sun often referred to the "loss" of China's national spirit and its sense of nationalism, and spoke repeatedly of the need to "recover" these. As explained above, this can seem

confusing, since losing something that is just being newly introduced is obviously logically contradictory. However, as he himself explained to his followers that nationalism, a idea that had arrived in China as a result of the expansion of international society, was a new and foreign import, he was not saying nor did he himself genuinely believe that his principle of Chinese Nationalism, or modern nationalism in any sense, had already existed long before and was subsequently vanquished by the Manchu invasion.[294] What he was referring to, rather, was the loss of the pre-modern but consolidated and cohesive lineage of Chinese group identity. One can only speculate as to the reasons why he used them interchangeably in this manner, but it was probably due to a combination of genuine conviction on Sun's part that *wangdao* and in particular the moral component of China's former moral-political identity *should* be preserved and form the core of his principle of Chinese Nationalism for normative reasons, as well as his probable belief that drawing such a connection would better enable his followers to understand and buy into Chinese Nationalism by framing nationalism, a foreign import, in a context with which his followers were highly familiar.

More importantly however, the "loss" that Sun was referring to was also China's mandate for a place at the center of this new *tianxia*. The scope and nature of *tianxia* had actually been changing in very fundamental ways prior to the expansion. Therefore, when the expansion finally arrived on China's shores, it was utterly unprepared. Sun blamed the Qing not only for failing to effectively, as the Great Learning puts it, "rightly govern one's state," but also for, as a direct result of this, losing its place in the center of *tianxia*. Sun's principle of Chinese Nationalism and this new moral-political identity were therefore not only an attempt to respond to the expansion and to adopt the standard of civilization, but also should be seen through the prism and as part of a larger, over- arching effort to reclaim China's place at the center of this new *tianxia*.

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[294] GFQJ, vol. 1, 3-4, 6.

Chapter 6: State Capitalism

Speaking to his followers in one of his lectures on the principle of Peoples' Livelihood (*minsheng*), the third and final out of his Three Principles of the People, Sun lamented that China was doomed to being a supplier of raw textiles to the West for manufacture and was never be able to move up the global economic value chain by explaining:

> [Why is this so?] This reason, is due to the fact that China's textile industry is facing foreign political oppression. The foreign powers' oppression of China, it not only limited to economic oppression. **Economic forces are a type of natural force, which is also what the Chinese call *wangdao***. When [the effects] of economic forces become ineffective, and when they cannot achieve ones' goals, [they] resort to political oppression. **This type of political oppression, is what the Chinese call *badao***... If China is accorded equal political status with the foreign powers, and is allowed to compete freely in their countries, China should be able to hold its own, and should not fail. But once the foreign powers use their political strength, backing its economic strength, China has no means to resist or compete.[295] (emphasis added)

While the last chapter explicated the concept of *wangdao* and the distinction between *wangdao* and *badao* in the context of Sun's vision for of China's new moral-political identity through his principle of Chinese Nationalism, this distinction between *wangdao* and *badao* also applied to his assessment of the contemporary international political economy and of China's role therein. As this passage suggests, Sun saw the contemporary international political economy as a global manifestation of *badao*, an international system that was intrinsically immoral. By using imperialism, oppression and exploitation to hinder and unnaturally distort the development of others for self- benefit, it not only caused and sustained massive disparities in power and wealth within Western societies, but also frequently led to conflict and war over resources, territory, and power between nations. Thus, although he was speaking in the context of the principle of Peoples' Livelihood, the crux of the matter he was addressing was the relationship between material

[295] GFQJ, vol. 1, 177.

wealth and power versus morality and *wangdao*. Like in his principle of Chinese Nationalism, which heavily emphasized its moral dimension, Sun explained that the essence of his principle of Peoples' Livelihood was its humanitarian spirit and, above all, a moral approach to China's development strategy. In his own words: "only with the existence of morals will there be a country, and only with the existence of morals will there be a world."[296]

However, as suggested in Chapter 2, Sun was acutely aware that overreliance on morality and *wangdao* to the neglect or exclusion of rules, laws and material strength would be naïve and utopian. This is because others cannot necessarily be trusted to hold themselves to the same moral standards and exercise the high degree of self-discipline and self-restraint, in which case China would be at the mercy of others.[297] Self-rectification, while framed by Sun predominantly as a moral enterprise, also had a political and material dimension with the goal of making China a strong and modern nation that would be accepted and respected by international society. This axis between the development of China's material strength and the moral dimension of doing so in a manner that accords with *wangdao* is the main theme that characterizes Sun's principle of Peoples' Livelihood.

This chapter argues that while Sun's plans for the economic development of China were undoubtedly *part of* his vision for China to become a strong and modern nation and accepted as a developed and civilized member of international society, it was *also* part of his larger, overarching effort of self- rectification to do so on the basis of morality, as explicated in Chapters 2 and 4, and *wangdao*. In others words, Sun's plan to industrialize and to transform China into a developed and strong nation was not just a plan to accumulate material strength. Rather, it should be seen through the prism of, and as an

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[296] GFQJ, vol. 1, 229.
[297] Y. Qin, *A Relational Theory of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 355.

important part of his vision for, China's self-rectification and movement back toward the center of this new *tianxia*.

Sun's use of the term Peoples' Livelihood, which basically means the ability to provide for the basic livelihood of the people, has been criticized as impossibly broad. Literally translated, *minshengzhuyi*, or the principle of Peoples' Livelihood, means "the doctrine of the life of the people." Bergère also notes that the principle of Peoples' Livelihood has three meanings: philosophical, normative, and programmatic. It includes everything from politics to society to economics and even to his theory of social evolution. Thus, the term has been dismissed in Western scholarship as being "clumsy," "rather vague," and/or "meaningless."[298] In contrast to the latter, this chapter is titled for and centered around the concept of state capitalism because at its very heart, the principle of Peoples' Livelihood was a state-centered plan for the moral-political rejuvenation of China by transforming it into a strong and developed nation that could one day be potentially worthy of emulation.

According to Immanuel Wallerstein, a system is capitalist if the primary social dynamic is directed toward the endless accumulation of capital. Although not everyone in such a system is ultimately successful in doing so, those who do succeed tend to prevail in the medium term over those who act according to other dynamics. Furthermore, the endless accumulation of capital, in turn, requires the ever-increasing commodification of everything.[299] Although capitalism defined as such is frequently associated with markets and trade, it is instructive to note that they remain conceptually distinct from one another. Fernand Braudel conceptualizes the global economic system as being akin to a pyramid-like structure

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[298] M. Bergère and J. Lloyd, *Sun Yat-sen,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 382.
[299] I. Wallerstein, "States? Sovereignty? The dilemmas of capitalists in an age of transition," in *States and Sovereignty in the Global Economy*, eds. D. Smith, D. Solinger and S. Topik (London: Routledge, 1999), 20–33, 20.

that consists of three layers, with each layer being dependent upon the existence of the layer that sits immediately below it. The apex of this pyramid is occupied by capitalism, which, in its concrete manifestation, is occupied by participants in trade whom systematically appropriate the largest share of profits in whichever sector of the economy in which they operate, whether financial, commercial, industrial, agricultural, or otherwise. Sitting immediately beneath the top layer is the market economy, which consists of regular participants whom engage in buying and selling and whom generally earn rewards that are proportionate to the costs and risks that are borne in the execution of such transactions. Finally, the base of the pyramid is composed of the non-market economy, formed by individuals or organizations whom participate only intermittently in buying and selling, generally through barter or for reasons of self-sufficiency, but whose activities form the basis and the perquisite for the existence of the upper two layers.[300]

Accordingly, it is important to note that while capitalism, or the accumulation of capital, is dependent upon the economic activity generated by trade taking place in the market, they are conceptually distinct. As per both Wallerstein's definition of capitalism and Braudel's tripartite conceptualization highlights, it is conceivable that a market economy can exist without being capitalist, in the sense that those acting according to the dynamic of the endless accumulation of capital either do not succeed in prevailing over others acting according to different dynamics, or if this group does not succeed in systematically appropriating the largest share of profits in all existing sectors of economic activity. Trade per se is also conceptually distinguishable from the market economy, for as the bottom layer of Braudel's pyramid highlights, trade can take place in an intermittent fashion and mainly for purposes related to self- sufficiency, thereby differing from the

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[300] G. Arrighi, P. K. Hui, H. F. Hung and M. Selden, "Historical capitalism, East and West," in *The Resurgence of East Asia: 500, 150 and 50 Year Perspectives*, eds. G. Arrighi, T. Hamashita and M. Selden (London: Routledge, 2003), 259–333, 263.

regularity and the rewards that characterize the market economy. Summarizing the difference between the capitalist dynamic and the market dynamic, Giovanni Arrighi, Po- Keung Hui, Ho-Fung Hung and Mark Selden write that "ideo-typically, the main difference between the two dynamics is that, other things being equal, the first tends to generate surpluses of means of payment (the accumulation of such surpluses being pursued as an end in itself), whereas the second does not (money being just a means of transforming one set of commodities into another of greater use value)."[301] Therefore, above all, capitalism defined as such is distinct from markets in that it is above all not just about economic activity, but is rather a form of social organization that is ultimately about the control and distribution of power.[302]

Not only is it important to note that capitalism versus trade and markets are conceptually related but distinct, but moreover, it was the expansion of capitalism from Europe to East Asia, rather than trade or the existence of markets per se, that distinguished the expansion of international society and the standard of civilization from previous eras. As Barry Buzan has noted, trade between East and West had existed long before the expansion:

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[301] Ibid., 265.

[302] There are other conceptions of capitalism, which all generally include in their definitions of capitalism private ownership, the profit motive, and the existence of markets, although these elements have existed for centuries. In order to describe the institutional structures that were consolidated in the eighteenth century and which gave rise to capitalism as we now know it, theorists have added or emphasized other elements into their definitions of capitalism. Karl Marx highlights wage labor, the employment relationship, and the commodification of wage labor additionally. However, wage labor was also already widely prevalent in the four preceding centuries in rural England and still does not, in this regard, demarcate modern industrial capitalism. Joseph A. Schumpeter, instead of emphasizing the element of wage labor, adds to his definition the development of money markets as the heart of capitalism. Geoffrey Hodgson writes that both of these additional elements, namely wage labor and the indispensability of money markets, should form part of the definition of modern industrial capitalism. Wallerstein, Arrighi, and Braudel's conceptions are emphasized in this chapter because they are most relevant to the expansion of international society and its impact on China's entry. See G.M. Hodgson, *Conceptualizing Capitalism: Institutions, Evolution, Future* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 251–262.

"[trade] is another very old practice in human affairs... [whether] trade as such is [an] institution, or particular principles applying to it, such as protectionism or the market, is an interesting question needing more thought."[303] Indeed, while trade links between Europe and China and other parts of East Asia had existed for centuries, it was the expansion of a particular form of capitalism, developed in the context of the inter-state rivalry that characterized relations between the European powers, which distinguished the expansion of international society into East Asia from earlier eras, which were also characterized by extensive trade links, but still lacking in the political-capitalist dynamic which Wallerstein and Braudel characterize.

Furthermore, the focus on the expansion of capitalism as defined above from Europe into East Asia is important and germane to this chapter because, distinct from merely trade or markets, the particular form of capitalism developed in the context of inter-state rivalry in Europe not only required the commodification of everything, as Wallerstein pointed out, but also, following the logic of the endless accumulation of capital, also required "the harnessing of the state's political strength in order to incorporate additional geographical areas into its network."[304] As will be discussed in greater detail in the next section, the European states' need for additional revenue in order to sustain their rivalries and with each other were closely intertwined with the sustainability of their war-making abilities as well as imperialism and hence the expansion. This political dimension of this capitalist dynamic is reflected in the narrative of the expansion story, under which during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, through a series of unequal treaties which were forcibly imposed on China, the Western powers successfully opened China's markets and incorporated China into the global capitalist system on its terms. As Gong says, what the Western powers

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[303] B. Buzan, *From International to World Society? English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 183.
[304] Wallerstein, 21.

"demanded in essence as the 'opening of China as a market for Western manufactures and commerce on the basis of China's incorporation, by force or otherwise, into the modern state system'... [and to] trade on Western terms."[305] Defined in this manner, it was this particular combination of overseas capitalist expansion, and not just the existence of long distance trade or markets, which was backed by the power of the state and occurring in the context of intense inter-state rivalry between the principally European great powers that formed the context of the large-scale projection of European power and expansion of international society into East Asia (hereafter referred to as the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic).

It was in the context of the arrival of this Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic and the expansion of international society into China that Sun formulated his principle of Peoples' Livelihood, which as the passage at the beginning of this chapter highlights, was intended to address both the economic and political oppression that Sun thought China faced. He envisaged the development of a hybrid model whereby China would also harness the power of its state to industrialize and become a developed and civilized member of the expanding global capitalist system, while doing so in accordance with *wangdao* as opposed to the imperialism, oppression, and overseas exploitation of *badao* resulting from the expansion of international society and the accompanying Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic.

The Braudelian–Wallersteinian dynamic in the Context of European Inter- state Rivalry

In explaining the differences in the historical development of political economies

[305] G.W. Gong, *The Standard of Civilization in International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 176–177.

between Europe and East Asia, Arrighi, Hui, Hung and Selden highlight two factors in particular, namely the dynamics of inter-state relations in these two respective regions, as well as the role of capitalism in shaping both processes within each respective region, as well as between them.[306] The starting point and underlying premise of their analysis begins from the observation that, while the distinguishing feature of the European system was intense competition between its constituent states, which often led to the displacement of one state by another as leader of the region, this dynamic has not historically characterized relations between states in East Asia. As the authors put it, "the nature of their mutual competition was very different from the European, as witnessed among other things by the fact that through the eighteenth and into the early nineteenth century China occupied a far more stable hegemonic position in the East Asian inter-state system than any state did in the European system."[307]

Intense rivalry, competition and military conflict in Europe necessitated a form of political economy that distinguished Europe from East Asia, and China in particular. Summarizing the nature of this development in the European context, R. Bin Wong wrote:

> Much European commercial wealth was tapped by needy governments anxious to expand their revenue bases to meet the ever-escalating expenses of war. From the fourteenth through the eighteenth century, the Chinese government, in contrast, taxed trade lightly, except on rare occasions. Amidst the mercantilist competition among European merchants and their governments for wealth and power, maritime expansion played a role of particular importance. Both European merchants and their governments benefited from their complex relationship, the former gaining fabulous profits, the latter securing much-needed revenues.[308]

Wong's research describes a process whereby competing European states had to both share power domestically, as well as work with their capitalists overseas by expanding their

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[306] Arrighi, Hui, Hung, and Selden, 262.
[307] Ibid.
[308] B. Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of the European Experience* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 146. See also, Tilly, C. 1992, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990–1992* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997).

respective state's mercantilist reach into other parts of the world in order to finance their ever-growing rivalries with each other. Furthermore, in order to finance the increasing resource commitments of global competition and warfare, Wong highlights the European states' heavy reliance on borrowing from their respective merchants. The heavy borrowing necessitated by European inter-state rivalry led to the development of various forms of credit instruments and institutions such as banks, joint-stock companies, and chartered companies, which as Wong puts it, "served the state by developing the concept and reality of a public debt and helped merchants and aristocrats to construct new institutions of European commercial capitalism."[309]

Summarizing the nexus between public debt, the capitalist class, and the overseas political-military expansion of European states, Arrighi, Hui, Hung, and Selden emphasize that the intense political and military competition between the European powers was instrumental in providing an ever growing surplus of capital which needed profitable places to be invested in, which in turn fueled even more political, military, and strategic competition between the powers. They conclude:

> Directly and indirectly, this self-reinforcing cycle of capital accumulation and territorial expansion was the main driving force of those technological and organizational innovations... that eventually moved the European system to dominion globally.[310]

This marriage between the ever-increasing momentum of capital accumulation, backed by the state's use of force and overseas territorial expansion, is also described by other scholars. Kenneth Pomeranz for instance, highlights how the joint stock companies and licensed monopolies discussed earlier by Wong possessed unique advantages in the pursuit of armed long- distance trade and in the operation of export-oriented colonies, as they possessed both the motivation and capacity to wait for long periods of time in return for

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[309] Ibid., 133.
[310] Arrighi, Hui, Hung and Selden, 265.

exceptional rates of return. This unique combination of motivation and capacities, in turn, were fostered in the context of "links to the state and the right to use force and preempt certain markets."[311] He then goes on to echo the argument made by both Wong and Arrighi, Hui, Hung and Selden, writing that there was a **"[strong] link among capitalism, overseas coercion, and industrialization: namely the political-economic institutions of European capitalism and violent inter-state competition**." (emphasis added)[312] He then continues:

> **This further suggests that the *political* economy of early modern Europe – in particular the constant expensive military competition – may well have mattered more than either the entrepreneurial talents or curiosity about exotic goods per se in making Europe's overseas commercial expansion distinctive**. Moreover, it suggests that Europe's military competition probably made its greatest *positive* contribution to European growth not through the way that war-making, bureaucratization, and so on affected the economic environment within Europe... **but through the extension of this competition beyond Europe**.[313] (emphasis added)

This fact, this Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic highlights another highly pertinent feature of this form of political-military competition which characterized European interstate relations, which was the fact that it actually in some respects, *obscured and undermined* free competition in the market. This point further buttresses the conceptual distinction between the market (and by necessarily implication, trade) versus the Braudelian capitalist dynamic. Pomeranz highlights how ongoing inter-state warfare in Europe often led to the creation of state-backed trading monopolies, confirmations of guild privilege, tax farms, and the sale of public offices, thereby actually obstructing the operation of the free market *in the name* of and operating according to the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic.[314] In fact, Pomeranz argues that due to the absence of these features, "eighteenth century China (and perhaps Japan as well) actually came closer to resembling the neoclassical

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[311] K. Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 25.
[312] Ibid., 166.
[313] Ibid., 172–173.
[314] Ibid., 174.

ideal of a market economy than did Western Europe."[315] In explaining what he refers to as the "Great Divergence" between the Europe and East Asia, therefore, Pomeranz concludes that the main reason for this divergence was essentially this nexus the Braudelian dynamic, military fiscalism, and overseas expansion and appropriation, resulting in the wholesale appropriation of the resources and markets of the Americas, which explains the opening up of this "Great Divergence."

The role of the state in Britain in both impeding the free operation of the market through tariffs, taxation through a policy of enforced saving imposed on the working class, and other fiscal measures targeted at the disenfranchised masses while simultaneously pursuing a policy of overseas militarism all the way until 1911 is also highlighted by John Hobson.[316] He goes on to posit that as opposed to being a champion of laissez-faire free trade, Britain essentially followed the aforementioned Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic in order to forcibly appropriate the resource portfolios of extra-European regions which fell under its influence or control. Summing up this combination of imperfect markets and the pursuit of the Braudelian capitalist Dynamic outside of Europe in the context of intra-European rivalry, Hobson argues that:

> British indifference to spreading free trade across Europe contrasted starkly with its forceful imposition of free trade in the non-European world. And more generally, Britain's passive military posture *vis-à-vis* Continental Europe after 1815 contrasted strikingly with Britain's frequent recourse to violence in the East. A second racist standard here was that while European economies industrialised through tariff protectionism… the Eastern economies were forced to move straight to free trade or near free trade. This served to contain their economies because it denied them the chance of building up their infant industries.[317]

Hobson then goes on to highlight how the spreading of free trade to the East was

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[315] Ibid., 70.
[316] J. M. Hobson, *The Eastern Origins of Western Civilisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 251.
[317] Ibid., 260.

wrapped *under the guise of spreading civilization* in the case of Britain took place in the context of the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic, the use of force, the commercial and territorial expansion. This factor is termed by Arrighi, adopting Max Weber's nomenclature, as the unique development of "political capitalism" in the European context.[318] Arrighi argues that what set off the European powers from polities in other parts of the world was the "*concentration* of power in the hands of particular blocs of governmental and business agencies... as [being] essential to the recurrent *material* expansions of the capitalist world-economy as the competition among '"approximately equal'" political structures."[319] Highlighting what essentially amounted to a combination of state capture by domestic capitalist interests and overseas commercial and territorial expansion, Arrighi, drawing on Braudel, observes that:

> Nowhere, except in Europe, did these elements of capitalism coalesce into the powerful mix that propelled European states towards the territorial conquest of the world and the formation of an all-powerful and truly global capitalist world-economy. From this perspective, the really important transition that needs to be elucidated is not that from feudalism to capitalism but from scattered to concentrated capitalist power**. And the most important aspect of this much neglected transition is the unique fusion of state and capital, which was realized nowhere more favorably for capitalism than in Europe: "Capitalism only triumphs when it becomes identified with the state, *when it is the state*."[320]** (emphasis added)

The absence of Braudelian–Wallersteinian dynamic and the centrality of the state in China

Highlighting the nexus between the Braudelian dynamic, inter-state rivalry, and territorial and commercial expansion that characterized the European system, Arrighi notes that the opposite dynamic characterized the East Asian system. He characterizes this dynamic

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[318] G. Arrighi, *The Long Twentieth Century: Money, Power, and the Origins of Our Times* (London: Verso, 2010), 12.
[319] Ibid., 13.
[320] Ibid., 12.

as one in which "a growing introversion of the power struggle generated a combination of political and economic forces that had no tendency toward 'endless' territorial expansion."[321] He notes that whereas interstate competition and the Braudelian- Wallersteinian Dynamic led to the building of overseas commercial and territorial empires in Europe, the same degree of inter-state rivalry was lacking in East Asia due to the relative stability of China's position in East Asia, leading it to prioritize domestic trade and at times, proscribe foreign trade.[322] He goes on to point out that, in contrast to context of Braudelian–Wallersteinian overseas expansion and inter-state rivalry in Europe, which resulted in rigorous competition for control over trade routes to Asia, such trade routes were far less important to China than the priority of integration of the more populous areas of China with her surrounding vassal states into an agriculture-based economic system that prioritized stability and peace.[323] Most notably however, it is important to emphasize that Arrighi does not say that there were no capitalists or capitalist activity in imperial China. Rather, the crux of his argument is that the capitalist class did not capture the imperial Chinese state as had occurred in European powers in the context of robust political, military, economic, and financial competition between them. As Arrighi wrote:

> ... the capitalist character of market-based development is not determined by the presence of capitalist institutions and dispositions but by the relations of state power to capital. Add as many capitalists as you like to market economy, but unless the state has been subordinated to their class interest, the market economy remains non-capitalist. **Braudel himself takes imperial China as the example that '"most opportunely supports [his] insistence on separating the *market economy* and *capitalism*.'"** Not only did China "have a solidly established market economy... with its chains of local markets, its swarming population of small artisans and itinerant merchants, its busy shopping streets and urban centers," in addition, the merchants and bankers of Shanxi province and the overseas Chinese originating from Fujian and other southern coastal provinces closely resembled the business communities that constituted the preeminent capitalist organizations of sixteenth-

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[321] G. Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century* (London: Verso, 2007), 320.
[322] Ibid., 322.
[323] Ibid., 324.

century Europe. **And yet, the state's 'unmistakable hostility to any individual making himself "abnormally" rich meant that there could be no capitalism, except within certain clearly-defined groups, backed by the state, supervised by the state and always more or less at its mercy.'**[324] (emphasis added)

Wong in his study also demonstrates how the fiscal set-up of the imperial Chinese state differed markedly from contemporaneous European powers. His research shows that not only was the Chinese state free from the pressures of having constant near-peers competing against it, but it also had superior scales and capacities relating to tax collection and other ways to raise revenue such that it did not need to develop the credit instruments or financial institutions such as banks, joint-stock companies, or chartered companies which became the basis of European commercial capitalism developed for the immediate purpose of raising public debt in Europe.[325]

Therefore, while Arrighi highlights how the realization of *free markets* was actualized to a truer and greater extent in China than in Europe prior to the expansion, this did not lead to the formation of the nexus between the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic, inter-state competition, state capture, and overseas commercial and territorial expansion that took hold in the European context.[326] Whereas the European powers were engaged in mutual competition for wealth and power, stressing foreign trade at the expense of other governments and merchants, China saw its merchants as but one of many sources of both fiscal security and political power and legitimacy. Moreover, rather than acting according to the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic driven in part by inter-state rivalry in the European context, China saw no need to militarily establish an economic position of dominance, since its position in the East Asian system was far more secure and foreign trade was far less important to it than could be said for the European powers. Wong concludes:

Unable to see any point – moral, material, or military – to plundering others, the

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[324] Ibid., 332.
[325] Wong, 133.
[326] Arrighi (2007), 26.

> late imperial Chinese state moved between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries to regulate its contacts with foreign merchants whom it considered dangerous. As Europeans became bellicose in Asia, the Chinese moved to protect their empire from these potentially disruptive influences. They allowed Chinese merchants to pursue their trading activities in Southeast and Northwest Asia without incorporating them centrally into their political economy, a move obvious to European thinkers.[327]

Before continuing onto a substantive discussion of Sun's economic ideas, it is necessary to distinguish between his ideas, which this chapter terms "state capitalism" in the context of the ideas presented above, and the more recent literature regarding the developmental state in East Asian economies post Second World War. There is a substantial body of literature which describes the rise of the East Asian "tiger" economies following the Second World War, highlighting the role of the state and state-directed strategies in fostering their relative economic success stories. This literature mostly emphasizes the various reasons why some states were more able to execute such developmental strategies compared to others, focusing mainly on the configuration of political and institutional relations between the state, the bureaucracy, and big businesses in commonly pursuing commonly defined strategic goals.[328] Not only does the empirical focus of this body of literature differ from that of this chapter, but also the substantive thesis of this body of literature differs from that of this chapter. This

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[327] Wong, 149.

[328] M. Beeson, "Developmental States in East Asia: A Comparison of the Japanese and Chinese Experiences", *Asian Perspective,* vol. 33, no. 2 (2009), 5–11. Y. Huang, ("Debating China's Economic Growth: The Beijing Consensus or the Washington Consensus", *The Academy of Management Perspectives,* vol. 24, no. 2 (2010), 31–47, Pei, M. 1998, "Constructing the political foundations of an economic miracle," in *Behind East Asian Growth: the Political and Social Foundations of Prosperity*. ed. H. Rowen, Routledge, London, 39-59. R. Stubbs, "What ever happened to the East Asian Developmental State? The Unfolding Debate", *The Pacific Review,* vol. 22, no. 1 (2009), 1–22. R. Stubbs, "The East Asian Developmental State and the Great Recession: Evolving Contesting Coalitions", *Contemporary Politics,* vol. 17, no. 2 (2011), 151-166. C. Johnson, C. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: the Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982). B. and Milhaupt, C. (eds), *Regulating the Visible Hand?: The Institutional Implications of Chinese State Capitalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,)(2015). A. Kohli, *State-directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). A. Latham and H. Kawakatsu (eds), *Japanese Industrialization and the Asian Economy*, (London: Routledge, 2013).

is because the former is focused on the reasons behind the successful execution of state-led development strategies, while this chapter is centered around the relationship between material wealth and power versus morality and *wangdao* in the context of Sun's development plans for China.

In sum, unions between the state and capital were commonplace, capitalism in the European context was generally driven by the interests of its capitalist class in the context of the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic, inter- state rivalry and overseas imperialism and expansion. In contrast, the Chinese state historically generally remained in a relatively dominant and controlling position vis-à-vis its merchant class in imperial China and, therefore, able to define its own interests independently of its merchant class to a greater extent.

Sun's Principle of Peoples' Livelihood

Exhorting his followers on the need to industrialize in order save China from ruin, Sun linked this not only to China's material needs and political survival, but also to the need to keep up with the unstoppable trend of civilization: "Industrialization is crucial to China, **the progress of civilization depends** on it, [this is not a trend] that can be repressed, therefore, industrialization policy must be implemented in our country." (emphasis added)[329] This suggests that Sun was highly aware that entry into international society required a country to be able to stand on its own two feet.[330] He explained to his followers the nature of China's economic predicament:

> Investigating why we suffer from this type of oppression, [it is] ultimately because our industry is not developed. Because our industry is not developed, so China's cotton, must all be transported overseas, and coarse cotton cloth from overseas is imported. The clothes that Chinese people wear everyday, are all reliant on foreign imports, and [we] must pay dearly for it, this type of high cost, must nevertheless be paid with very precious gold, silver, and food which is transported overseas as compensation.

[329] GFQJ, vol. 1, 183.
[330] GFQJ, vol. 1, 188.

> This situation, is like a profligate descendent of a declined family, who does not know how to produce on his own, has no ability [to support himself], but nevertheless sells the [precious treasures] bequeathed to him by his ancestors in exchange for food and clothing. This situation describes how China is being economically oppressed by the foreign powers.[331]

Further describing to his listeners the desperation of China's economic situation, Sun said:

> Before [when I] was discussing the issue of nationalism, I said that the foreign powers are using economic means to oppress China. Every year they plunder China's rights, which now amounts to twelve million dollars. This is to say, because of the economic oppression inflicted upon China by the foreign powers, [we] must lose twelve million dollars every year. What methods does China use to pay this twelve million dollars to the foreign powers?... This loss of twelve million dollars is not paid entirely in monies, part of it is paid with food supplies. The supply of food in China is already insufficient, why are [we] still sending food overseas?...
> But in order for us to implement the principle of Peoples' Livelihood and solve the food shortage, **in regards to the capitalist system, [we] can only gradually improve it, [we] cannot immediately overturn** it.[332] (emphasis added)

Sun, realizing the importance of material strength to China's political survival and to joining the ranks of the civilized nations of the time, in fact wrote a whole book entitled the International Development of China detailing his vision and plans for China's future economic model, explicating everything from his broad core philosophical approach and values toward economic development all the way down to very detailed and technical plans related to the construction of certain ports and railways.

In the introduction of the International Development of China, Sun set out the core of his approach in the book, and thus set the tone by writing:

> However the development of China's natural resources, has already become among the biggest problems, and does not just solely affect China only. [**Regarding] the power [to determine our development], if it is controlled by us we will survive, if it is controlled by others we will perish.** From now on, the key to China's survival or death, indeed depends on this issue of industrialization. [If] we wish to possess power to determine to our development, knowledge is indispensible... [we can then] gallop into the arena of the world economy, and **transform the competitive nature of the other races, and reach our state of Great**

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[331] GFQJ, vol. 1, 175.
[332] GFQJ, vol. 1, 159, 169.

Harmony.[333] (emphasis added)

What is most interesting about these passages is that while Sun links material development to China's political survival and to the new realities and circumstances brought forth by the expansion, he also frames these imperatives in the larger context of the Great Harmony and *wangdao*, as pointed out in the beginning of this chapter. Sun's development plans were not just about making China rich and powerful. His plans for China's development and accumulation of material strength were ultimately grounded on the moral foundation of *wangdao*, and should be seen as part of a larger all-embracing effort of self-rectification and moving back toward the center of this new *tianxia*. This is also apparent in the way he directly linked economic organization to morality:

> As I said the last time, there is an invention, regarding the civilizational development of society, **the improvement of economic organization and the progress of morality**, what is the core of all of this? *Minsheng* is the motivating energy behind all social activity, because of *minsheng* fails, therefore the civilizational development of society cannot develop, **economic organization cannot improve, [and] morality regresses**, and all sorts of injustices occur…[334] (emphasis added)

As the previous chapter on Chinese Nationalism argued, Sun acknowledged that the West was way ahead of China in terms of what he termed "material civilization." However, he believed that no level of "material civilization" could not compensate for its moral dereliction and bankruptcy under the *tianxia* framework. Moreover, Sun thought that the advancement of the Wests' material advancement had actually led to the denigration of world politics into *badao*.[335] In the passage cited at the beginning of this chapter, Sun used the case of China's loss of the power to set her own customs and an industrial policy as an example of the abuse political and military superiority or *badao* that had unjustly stunted China's economic growth, and also to highlight the fact that economic oppression was ultimately backed up by

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[333] GFQJ, vol. 1, 423.
[334] GFQJ, vol. 1, 151.
[335] GFQJ, vol. 3, 124; GFQJ, vol. 3, 538-539.

political oppression and coercion. Sun had also said earlier in the context of his principle of Chinese Nationalism:

> Today as we have not yet prospered, [we first] resolve to aid the distressed and support the tottering, in the future when we are strong, and we think back to the pain **we have suffered as a result of the great powers' political and economic oppression, in the future if small and weak nations also suffer such pain, we must then wipe out such imperialism, only then would we have rightly governed one's state and pacified *tianxia***. In the future in order to rightly govern our state and pacify *tianxia*, we must first restore Chinese Nationalism and the status of our nation. Using our intrinsic morals and peace as a foundation, to unify the world under the Great Harmony, this indeed is the grave responsibility of our four hundred million people.[336] (emphasis added)

In Sun's view, therefore, the economic oppression that China suffered was as a result of the immorality of the political oppression it was confronted with. Sun told his followers:

> Because there is this type of economic oppression, every year incurring massive losses, for this reason China's social enterprises cannot develop, and even peoples' basic livelihoods are lost. There is another type of oppression more powerful than the direct sending of a few hundred troops to kill us. Furthermore, the foreign powers use the ideology of imperialism to carry out their economic oppression, the Chinese peoples' livelihoods naturally suffer, the homeless increase by the day, and our national strength weakens by the day.[337]

While the direct impetus for Sun's economic blueprint for China was to build a strong nation with material wealth and strength to withstand the political and economic oppression inflicted upon China by the foreign powers, the philosophical underpinning of his blueprint was not based on a competitive, zero-sum view of the world, but was centered around the idea of harmony and mutual cooperation. Explaining to his listeners the relationship between capital and labor and the importance of social harmony, Sun said:

> [When] workers possess great productive capabilities, and produce more for the owners of capital, for the owners of capital they are able to produce more, for the workers they can earn more in wages. This is [a matter of] the mutual harmonization of interests between workers and owners of capital, not [a matter of] mutual conflict. The reason why society evolves, is due to the harmonization of the economic interests of the majority [of people], not due to the existence of conflict between the economic interests of the majority. **The mutual harmonization of the economic**

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[336] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54.
[337] GFQJ, vol. 1, 21, 41.

> **interests of the majority, is to seek to benefit the interests of the majority; when the majority's interests [are benefited], only then does society progress**.[338] (emphasis added)

To further buttress his point that his principle of Peoples' Livelihood was aimed at harmonizing the economic interests of the majority, Sun used the example of textiles production to explain to his followers that even the production of a single product involves the contributions of a whole range of people, From the fertilizer, to the equipment required to harvest the cotton, to the agricultural specialists who developed these products, to the workers who harvested the cotton, to the transportation equipment and workers required to transport the cotton as raw materials to the factory, they all formed a single supply chain with mutually interlocking interests., Sun said:

> [I] would like to ask the workers in the textile factory, how [can they] say that the surplus value of those cloths and yarns is solely due to their labor? Not only does this situation apply to the surplus value arising from the textiles industry, indeed the situation regarding the surplus value arising from every industry is the same. From this [we can] see that all surplus value arising from industry, is not only the result of the labor of factory workers, all members of society that have capability and purpose, regardless of whether [it is] directly or indirectly, whether through producing or consuming, all contribute to varying degrees. This type of member [of society] with capability, constitutes the majority of society.[339]

Therefore although the direct impetus for Sun's development plans was the political survival and the material strengthening of China, at the philosophical heart of his development plans was a heavy moral emphasis on the value of harmony and the value of benevolence/humanity (*ren*), or treating people like people and valuing people as the end rather than as a mere means to an end or as impersonal, discrete components of a larger system.[340] In Sun's view, it was precisely mutual cooperation and the ability to coordinate and harmonize interests that separated humans from animals. In Sun's words:

> The development of China, no matter what, must occur. But the direction it takes, will it follow the old path taken by Western civilization? But this old path, is as good as the

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[338] GFQJ, vol. 1, 138.
[339] GFQJ, vol. 1, 139.
[340] Qin (2018), 341.

> one taken by Columbus by sea to America. [If China follows this path], setting West along the path from Europe, past Canada and the Bahamas… diverting by a great distance... If China [follows this path], and relies on the road already explored by the West, this would be like us setting out West across the Atlantic, everyone can foresee that what lays at the opposite shore would be continental America, and not Africa-India. The same logic applies in the realm of economics. Material civilization should not be focused on private interests and private gain, but should rather be focused on the public interest, and the shortest and most direct route [to this], lies not through mutual competition, but mutual cooperation.[341]

Summarizing this position in the conclusion of *The International Development of China*, Sun wrote that:

> ... [the motivation behind humanity's progress] is mutual cooperation, not mutual competition, which is the case with other animal species. Thus the natural disposition to fight, is therefore what humans have inherited from their animalistic tendencies, and this beastly nature is best eradicated as soon as possible.[342]

At the same time, Sun also rejected the historical materialism of Karl Marx, explaining to his listeners:

> Class warfare, is not the reason behind the evolution of society, class warfare, [occurs] when society is in the process of evolving, [and] is a type of disease... What Marx has learned from his research into social problems, [he has learned] only from seeing the illness [resulting from] the evolution of society, but [he] has not seen the principle behind the evolution of society.[343]

In Sun's view, physical warfare, trade or commercial warfare and class warfare were all a result of the replacement of mutual harmony and cooperation with competition and conflict. This in his view, was intrinsically immoral because as the above passage suggests, this "natural disposition to fight" is animalistic and reflects the abandonment of the value of humanity and benevolence (*ren*). This is the same as Yaqing Qin's point that "[harmonious] human relations depend on moral virtues in the final analysis and a society without morality is one of lower animals rather than humans."[344] Lamenting the state of international politics following the end of the First World War, Sun wrote:

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[341] GFQJ, vol. 1, 541.
[342] GFQJ, vol. 1, 538.
[343] GFQJ, vol. 1, 138–139.
[344] Qin (2018), 337.

> When the United States entered the European war, and the European war became a great world war, the American people were united in their desire for this war to be the end of all future wars, [and for this] this plan to realize this aim once and for all. Out of all the hopes of the peace loving nations of the world, none failed to rise up [in response], the Chinese people especially, at the time all believing that the age of the Great Harmony [was about to] arrive. Regrettably the great victory that the United States had achieved on the battle field, were all unexpectedly reversed during the [peace] conference, and the world reverted to the situation before the [start of] the European war, fighting for land, fighting for food, and fighting for resources.[345]

However out of the wreckage and disappointment following First World War, Sun spotted an opportunity not only to use the world's idle surplus war- making capital and workers for the development of China, but also in the process to transform the competitive and conflict-prone nature of the world into a state of Great Harmony:

> To use their grand scale of machinery [built up] during the period of the war, and their complete organizations of workers, in order to aid in the growth of the development of China's industry, and result in the flying progress of our citizens; and in order to solve the post-war problem of [surplus] workers. Who would have thought that the people of various countries having fought a long and bitter war, hearing of peace in the morning, but becoming slack by the evening, desiring to return to the situation prior to the war, not only are the soldiers from the battlefield successively disbanded, and [their supporting] factories are also being put to rest... [if we miss] this golden opportunity, they will become trapped in economic panic... the pain they suffer, will be even greater than that during the war, in the future [if they] desire to recover the shape of their pre-war economies, the development of China's resources will be indispensible to saving the poverty of various countries. However [the issue] of the development of China's resources, has already become the greatest issue facing the people of the world, [and] does not just concern the welfare of China only.[346]

As the above passages suggest, Sun deplored the contemporary state of the world and, in particular, the failure of the First World War to put an end as promised to imperialism, political and economic oppression, and Hobbesian competition over food, land and resources in the tradition of *badao*. Rather than believing or succumbing to the Social Darwinian logic of natural selection, Sun instead expressed a fundamental faith in the power of human agency to improve social organization so that a *wangdao* society founded on morality and conscience

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[345] GFQJ, vol. 1, 539.
[346] GFQJ, vol. 1, 423.

would ultimately prevail. Sun told his listeners:

> Following the logic of evolution... the strengths and weaknesses of animals, the prospering or decay of plants, are all attributed to the survival of the fittest, the strong prevail and the weak are defeated. Scholars of evolution then raise the analogy of the nations of humanity. In every war between a strong and a weak country, in disparities of wealth between people, all of these are regarded as common examples [of this logic], therefore according to Darwin's [thesis], [he says that] in the world there only exists power and might but no justice, [and] subsequently scholars blindly parroted this opinion, [claiming] that power and might are absolutely the only truth in this world**. I personally, in resorting to my conscience, consciously feel that I dare not agree.** Sincerely speaking even though power and might accord with the logic of evolution, however given [our] consciences given by heaven the obliteration of [our innate sense] of justice is indeed difficult, therefore evolution and the survival of the fittest are how barbaric species evolve, justice and morality are [the bases] upon which moral civilization evolves. **Social organizations have its shortcomings, even though they are limited by [the logic of] evolution, however the improvement of social organization, may be within the capability of human endeavor?** Socialism can therefore maximize the capability of humanity, in order to save the defects of [the logic] of evolution.[347] (emphasis added)

The above analyses supports the central argument of this chapter, that while Sun's plans for the economic development of China were undoubtedly *part of* his vision for China to become a strong and modern nation and accepted as a developed and civilized member of international society, it was *also* part of his larger, overarching effort of self-rectification to do so on the basis of morality as explicated in Chapters 2 and 4, and *wangdao*. Sun intrinsically believed in the power of human agency to rise above man's animalistic instincts to fight and compete, and to ultimately create social organizations characterized by harmony, benevolence and humanity, and *wangdao*. In particular, Sun posited that China was in a unique position and at the right place at the right time (following the end of the First World War) to effect such agency. He wrote:

> The day it was announced that the war end, I immediately started to research [this] plan for the international development of China's industry... The reason why I acted so urgently, desiring to use all my humble efforts, [is to use] this unprecedented and one and only opportunity to pursue the reality of world peace. Speaking of the vastness of China's territory, covering up to four million two hundred and eighty-nine thousand square miles, with a population of four hundred million, and furthermore with countless minerals buried underneath its soil and its

[347] GFQJ, vol. 1, 185.

> agricultural industry, not only is unable to fly high and stand on its own two feet, unable to mutually support the other nations of the world in the pursuit of common development, but on the contrary has is the target of thieves, becoming the meat on the chopping board of the great powers' economic oppression, this really is not just the shame of China, but is also a tragedy for the world.[348]

However, he optimistically predicted that if China were developed, given its vastness and rich natural resources, it would have no problem digesting the vast majority of the world's surplus production following the end of the war.[349] The core to Sun's development strategy was a state-led strategy to develop China's industry and capital. Sun told his followers:

> Our country is split and disintegrating... but [this state] of disintegration, is a temporary situation, in the future [we must] unite the country. After uniting the country, in order to solve the problem of Peoples' Livelihood, [we must] develop capital, and develop industry... **we must urgently use the power of the state to develop our industry, using modern machinery for production, providing jobs for all our workers**... If [we] do not use the power of the state to manage [this], giving a free rein to private Chinese or foreign commercial interests to manage [this], the future consequence will be the flourishing of private capital, resulting in great inequalities in wealth.[350] (emphasis added)

Summarizing the nature emphasizing the state-led nature of his development plans, Sun wrote:

> The development of China's economy should proceed along two routes, (1) private enterprises and (2) state-run enterprises. All activities that are suitable to be delegated to be run individuals, or are more suited for them to run, should be run by such individuals, rewarded by the state, and protected by the law... as to enterprises that cannot be delegated to private enterprises and those that may be monopolistic in nature, they should be run by the state.[351]

Sun essentially advocated a hybrid, bifurcated model for China's economic development. Sun believed that the state sector should directly own or control all the major and strategic sectors in industry. He advocated a laissez-faire, low tax approach consequently for the private sector, proactive land redistribution policies giving the government broad powers to ensure

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[348] GFQJ, vol. 1, 424.
[349] GFQJ, vol. 1, 426.
[350] GFQJ, vol. 1, 155–156.
[351] GFQJ, vol. 1, 430.

relative equality in the distribution of land, as well as broad and discretionary powers for the government to regulate private capital and property when it was deemed necessary for the greater good.

Under Sun's development plans, the state would monopolize the most lucrative and strategic sectors of the economy in order to centralize power, harness the wealth generated by those sectors toward the achievement of national objectives, and to prevent the undue polarization of wealth. For the rest of the private sector economy however, the state adopted a relatively laissez- faire attitude characterized by low taxes. The government would also devise policies to proactively spread and redistribute land rights, so as to ensure the basic welfare of all of its people, especially the most vulnerable. Moreover, the government's laissez-faire attitude to the private sector was subject to the caveat that the government could intervene at any time to prevent the disproportionate accumulation of wealth and power among private families or individuals.

To this effect, under Sun's blueprint, the state would monopolize all infrastructure development, including ports, railways, canals, and rivers.[352] It would also monopolize control over the entire commodities sector, including coal, steel, gas, copper, and other precious metals.[353] The cotton and textile industry, the leading industry that pioneered the industrial revolution, was also to be managed by the state.[354] Agriculture could be run by the private sector, but agricultural exports were to be directed by the state.[355] Furthermore, the entire publishing and surrounding industries should also be managed by the state.[356]

Sun was quite unequivocal in his belief that the state should lead and the private sector

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[352] GFQJ, vol. 1, 430–431 ; 440–441; 479.
[353] GFQJ, vol. 1, 534–538.
[354] GFQJ, vol. 1, 529.
[355] GFQJ, vol. 1, 527.
[356] GFQJ, vol. 1, 533.

should follow. As he put it, the primary goal of China's economic development was to develop the capital of the state, and while they were both welcome and there was a distinct place for them, the role of both foreign and private capital was to further the development of state capital and to supplement it.[357] Moreover, under Sun's blueprint, the government would have extensive and far-reaching powers to redistribute land in order to avoid the polarization of wealth resulting from the undue accumulation of land or speculation. In urban areas, Sun proposed that all private property holdings would be subjected to a government assessment of its fair value. Crucially, the government would have a broad discretionary power of compulsory purchase to purchase any of these private landholdings at the assessed price at any time. Sun reasoned that adjustments in assessed values generally would not change over time, save perhaps to take into account inflation, because he reasoned that increases in the value of land would mainly be due to the general improvement of the economy and locale as opposed to the hard work of the property owner.[358]

Summarizing the essence of his principle of Peoples' Livelihood to his followers, Sun wrote:

> The meaning of our Three Principles of the People, means by the people, of the people, and for the people, which means that the country belongs to everyone in common, [our] politics is commonly managed by all, [our] rights are enjoyed by all... everything must be held in [for the common benefit of the people**], this is the real meaning of the principle of Peoples' Livelihood, and is the world of Great Harmony that Confucius had hoped for**.[359] (emphasis added)

Conclusion

For Sun, his development plans were never just about the accumulation of wealth and power for China. As this chapter has argued, while Sun's plans for the economic

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[357] GFQJ vol. 1, 155, 541.
[358] GFQJ, vol. 1, 153, 432, 441.
[359] GFQJ, vol. 1, 157.

development of China were undoubtedly *part of* his vision for China to become a strong and modern nation and accepted as a developed and civilized member of international society, it was *also* part of his larger, overarching effort of self-rectification to do so on the basis of morality as explicated in Chapters 2 and 4 and *wangdao*. This is most apparent through the linking of his development plans to the values of harmony, the improvement of social organization, and above all through the values of benevolence and humanity (*ren*), which regard people as people rather than merely as means to ends or as impersonal, discrete components of a system. This framing of his development plans through these values permeates the entirety of Sun's ideas regarding the development of China. Even though the immediate goal of his development plans was the material advancement of China, in the final analysis this chapter also suggests that rather than being an end in and of itself, this goal should be seen as part of Sun's larger, over-arching vision for China to move back to the center of this new *tianxia* by setting an example and transforming firstly China and then potentially the world into the state of the Great Harmony.

Sun's development plans for China in this sense reflect his general approach to *tianxia*, the expansion, and international relations, and are explicated in a style that is similar to his principle of Chinese Nationalism, as presented in Chapter 4. However, while this approach does not run into any real obstacles theoretically in relation to his principle of Chinese Nationalism, since that only involves the nature of China's own moral-political identity, the issue of the Paradox of Self-Rectification was never effectively addressed by Sun in the context of his development plans, constituting a very significant omission on his part. He seemed to make a number of tacit assumptions that would be crucial to resolving this paradox in the context of his ideas as presented in this chapter without providing much or any empirical evidence for them. He assumed that access to a market the size of the Chinese market, especially when fully developed, would be sufficient to induce others to change their

ways and for the global economic system to operate in a more moral and harmonious way. However, that cannot simply be taken as a given. Others may change their ways to suit Sun's approach vis-à-vis their economic dealings with China, but not necessarily with their own dealings vis-à-vis each other for instance. Even when fully developed, the size of the Chinese market may not be as domineering such as to induce others to fundamentally change their economic models either.

Sun also neglected to address the issue of where China, when developed, would invest its surplus capital. Wouldn't China then need to find places overseas to invest its surplus capital, just like the Western powers did through their empires or otherwise? In that case, would China not potentially also be swept into the Braudelian–Wallersteinian Dynamic just like the Western powers he was so heavily rebuking? And in that case, wouldn't the Chinese state need to turn to its businesses, whether state owned or private, for revenue and support, again, just like the Western powers he was criticizing? Although Sun never provided effective answers to any of these questions, his approach essentially assumed that China's economic heft, when fully developed, and this inherent normative attraction of his economic model, would naturally attract the emulation and mimicking of others. This accords with the logic of *tianxia wei gong* as set out in Chapter 2.

Chapter 7: The Great Harmony

The previous two empirical chapters discussed the first two theoretical discontinuities which revealed aspects of the expansion story that were previously obscured and ignored. Chapter 4 explicated Sun's construction of a new moral-political identity for China through his principle of Chinese Nationalism. While his adoption of nationalism was undoubtedly triggered by the expansion and the fact that the nation-state had become the sole legitimate form of political organization in international society, it should also be seen as *part of* his larger over-arching effort for China to move back toward the center of the new *tianxia* resulting from the expansion. His principle of Chinese Nationalism was heavily imbued with *wangdao* and emphasized its moral dimension, demonstrating how *tianxia* is inherently and highly adaptable and can readily accommodate nationalism and become an *international or inter-state* worldview while retaining the integrity of its conceptualization of the world as a universal moral community, which lies at the heart of *tianxia*. Chapter 5 therefore, highlighted how Sun seamlessly amalgamated the universalistic moral community of *tianxia* with the reality of nationalism brought forth by the expansion through his principle of Chinese Nationalism.

Chapter 6 examined Sun's conception of the appropriate relationship between material wealth and power versus *wangdao*, morality and self- rectification in the context of his principle of Peoples' Livelihood and his economic development plans for China. While Sun's plans for the economic development of China were undoubtedly *part of* his vision for China to become a strong and modern nation and accepted as a developed and civilized member of international society, it was *also* part of his larger, overarching effort of self- rectification to do so on the basis of morality as explicated in Chapters 2–4 and *wangdao*. In others words, Sun's plan to industrialize and to transform China into a

developed and strong nation was not just a plan to accumulate material strength. Rather, it should also be seen through the prism and as an important part of his vision for China's self-rectification and movement back toward the center of this new *tianxia*. Sun viewed the contemporary international political economy as a global manifestation of *badao*, an international system that relied on imperialism, oppression and exploitation to hinder and unnaturally distort the development of others for self-benefit. He believed this not only caused and sustained massive disparities in power and wealth within Western societies, but also frequently led to conflict and war over resources, territory and power between nations. Instead, his state-centered plan for the development of China was heavily based on his philosophy of harmony, the improvement of social organization through the power of human agency and, above all, the value of benevolence and humanity (*ren*), which values people as people rather than merely as a means to an end or as impersonal, discrete components of a system. The permeation of these values throughout his development plans of China suggests that rather than being an end in and of itself, they should be seen as part of Sun's larger, over-arching vision for China to move back to the center of this new *tianxia* by setting an example and transforming firstly China and then potentially the world into the state of the Great Harmony.

The Great Harmony is the concept that Sun uses to crystallize his vision of inter-state moral-political order under this new *tianxia* brought forth as a result of the expansion. The whole purpose of Sun's envisioning of China moving back toward the center of this new *tianxia* is to restore a state of harmony, both within China itself as well as between China and the other members of this *tianxia*. On the relationship between China's own internal reinvention and the state of harmony, Chih-yu Shih wrote:

> **If the harmonious order of under-heaven is in jeopardy, it is the failure of the princes and the gentlemen to honour the commitment to reigning their domain selflessly**. The ultimate blame must be on their shoulders, whether or not violence has actually taken place during the restoration of harmony. Violence toward the

> superior and violence over the periphery cannot be immediately justified – violence is legitimate only when it helps to restore selfless leadership... **therefore, identity is about moral responsibility, not about difference**.[360] (emphasis added)

The whole underlying logic of the *tianxia* framework is based on the premise that the goal and natural state of all social relations is harmony. Because the Qing dynasty had failed to honor its commitment to reigning China selflessly by ruling in the dynasty's interests, not the nation's, and harmony under *tianxia* was in jeopardy, Sun laid the ultimate blame on their shoulders. Violence, in other words revolution, was justified in order to restore selfless leadership and moral responsibility. The validity of this reason for violence in order to restore moral responsibility was itself a result of the changes and circumstances brought forth by the realities of the expansion. The nation-state had become the sole legitimate form of political organization in international society, and a state at least had to have a plausible claim to represent its people (i.e., the nation) to be legitimately accepted as a member of international society.[361]

In Sun's view, the Qing's utter moral and political failure to do so was evidence that it was completely incapable of selfless leadership, and hence moral responsibility.

Reinforcing the point that the goal of all social relations under the *tianxia* framework is harmony, Yaqing Qin says that the most significant relationship, or what he terms the meta-relationship, is the that between *yin-yang* and the dialectic of the golden mean (*zhongyong*). Describing this relationship, Qin wrote:

> **The core of the *zhongyong* dialectics is harmony**. It sees polarities in everything, but argues that change and progress are not ignited by conflict and crisis, but rely on the harmonizing process of the *yin-yang* trans-subjective mutuality... Daoism believes that harmony is to return to the state of nature while Confucianism holds that harmony is the state of nature to be reached through practicing centrality in society. Therefore, even though Daoism implies the importance of centrality, **Confucianism makes it an explicit and defining feature of the Chinese dialectics, especially for**

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[360] Shih (2010), 537-560, 544.
[361] J. Mayall, *Nationalism and International Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 45, 148.

> **social purposes, that is, harmony among humans.** Harmonious human relations are managed by practicing the centrality principle. I term the Chinese dialectics *zhongyong* dialectics exactly because of this **important development of Confucian dialectics with its accent on harmony in terms of centrality through human agency**.[362] (emphasis added)

Zhongyong, or the Golden Mean, refers to polarities moving toward the due middle in terms of appropriateness and reasonableness, a dynamic process of centralizing with due measure and degree in order to attain harmony.[363]

Harmony in this context is not premised on homogeneity or the elimination of differences, but rather is based on the premise that differences exist naturally, just like yin and yang do. It is the existence of difference that makes this endeavor to attain harmony necessary in the first place. As Qin says, "[for] any good piece of music, it is the result of different sounds, appropriately adjusted and combined... By the *zhongyong* logic, it is this difference and heterogeneity that create the necessary condition for a harmonious order."[364]

Recall the imperial-style gate entrance gate leading up to Sun's mausoleum in Nanjing, carved with his most famous saying reading *Tianxia Wei Gong*, or all-under-heaven is shared by all. The phrase *tianxia wei gong* itself comes directly from the famous passage in Chinese *Book of Rites* describing the ideal state of the Great Harmony:

> When the Great Way was in practice, then [all-under-heaven] was shared by all. They chose people of talent and ability whose words were sincere, and they cultivated harmony. Thus people did not only love their own parents, not only nurture their own children... In this way selfish schemes did not arise. Robbers, thieves, rebels, and traitors had no place, and thus outer doors were not closed. This is called the Great Harmony.[365]

Thus, the purpose of *tianxia wei gong,* or Sun's highest ideal of what an ideal of

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[362] Qin, (2018), 182–183.
[363] Ibid., 185.
[364] Ibid., 187.
[365] *Liji Lijie (The Book of Rites, Critical Edn.)* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1998), 581-583, quoted in, W.A. Callahan, "Remembering the future—utopia, empire, and harmony in 21st-century international theory", *European Journal of International Relations,* vol. 10, no. 4, 2004, 569–601, 573.

political community of nations should look like, is ultimately to strive toward the achievement of this state of Great Harmony.[366] As chapter 2 has argued, under the *tianxia* framework, this is done through the act of self- rectification, based on the premise that if moral-political self-rectification makes oneself good enough, this enables movement toward the center of *tianxia*. This will then serve as a cultural and moral model attracting the emulation and evolution of all others. Centering oneself in *tianxia* through the act of self-rectification therefore, induces harmony throughout the system according to this logic.

One way to understand and conceptualize this logic is Qin's description of what constitutes good governance in a relational framework like *tianxia*. He wrote:

> Since society is relational, governance means proper management of relations in society. **It is establishing and maintaining appropriate and harmonious relations among societal members that constitute what governance is about. In turn, relational management rests on morality and morality-induced social trust.** A trustable and trustful society with the rule of morality reflects sustainable governance. It is not out of cost-efficient calculation, but out of humanitarian consideration that goes beyond any naked power and tacit coercion... **this tripartite scheme of relationality, morality, and trust reflects the essence of the relational approach to governance**.[367] (emphasis added)

This is reflected in the permeation and prominence of *wangdao* versus *badao* throughout Sun's ideas. Whereas *badao* depends on coercive and hegemonic rule, implying conflict and violence, *wangdao* is based on normative or moral power that leads by example and emulation, implying harmony and sustainability. The implication of conflict and violence through the imposition of the standard of civilization are parts of the expansion story that have been largely obscured and ignored. Because the standard and the expansion are premised on the transformation of the inferior other, or those outside of international society, violence, either outright or through imperialism or other means, is implicitly justified when the other is either unwilling or incapable of being transformed. As Shih

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[366] GFQJ, vol. 1, 230–231.
[367] Qin (2018), 346.

succinctly states, "[in] contrast to the Orient, Western modernity embodies a transcendental universalism. To ensure universal modernity for humankind, the West has to either transform or eliminate the Orient."[368]

This chapter argues that seen in this light, Sun's reinvention of China's whole moral-political identity, while done *partly* in response to the standard and the new reality and circumstances resulting from the expansion, should also be seen as part of this larger, over-arching logic of achieving harmony and the avoidance of violence and conflict which are inherent in the *tianxia* framework. By adapting to the reality of the expansion and this new *tianxia* through self- rectification, this obviates the need for conflict and violence. Moreover, by moving back toward the center of this new *tianxia* and potentially one day becoming worthy of the moral and cultural emulation of others, this in turn would induce a state of Great Harmony and lead to the true realization of *tianxia wei gong*, those famous words carved onto the gateway at the entrance on the path leading up to Sun's mausoleum in Nanjing.

Compared the Sino-centric East Asian order prior to the expansion, this new *tianxia* that the expansion had resulted in is infinitely more diverse politically, economically and culturally, thereby giving rise to the systemic probability of conflict in international relations. This is the basic premise of almost all mainstream international relations theories.[369] For instance, all of Hedley Bull's institutions of international society are premised on the assumptions that conflict lies in the nature of social life and that violence continues to be a legitimate, if last-resort, means to achieve one's objectives. Reflecting these assumptions, war itself is an institution, and the balance of power, great powers,

[368] Shih (2010), 539.
[369] Qin (2018), 161–169.

diplomacy and international law are arguably all aimed at limiting violence.[370]

Since self-rectification reduces or obviates the need for conflict and violence, Sun's emphasis on the Great Harmony actually complements the latter four institutions which are aimed at the limitation of violence in international society. Two pillars or elements lie at the heart of Sun's conceptualization of the reality of this new *tianxia*, in which there exists a systemic probability of conflict, and its relationship with the Great Harmony: the power of human agency to achieve harmony through social evolution in order to obviate the need for conflict and violence and the co-embedded relationship between the political community of the nation-state and the universal moral community of *tianxia*.

International Society and the Great Harmony

In a short speech at the opening ceremony of the Whampoa military academy, which became the lyrics to the Republic of China's national anthem, Sun said to his followers: "The Three Principles of the People, the foundation of our party, using [this] we establish the Republic, using [this] we advance into the Great Harmony."[371] In addition, speaking in the context of his principle of Chinese Nationalism, Sun told his followers:

> Therefore, we must first decide on a type of policy, to aid the distressed and support the tottering, **only this would amount to fulfilling our heavenly-ordained duties**. When dealing with the small and weak nations... we must support them, when dealing with the world's great powers we must resist them, if everyone in the nation sets this as their resolution, only then can the Chinese nation prosper. If we do not first set this as our resolution, the Chinese nation will have no hope. Today as we have not yet prospered, [we first] resolve to aid the distressed and support the tottering, in the future when we are strong, and we think back to the pain we have suffered as a result of the great powers' political and economic oppression, in the future if small and weak nations also suffer such pain, we must then wipe out such imperialism, only then would we have rightly governed one's state and pacified *tianxia*. **In the future in order to rightly govern our state and pacify *tianxia*, we must first restore**

[370] H. Bull, *The Anarchical Society: a Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).
[371] GFQJ, vol. 9, 419. He gave the speech in classical Chinese, hence its abbreviated style.

> **Chinese Nationalism and the status of our nation. Using our intrinsic morals and peace as a foundation, to unify the world under the Great Harmony, this indeed is the grave responsibility of our four hundred million people**.[372] (emphasis added)

Sun's reference to rightly governing one's own state in order to pacify *tianxia,* it may be recalled, was highlighted by him specifically on another occasion when speaking in the context of his principle of Chinese Nationalism. Sun said that besides their "intrinsic morality," which he claimed should be re- awakened after nearly four centuries of Qing rule, his followers should also recover the political wisdom of the past. He said:

> China has a very systematic political philosophy, that politicians in the West have not seen… which is what it says in the Great Learning as "to study the nature of things in order to acquire knowledge; to acquire knowledge in order to cause one's thoughts to be sincere; to cause one's thoughts to be sincere in order to rectify one's heart; to rectify one's heart in order to cultivate one's self; to cultivate one's self in order to regulate one's family; to regulate one's family in order to rightly govern one's state**; to rightly govern one's state in order to pacify *tianxia*.**[373]

Sun quoted this passage from the Great Learning as representing the lost political wisdom of the past encapsulates the idea that the universal moral community which begins from the hearts and minds of every individual and passes through the state are all ultimately being bound together in one cosmic order and are all part of *tianxia*. It also embodied the idea that pacifying *tianxia* begins with the act of individual self-cultivation. He continued by saying that this idea of beginning at the individual level, self-cultivating, and carrying the spirit of the rectified self forward through this cosmic order until it pervades all the way up to the level of *tianxia* was China's unique treasure, and must be preserved.[374] At its root, Sun's emphasis on the power of human agency to self- rectify, pacify *tianxia* and to attain harmony as a result can be traced to here. By reaching in and self-cultivating, this enables one to reach out and ultimately restore harmony throughout *tianxia*.[375]

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[372] GFQJ, vol. 1, 53–54.
[373] GFQJ, vol. 1, 49.
[374] Ibid.
[375] See also: Qin (2018): 190-194.

It should be apparent from these passages that Sun drew a close relationship between *tianxia* and the state, which he defined through his principle of Chinese Nationalism in terms that heavily emphasized *wangdao* and its moral dimension. The suggestion here is that *tianxia* and the state are not entirely separate and discrete entities, because they are clearly bound together by a common moral basis in Sun's ideas. *Tianxia* is a predominantly moral and universal community, while the state is a moral-political entity and is itself defined by, or should strive to be defined partly by, the moral basis that underpins *tianxia*. The moral-political underpinnings and basis of *tianxia*, being an inherently adaptable relational worldview as argued in Chapter 2, can also in turn evolve in line with the prevailing standards and best practices of its members, the nation-state. The clearest example of this is that as a result of the expansion, the new *tianxia* is no longer composed of tributaries but of nation- states. Therefore, *tianxia* and the state are to a certain extent, mutually co- constitutive and co-embedded within one another through this common and simultaneously evolving moral-political basis. This moral-political basis evolves through the acts of modeling when one occupies the center of *tianxia*, and emulation when one sits at the periphery.[376]

Following the logic of centering and self-rectification, modeling, and emulating, harmony can thus be achieved between states in the context of *tianxia*. The basis behind the logic of this dynamic is the common moral-political underpinnings that bind *tianxia* and the state together and render them mutually co-constitutive. Conceptualized in this way, nation-states, even though they are discrete entities ordered on the principle of sovereign equality, are bound together and, to a certain extent, are mutually co-constitutive with *tianxia*. It is by observing changes in the nature and scope of *tianxia* that nation-states can

[376] Qin (2018) terms this 'co-embedded inclusivity,' see 173.

derive their predominant moral-political principles that in turn serve as guidelines on how they should self-rectify. The logic of modeling versus emulation can therefore reduce or obviate conflict and violence if nation-states feel bound and act according to this constant moral-political and dynamic self- rectification.

This explicit link between self-rectification and the attainment of the Great Harmony was drawn by Sun in a speech as early as 1912. In this speech, Sun said:

> Following the establishment of the Republic of China, every citizen of the Republic of China each bears the heavenly-ordained responsibility of a citizen. What is [this] heavenly-ordained responsibility? It is to promote world peace, this promotion of world peace, is the goal of the Republic of China's future. Proceeding according to this type of goal, that is the foundation of consolidating the Republic of China. Also including politics, law, custom, [our] citizens' enlightenment, [and various] types of causes, all need to be improved in order to make progress, only then can [we] compete with the world. [Every instance] of this type [of need] to improve and make progress, is the responsibility of [each] citizen of the Republic of China. [If] everyone fulfills this responsibility, [if] everyone fulfills their obligations, [if] there is not one of our four hundred million [citizens] that [does not act in this way], then the Republic of China's progress will definitely be speedy… **Moreover… the Great Harmony of the world, is already [evident] in the trend of China and the world being one family. The citizen of the Republic of China, each must know the degree of civilization [prevailing] in today's world**…[377] (emphasis added)

This suggests that Sun drew a close link between self-cultivation on the individual level, self-rectification on the level of the nation-state, and the realization of the Great Harmony on the level of *tianxia*. This encapsulates not only the point that the nation-state and *tianxia* are mutually co-constitutive, but also reinforces the importance of the self-cultivation at the individual level due to Sun's recognition of the power of human agency to effect change and attain harmony.

It should also be apparent from these passages that for Sun, the Great Harmony was an ideal end state that had not yet been reached, but could potentially be reached through a long process of successful self-rectification, both moral and political. Sun referred to the Great Harmony as "Confucius' ideal world," telling his listeners that:

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[377] GFQJ, vol. 3, 25.

> In our country a few thousand years [ago], Confucius said: 'When the Great Way was in practice, then [all-under-heaven] was shared by all.' Thus, people did not only love their own parents, not only nurture their own children, this is the world of the Great Harmony. **The world of the Great Harmony is what is termed 'all-under-heaven is shared by all'… this ideal world that Confucius spoke of,** [if] it be truly realized in practice, then [men] will not see things that they desire [and do not have], then the people will not fight [against one another], and soldiers and armor also will no longer be necessary.[378] (emphasis added)

For him, the standard for determining when *tianxia wei gong* is realized in practice is when the Great Harmony itself is realized, highlighting the importance of this concept in Sun's ideas. Sun then continues in the same speech to say that the Great Harmony differs from the state of the Small Tranquility (*xiaokang*), which he implied represented the contemporary state of the world.[379] Traditionally, the Small Tranquility has been seen as the state between primitive savagery and the utopia of the Great Harmony. Although Sun himself never explicitly defined the differences between the two, his successor Chiang Kai Shek, reflecting on what Sun meant by the Great Harmony, explicating the stages leading up to the attainment of the Great Harmony as set out in the *Book of Rites*, wrote that:

> A society of the Great Harmony [as described] in the *Book of Rites*, this is not achievable in one single step... The *Book of Rites* describes the existence of 'Three Ages.' These Three Ages represent the three stages [leading to] the attainment of a society of the Great Harmony. In *Gongyang's Commentary*, the three ages are, firstly the Age according with Chaos, secondly the Age of Rising peace, and thirdly the Age of Peace and Tranquility... after we have pacified turmoil, our country will eventually become stable, this is when the stage of construction begins. The state termed the Small Tranquility described in the *Book of Rites*, is the equivalent of what is termed in *Gongyang's Commentary* as the Age of Rising Peace. If the construction of society of society reaches the highest ideal, then that is [the state] referred to in the *Book of Rites* as 'The Great Harmony,' and is also what is referred to in *Gongyang's Commentary* as the Age of Peace and Tranquility.[380]

Chiang also implied, like Sun that China and the world had largely reached the state of Small Tranquility, and that therefore the crux of the issue was how to reach the final state of the Great Harmony. Describing the contemporary state of the Small Tranquility, Chiang said:

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[378] GFQJ, vol. 3, 303.
[379] GFQJ, vol. 3, 305.
[380] GFQJ, vol. 1, 230.

> Before the construction of society reaches the highest ideal of the Great Harmony, that is the stage of the Small Tranquility. What is a Small Tranquility society? ' Goods and labor are for self-benefit' – this means that goods are produced for self-profit, [and] laborers work to earn a wage for themselves. Entrepreneurs pursue profits, laborers pursue wages, this is a 'free society.' But society and the economy thus develops from [a society of] free competition to a system of monopolistic capitalism, causing [a situation] of unfair competition, [and] causing a minority to exclusively be in possession of wealth in society, [and] the majority to fall into a situation of poverty, turmoil in society thus necessarily arises from this... '[Rulers] recognize as an achievement only that which is to their own benefit, Walls and moats are built to make the city secure"- this is what [Sun] referred to as the age of conflict between countries under monarchical rule. In this age, 'Conspiracies and plots are hatched, and military conflict arises from this.' **Therefore if a society of Small Tranquility does not [seek to] further progress to the world of the Great Harmony, then even [the state of the] Small Tranquility will be impossible to maintain**.[381] (emphasis added)

Not only did Chiang share Sun's implicit assessment that their contemporary world was a world in the state of Small Tranquility, but Chiang further asserted that one cannot merely be satisfied with the Small Tranquility and stand still. Even the maintenance of the Small Tranquility requires constant striving and self-rectification toward the direction and the ideal of the Great Harmony. This reflects the emphasis that Sun put on the responsibility of each Chinese citizen to constantly strive to improve and make progress and, in his words, "know the degree of civilization [prevailing] in today's world."[382] This also exposes one of the assumptions behind the logic of *tianxia* and self-rectification, which is that they both assume that moving toward or even striving to stay at the center of *tianxia* is a dynamic, on-going process that has no definite beginning or ending.[383] Therefore if the standard of civilization as described in the existing literature on entry and expansion is conceived of as *part of* Sun's overarching effort toward the self-rectification of China and moving back toward the center of *tianxia*, this supports the argument in this thesis that entry is an on-going

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[381] GFQJ, vol. 1, 231.
[382] GFQJ, vol. 3, 25.
[383] Qin (2018) also characterizes the process of attaining harmony in his relational theory as a '*constant* process of harmonizing... It is a *dynamic* process, a process that is *continuously* reaching harmony by adjusting all the differences appropriately toward centrality...' (emphasis added), 185.

process with no definite beginning or end rather than a one-off historical event as it is currently portrayed in the existing literature.

What then, does the state of Great Harmony look like in practice, and how does it differ from the Small Tranquility? Chiang wrote,

> What kind of society is the society of the Great Harmony [described] in the *Book of Rites?*... The economic system of the Great Harmony is '[Riches are not wasted or squandered and are used fully and appropriately], therefore [riches] do not have to be kept to oneself; [People create wealth, appreciate and cherish wealth,] [yet] it is not necessary for themselves [to use and possess and possess exclusively.]'... This means that in a society of Great Harmony production actively develops resources for the goal of sustaining its people; [In] a society of Great Harmony labor is in order to serve society and not for labor wages, therefore a Great Harmony society's economic system is based on cooperation, with public service as its goal, this is the economic system of the Principle of Peoples' Livelihood... 'They chose people of talent and ability whose words were sincere, and they cultivated harmony.' – **This refers to a world composed of democratic and sovereign states with equal status. In this world, 'Robbers, thieves, rebels, and traitors had no place,' this is the *tianxia wei gong* world of eternal peace**.[384] (emphasis added)

The direct link between the crown jewel of Sun's ideas, *tianxia wei gong*, and the state of the Great Harmony is again explicitly drawn here by Chiang. Chiang further interpreted this to mean a *tianxia* composed of sovereign states with equal status. Although Sun never himself explicitly interpreted the Great Harmony in this way, this interpretation seems to accord with Sun's ideas and is highly apparent from not only the way he directly linked his principle of Chinese Nationalism to *tianxia*, as explicated in Chapter 4, but also in the way he explicitly linked his principle of Chinese Nationalism to the attainment of Great Harmony. Recounting the history of revolution up to 1923, Sun wrote:

> In relation to the various nations of the world, [we] must maintain the independent status of our nation, carry forward our intrinsic culture, and absorb the [cultures] of the world and strengthen them, in anticipation of [sharing] the world with the various nations, in order to attain gradually the [state of] the Great Harmony. This is [the relationship] between the principle of Chinese Nationalism and the various nations of the world.[385]

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[384] GFQJ, vol. 1, 230.
[385] GFQJ, vol. 2, 355.

This passage reflects the close relationship between the Great Harmony, *tianxia wei gong*, and Sun's principle of Chinese Nationalism. Just as it has been argued in this thesis that *tianxia* is inherently adaptable and has no problems incorporating the nation-as its basic unit, this also holds true in the case of the Great Harmony. The dynamic, on-going nature of the process, coupled with the strong sense of *wangdao* and morality in his principle of Chinese Nationalism, fits with this conception of the Great Harmony and is premised on the logic set out in Chapter 2 of this thesis. This is, in turn, based on the assumption that others will easily see the benefits, whether moral or political, of self-rectification through emulation. In the context of his ideas on China's development, recall that the element of harmony was also heavily emphasized as the philosophical basis for his development plans. He wrote:

> However the development of China's natural resources, has already become among the biggest problems, and does not just solely affect China only. [**Regarding] the power [to determine our development], if it is controlled by us we will survive, if it is controlled by others we will perish.** From now on, the key to China's survival or death, indeed depends on this issue of industrialization. [If] we wish to possess power to determine to our development, knowledge is indispensible... [we can then] gallop into the arena of the world economy, and **transform the competitive nature of the other races, and reach our state of Great Harmony**.[386] (emphasis added)

It is not entirely clear whether Sun meant the transformation of Chinese society into a state of the Great Harmony, or the wider world in general, although his explicit reference to transforming the competitive nature of other races seems to point to the latter. The most likely interpretation seems to be that participation in the Chinese market, structured on harmony and his principle of Peoples' Livelihood, would show others the moral and perhaps economic value of his economic model, and this in turn would cause them to emulate his model. This interpretation is supported by Sun's analysis and assessment of the global political and economic situation following the end of the First World War. He bemoaned that the war to end all wars which was hoped for had not materialized, and that he, the Chinese, and

[386] GFQJ, vol. 1, 423.

many other nations had their hopes raised that "the age of the Great Harmony [was about to] arrive."[387]

Instead he said, the world had reverted back to the previous cycle of fighting for land, food and resources. Assessing how China should respond to this situation, Sun said:

> To use their grand scale of machinery [built up] during the period of the war, and their complete organizations of workers, in order to aid in the growth of the development of China's industry, and result in the flying progress of our citizens; and in order to solve the post-war problem of [surplus] workers. Who would have thought that the people of various countries having fought a long and bitter war, hearing of peace in the morning, but becoming slack by the evening, desiring to return to the situation prior to the war, not only are the soldiers from the battlefield successively disbanded, and [their supporting] factories are also being put to rest... [if we miss] this golden opportunity, they will become trapped in economic panic... the pain they suffer, will be even greater than that during the war, in the future [if they] desire to recover the shape of their pre-war economies, the development of China's resources will be indispensible to saving the poverty of various countries. However [the issue] of the development of China's resources, has already become the greatest issue facing the people of the world, [and] does not just concern the welfare of China only.[388]

This supports the interpretation that participation in the Chinese market was intended to show others the normative and economic benefits of this approach, which they would then emulate back home and in other places. This largely seems to be the mechanism through which Sun intended his ideal of the Great Harmony would be spread throughout *tianxia*. However, the Paradox of Self-Rectification applies here as it did to his ideas as set out in the previous chapter on Sun's development plans. If it is doubtful whether the assumptions behind his *tianxia* logic alone are sufficient to induce such self-rectification and morally-inspired behavior in the economic sphere, similar doubts apply in an even more magnified fashion to the Great Harmony, which even in his own words is an ideal of the very highest standard and which has never actually been realized in the past. For instance, when speaking about his principle of Democracy (*minquan*), he said:

So over two thousand years ago, Confucius [and] Mencius both advocated *minquan*.

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[387] GFQJ, vol. 1, 539.
[388] GFQJ, vol. 1, 423.

> Confucius said, 'When the Great Way was in practice, then [all- under-heaven] was shared by all.' [By this] he was advocating a world of Great Harmony with *minquan*. In addition, '[one] must speak of [the saintly emperors] *Yao* and *Shun*, this is because *Yao* and *Shun* did not regard *tianxia* as their private property. *Yao* and *Shun*'s politics, were monarchical rule in name, but accorded with *minquan* in practice, therefore Confucius held them both in high esteem... During that age, [they] already knew that a monarch is not necessary, [they] already knew the monarchy will not necessarily last for long... From this, we can see that in the Chinese peoples' understanding of *minquan*, they were already aware of it over two thousand years ago. **But at the time, they thought it was [impossible to put into practice], like what foreigners would term a utopia, an ideal, not something that can be achieved immediately.**[389] (emphasis added)

Yao and *Shun* were mythical saintly emperors that Confucius used to refer to the highest standards of moral conduct in public life. Thus, it is not surprising that Sun himself also pointed out though that the Great Harmony, of which he argued *minquan* was an integral and indispensible component of, was an ideal of the highest standard that has never actually been realized in practice.

He repeated a similar point in the context of *tianxia wei gong* in a speech he gave to farmers in 1924:

> In other words, during the imperial era, only one person was emperor; [however] during the republican era, [our] four hundred million people are all emperors. This is [what is referred to] as the people as the masters, this is the reality of putting the principle of *minquan* into practice. This [principle], during the past few millennia of Chinese [history], even though it has never been [put into practice]... has been conceptualized as early as [back then]. For example Confucius said, "*tianxia wei gong*"… the Three Principles of the People that this revolution is trying to implement, this is what they mean.[390]

He repeated this point in the context of *minquan* again, highlighting that although the ideal of the Great Harmony, which he defined as including democracy, had been conceptualized in theory since the time of Confucius, it had never actually been realized in practice.[391] In fact, Sun's idealistic and utopian interpretation of the Great Harmony permeated the spirit of all of his Three Principles of the People. Concluding one of his lectures on the

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[389] GFQJ, vol. 1, 60–61.
[390] GFQJ, vol. 3, 483.
[391] GFQJ, vol. 3, 372–373.

principle of Peoples' Livelihood, Sun said:

> The meaning of our Three Principles of People, is of the people, by the people and for the people, [and this] means that the country is owned in common by all its people, [its] politics are managed in common by its people, its benefits are enjoyed in common by its people. According to this [logic], [the relationship] of the people vis-à-vis the country, is not just merely owning all property in common, all affairs, rights and privileges must be held in common, this is the real meaning of the principle of the Principle of Peoples' Livelihood, this is the world of the Great Harmony that Confucius hoped for.[392]

Surely, a man as well read, experienced and travelled as Sun must have realized that the Great Harmony defined by him as such was, in the words of Marie-Claire Bergère, a "utopian paradigm."[393] This is apparent by his references to it as the highest ideal. His pointing out on numerous public occasions that it had never been realized in the past in practice and there were no historical precedents for it also suggests that he did not naively believe that it was an ideal that could literally be realized anytime in the foreseeable future. This is further supported by his reminders to his followers that it was crucial for China to be militarily strong and prepared to defend itself through the force of arms. In a speech he gave to the army, Sun said:

> In the previous year the success of the revolution was entirely due to the efforts of [our] soldiers, and today the maintenance [of the security] of the Republic, is also dependent on our soldiers. The responsibility of our soldiers lies in the defense of our country, because in the twentieth century in establishing a country on the face of the earth, a number of strongmen scramble [and compete with one another], [**therefore we] are still unable to enter into the era of the Great Harmony, [and] without a strong military [we] cannot found a country**.[394] (emphasis added)

The suggestion here is that Sun *did not* realistically expect the Great Harmony, an ideal that he held as representing the highest moral-political standard of social and international relations, could be realized in the foreseeable future. Yet, as the earlier parts of this chapter have emphasized, Sun still consistently insisted on upholding and promoting it as

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[392] GFQJ, vol. 1, 157.
[393] Bergère and Lloyd (1998), 369.
[394] GFQJ, vol. 3, 90.

his highest ideal and as representing the full realization of the crown jewel in his ideas, *tianxia wei gong*. The key question is *why*?

This chapter argues that the key though not only part of this answer lies in Sun's intrinsic belief, or one could even say faith, in the ability and desire of humans to evolve and self-rectify. This accords with the logic of *tianxia* as explicated in Chapter 2 as well as in the earlier parts of this chapter. Explicitly spelling out his logic, that morality, the pursuit of harmony, self-rectification, and hence the evolution of humanity would ultimately, some day, lead to *tianxia wei gong* and the state of the Great Harmony, he wrote:

> The principle behind the evolution [of humanity], is different from the principle behind the evolution of [other] species, the principle [behind the evolution of] other species is competition, while the principle [behind the evolution of] humanity is mutual cooperation. **[Both] societies and countries are bodies [characterized by the principle] of mutual cooperation, [are bodies] characterized by morality, benevolence and humanity, [and are] for the purpose of mutual cooperation.** [If] humanity follows this principle [it will] prosper, if it does not it will perish, this principle has already been applicable to humanity for [the past] several decades. But humanity to this day has been unable to fully adhere to this principle... However since humanity has [become] civilized... [it] has already accomplished what man can not accomplish, [and] has already achieved what man can not accomplish, [and] moved towards the principle of mutual cooperation, in order to accomplish the goal of the evolution of humanity. **What is the goal of the evolution of humanity? This is what Confucius [meant when he] said, "when the Great Way was in practice, then [all-under-heaven] was shared by all**."[395] (emphasis added)

This faith, not in actually reaching the ultimate ideal of the Great Harmony in the foreseeable future but more so in the underlying logic of it, encapsulated the spirit of Sun's *tianxia wei gong* view of the world. In a separate speech, he told his listeners:

> Today [as we] enter [the age of] socialism, [we] emphasize humanitarianism, therefore [we] do not engage in mutual conflict, and conversely we value mutual cooperation, only when there is morality would there be a country, [and] only when there is morality would there be a world. Recently it has been said in [the discipline] of sociology, [that] despite thriving greatly, the borders of countries are still rigid, [and] as between countries it is impossible that there [would be] no conflict. Moralists surely hope for a world of Great Harmony, [for] a day when there is forever no more war. I also have this wish, and am touched by this theory. **In the future there is surely hope for peace in the world, surely there will be day**

[395] GFQJ, vol. 1, 381.

[when] Great Harmony is reached, in this I am boundlessly hopeful, [in this] greatest of all ideas.[396] (emphasis added)

As is the case in his development plans for China, Sun did not really bother thinking through the processes or modalities or how to achieve the Great Harmony in practice. He did not provide an effective answer anywhere in his ideas on the Great Harmony to the Paradox of Self-Rectification either.

In essence, it was not so much the feasibility of reaching the Great Harmony that attracted Sun. Rather, it was the intrinsic moral worth of this highest of ideals, which most fittingly represented his key idea of *tianxia wei gong*. This, in turn, is premised on the logic of self-rectification, namely that members of *tianxia* would naturally have the desire and ability to self-rectify. This explanation accords not only with Sun's views on the Great Harmony as presented in this chapter, but also with the central argument of this thesis, that Sun viewed entry, the expansion and international relations through the prism of *tianxia wei gong* and the idea of self-rectification.

Since Sun believed that *tianxia wei gong* and the Great Harmony were thus highly worthy ideals that should be strived for despite not being immediately achievable, self-rectification should thus be seen as a continuous and on-going process without a definite beginning or end. Since this thesis argues that Sun's adoption of the standard of civilization be seen as *part of* his larger vision of the self-rectification of China, following this logic, this also means that entry should not be seen as a one-off event, but rather should also be conceptualized as an on-going process.

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[396] GFQJ, vol. 3, 144.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis has presented Sun's ideas on international relations in the context of the *tianxia* framework, and set out his responses in three major issue areas to the realities and circumstances brought forth by the expansion of international society. Returning to the question that Cemil Aydin posed, did non- Western actors and intellectuals like Sun "have a role beyond actualizing a potential that already existed in Eurocentric values or beyond reinterpreting ideas originating in Europe?"[397] This thesis argues that the answer to this question is yes. While Sun's ideas were tailored for the self-rectification of China by adopting to the standard of civilization, in fact it did much more than that, as will be highlighted below. Or as Leigh Jenco put it, do Sun's ideas on international relations as presented in this thesis constitute an alternative frame of reference from which entirely new questions can be derived?[398] This thesis argues that the answer to this question is yes, as the below will argue.

This chapter returns to the three-step approach set out by Farah Godrej as discussed in Chapter 1. The first two steps of this approach were, firstly, self- dislocation and immersion into the world, the ideas and the text of Sun and, secondly, to translate and make this text comprehensible to Western audiences through putting forth and framing Sun's ideas in a cultural account that "captures the experiences that shed light on the text" in clear, easily comprehensible and concise language.[399] This has been the task of the previous empirical chapters. This chapter in turn, focuses squarely on the third step of this approach, namely self-relocation. This step involves bringing the dislocating insights that can be derived from Sun's ideas on international relations back into the fold of the English School and on that

[397] Aydin (2013), 159–186, 160.
[398] Jenco, (2007), 741–755, 752.
[399] Godrej (2011), 54, 62

basis to challenge that theory. Or in Godrej's own words:

> The articulation of the insights of lived experience through the creation of cultural accounts must lead to a final hermeneutic moment in which the adherent or fieldworker turns back into theorist, by articulating how these insights challenge our theoretical understandings...[400]

Godrej also emphasizes that at the heart of this endeavor of self- relocation is the dislodging of any Euro-centrism inherent in, in our case, English School thinking in the context of the expansion thesis by carefully examining how Sun approached certain questions and addressed certain problems in novel ways presented to him by the expansion of international society by drawing on the concept of *tianxia* and other classical resources and concepts.[401] In this spirit, this chapter argues that there are four major issue areas where Sun's ideas most apparently dislodge and challenge our existing theoretical understanding of the nature and processes involved in the expansion of international society, as well as in standards of civilization. First, how do Sun's ideas on international relations and framing of his ideas under the concept of *tianxia* show that standards of civilization are multi-layered and multi-dimensional? Second, how do they show that the processes of civilizing are on-going processes rather than one-off events? Third, how does the argument made in this thesis that Sun's ideas on international relations should be taken seriously highlight his agency? Lastly, Sun's ideas on international relations in the context of *tianxia* constitute a scheme of values in which, as argued in this thesis, the moral takes clear precedence over the political. What implications does this prioritization of justice and morality over order have for our understanding of the expansion, and for English School theory more generally?

The multi-layered and multi-dimensional nature of standards of civilization

[400] Ibid., 66.
[401] Ibid., 108–110.

As Chapter 4 has discussed in detail, the expansion story as it is currently presented in the English School literature is a story of one-way expansion, whereby international society was an immanent and completely formed creation which then radiated outwards by imposing one, singular standard of civilization upon others. As Hobson colorfully puts it, this is the equivalent of the "*big bang theory* of world politics," which portrays the expansion as an "endogenous journey that passes through a familiar series of European way-stations."[402] This narrative assumes that there is one singular standard of civilization, in the sense that they are essentially one-dimensional, objective standards such as the guaranteeing the rights and property of foreign nationals, the establishment of a reasonably effective state bureaucracy, adherence to international law, and participation in the global diplomatic network. Moreover, this narrative leaves little or no room for the agency of the recipient states or potential entrants into international society. Furthermore, this narrative also presents the expansion story as being akin to a snapshot, with the standard of civilization being seen as something that was relatively fixed in time in terms of its content.

This thesis has attempted, through its exposition of Sun's ideas on international relations, to challenge the assumptions behind all three of these arguments. While adopting the standard of civilization as set out the by Western powers indisputably was a major component of Sun's response to the expansion of international society, it was far from the whole story. Within Sun's overall scheme of ideas and worldview, the adoption of the standard of civilization formed *part of* the new moral-political identity and order which Sun felt China had to construct for itself in order to make sense of the new *tianxia* brought about by the expansion of international society. The adoption of the standard of civilization as part of this new moral-political identity and purpose were also *part of* what was necessary to achieve self-rectification and to improve upon China's peripheral position in this new

[402] Hobson (2012), 223

tianxia, the center of which China suddenly discovered was occupied by the Western powers.

Since *tianxia* is by its very nature is an inherently adaptable worldview and concept, both in terms of its moral-political criteria for determining center and periphery, as well as in terms of the actual, concrete ordering of powers along this spectrum, this thesis argues that *tianxia* possesses the conceptual space to accommodate the standard of civilization while maintaining the conceptual integrity of *tianxia* itself. Moreover, by virtue of this quality of adaptability, *tianxia* also possesses the conceptual space to accommodate any *future* changes to the standard of civilization. Seen in this light therefore and as foreshadowed by the arguments presented in Chapters 2 and 3, this shows that "entry" into international society is not necessarily a binary choice determined solely based on the possession or lack of membership. Rather, it can be conceptualized as being a matter of how close one is to the center of *tianxia*, or in other words a matter of degree and relative status and positioning rather than a matter of in or out.

This thesis has then attempted to show how this *tianxia* worldview was applied by Sun in three major issue areas as part of his overall response to the realities and circumstances brought forth by the expansion. It began with an exposition of Sun's ideas on Chinese nationalism and exceptionalism, whereby Sun amalgamated the universal with the national by conceptualizing the Chinese nation as the exceptional nation endowed with the requisite moral qualities and promise of moving from the periphery and back to the center of this new, expanded *tianxia* that it found itself in consequent to the expansion. Chapter 5 highlights how Sun's conceptualization of Chinese nationalism is heavily imbued with the moralistic and universalistic concept of *wangdao*. The qualities and values that form part of the concept of *wangdao* not only represent the ideal international community for Sun, but also define to a large extent the essence of Chinese nationalism itself. It has been remarked by scholars in relation to Chinese international relations theory that there is a "lack of awareness of

international-ness" in that tradition, but Sun's ideas show how *tianxia* is inherently and highly adaptable and can readily accommodate nationalism and become an *international or inter-state* worldview while retaining the integrity of its conceptualization of the world as a universal moral community which lies at the heart of *tianxia*.[403] Therefore, while the adoption of nationalism by Sun was undoubtedly partly to meet the standard of civilization imposed by the Western powers and to gain entry into international society, this thesis argues that it was in fact much more than that. That is, it also represented the attempt to self-rectify on China's part in order to move from periphery and to the center of this new *tianxia* in Sun's ideas.

Chapter 6 on state capitalism discusses the economic dimension of the expansion of international society, in the form of global capitalism and its political counterpart of imperialism, a dimension of the expansion story that is often neglected by the expansion literature. That chapter highlights Sun's early recognition of the links between global capitalism and imperialism in the context of Western inter-state rivalry and its effects on the extra-European world and China in particular. Sun's development plans were an attempt not only to adopt and satisfy the economic dimension of the standard of civilization, namely to become a developed and industrialized economy, but also to transcend it in the sense that Sun presented his model of state capitalism as a *morally more justifiable* model for economic development and participation in global capitalism. Sun argued that his model of state capitalism constituted a morally superior model internationally because it was non-imperial, thereby breaking the then-existing link between global capitalism and imperialism. The underlying philosophical basis of his model was the value of harmony and benevolence or humanity, or in other words, treating people as people and taking people as the end rather than merely as a means to an end or as impersonal, discrete components of a larger system. This thesis argues that this highlights Sun's agency in the sense that he chose not to

[403] Qin (2007), 313–340, 322.

blindly follow the then prevailing standard of civilization *in full* in relation to participation in global capitalism through imperialism as Japan had done.[404] Instead of fully conforming to the then prevailing standard for a civilized and developed power, which was imperialist, Sun developed his own model of state capitalism which fit with his moral-political conception of this new *tianxia* and *wangdao*. In other words, the effort and vision of developing a modern industrialized economy through his model of state capitalism was not *only* to meet the standard of civilization, but rather it was part of a larger overarching effort to self-rectify and move China from the periphery to the center of this new *tianxia*.

Finally, Chapter 7 is an analysis of Sun's ideal international community through an exposition of the concept of the Great Harmony. Sun saw the Great Harmony as an ideal of the highest standard that represented, in theory, the actual realization of the crown jewel of his ideas, *tianxia wei gong* in practice. The Great Harmony had never actually been realized in practice and was unlikely to be so realized in the foreseeable future, but Sun nonetheless held it up as his highest ideal because he fundamentally believed in the desire and ability of humanity to self-rectify and evolve socially. That chapter argues that it was not so much reaching the destination but more the journey itself that mattered for Sun, and that self-rectification is a continuous journey of self-improvement with not definite beginning or end. If then, the standard of civilization is seen as part of Sun's larger effort to induce the self-rectification of China and for it to move back toward the center of this new *tianxia*, then this also shows that standards of civilization are not just one-off events, but have continuing impact and that therefore, entry itself should not be conceived of as a one-off event but rather should also itself be seen as an on-going process.

Therefore, this thesis argues that standards of civilization are not just one-

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[404] S. Suzuki, *Civilization and Empire: China and Japan's Encounter with European International Society* (London: Routledge, 2009).

dimensional, objective lists composed of discrete items which are ticked off one after another. Rather, the standard of civilization imposed by the Western powers on entrants as described in the existing expansion literature should be viewed *as a layer, part of* and *in the context of* the *tianxia* worldview and conceptual framework, as this study has attempted to demonstrate through its exegesis, analysis and critique of Sun's ideas on international relations. Moreover, Sun's ideas are theoretically significant both because they adopt the standard of civilization as described in the existing literature on the expansion and because they attempt to transcend them in a morally-informed way within the framework of self-rectification and *tianxia*, thereby demonstrating the agency of Sun. Finally, since the concept of *tianxia* is inherently adaptable both in terms of its criteria for determining center versus periphery, as well as in its actual ordering of powers, this opens up the conceptual space to view standards of civilization as not necessarily being fixed in time, but rather to view standards of civilization as potentially changing in content and of continued relevance under this framework not only in other historical periods, but also in the present and far into the future. Furthermore, this decenters the discussion and analysis of standards of civilization by allowing them to change in their direction and allowing one to discuss them in a non-Eurocentric way. These, it is argued here, represent and constitute significant dislocating insights that can be taken back to critique and enrich the English School tradition from this study of Sun.

Civilizing as an on-going process rather than a one-off event

Rather than conceiving of the standard of civilization and the satisfaction of the standard of civilization as a one-off historical event therefore, standards of civilization can and should be viewed as a layered part of and in the context of *tianxia*. Since states engage in either modeling by acting as a moral-political exemplar for others to emulate, thereby

possessing the status of being the center of *tianxia*, or in self-rectification or restoration through emulating and restoring the moral-political characteristics required to be a model, thereby moving from periphery to center, this is an on-going process that requires continuous effort on both sides as opposed to being a one-off event. It is a case of the moral-political exemplar staying true to its moral-political identity and order, which has been accepted as legitimate by the rest, or in the case of the rest, it requires them to seek to acquire the characteristics associated with that moral-political order in order to center itself. When seen through the prism of self-rectification, this thesis argues that entry should, therefore, be seen as an on-going process rather than as a one-off, historical event. Moreover, there is considerable room for agency, interpretation and conceptual creativity for those who seek to self- rectify and move toward the center. As the last section has highlighted, Sun's ideas on international relations show not only his adoption of the standard of civilization as the expansion literature has documented, but his attempts to transcend this standard in a highly morally-informed and contextualized way. This then potentially opens up the same conceptual space for agency and creativity for others engaged in self-rectification during this process of adoption, adaptation, and possible transcendence.

Moreover, since *tianxia* is an inherently adaptable concept, both in terms of its criteria for the ordering of states along the center versus periphery spectrum and in its concrete ordering of states, this also opens up the conceptual space not only for the content of standards of civilization to change through time, but perhaps even more importantly as a dislocating and decentering insight relevant to the English School tradition, for the *direction of travel* for standards of civilization to change. Although historically and in the context of the expansion of international society as documented by the existing expansion literature, the standard of civilization travelled largely from West to East, plausibly at some point in the future this direction of travel may be altered or reversed, as other states come to serve as models for

moral-political emulation. This potentially provides a framework of, and allows for the discussion and critique of, standards of civilization as a concept far into the future and into the past in a decentered way. Furthermore, any future changes in direction of travel for standards of civilization would also be accompanied by the aforementioned conceptual space for those seeking to self-rectify and emulate for the same agency and creativity that this thesis has argued that Sun has demonstrated through his ideas on international relations. It is argued here, therefore, that standards of civilization represent civilizing *processes* rather than one-off events, and that they can be discussed in a decentered way that retains its relevance far into the future and into the past while at the same time recognizing the potential for agency and creativity for states on the receiving end. These, it is submitted here, constitute dislocating insights that can be derived from this study of Sun and significantly enrich the utility and our understanding of standards of civilization as a concept under the English School tradition.

The intellectual value of Sun's ideas

Chapter 3 argued that contrary to the view of three major scholars who have previously studied Sun, Sun was not a man of action as opposed to man of intellect but rather the opposite in both senses, and that his ideas on international relations should be taken seriously on an intellectual level for the reasons set out in that chapter. It was argued earlier in this chapter that the expansion story as it is currently presented in the English School literature is a story of one-way expansion, whereby international society was an immanent and completely formed creation which then radiated outwards by imposing one, singular standard of civilization upon others. The way this story has been portrayed in the existing expansion literature therefore, largely obscures and ignores the possibility of any conceptual or intellectual agency on the part of major intellectuals or leaders from entrant countries such

as Sun.

Chapter 2 compared Sun's views to those of Kang You Wei and Liang Qi Chao, whom responded to the moral and political dilemmas resulting from the expansion of international society and China's experience with this expansion in very different ways. It was argued in that chapter that Kang remained firmly within the *tianxia* conceptual framework, but then took this in a direction that had little or no resemblance to the reality of international relations resulting from the expansion of international society through his advocacy of a Confucian-socialist utopia where the nation-state would be completely abolished. On the other hand, Liang ultimately mostly abandoned the *tianxia* conceptual framework in the end with his conceptualization of the world through a fiercely competitive, Social Darwinist lens. In contrast, Sun's ideas were a realistic, direct and coherent response to the realities and circumstances brought forth by the expansion of international society by recognizing that both the nature and scope of *tianxia* had fundamentally changed and that as a result, China needed to redefine its moral-political identity and purpose in order to self-rectify. Sun's ideas therefore, show that the *tianxia* worldview can co-exist and adapt to not only *the* standard of civilization as documented in the expansion literature, but also to standards of civilization in general as argued above. Sun's agency, therefore, is demonstrated through the various ways he combined and amalgamated *tianxia* with the realities of brought forth by the expansion of international society. The potential for adoption, adaptation and transcendence in relation to major leaders and intellectuals from entrant countries like Sun during the process of the expansion is an element that has largely been ignored and obscured by the expansion story as it is portrayed in the existing literature.

Returning to the question that Cemil Aydin posed, did non-Western actors and intellectuals like Sun "have a role beyond actualizing a potential that already existed in

Eurocentric values or beyond reinterpreting ideas originating in Europe?"[405] This thesis argues that Sun's response to the standard of civilization and the expansion of international society through the lens of *tianxia* shows that his ideas were clearly original and worthy of serious intellectual consideration for the reasons set out in Chapters 2 and 3. It therefore argues that the answer to Aydin's question is yes. When refracted through the lens of *tianxia* and self- rectification, Sun's intellectual engagement with China's entry into international society was highly original and played a role well beyond merely actualizing or reinterpreting ideas that had originated in Europe. Furthermore as a dislocating, decentering insight to the way the expansion story is portrayed in the existing English School literature, this excavates the agency and cultural autonomy of Sun and potentially of other figures like him, a role that has largely been obscured in the expansion story as it is currently portrayed.

The implications of Sun's moral-political order for the English School tradition

Although the discussion of justice in relation to the value of order is a persistent and recurring theme in the English School literature, the role of justice and the moral dimension is seldom if ever discussed explicitly in the context of the story of the expansion of international society. For instance, Hedley Bull in "The Revolt against the West" mostly discusses the issue of justice in the context of decolonization onwards and the various demands of newly recognized non- Western states for political, economic and cultural recognition.[406] This thesis argues Sun's approach of reinterpreting and adapting his conceptualization of *tianxia* to the realities of the expansion of international society clearly prioritized the moral dimension over the political dimension, as evidenced by Sun's repeated emphasis of

[405] Aydin, 160.
[406] H. Bull, "The Revolt against the West," in *The Expansion of International Society*, eds. H. Bull and A. Watson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 217–228.

wangdao over *badao*. His justifications for his conceptions of Chinese Nationalism, state capitalism and the Great Harmony all heavily emphasized their moral bases and how they arguably represented superior moral-political responses to the realities and world trends brought forth by the expansion of international society.

If the moral is privileged over the political in the way that they are within Sun's ideas on international relations, this would clearly have significant implications for how Chinese may view their process of entry into international society, as well as for how what they conceptualize as China's proper place within international society thereafter. For instance, those who subscribe to Sun's moral-political view of the world would potentially feel aggrieved on a highly personal and moral level if it were perceived that China's efforts toward self-rectification have not been or were not being sufficiently recognized. Moreover, this sense of grievance would be further heightened if it were perceived that the criteria and goalposts for self-rectification and moving toward the center of *tianxia* were being moved constantly even after China had made efforts to adapt and self-rectify, thereby in effect potentially perennially denying due recognition for China's efforts toward self-rectification. Furthermore, it is highly conceivable that this sense of grievance could be further heightened by memories of the coerced nature of China's entry into international society.

This sense of grievance felt on a moral level could conceivably be more intense than grievance felt on a purely political level, for a denial and refusal to recognize one's sincere efforts toward self-rectification could be perceived as an unjust affront and disapproval of the very moral-political identity of the state as opposed to merely opposing the power or ranking of the state. This manner of privileging the moral over the political and any strong sense of injustice thereby derived from a perceived lack of recognition and credit for self-rectification would clearly have corrosive effects on the building of any consensus upon which the very idea and functioning of international society clearly relies. Therefore, it is

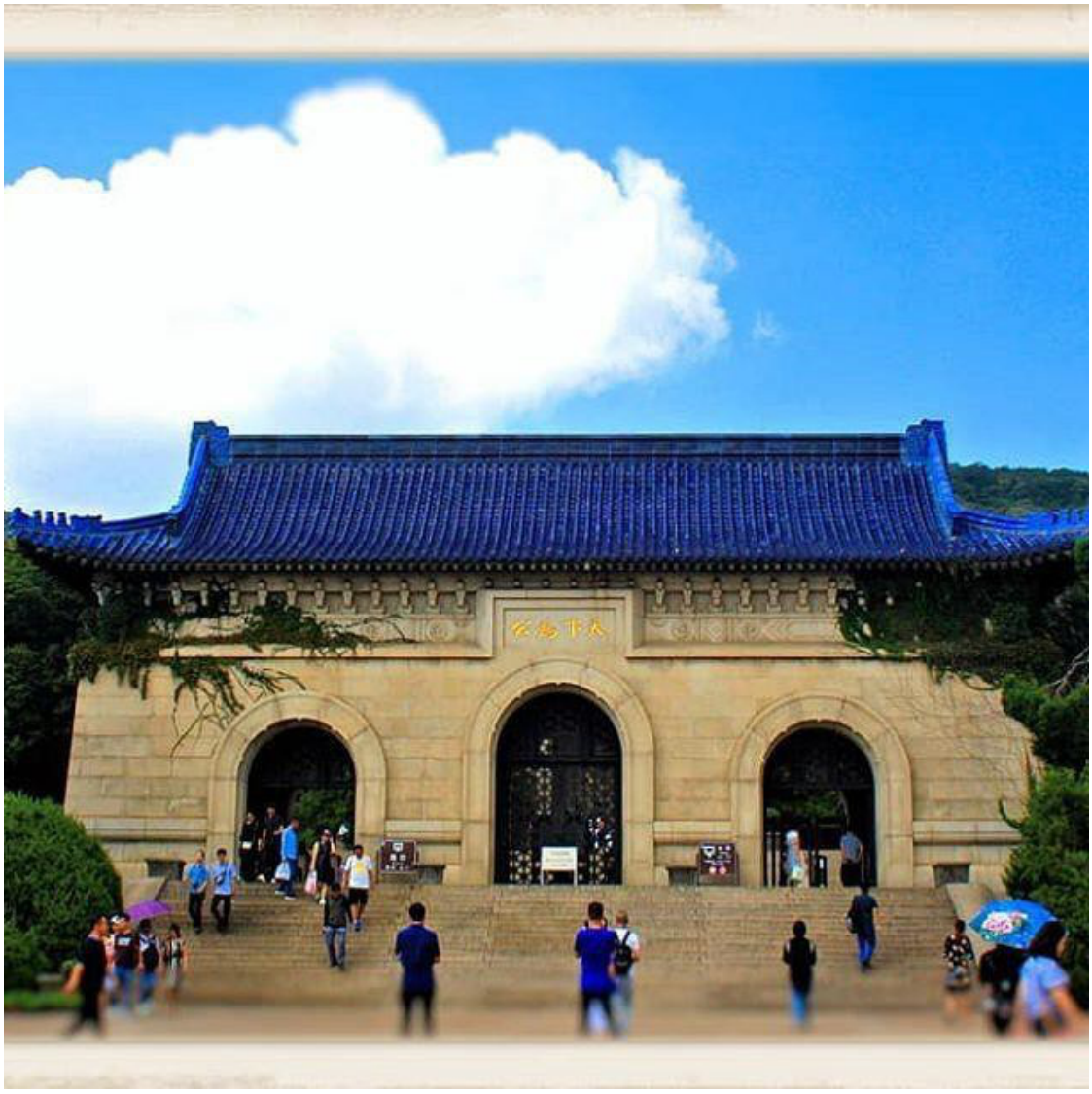
argued that the dislocating insight that can be derived from this is that the moral dimension of the expansion, and how entrants perceived the morality or injustice of the expansion of international society has largely been ignored by the expansion story as it is portrayed in the existing English School literature, and should be brought back in.

Conclusion

Through this study of Sun's ideas on international relations, one can see how the story of the expansion of international society is much richer and multi-layered than is portrayed in the existing literature. The story of the expansion of international society is not just a story about the imposition of the standard of civilization by one group of countries on another in a uniformly similar way. Rather, it is a story about how when confronted with an entirely new way of organizing society and the world, intellectuals and leaders in entrant countries had to make sense of this new world and had to find ways to reconcile their historical and cultural backgrounds with this new world. They also had to find ways to survive and to preserve the political independence of their countries. Through his ideas on international relations and in the context of the expansion of international society, Sun enthusiastically rose to this challenge at this time of great crisis as well as of transformation in Chinese history. Coming from a country with such a profoundly different worldview from that those which had imposed its forced entry into international society, Sun fashioned a response that enriches our understanding of standards of civilization and the expansion process in a number of ways that were previously obscured in the existing literature on the expansion of international society. This thesis hopefully represents a small but significant step toward uncovering and shining an intellectual light on these previously obscured aspects of the expansion story.

However, while Sun's ideas on *tianxia*, the expansion, and international relations *are*

worthy of serious intellectual consideration, this thesis argues that he was also *not* a man of action or practicality, contrary to the prevailing Western scholarship on him. As the Paradox of Self-Rectification and his approaches to his development plans for China and the Great Harmony in particular have shown, he never really bothered to think through the processes or methods by which his lofty ideals could be actualized in practice. However, he inspired others to fight for him, attribute a revolution he was absent from to his name and continues to remain a source of inspiration for many Chinese around the world. These are not the marks of a well-oiled political machine devoid of big ideas, but rather those of a dreamer with grand ideas which resonates with and inspires others.



The entrance gate leading up to Sun's mausoleum in Nanjing, engraved with the words *tianxia wei gong*



Tianxia wei gong in the original calligraphy of Sun

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