

Chapter 2

Teaching Civilisation: The Role of a French Education in the Development of Modernity in Shanghai

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Abstract One of the most obvious examples of modernity being brought to Asia through trade, infrastructure development and cultural penetration occurred in Shanghai from the middle of the nineteenth century until the end of World War II. While Britain was the dominant economic force in the city, France played a significant role in intellectual and cultural development. During the concession era, Shanghai became known as the Paris of the East. While partly due to the appearance of the French Concession of the metropolis and the “city of lights” entertainment and vice available, somewhat reminiscent of Paris, the modernising French influence came variously from the economic presence, political administration and the civilising mission, which was integral to French imperialism. The establishment of the Université l’Aurore by the French Jesuits in 1903 was an important part of the modernisation of the Chinese population of Shanghai through cultural contact. Within its first decade, the university had established a medical school to teach “modern western techniques” and a law school charged with teaching “modern legal systems and philosophy”. What was the impact of the training provided by this institution for the growth of modern Shanghai? How did the religious orientation of the university help or hinder the development of modernity in Shanghai? Within the multinational context of Concession era Shanghai, was a French influence discernable in its modernisation process? Sources from the university, Jesuit journals, such as *Études*, and articles by those implicated in the development of Shanghai will reveal the impact of this institution in the development of modernity in China’s most modern city.

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Shanghai offers strong evidence of external influence on modernity in an Asian city. The international composition of Shanghai in the concession era provided varying models for the Chinese population to observe and mimic. The French contributed through the installation of their economic systems, infrastructure and the *mission civilisatrice*. Within the last of these offerings, education was a key component, providing examples through structure, programmes and cultural contact. The most significant artery of French education, the Jesuit-run Université l'Aurore, holds a singular place in the development of modernity in Shanghai.

Before 1830, China was closed to outsiders, except for a small trading post in Guangzhou, which was the port of trade established by Arab merchants in the Middle Ages. European imperial expansion in the early nineteenth century increased interest in China as a market and source of trade materials. The ruling Qing Dynasty resisted the “barbarian” invasion, but, ultimately, China would be opened by force.

The first wave of opening came as a result of the First Opium War, which was essentially a war over trade rights between China and Britain. The Treaty of Nanjing, which concluded the conflict following a series of decisive victories by Britain, secured trading rights in five Chinese ports and the cessation of Hong Kong to Britain.¹ Capitalising on China's weakness, the French concluded their own treaty (1844), which included a provision in Article XXII, which set the precedent for the expansion of Treaty Ports into foreign concessions. Beyond Treaty Port trading rights, French envoy de Lagrené negotiated the return of Christian missionaries to China, with the repeal of a Chinese imperial edict from 1724.

The acknowledged genesis of Catholicism in China was the mission of Matteo Ricci. His innovative approach of harmonising Christianity and Chinese culture, particularly Confucianism, through cultural accommodation, along side the apostolate of science, philosophy and Christian faith, became the general model of mission for many of the Jesuits who followed him. Ricci, based in Beijing, was literate in classical Chinese which facilitated his top-down approach to conversion. The strategy of identifying traditional Chinese faith with Christianity was designed to create a Chinese Christianity which was much more palatable to the local population than converting to a foreign faith (Wiest 1997). However, Ricci's successors did not maintain his early momentum. Eventually, Western encroachment and Christian mission came to be synonymous for the Chinese court, and both were shut out in the early eighteenth century.

The nineteenth-century French Jesuits in Shanghai were among those who believed Ricci's model of indirect evangelisation would still be most effective and sought to follow it (de la Serviere 1914). That is, missionaries eschewed direct preaching employing other means such as charitable works, scientific installations and education to gain the favour and attention of non-Christians. Despite their intentions, however, the new breed of Jesuit missionary in China bore little resemblance to Ricci. Most notably, the notion of cultural accommodation, of

¹The Treaty Ports—Shanghai, Ningbo, Xiamen, Fuzhou and Guangzhou.

creating a Chinese Catholicism, rather than turning the Chinese into French Catholics, was lost.

Success came quickly in several the Jesuits “indirect” pursuits. Scientific accomplishments were achieved by the Jesuits of Xujiahui, publishing papers as early as 1855. The meteorological observatory that was to become the first home of the Université l’Aurore was constructed by 1873. The Sheshan astronomical observatory was in use two decades later. A magnetical observatory was operational by 1908. From the early days of the mission, artefacts were being collected that would become the basis of the world-renowned Musée Heude (natural history) and the Musée des Antiquités Chinoises.

The first achievements in education at the new mission at Xujiahui were realised in 1850 with the opening of the Collège Saint-Ignace, which coincided with the completion of the church. It is significant to note that the first school and the first house of worship were completed at the same time, suggesting that the indirect evangelisation through education was as important for the mission as the direct evangelisation of the church. The system put in place at Collège Saint-Ignace aimed to prepare the transition from primary to secondary school education and permit top students to excel in Chinese official examinations or prepare them for further study in the Chinese system. By the end of its first decade, this school was home to nearly one hundred students (Wiest 1997). Up to the late nineteenth century, the Jesuits of Xujiahui pursued a modest mission in the education of Chinese students. The Collège Saint-Ignace only provided for a secondary education and courses were taught in Chinese. Students were only exposed to French during foreign language classes, which also included English. At the dawn of the new century, this programme no longer satisfied the needs of the young Chinese students. The Jesuits would see that the appetite of their students for further Western education would be sated (Brossollet 1999).

The *Quinzaine Coloniale* noted the contribution of the Jesuits in exerting French influence over moral matters in China. The Catholic missions, which had cultivated various methods of evangelisation, are acknowledged to have acquired real authority and prestige in the Qing Court and throughout the upper echelon of Chinese society (La Quinzaine Coloniale 1901), despite their slipping influence in France.

The French contribution to the modernity of Shanghai can be observed in the physical remnants of the French Concession. However, a more significant impact in the evolution of the metropolis came through the education of a Chinese elite at the Université l’Aurore. In answering the following questions, the role of a French Jesuit education in the modernisation of early twentieth-century Shanghai will be revealed. How did the institution of a French urban identity set the framework for the influence of French education? Was the mission of Aurore concerned with the development of modernity in Shanghai? If so, what steps were taken to achieve this aim? What was the impact of the training provided by this institution for the growth of modern Shanghai? How did the religious orientation of the university help or hinder the development of modernity in Shanghai? Within the multinational context

of concession era Shanghai, was a French influence discernable in the modernisation process?

Academic calendars and student handbooks reveal some of the intended processes the Aurore was to implement. The Jesuit published journal *Relations de Chine* provides regular assessment and analysis of the progress of the institution, both academically and administratively. Colonial and other contemporary journals, such as *Revue politique et parlementaire* and *La Quinzaine Coloniale*, offer a secular perspective on the Catholic University in China. A twenty-fifth anniversary retrospective published by the university offers a particular view of the early history of the institution.

2.1 The French in Concession Era Shanghai—Creating the Paris of the East

With mechanisms in place to create and display the best and most infamous elements of French culture, Shanghai came to be known as the “Paris of the East”. The French identity of Shanghai was evident in the economic systems and infrastructure; the aesthetics of the French Concession; the lifestyle and culture enjoyed by the expatriate community; the religious, particularly Catholic, presence; and the implementation of the *mission civilisatrice*.

2.1.1 Economy and Infrastructure

The port concessions were designed to dominate the regional economy, as a form of economic imperialism in lieu of full colonisation (Murphey 1974). The Chinese scholar Zheng Guanying was aware of this insidious threat and warned his countrymen, “being swallowed up by troops is a disaster men perceive easily, [but] conquest by commerce envelops the nation invisibly” (Zheng 1895). By 1850, the French Concession already had greater trade volume than Guangzhou, the original port of trade in China.

French pride in their economic presence was illustrated in the journals of the day, “aussi notre colonie de Changhaï devient-elle chaque jour plus prospère et prend-elle un essor marqué par une floraison d’entreprises qui font le plus grand honneur à nos compatriotes” (Bulletin de la Société de Géographie Commerciale de Paris 1902). For example, the primary silk markets were located in Shanghai and Guangzhou, with France, Switzerland, Italy and the USA as the largest customers. Though London once held a monopoly, Lyon, Zurich and Milan had become the most prominent distribution centres and the majority of silk inspectors were French. “C’est grâce au commerce de la soie qu’un mouvement d’émigration de jeunes Français intelligents et bien préparés s’est dessiné vers l’Extrême-Orient” (Bard

1899). French financial institutions and business practices were installed, as overseas business interests held confidence that eventually the “backward” Chinese merchants would emulate their system. In this effort, the French were in direct competition with the other colonial powers, who were working from the same premise, but all looking to modernise the economy of Shanghai. It is worth noting that it was no great accomplishment to dominate the Chinese economy, as the national budget of China was less than that of Paris alone, it was the other foreign powers that provided the real competition (Bard 1899).

2.1.2 A “Corner of Europe”

The French Concession represented the best of French technological modernisation. The Concession had electric street lights, while most towns in France were still using gas; the *Conseil Municipal* launched and managed an electric company, police force and sanitation services; roads, professional buildings and houses echoed French style and techniques (Brossollet 1999); French engineers and city planners maintained the continental feel of the surroundings; J.J. Chollot, Chief Engineer of the Concession (1893–1907), was responsible for the planning and execution of the first tramline at the request of Consul Ratard²; and the French Concession was well appointed with gardens and parks, enhancing the familiarity of the environment for French nationals used to the comforts of Paris.

2.1.3 Lifestyle and Culture

The belief in the universality of humanity, in conjunction with the superiority of French culture, had much to do with French identity. Some contemporary French observers felt a responsibility to instil European values in the local community. “Il est certain qu’il est préférable d’avoir les Chinois sur les concessions sous le contrôle des Européens...plutôt que de les avoir au dehors, comme c’est le cas pour les faubourgs” (Bard 1899). The assimilationist nature of French presence was central to creating the Paris of the East, as the Francisation of indigenous people broadened French impact on Shanghai. Ironically, the Chinese had an equal measure of self-assuredness in the superiority of their culture. “(Le Chinois) se croit, sans manifester ouvertement son opinion, plus capable que les Européens, sur qui il a certainement l’avantage de l’incessante résistance, et il attend l’avenir, persuade que ce dernier lui appartiendra” (Simond 1898).

The cultural penetration of French urban identity took many forms including theatre, books, cinema, recreation and nightlife. The desire to import a French

²The tramline opened in 1906.

lifestyle went as far as journal articles on maintaining a typical French garden in the challenging Shanghai climate (La Quinzaine Coloniale 1904). The legendary French recreation and nightlife attracted members of all communities to the Cercle Sportif français and performances by the Société dramatique (Bergère 2002). More significant to the conveying of the Paris of the East reputation was the underground nightlife. The permissiveness of vice within French controlled territory; gambling, drugs and prostitution, all tolerated by the French administration; created the “city of lights” feel so well known; and appreciated by travellers to the French capital. It is also worth noting that the standard of living was very good for all French citizens—not everyone was rich, but Shanghai had no poor French—allowing for the active pursuit of leisure (Clifford 1991).

The fact that the French administration took steps to promote the French language as a means of exerting influence was tempered by the results. Even within the French Concession, French and English were at least equally useful. “Dans la concession française a l’hôtel du consulat même, le concierge ne vous comprend pas, si vous ne lui parlez pas anglais. Vous êtes à l’église, dans la cathédrale catholique romaine, desservie par les missionnaires français; on y prêche en anglais!” (Pageot 1909). Despite the best efforts to maintain the French language in education and business, success was minimal. Other cultural customs also tended towards British norms. “La colonie étrangère tout entière a adopté la coutume des Anglais qui veut qu’on ne puisse se rendre à une invitation à dîner qu’en habit noir ou au moins en smoking” (Bard 1899).

2.1.4 Religious Presence

By 1900, France was looking to maintain a slipping influence in China. In this effort, the religious protectorate became a primary resource (Bays 1996). Missionaries were used to augment political weakness. “Catholics [whether foreign or Chinese] were surrogates for French power in China. [...] In the minds of rivalrous foreigners, Catholic success was thought to presage superior French influence [...] and to block British ambitions” (Bays 1996). The religious protectorate over Catholics, and later the extension of the concession to Xujiahui, expanded French influence through other Catholic foreigners and Catholic Chinese.

2.1.5 Mission Civilisatrice

The most compelling, and ultimately most successful, argument in favour of French imperialism was the *mission civilisatrice*. Even socialist leader Jean Jaurès, an avowed internationalist, spoke to the advantages of exporting French culture in the context of the *mission civilisatrice* in Morocco when he told parliament in 1903, “Oui, il est à désirer, dans l’intérêt même des indigènes du Maroc comme dans

l'intérêt de la France, que l'action économique et morale de notre pays s'y prolonge et s'y établisse" (Andrew 1976). In Shanghai, the most notable manifestations of the French *mission civilisatrice* at the beginning of the twentieth century were in education and religion.

Efforts to exert a French cultural influence came from both Paris and Shanghai. The realisation of the *mission civilisatrice* was driven by interests in the French government and those within the Concession itself. The Jesuits at Xujiahui and members of the secular French community contributed to the creation of a French cultural environment and the extension of French values into the Chinese consciousness.

Parks, public spaces and recreational areas were established so that many parts of the Concession could not be distinguished from France on appearance alone. The desire of French residents to live a "French" life—from accommodations to the basics of creature comforts to the decadence of luxury and vice-ridden nightlife—defined a large part of the interaction within the foreign community. The colonial policy of the day demanded the imposition of French culture. The drive to civilise local populations through assimilation was part of the mandate for French presence in Shanghai. Dissemination of the French language and Catholicism was a central part of the process. Each of these contributed to the creation of the Paris of the East identity of Shanghai, suggesting that this modern metropolis was, in fact, French.

However, the French urban identity of Shanghai was strongly influenced by its geopolitical setting between the Chinese administration and International Settlement. Certainly, the interaction between these three communities shaped identity in all quarters. Before the First World War, France had a privileged position among foreign powers in Shanghai; though smaller in population and weaker economically and politically, French philosophical tradition and cultural presence redefined the relationship with Chinese intellectuals. But to suggest that Shanghai deserved its recognition as a French city—the Paris of the East—would require a blind eye to the realities of economic and political influence. The transition of Chinese intellectuals to a French model led to more intellectual exchange and created a mentoring relationship for the elite of Shanghai. The accelerated agitation for reform by the Chinese business and intellectual leadership was welcomed in French journals, seemingly as a continuation of their own revolutionary and republican legacy (Rottach 1914).

The French city that had been cultivated up to 1900 was still a work in progress. However, by that date, its legitimacy was no longer questioned (Maybon and Fredet 1929). The French Concession was originally small in area, overshadowed economically and never attracted a large number of settlers from France, leading one to lament, "une communauté plus nombreuse aurait peut-être eu plus de poids dans le développement historique de Shanghai" (Metzger 1999).

In 1900, France was still competing to be the dominant foreign influence in Shanghai and China, but, by mid-decade they had given up this goal—influence over economics and language was lost to English-speaking interests, the French military was spread too thin around the world to be a regional power. The Concession looked French, but French and English language were at least equally useful within its borders. French identity was powerful enough to assert independent ideas and

direction, but it was not powerful enough to impose these on a broadscale. French identity was able to manifest itself in concentrated areas where it could be more influential—Catholicism, intellectual life, formal education and entertainment—in part leading to the maintenance of the Paris of the East reputation through the ensuing decades.

It has been suggested that French identity did not exist in any independent manner in the light of the supremacy of the English language and the commercial power of Britain and the USA relative to France (Bergère 2002). While the points on relative power are valid—France made real efforts to exert a singular influence and, in certain areas of cultural life, succeeded. Clearly, the French administration and community felt they had something to offer and remained independent, though not dominant in politics and economy, and there are reasons for Shanghai being known as the Paris of the East, perhaps the most significant is the impact of the Université l'Aurore on the development of modernity in Shanghai.

2.2 Establishment and Mission of the Université L'Aurore

In the late nineteenth century, the French Jesuit educators in China and the administration of the Third Republic each began to explore the possibility of establishing a university in China. Once established by the Jesuits with the approval, if not the assistance, of the government, the fledgling institution struggled through a period of growing pains. Disagreement over the mission to be pursued between the main Chinese benefactor (Ma Xiangbo), the Jesuit administration and government precipitated a period of internal power struggle, bargaining and compromise.

2.2.1 *The University Initiative*

Proposals for an institute of higher learning were pursued by the mission in Xujiahui in 1860 and 1898, but were abandoned without realisation in both cases (Metzger 1999). As the turn of the century approached, the Chinese students of the missionary school demanded further education beyond the secondary schooling offered. The Jesuit educators began to seriously explore the possibilities of providing higher education in French.

This coincided with a change in attitude from the French authorities. Though ardently anticlerical and keen not to cross-jurisdiction between church and state in France, the overseas situation was somewhat different. Having lost the battle for economic supremacy, the French were now concerned about their slipping cultural influence. To rectify this situation, the Embassy in Beijing envisioned a translators' college that would extend the use of the French language in the capital. However, the end of the Hundred Days Reform and the return of the conservative Empress Dowager Cixi to power in China put an end to dreams of extending Western

influence in the capital. In Shanghai, under the auspices of the French Concession and outside of imperial control, the opportunity for a French-language university remained. Now endorsed by the administration, the Catholic university had genuine possibilities of becoming a reality (Brossollet 1999).

The French colonial journal *La Quinzaine Coloniale* noted the effect of the secular influence of France in China by pointing out the role of French engineers in the development of Shanghai, but in the next sentence lamented the struggle to entice scholars, teachers and doctors to continue the “civilising” work underway. Encouragement is offered with the assertion that there is an excellent chance of career success for qualified individuals willing to take up the challenge. Marrying the *mission civilisatrice* with individual and national advantage the article points to a strong and wise diplomacy that can find a way to make the best use of national interests along with the moral imperative. Foreign Minister Théophile Delcassé is credited with maintaining a positive relationship with China despite the internal quarrels of the Third Republic (*La Quinzaine Coloniale* 1901). It is within this political context that the anticlerical government in Paris decided not to oppose, and even support, the Jesuits in their attempt to provide a French standard of education for Chinese students in Shanghai. The mission to educate, along the French model, was a common goal for both Jesuit and French Republican.

The French missionaries and the political colonial lobby used the notion of exporting French culture to China, but each had a very different idea of what this should entail. For the Jesuits, the call to mission was clear, “Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mark 16:15); the exportation of French civilisation was integral to their global evangelisation. For the French government, the civilising mission was central to political and economic goals, “It is through expansion, through influencing the outside world, that nations persist and last” (Leon Gambetta). Each side was willing to work with the other to further their particular aims often trying to manipulate circumstances to the advantage of their agenda. The most obvious example of this behaviour is the financial support that the Third Republic government provided to Catholic institutions in China, including the Université l’Aurore, under the auspices of the French protectorate over all Catholics in China, even after the passage of the French law on the separation of church and state in 1905 (Wiest 1997).

The advantages of using Jesuit resources in a proposed French university are foreshadowed in *La Quinzaine Coloniale* in 1901. Catholic missions are admired for their stability and influence despite challenges from both the Chinese and French. It is noted that at the time of writing the Jesuits had redoubled their zeal in the work of education, colleges and Franco-Chinese schools in various centres in China. This commitment is seen as the model by which French influence may best be exerted in China (*La Quinzaine Coloniale* 1901). This revelation allows for the anticlerical Third Republic to openly endorse and even support the mission of the future Jesuit university.

Though there was support beyond the Jesuit community for a French university in China, questions of location, composition, administration and orientation—religious or secular—were hotly debated. Noted contemporary writer on China and long-time Shanghai resident Albert-Auguste Fauvel weighed in on the importance of including a Faculty of Medicine in the French university in China regardless of the other conditions—though he clearly stated a preference for a Jesuit-run institution in Shanghai. He displayed the pragmatism of the government in asserting that the Jesuits were best placed to implement the humanitarian mission and simultaneously exert the influence of France within China.

His endorsement of Shanghai was largely based on the infrastructure (meteorological observatory, astronomical observatory, museum of natural history, printer, etc.) that the Jesuits had established at Xujiahui, “Hâtons-nous de profiter de ce que celui-ci n’est pas encore sorti de terre et, battant le fer tant qu’il est chaud, complétons ce que les savants missionnaires jésuites ont déjà créé à Zi-ka-wei” (Fauvel 1903).

Beyond the scientific resources already established by the Jesuits, Fauvel further pointed out that when the municipal council of the French Concession decided to open a French school in 1879, they called on the Jesuits to do the teaching. Finally, he made the financial argument that the Jesuits were the most cost-effective way for the government to extend its influence, “Les finances de l’Etat ne peuvent guère supporter de gros sacrifices d’argent en vue d’augmenter notre prestige en Extrême-Orient. Il est de toute nécessité de d’utiliser là-bas ces professeurs, parfaitement brisés aux meilleures méthodes d’enseignement, que l’on appelle les Jésuites” (Fauvel 1903).

Fauvel tried to balance the anticlerical sentiment in France with the practical advantage to be gained by teaming with the Jesuits on a prospective university, “Comme nous l’avons dit les bases existent déjà à Shanghai, il n’y a plus qu’à compléter. Si on veut servir efficacement les intérêts français en Extrême-Orient on devra avec l’aide des missionnaires, fonder à Shanghai une université française dans laquelle la faculté de médecine devra, avoir un rôle prépondérant” (Fauvel 1903).

The presence of a faculty of medicine, though not realised in the initial stages of the actual French university in Shanghai, was presented as a key component for maintaining and raising French prestige for the lay observers. The initiative to launch the university was praised in itself, but Fauvel estimated that a Faculty of Medicine would bring France a thousand times more esteem in China, “la fondation d’une Université de médecine fera mille fois plus pour la gloire de notre pays dans l’Empire du Milieu que l’ouverture de cours de sciences commerciales ou autres” (Fauvel 1903).

While the endorsement of a French university in Shanghai was widely shared, a Jesuit-run institution located in Shanghai was not universally endorsed. Dr. Regnault responded to Fauvel’s article in a subsequent issue of *Revue politique et parlementaires*, arguing that few of the Jesuit resources in Shanghai were pertinent to the most important aspect of the proposed university, the medical school. He suggested that Guangzhou may be even more useful given the French colonial

presence just south of the city in Indochina (Regnault 1903). Dr. Regnault further asserted that the teaching should be done in French; therefore, the linguistic advantage of the Jesuit teachers was not applicable. His anticlerical stance was made clear when he insisted that the French Faculty of Medicine should be kept separate from religious influence as a fundamental element for success, “La Faculté de médecine française ne devrait d’ailleurs pas être inféodée à des missionnaires d’une confession quelconque; elle ne devrait être ni catholique, ni protestante; elle devrait être laïque et rester indépendante de toute religion occidentale c’est là, croyons-nous, une condition essentielle de son succès” (Regnault 1903).

He further inflamed the debate by suggesting that if the Jesuits became involved in the teaching of medicine, it would lead to an epidemic of attempted deathbed conversions of critically ill Chinese by their graduates,

Les médecins élevés et instruits par des missionnaires religieux seront des catéchistes plutôt que des médecins; ils croiront bon de prêcher leur foi partout autour d’eux; ils mêleront facilement les pratiques religieuses aux traitements scientifiques s’ils sont logiques avec eux-mêmes, ne s’efforceront-ils pas de faire des conversions *in extremis*? N’iront-ils pas jusqu’à baptiser un malade sur son lit d’agonie ‘pour sauver une âme’! Les Chinois ne verront en eux, avec raison, que des missionnaires religieux déguisés et le mouvement xénophobe ne pourra que s’accroître (Regnault 1903).

Despite being in full agreement that a university featuring a Faculty of Medicine would be very useful politically and commercially, citing a report by Indochina Governor Paul Doumer stating that nothing served the French interest better than medical institutions, Dr. Regnault would not consider working with the Jesuits to achieve this aim (Regnault 1903). Such was the anticlerical sentiment, even in the context of the overseas humanitarian mission.

The ultimate decision to allow the Jesuits to be responsible for the French presence in higher education was aided by the excellent reputation of the Jesuits of the Xujiahui mission among French government administrators involved in the *mission civilisatrice*. This was confirmed in 1898 when the French ambassador to Beijing, Stephen Pichon, was told by the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères to facilitate the opening of a French school of higher education to be run by the Jesuits (Wiest 1997).

The French government became involved in negotiations that led to opening of the Université l’Aurore. By 1903, the government in Paris fully supported the establishment of the university by the Jesuits, but insisted that there would be no financial support for the project (Metzger 1999). However, government did become financially and logistically involved and remained so for the duration of the institution.³ The indirect approach employed in the university certainly made support more palatable for the government.

³Wiest notes that as of 1997, the French government was still providing assistance to Shanghai Second Medical University, which took over the campus of Aurore in 1952 (Wiest 1997).

Simultaneous and parallel to the French musings on the viability of a French university, Chinese educator and former Jesuit working at the College Saint-Ignace, Ma Xiangbo, was developing a further study plan with some of his more accomplished students. At the time, education in China was in transition. The ancient imperial examination system that relied on the study of Chinese classics and had always been the centre of intellectual life in the empire was the subject of reform attempts and had been widely discredited by China's weakness in the face of foreign aggression. Educators variously attempted to maintain or modify the old system, adopt Western practices or create a new Chinese methodology. Ma Xiangbo was interested in developing a Western Chinese hybrid education that would constitute a meeting point of cultures and provide Chinese students with a link to their intellectual heritage, while equipping them to join increasingly Western-oriented intellectual elite.

Ma was himself a product of the College Saint-Ignace. He understood and appreciated the advantages of structure and continuity in the education process. In an attempt to insulate his students from the upheaval of the system in China, he approached the Jesuits about pursuing the project in partnership. Ma made a significant endowment of his personal funds to the Jesuits to finance the launch of the university.

Though the Jesuit missions traditionally remained disengaged from political machination and expected the same of their students, it was largely activist exiles from Nanyang Gongxue that formed the first class of students at Université l'Aurore. Reacting to strict prohibitions on Western political and philosophical materials, such as those of J.J. Rousseau, and the banning of the work of Chinese reformer Liang Qichao, one hundred students left Nanyang Gongxue along with noted scholar Cai Yuanpei in 1902. These reform minded students split between forming the Patriotic School with Cai and persuading Ma to bring his vision for a hybrid university to fruition so they could make up the inaugural class (Hayhoe 1983).

For years, Ma had been frustrated by imperial resistance to his proposed reforms of the education system and now believed that progress could be made with some form of democratisation of the government. This experience made him somewhat sympathetic to the reform and revolutionary movements that opposed the Qing Dynasty. Though it was against his own Jesuit training and contrary to the position of his partners in Aurore, Ma was willing to open the new university as a safe haven for political revolutionaries (Hayhoe 1983).

2.2.2 The Formative Years

The university opened in the spring of 1903 with great optimism and expectations. The facilities included the old meteorological observatory at Xujiahui, and the curriculum focused on the best aspects of European civilisation—science, philosophy and Latin. Within months, courses in English and French taught by Jesuit

scholars from the mission at Xujiahui were added. With the appointment of Father Perrin, as Deputy Director, and two scholastic fathers added to the professorial ranks, enrolment increased to better than 100 students for the second year. To satisfy the desire of the increased student population courses in German, Italian and Russian, fencing, dancing and piano joined those already on offer.

The Jesuits were not comfortable with this haphazard approach to academics, charging that the students had too much influence over curriculum. In 1905, they tried to implement some order. Contentious issues included the curriculum, administration, admissions and student activism. In the reorganisation, Ma Xiangbo was moved out of the way and put in charge of administering the finances. The changes led to a students' revolt. Opposition was carried to the point of withdrawal from the university by many of the students. Ma also decided to leave rather than continue under the new administrative order. The rejection of the new system and the defection of students forced the first incarnation of the Université l'Aurore to close its doors after only two years.

Despite this power struggle, the Jesuits were satisfied with the academic progress of their young students, "Le R.P. Supérieur et le P. Recteur en ont été étonnés et très satisfaits. Ces jeunes gens de 18 à 30 ans ont fait de réels progrès, en sciences (arithmétique, algèbre, géométrie, physique et chimie), en philosophie, en langues (français, allemand, anglais, latin) en histoire et géographie, sans compter le dessin (professeur P. Hermand) et les exercices militaires (1 heure tous les jours, commandés par un sergent français et le P. Ménez)" (Relation de Chine 1905). From the beginning, the programmes were quite comprehensive, incorporating fine art and physical activity into the academic programmes.

The difference in vision for the university between Ma and the Jesuits amounted to Ma's dream of a cultural meeting point between East and West, and the Jesuits ambition to create a university that was on par with the institutions of Europe. To create their institution, the Jesuits implemented strong authority at the top, a clear curriculum with structured programmes, and recruited students for whom studying would be the primary activity. Ma was blamed for his permissiveness; the student government organisation was criticised for interfering in academics and being a distraction from serious study; the curriculum was cited for being too broad and ambitious to be practical. The sanctuary offered to the revolutionaries for whom Ma held political sympathy was intolerable for the apolitical mission of the Jesuits and could not be permitted to continue. Future students would be expected to betray no political convictions, and those that did risked expulsion or arrest (Wiest 1997).

In their explanation of the failure of the first Université l'Aurore, the disgruntled students complained to the Chinese-language press in Shanghai of the undue influence exerted by the Catholic Mission. Yet, in the same articles, they praised the competence and dedication of the Jesuit faculty (Hayhoe 1983).

When the university reopened, it was under full Jesuit control. The institutional organisation and curriculum were built on the French academic model (De la Servière 1912). French became the primary language of instruction while classes emphasised

lecturing and laboratory work. The administrative structure was top-down, with well-defined programmes of study and a homogeneous and obedient student body. The Jesuits were trying to repair a reputation they felt had been compromised by the political activism of student revolutionaries. As a result, the new enrolment included younger, less politically minded students whose values could still be shaped without resistance. A noted local scholar, Professor Zeng, had been recruited to legitimise the institution within the local community, and a Chinese Jesuit, Father Laurent Li the founder of the press at Xujiahui, replaced Father Perrin (*Relation de Chine* 1918). Some notables of Shanghai's Christian community were brought into help with daily administration, freeing the Jesuits fathers to focus on developing the academic programmes and teaching.

At the same time, Ma Xiangbo founded another university, which attracted the dissident student population that had walked out of Aurore. This attempt at an institute of higher education proved more successful than his first. As the Jesuits kept the original name of Aurore (Zhendan), Ma launched this new institution as Fudan (renewal of Aurore). This institution is today ranked among the best universities in China.

From 94 students at the reopening of Aurore in 1905 to 172 in 1907, and this increase despite a high attrition of applicants, the necessity to move into a larger space closer to the city became acute (De la Hitte 2009). This move had been foreshadowed in an issue of *Relations de Chine* in 1905, where it was lamented that the enrolment had to be capped at 150 students, as all existing space was full, and that the permanent home would likely be erected between Xujiahui and Shanghai in the French Concession near the new hospital (*Relation de Chine* 1905). Though a further 160 students sat the entrance examination in January 1906, there were only 50 places on offer for the next year's intake of students (*Relation de Chine* 1906). The Jesuits of Aurore were beginning to feel the urgency to open the new and larger location in order to fulfil their mission.

Until 1908, the university remained housed on the outskirts of Shanghai in the observatory buildings of the mission at Xujiahui. A parcel of land in the Lujiawan district⁴ of the French Concession was acquired by the Jesuits in 1904⁵ and was developed into the permanent home of the university. Student residences (west) and classrooms and administration buildings (east) were constructed on opposite sides of the street.⁶

⁴In the French romanisation of the time, it was spelled Lo-Ka-Wei. This roughly corresponds to the modern Luwan District of Shanghai.

⁵Father Diniz, architect of the Mission, procured 6 hectares covering both sides of Dubail Avenue (Chongqing Lu).

⁶Ironically, the remaining structures from this campus were incorporated into Ma Xiangbo's second university, Fudan, in 1997 (Metzger 1999).

2.2.3 *The Mission*

When the Jesuits returned to China in the mid-nineteenth century, they saw a backward country run by an inefficient and corrupt government, torn apart by rebellions and weakened by famine and plagues. Their system of education and Christian faith was intended to create a new elite to rebuild the country on a firm Christian foundation. Aurore would provide the first-rate education necessary to facilitate these goals. In this, they saw themselves as following in the same tradition as Ricci, but the Jesuits at Aurore were guided by a different model of mission. They took what was a strategy for Ricci—the conversion of society from the top-down through indirect means—and made it the core of their method. Ricci's method relied on the missionaries becoming Chinese and on the Gospel becoming part of the Chinese culture. The Jesuits of Aurore hoped that a Chinese elite, educated at a French Catholic institution, would extol the virtues of the faith throughout Chinese society.

In setting the mission at Aurore, the Jesuits altered the approach initiated by Ricci and taken up by the mission at Xujiahui. The idea of placing Christianity within a traditional Chinese context was rejected. The pagan Chinese religious rites were condemned by the Holy See in the mid-eighteenth century, equating these rituals with French Catholicism was unthinkable. The new approach was to introduce their superior system of education, grounded in Christian principles, to create an elite intellectual class that would modernise the ancient civilisation, and even if not all converted to Christianity, they would at least sympathetic to the faith (Wiest 1997).

The published mission of the university was not quite so complex or ambitious. In the first year of the original Aurore, it was stated that the mission of the university was to allow young Chinese to study European science and give them higher education without requiring them to go to Europe or America.⁷

When the university reopened in 1905, the direction was slightly modified to indicate that the primary goal of the university was to allow Chinese students to receive secondary and higher education without going overseas and spending time in Europe or America (Programme de l'Université l'Aurore 1905). One of the underlying motives in providing a Western education on Chinese soil was the concern that when young Chinese students went abroad they frequently lost their way, either into a life of decadent excess or into atheistic, socialist or revolutionary philosophies (De la Servière 1925). Chinese students had been going to Europe and North America for university education since 1854, with about 30 studying in France by 1877, and there was some evidence to corroborate the Jesuits' concerns (Metzger 1999).

⁷“Cette université a pour but de faciliter aux jeunes Chinois l'étude des sciences européennes et de leur donner l'enseignement supérieur sans qu'ils aient besoin d'aller le chercher en Europe ou en Amérique” (Metzger 1999).

Though the missionaries at the university had hopes that students would convert to Catholicism, religion was not to be part of the curriculum. The place of the religion in the goals of the university is expressed in a later mission statement indicating that the training at Aurore aimed to create an elite worthy of its role as the leading class of China, imbued with moral and social truths; an elite of sound ideas, in touch with the Catholic religion, aware of the prejudices against it, and an appreciation during the current disarray.⁸

The Jesuits at Aurore displayed a keen respect for the “other” and developed a close relationship with the students. As Aurore grew, successive rectors lamented that these relationships were not cultivated by the growing lay faculty that had to be employed to meet the needs of the curriculum. There remained an unsatisfied desire for more young Jesuit teachers to enhance that special link between the students and the institution (Wiest 1997).

2.2.4 *Bargaining for Mission and Modernity*

While education and conversion remained the primary mission of Aurore, modifications to other aspects occurred over time. The overlap and interplay of interests between the Jesuit mission and the government agenda with regard to Aurore was a constant dynamic in the development of the university. Just as the government was keen to use the Jesuit mission to extend French prestige and influence, the Jesuits used the protectorate over Catholics and *mission civilisatrice* to the advantage of Aurore (Wiest 1997). Despite rampant anticlericalism in France, the Jesuits were consistently able to get assistance in the pursuit of their educational mission in Shanghai. Government and military officials from the ambassador and consul to the commander of the expeditionary force endorsed or contributed to the development of the university.

The language of instruction was always a contentious element in the execution of the Jesuit mission at Aurore. French, Chinese and English each had their supporters—French was most strongly endorsed by the French government and many of the teachers—Jesuit and lay; Chinese was favoured by some of the students and certain Jesuit teachers; English was the choice of a majority of the student population. As the mission evolved, French was entrenched as the language of instruction with the exception of certain courses in Chinese Law and language classes. Students were expected to have a sufficient level on entry to attend regular classes. Those without French-language skills could take a one-year preparatory course in French before entering the mainstream programme.

⁸“la formation de l’Aurore s’attache à créer une élite digne de son rôle de class dirigeante pénétrée des vérités morales et sociales; une élite aux idées saines avant perdu, au contact de la religion catholique, ses préjugés contre elle, et l’appréciant dans le désarroi actuel!” (Relations de Chine 1936).

The Jesuits justified the use of French as the most authentic language for the pursuit of a European education,

The Chinese people like to go back to the origins of things and they know that, in matters of science, French owes much to Latin and is its main scion.... They trust teachers such as [French Catholic] missionaries whose knowledge of Latin and Greek make them versed in the etymology of the scientific vocabulary of all disciplines.... They know that French represents a good half of the world civilization, and that it is the key to disinterested higher studies, in short to science.

Archives françaises de la Compagnie de Jésus, Fichier 2–51 complément, “l’Aurore, Université française de Lo Ka wei, près Changhai” (ca. 1907), p. 4 (Wiest 1997)

The place of the French language in the mission of Aurore is best summarised in a series of letters from the rector of the university, P. Pierre Lefebvre, to a Jesuit superior in Paris, “If you plan, within a few years, to have all the courses taught in Chinese, please stop all projects of construction and development. This measure would indeed be the death warrant of Aurore, because students would not apply here to find what is already well provided by other institutions” (Wiest 1997).

Following a directive to use the Chinese language for instruction in religious education, P. Lefebvre laments, “When the apostolic delegate asked what we did [in catechetical classes and in our sermons], I explained to him we did it in French because it seemed more useful for our students and for promoting the holy cause. Now that things have been decided against us, I wash my hands of the whole business if results are not as good as those we obtained before”.⁹

In offering a place where Chinese students could enjoy the advantages of a foreign education within their own borders, and the particular benefits of French language, culture and educational practices, the Jesuits of Aurore may have attained their greatest success towards the goals of their mission and in the attempt to create sympathy within the Chinese elite for Catholicism. The Chinese governor of Jiangsu Province noted that Aurore enjoyed an excellent reputation beyond the city of Shanghai and even beyond the borders of China. As a testament to this status, he sent his own son there to study (De la Hitte 2009).

In the pursuit of their mission, the Jesuits of Aurore ensured the stability, academic standard and financial viability that would permit the institution to foster the advancement of Catholicism in China. The protection of the French government through the religious protectorate and the physical location within the French Concession of Shanghai ensured the stability of Aurore even as revolution, riot, war and political crisis went on around it. The Concession police force was called on campus as needed, and the French military was stationed nearby proving a deterrent to riotous instability, while the campus visits of French military and civic leaders, and the regular involvement of the consul general at convocation demonstrated a continuity of authority.

⁹The apostolic delegate at that time was Archbishop Celso Costantini.

Achieving a high academic standard was a founding principle of Aurore. In fact, the recognition of an Aurore education as superior to that of similar schools was seen as an indicator of the success of the institution (Relations de Chine 1906). The education at the university was always intended to rival those offered in Europe. Gaining official recognition for the qualifications conferred was relentlessly pursued. The first request for accreditation was made to the Viceroy of Nanjing by three students trained at Aurore, who subsequently passed the imperial examinations in 1905. They wanted to return to Aurore for further study and hoped that their work would result in certification recognised by the Chinese government (Relations de Chine 1905).

Though official recognition for the programs was not granted immediately, the Jesuits followed the Chinese rules and regulations on education and made the required changes to their structure. By 1912, they obtained the official recognition of the university and the degrees it granted from the fledgling Chinese republic (De la Hitte 2009). In fact, at that time, the Jesuits felt that they had established the only European standard university in Shanghai, suggesting that the Anglican St. John's University was more like a high school, the German medical school was by design a preparatory institution, and the School of the Arsenal was an insubstantial copy of the École des arts et manufactures in Paris—"Seule l'Aurore nous paraît avoir les caractères sinon d'une université" (Relations de Chine 1913).

In 1918, the French Public Education Ministry granted the *cours préparatoire* at Aurore equivalency to the French baccalaureate. There were ten graduates in the first class after the accreditation. The Jesuit journal *Relations de Chine* proclaimed, "Pour la première fois, ces examens conféraient l'équivalence du Baccalauréat français" (Relations de Chine 1920).

Aurore was responsible for training many of Shanghai's elite. Graduates would go on to become the leaders of large enterprises, such as the Shanghai Electric Company, various railway lines and the tramline in Beijing (Metzger 1999). The modifications to the curriculum—adding new departments, broadening the expertise of the faculty, expanding the opportunities for in-depth research—led to an increase in Aurore alumni pursuing further study overseas, even earning entry into doctoral programmes at the Sorbonne (Wiest 1997).

Despite the assertion that the university would not receive government financial support, such funding did materialise. The Jesuits made use of their understood position as an unofficial branch of the French imperialist agenda through the *mission civilisatrice*. The strength of French Jesuit institutions limited the impact of British, American and German imperial ambitions (Bays 1996). In the context of this understanding, state purse strings were loosened to support the mission of Aurore, at least as far as it overlapped with the mission of the government.

Starting from 1913, the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères* allocated an annual 1000 franc subsidy to Aurore. In 1916, the ministry reached in accord with Jesuits guaranteeing financial support for the university. In return, the Jesuits agreed that the direction and the administration of Aurore would retain a French character, teaching would continue to be conducted in French, and the director and the majority of professors would be French. With these concessions, the government

subsidy was increased first to 15,000 francs and then to 25,000 francs annually. The figure continued to be adjusted for inflation, administrative flux and increases in the number of teaching staff, reaching 1,600,000 francs in 1945 (Wiest 1997). This modification to the mission took some of the decision-making freedom away from the Jesuits, but ensured the financial viability so the primary mission could be perpetuated without fear of financial shortfall.

Similarly, the Municipal Council of the French Concession contributed 300,000 francs in 1915 for new construction and relocation of the Jesuit observatory and natural history museum. The improved infrastructure was to the greater benefit of the entire Concession while specifically improving the facilities of the university. The two sides remained wary of each other, but continued to work together, even taking pride in each other's accomplishments.

Through institutional stability, high academic standards and achievement and a secure financial situation, the Jesuit mission of education and assimilation could be pursued at the Université l'Aurore, the French Catholic university of Shanghai for the education of Chinese.

2.3 Lessons in Modernity

In pursuit of the aim to provide a French style and calibre of education at the institution in Shanghai, the programmes and courses offered from the earliest days reflected the norms of the day in France. As the university grew in student population and reputation, professional schools including Law and Engineering were added. Beyond the classroom, the Jesuit educators also believed that cultural contact would enhance the learning experience for the Chinese students. The combination of lessons imported directly from Europe, and the cultural understanding of Western ways afforded by environmental experience would equip graduates to lead and guide the development of China in the model of modernity set by France.

2.3.1 *The Programmes and Courses*

Unlike their missionary predecessors, the French Jesuits were not interested in fitting themselves into Chinese society, and they never planned to adapt the Gospel to China, nor did they look to immerse themselves in the Chinese culture. They sought to bring a superior French education to China in the model of indirect evangelisation. To this end, two programme levels were developed: *cours préparatoire*—which roughly corresponded to a Chinese secondary education and *cours supérieur*—which was meant to be at least on par with the programmes offered in Chinese superior schools, or roughly equal to a university education in Europe. The university originally offered courses under four departments: literature,

philosophy, mathematics and natural sciences. The programmes in the sciences were developed to provide practical skills for students, such as marine navigation and typhoon prediction.

The first of the *cours préparatoire* was offered in Chinese, but from the second year forward the bulk of courses were offered in French. The courses offered in the two-year *cours supérieur* were conducted in French.

For the first three years, the courses were the same for all students: French and English language classes, fundamentals of classical and modern European literature, history and geography of China and the Great Powers, philosophy, political economy, civil and international law, mathematics and science. In the fourth year, students were divided into two programmes: literature or sciences. The literature section offered unique courses in French and English literature, and further studies in law. The sciences programme featured courses in advanced mathematics, zoology, botany and geology. Philosophy, French and English language, rhetoric and history and geography were taught to both groups. While ambitious, these programmes were not out of line with those being offered at other institutions at the time. In the later years of their programme, students were encouraged to specialise in a particular branch to attain sufficient expertise. In such cases, the years of study would increase.

The first year in the new premises, 1908, brought the largest student population since opening (242 registered students (De La Servière 1925)) and a renewal of the programmes and directorship. New Director Father Allain was put in charge of implementing the new, longer programmes designed to further the academic depth offered at the Université l'Aurore. The redesigned *cours préparatoire* still lasted three years with French as the language of instruction for the final two years, now included classes in French, English, European literature, history and geography of China and the west, philosophy, mathematics, physics and natural sciences. The goal of the programme was the successful completion of examinations equivalent to those of the French baccalaureate and the possibility of advancing to the *cours supérieur* at Aurore. The *cours supérieur* was also of a three-year duration in preparation for either *licence-ès-lettres* or *licence-ès-sciences* with various specialisations within each programme (Hayhoe 1983).

2.3.2 Professional Schools

The next step in the development of the university was the addition of a medical school, Engineering Faculty and Law School. In each case, there was debate over the make-up and direction of the programme, but ultimately, the Jesuits held their control over the curriculum. In 1909, the Faculty of Medicine accepted its first class of students. The proximity of the Hôpital Sainte-Marie of the French Concession facilitated the addition of this faculty (De la Hitte 2009). As discussed in the 1903 debate, the Faculty of Medicine was seen to have value beyond the education of students in Western practice, but also as an artery of French influence (Fauvel

1903). In the context of the Jesuit university, this influence, it was hoped would eventually extend to Christianity with students adopting French Catholicism along with Western medicine.

By 1914, the addition of further programmes and the changing employment situation for university graduates precipitated a modification to the fields of study. The *cours supérieur* was reorganised into three sections: *Lettres-Droit* (Arts and Law), *sciences* (science) and *Médecine* (Medicine). Courses in Chinese and French literature remained mandatory for students of all faculties whether pursuing a future as teachers, doctors, lawyers or engineers (De la Hitte 2009).

Students of *Lettres-Droit* enrolled in a four-year programme of general arts and law leading to examinations for the *licence-ès-lettres*, with the possibility of taking a fifth year to write a doctoral dissertation. The *sciences* programme was structured with three years of general sciences resulting in a certificate in a chosen discipline (physics, chemistry, mathematics, etc.), and a subsequent two years of dedicated study in a specific engineering field would lead to a professional qualification. Students of *Médecine* were required to make a longer commitment to receive their qualification. The initial programme lasted six years and resulted in a specialist certificate in anatomy, embryology, physiology and histology. Certificates in external pathology, obstetrics, surgery and internal pathology could be earned in an additional eighteen months of dedicated study (De la Servièrre 1925). Officials and experts from both the French and Chinese administrations certified the examination results so that the qualification could be recognised by both parties (Relations de Chine 1919).

2.3.3 Cultural Contact

Despite tight discipline, the familiarity between students and faculty bred a good rapport. The students held their professors in high esteem and showed their respect by studying diligently. Both groups demonstrated a desire to maintain the reputation of the institution. Students generally held to an 8:30 pm curfew, by which time they were expected to be in their rooms quietly studying. Lights out came at only 10 pm.

Student life was all study and quiet time. Physical activity was encouraged as part of the university experience at Aurore. The university was well endowed with sporting opportunities featuring five tennis courts, two basketball courts a running track and one of the best soccer fields in the city, “volontiers emprunté par la Ligue Anglaise, ce qui n’est pas peu dire (Relations de Chine 1919)”. The greatest freedom for the students was over religion. They were free to practise as they saw fit and there was no proselytising by the Jesuits. Ultimately, Christians only ever accounted for about one-quarter of the student population.

The overall quality of the teaching combined with the diligence of the students admitted to the university ensured that a large majority of graduates went on to

successful careers, whether in law, politics, medicine or another field; the experience of student life at Aurore aided in the students' achievements after graduation.

2.4 Conclusion

From the first establishment of French residence in Shanghai, there was a desire to mimic the modernity of the home country to offer the expatriate a familiar and comfortable overseas living experience. To this end, the French Concession was modelled on Paris in infrastructure, economy and culture. Modernity in infrastructure was easily recognised in Shanghai—roads, electric street lamps, sewage systems, urban tramlines. The city had a modern trade and manufacturing economy. Social organisation and cultural activities for the foreign population mirrored that familiar in Europe. After sixty years of this presence, the French opened a university, at least in part to bring French civilisation through education to the Chinese.

From its establishment, the primary mission of the Université l'Aurore was to provide a French calibre education, demonstrating the intention to bring French modernity to Shanghai. To this end, the programmes and courses were deliberately designed to reflect key aspects of the French educational model. The resultant Chinese elite were to be the vanguard of a modern China, imbued with French values in accordance with the *mission civilisatrice*.

Students were groomed to be leaders in business, law, medicine, administration and academics as Shanghai continued to modernise along Western models as a republic after millennia of imperial rule. Thanks to Aurore, a modern French education could be earned without the upheaval and expense of going to Europe; as a result, these graduates would be more likely to remain in Shanghai and become contributors to its continued modernisation.

Jesuit mission in education was designed to develop a new educated class of Chinese sympathetic to French imperatives and, by extension, the Christianising goals of the church. Aurore struggled in its early phases due to this double mission. The church versus state conflict in France nearly aborted the project before its inception, and the role of the church in university administration led to closure and fissure before the relaunched university could become a significant modernising force in education in Shanghai. The transition from French education to Christianity never did materialise for most students. Though Catholic conversions were few, cultural conversions were plentiful—"French Modernity" was embraced.

Aurore provides a singular example of the modernisation of higher education in China; the standards set by Aurore provoked changes in the Chinese academic model. Hybrid institutions were developed to incorporate elements of the education being offered at Aurore into the Chinese system. Only Fudan could rival what Aurore offered in terms of academic quality, future prospects and modernising influence. The contribution of the Université l'Aurore to the shift in educational practice is a testament to the French influence on modernity in Shanghai.

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Sites of Modernity

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