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Calvin Mateer and the Dissemination of Psychology in the Late Qing Period: The Earliest School to Offer Psychology Courses

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Abstract

Historical scholarship has exhibited omissions and even misinterpretations regarding the contributions of the late Qing missionary Di Kaowen (Calvin Wilson Mateer) to the introduction of Western psychology, such as the claim that Dengzhou Wenhuiquan (Tengchow College) was the first institution to offer psychology courses. Through careful examination of early historical materials from Dengzhou Wenhuiquan, it has been discovered that the institution did not establish psychology courses in 1876, and no records exist of such courses being offered before 1891. Based on the curriculum printed in 1891, psychology courses were likely introduced only after 1896 or 1897. Dengzhou Wenhuiquan's introduction of psychology courses thus occurred later than those initiated by Yan Yongjing and Xie Weilou (Devello Z. Sheffield). Although Di Kaowen demonstrated knowledge of psychology in 1877 and attempted to translate the term "psychology" while writing textbooks, his participation in textbook committee work and awareness of W.A.P. Martin's plans for a *Mental Philosophy* textbook demonstrate his engagement with the field. In 1899, he wrote a book review for Martin's *Xingxue Juyu* (An Introduction to Psychology), and his role as chairman of the terminology committee in 1891, followed by his chairmanship of the Scientific Terminology Committee established in 1896, positioned him to edit the *Terminology Vocabulary* (including psychological terms) published in 1904. Di Kaowen actively promoted psychology teaching and terminology standardization, establishing a tradition at Dengzhou Wenhuiquan. His translation work and review of Martin's book reveal that he drew upon Chinese traditional culture when creating psychological terminology.

Full Text

Calvin Wilson Mateer and the Dissemination of Psychology in the Late Qing Dynasty

Abstract

Historical scholarship has overlooked or even misinterpreted the contributions of the late Qing missionary Calvin Wilson Mateer to the introduction of Western psychology into China, particularly regarding whether Tengchow College was the first institution to offer a mental philosophy course. Through careful examination of early historical materials from Tengchow College, this study finds that the college did not establish a mental philosophy course in 1876, and no records indicate such a course existed before 1891. Based on a curriculum printed in 1891, psychology classes were likely introduced in 1896 or after 1897. Tengchow College's offering of mental philosophy courses came later than those established by Y. K. Yen and D. Z. Sheffield. As the first president of Tengchow College, Mateer demonstrated knowledge of psychology as early as 1877 and attempted to translate "psychology" into Chinese, as mentioned in his writings on compiling textbooks for China. He participated in the School and Textbook Series Committee, was familiar with W. A. P. Martin's plan to write a Mental Philosophy textbook, and wrote a book review in 1899 for Martin's *Xing Xue Ju Yu* (Introduction to Psychology). Mateer chaired the Terminology Committee in 1891 and later became chair of the Scientific Terminology Committee when it was established in 1896. The *Technical Terms, English and Chinese* (including psychology terms) that he edited was published in 1904. Throughout the process of psychology's dissemination in the late Qing period, Mateer was among the first to pay attention to the field, promoted psychology teaching and terminology standardization, and established a tradition of psychology instruction at Tengchow College. Through Mateer's early translation of "psychology" and his later commentary on Martin's *Xing Xue Ju Yu*, we can see that he emphasized drawing nourishment from traditional Chinese culture when creating Chinese psychological terminology.

Keywords: Calvin Wilson Mateer; Tengchow College; psychology; mental philosophy; late Qing dynasty

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1. Introduction

The dissemination of Western psychology in China during the late Qing period represents a crucial stage in the development of Chinese psychology, involving missionary activities from both Western and Chinese Christians who spread psychology through articles, writings, and teaching (Zhao, 1983; Zhao, 2000; Yan, 2012a; Yan, 2012b; Yan, 2015). Current historical scholarship has not given due

attention to the contributions of the Western missionary Calvin Wilson Mateer (C. W. Mateer) to the spread of psychology—what specific work did he do, and what impetus did he provide for the discipline? The Chinese history of psychology community has focused only on the question of whether the Tengchow College he presided over was the first to offer mental philosophy courses (see Gu, 1985, p. 289; Zhao, 2000, pp. 101–103; Yan, 2015, p. 15; Wang, 2023, p. 280). The establishment of mental philosophy courses marked, to some extent, the transformation of psychology in China from a “paper” discipline found only in writings to a “practical” discipline with educated practitioners, representing an important link in the development of Chinese psychology. Recently, the author has become concerned with the question: Did Tengchow College truly pioneer mental philosophy courses? This issue could cause confusion in the compilation of modern Chinese psychology history. This paper adopts empirical historical research methods, examining historical documents to first explore whether Tengchow College first offered mental philosophy courses, and to review the circumstances of mental philosophy courses offered by Y. K. Yen and D. Z. Sheffield at their respective schools. It then proceeds to discuss Mateer’s role in the early dissemination of psychology during the late Qing period, and through his contributions demonstrates the collision between Western psychology and Chinese culture during its early introduction.

2. The Controversy over Tengchow College’s “First” Mental Philosophy Course

In January 1864, Calvin Wilson Mateer and his wife arrived in Tengchow for missionary work. That autumn, they founded the Tengchow Boy’s Boarding School with a six-year curriculum. In 1873, the school changed to a twelve-year system and was renamed Tengchow Boy’s High School. In January 1877, the school was renamed “Tengchow College” while holding its first graduation ceremony. In 1884, Tengchow College was authorized to operate as a university, with the English name Tengchow College (also called Shangtung College), while the Chinese name remained unchanged. In 1904, Tengchow College moved to Weixian and merged with the university division of Tsingchow Boy’s Boarding School, becoming Shangtung Protestant University (later known as Cheeloo University) (Guo & Du, 2012; Han, 1993). Scholars have often based their judgment that mental philosophy courses were offered in 1876 on a blank diploma format printed in *Annals of Tengchow College* compiled by Wang Yuande and Liu Yufeng (1913/2012), which listed mental philosophy courses. Additionally, the book presents a curriculum printed in 1891 that includes mental philosophy, leading later generations to claim this might be “the first psychology course offered in China’s educational system” (Gu, 1985, p. 289). This information has been widely circulated in academic circles (Zhao, 2000, pp. 101–103; Gao, 2013). Yan (2015, p. 15) also concluded this was the earliest mental philosophy course in China based on the claim by Tengchow College and Shangtung Protestant University graduates that Mateer issued a diploma to three first graduates (see [Figure 1: see original paper]), with the diploma format listing mental philoso-

phy courses (Han, 1993, p. 10). The claim that Tengchow College pioneered psychology courses continues to spread in Chinese psychology circles today (Wang, 2023). Furthermore, judgments about the 1876 date of this diploma have influenced determinations of when other disciplines were first offered (Lyu, 1994; Wang, 2004). Determinations based on this curriculum may contain errors. In fact, the first Tengchow College graduates completed their studies in January 1877, which fell in the winter of the second year of the Guangxu reign in the Chinese calendar, before the Spring Festival, leading some scholars to mistakenly believe they graduated in 1876 (see Guo & Du, 2012, p. 17). All subsequent references to graduation diploma information have been corrected accordingly.

3. Mental Philosophy, Mental Science, and Psychology

Some scholars claim that “during the Tengchow College period, no ‘psychology’ courses were offered; the ‘mental philosophy’ offered in the later period was obviously not psychology...” (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 5). In fact, mental philosophy (mental philosophy) during this period was not what we now call parapsychology, but rather psychology. In the mid-to-late 19th century, on the one hand, the name for the discipline of psychology had not been fixed in the Chinese context; on the other hand, in the English-speaking world between 1840-1860, “mental philosophy” and “psychology” were used interchangeably, with “psychology” gradually becoming fixed after 1860. After T. C. Upham published *Elements of Intellectual Philosophy* in 1827, he found the term “intellectual Philosophy” too narrow in meaning, so when publishing *Mental Philosophy* in 1831, he used “mental Philosophy” to represent “the states, activities, or operations of the mind under the two great heads of the intellectual and sensitive” (Fay, 1939, p. 92). At that time, mental philosophy still belonged to philosophical psychology. Upham’s work was acclaimed as the best textbook before William James’s *The Principles of Psychology* (Roback, 1952, p. 50). When J. Haven published *Mental Philosophy* in 1857, he stated that “to distinguish the science of mind from other sciences, a more precise limiting term is needed, and now ‘psychology’ is gradually being used as such a term” (Haven, 1858, p. 16). This suggests that mental philosophy underwent a gradual transformation toward psychology. In 1889, Y. K. Yen translated Haven’s original *Mental Philosophy* as *Xin Ling Xue* (心灵学), which scholars recognize as the first Western psychology work translated by a Chinese person. Therefore, mental philosophy (also called mental philosophy), mental science (mental science), and psychology (psychology) mentioned in this paper are all regarded as the same discipline, with usage depending on Chinese/English and ancient/modern contexts.

In 1881, Mateer wrote a “proposal” to the American Presbyterian Mission Board, suggesting the expansion of Tengchow College into a university called Shandong University Hall, which mentioned offering courses in psychology, ethics, etc. (Fisher, 2009, p. 133). The English term he used here was “mental and moral sciences,” which actually meant mental science, i.e., mental science, referring to what later became psychology. However, this psychology course

appeared only in Mateer's proposal; whether Tengchow College actually offered the course requires further examination of historical documents.

4. Evidence from Tengchow College Graduation Diplomas

The *Annals of Tengchow College* printed in 1913 contains a yearly curriculum for the regular and preparatory divisions printed in 1891, which includes mental philosophy courses. However, the “Tengchow College Curriculum” in the *Tengchow College Regulations* printed in 1891 does not include mental philosophy, nor does the English *Tengchow College Prospectus* published in 1891, which contains evidence that Mental Science courses were not offered (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 9; Corbett, 1955, p. 44). This can be considered as one piece of evidence.

Let us search for additional evidence by examining original graduation diplomas, though few Tengchow College diplomas survive. According to the author's research, only the graduation certificate of Zhong Weiyi from the eleventh year of Guangxu (1886) (sometimes written as “乙”), the diploma of Cao Kun from the twentieth year of Guangxu (1895), and the diploma style material from the seventeenth year of Guangxu (1891) are available. The content of Zhong Weiyi's graduation diploma is as follows:

“Shandong Wen Hui Xue Guan is established in Tengchow city to teach in detail literature, mathematics, and various sciences. Now Zhong Weiyi has completed and passed examinations according to our curriculum. What he has studied includes the Four Books and Five Classics, mathematics, algebra, geometry, world history, trigonometry, various measurement methods, physics, surveying and navigation, *Tian Dao Su Yuan* (Tracing the Source of the Heavenly Way), geology and mineralogy, Chinese history, analytical geometry, physics calculations, chemistry, calculus, astronomy, logic, political economy, and excels in composition. Having achieved such accomplishment, he is truly worthy of respect and can be called a scholar without shame. Therefore, the principal specially awards this diploma as public recognition. Guangxu 11th year (1885) Principal: Calvin Wilson Mateer” (Zhong, 2014, p. 9)

Mental philosophy is not listed among these courses. Unfortunately, the original diploma was destroyed by fire; this copy was reissued by Shandong Wen Hui Xue Guan in 1901, so some content may contain errors from later additions and can only be used for reference. Additionally, according to the 1891 “diploma style” of Tengchow College, mental philosophy is also absent:

“Tengchow Wen Hui Xue Guan is established in the city to teach in detail literature, mathematics, and various sciences. Now a certain person has completed and passed examinations according to our curriculum. What he has studied and lectured on includes the Four Books and Five Classics, mathematics, algebra, geometry and conic sections, trigonometry, various measurement methods, surveying,

navigation, physics calculations, analytical geometry, *Sheng Shen Zhi Zhang* (Self-examination Guide), geology and mineralogy, *Tian Dao Yin Zheng* (Evidence of the Heavenly Way), Chinese history, world history, physics, chemistry, astronomy, logic, political economy, and excels in composition. Having achieved such accomplishment, he is truly worthy of respect and can be called a scholar without shame. Therefore, the principal specially awards this diploma as public recognition” (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 32).

The only surviving photocopy of a Tengchow College graduation diploma is that of Cao Kun from the twentieth year of Guangxu (January 1895) (see [Figure 2: see original paper]). The courses listed on the diploma include the Four Books and Five Classics, literature, mathematics, algebra, geometry, various measurement methods, surveying, trigonometry, physics calculations, analytical geometry, political economy, navigation, *Sheng Shen Zhi Zhang*, *Tian Dao Yin Zheng*, astronomy, geology and mineralogy, Chinese history, world history, physics, logic, and chemistry—21 courses in total. Mental philosophy courses appear in none of these documents. Furthermore, in Mateer’s own writings about early teaching at Tengchow College, mental philosophy courses are not mentioned when listing student coursework (Fisher, 2009, pp. 86–87). Thus, there is no evidence that Tengchow College offered psychology courses in its early period.

Additionally, since Tengchow College used Chinese exclusively for instruction from its founding in 1864, the Mateers did not participate in teaching during the initial stage, which was handled by a Chinese assistant who had converted to Christianity (Fisher, 2009, p. 85). During the first ten years, the school was almost entirely managed by Mateer’s wife, Julia Brown Mateer, while Calvin Wilson Mateer himself was engaged in other work, only later devoting himself “wholeheartedly to the work she had initiated” (Fisher, 2009, p. 80). This makes it unlikely that mental philosophy courses were offered in Tengchow College’s early period.

5. When Did Tengchow College Actually Offer Mental Philosophy Courses?

According to the *Annals of Tengchow College* printed in 1913, the 1891 “Yearly Curriculum for Regular and Preparatory Divisions” lists “mental philosophy” for the sixth year of the regular division. When was this course actually offered? The diploma style printed in the same book (which includes mental philosophy courses) (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 78)—from which year does it originate? Observing the diploma style (printed in 1913), the phrase “The American Presbyterian Church establishes Tengchow College in Shandong Tengchow city...” does not appear in the 1891 “Wen Hui Xue Guan Diploma” or in the original January 1895 Cao Kun diploma, which both use the phrase “Tengchow Wen Hui Xue Guan is established in the city...”. Therefore, we can determine that the graduation diploma style printed in 1913 was likely adopted after January 1895,

possibly starting in January 1896.

According to a note in the 1891 “Yearly Curriculum for Regular and Preparatory Divisions”: “The above two-division curriculum was printed in 1891. At that time, the eight-legged essay system was still prevalent, so the established curriculum had to be adjusted according to circumstances. Later, as Western learning flourished, gradual improvements were made, with additional notes below to show the actual conditions of Tengchow College at that time” (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 72). This shows that courses offered after 1891 would change according to circumstances. Therefore, the curriculum notes “added in 1902” under “botany and zoology,” and “later changed to policy essays and classical studies” after “reading literature” and “writing literature.” Based on the fact that the original January 1895 Cao Kun diploma lists “literature” as a first-year course rather than “policy essays and classical studies,” while the 1913 Tengchow College diploma style includes “policy essays and classical studies,” we can similarly determine that this diploma style appeared after January 1895. Therefore, the mental philosophy courses appearing in the diploma style were likely offered between 1896 or 1897 and 1904 (when Tengchow College moved to Weixian and merged with Tsingchow Boy’s Boarding School to become Shangtung Protestant University).

The 1891 “Yearly Curriculum for Regular and Preparatory Divisions” that includes mental philosophy courses (offered in the sixth year) was actually printed in 1913, while the “Tengchow College Curriculum” in the 1891 *Tengchow College Regulations* does not include mental philosophy, nor does the English *Tengchow College Prospectus* published in 1891. The Chinese translation records the statement: “Several desirable branches, e.g., Mental Science and Physical Geography have been omitted for want of suitable textbooks” (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 9). According to some English sources, the original English term for “精神科学” in the 1891 English *Tengchow College Prospectus* was Mental Science (Corbett, 1955, p. 44). This is an important piece of evidence discovered so far, indicating that Tengchow College had not offered mental philosophy courses by 1891. At the same time, it shows that the 1891 “Yearly Curriculum for Regular and Preparatory Divisions” may have been a teaching plan just proposed at that time, which had not yet been included in important historical records of Tengchow College. The author temporarily offers this hypothesis: When this “Yearly Curriculum for Regular and Preparatory Divisions” was being planned in 1891, Mateer may have specially printed it, but the actual offering of mental philosophy courses would have to wait until the sixth year listed in the curriculum table, i.e., 1896 or 1897. Listing mental philosophy teaching plans in the 1891 curriculum (courses not offered due to lack of textbooks) roughly coincides with the time when Mateer and several other missionaries began meeting in November 1891 to work on terminology standardization.

6. Mateer's Contribution to the Dissemination of Psychology in the Late Qing Period

The offering of mental philosophy courses during the late Qing period holds significant importance in the history of modern Chinese psychology, marking the beginning of psychology's move toward having students and becoming public. However, at that time, this public still belonged to the religious sphere, and psychology had not yet completely transformed into modern scientific psychology or entered secular society.

To our current knowledge, St. John's College in Shanghai should be the first school to offer mental philosophy courses in China. Zhao (1983) stated that Y. K. Yen administered academic affairs and taught mental philosophy at St. John's College starting in September 1879, translating Haven's *Mental Philosophy* while teaching, and publishing the first half of the book under the title *Xin Ling Xue* (心灵学) in 1889. According to the first semester faculty list in St. John's University's self-compiled school history manuscript: "Rev. Yen—Superintendent and Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy" ("Draft of self-edited history of St. John's University", p. 6), suggesting that Yen may not have taught psychology courses at that time. However, in the second semester, a "St. John's College Announcement" published in *Shen Bao* for 37 consecutive days stated: "The newly established St. John's College teaches English, Chinese literature and classics, as well as various books studied in Western academies: namely astronomy, geography, geology, world history, international law, mathematics, physics, chemistry, logic, mental philosophy, ethics, evidence of Christian doctrine, and music" (Schereschewsky, 1880). Here, "mental philosophy" is a term for the *Xin Ling Xue* course taught by Y. K. Yen, indicating that Yen began teaching mental philosophy in 1880, using Haven's *Mental Philosophy* as the textbook.

The second school to offer mental philosophy courses was D. Z. Sheffield's Tongzhou Luhe Academy. In 1892, the first graduating class studied 11 courses including mental philosophy (Lutz, 1998, p. 26). In November 1891, Sheffield became a member of the Publication Committee, responsible for terminology standardization in mental science and moral science. The author discovered an unpublished mimeographed manuscript without author attribution, *Ling Xue Lue Lun* (Mental Philosophy) (see [Figure 3: see original paper]), which, when compared with Sheffield's 1911 published *Xin Ling Xue*, proves to be an early version of that work (Sheffield, 1911). Since the 1892 first graduates had not studied English and all courses were taught in Chinese, Sheffield spent considerable time writing or translating textbooks in Chinese (Lutz, 1998, p. 26). Based on the fact that the first graduates studied mental philosophy, this mimeographed *Ling Xue Lue Lun* was likely printed before 1892, probably serving as his teaching material at that time. This manuscript initially translated mental philosophy as "灵学" (lingxue) and included a Chinese-English glossary at the end, likely reflecting Sheffield's participation in terminology standardization work in 1891, as described later.

The third school to offer mental philosophy courses was Mateer's Tengchow College, which first offered mental philosophy in 1896 or 1897. However, due to limited materials, rigorous judgments cannot be made about who taught the courses or what textbooks were used. In fact, Zhao (2000, p. 103) raised similar questions about the 1876 course offerings at Tengchow College.

The above discussion refutes the claim that Tengchow College pioneered mental philosophy courses, establishing that Y. K. Yen first offered mental philosophy courses, Sheffield was second at Luhe Academy, and Tengchow College was third. Beyond establishing psychology courses, what specific work did Mateer contribute to the dissemination of psychology during the late Qing period? These efforts constitute his complete contribution to late Qing psychology.

6.1 Mateer's Knowledge of Psychology and His Review of Martin's *Xing Xue Ju Yu*

Mateer was among the earlier missionaries in China to pay attention to the English term "psychology" and attempt its Chinese translation, as mentioned in his 1877 article on writing textbooks for China. He participated in the School and Textbook Series Committee and was familiar with W. A. P. Martin's plan to write a Mental Philosophy textbook, writing a book review for Martin's *Xing Xue Ju Yu* in 1899. He chaired the Terminology Committee in 1891 and later, when the Scientific Terminology Committee was established in 1896, served as its chair. The *Technical Terms, English and Chinese* (including psychology terms) that he edited was published in 1904. In the process of psychology's dissemination in the late Qing period, Mateer was among the first to pay attention to the field, promoted psychology teaching and terminology standardization, and established a tradition of psychology instruction at Tengchow College. Through Mateer's early translation of "psychology" and his later commentary on Martin's *Xing Xue Ju Yu*, we can see that he emphasized drawing nourishment from traditional Chinese culture when creating Chinese psychological terminology.

Mateer was among the earlier missionaries in China to pay attention to the English term "psychology" and attempt its Chinese translation. In May 1877, the Christian missionary conference held in Shanghai established the School and Textbook Series Committee (Chinese name "益智书会"), consisting of W. A. P. Martin, A. Williamson, C. W. Mateer, Y. J. Allen, R. Lechler, and J. Fryer. The committee initially decided to compile primary and advanced Chinese elementary school textbooks, both sets including mental philosophy as a subject, though without specifying who would be responsible for writing the textbook ("The Shanghai Missionary Conference", 1877). This shows that Mateer was already familiar with mental philosophy textbooks at that time. In September-October 1877, Mateer specifically wrote an article "School Books for China," stating that terminology standardization was an important component when preparing to write Chinese textbooks. He mentioned using "farviewer" for telescope and the coinage "soullaw" for psychology. Actually, he was expressing Chinese characters' meanings in English, not translating into Chinese

characters, and claimed that “Chinese is particularly rigid and unsuitable for forming technical terms and new expressions.” English could draw on Latin and Greek for technical term creation, but if Chinese term creation could only draw on English meanings, it would be bland, and “such wording would not only lack dignity but also be embarrassing and awkward in practice” (Mateer, 1877). This reflects three points: First, by 1877 Mateer already had some background knowledge of psychology. Second, he used the coinage “soullaw” to refer to psychology, which could be literally translated as “the law of the soul,” essentially the original meaning of psychology. Third, he realized at that time that using English meanings to create Chinese technical terms was inappropriate, noting that English could borrow from Latin and Greek because they share an alphabetic system, while Chinese had no other pictographic script to borrow from. He thus concluded that, as a unique block-character script, Chinese terminology creation was difficult. This, of course, reflects his historical limitations as a Western missionary. The above information shows that at least from 1877, Mateer understood psychology, was familiar with Mental Philosophy textbook compilation work, and expressed opinions on psychological terminology creation.

What was Mateer’s background knowledge of psychology? By 1878, the Mental Philosophy textbook compilation work of the School and Textbook Series Committee was assigned to W. A. P. Martin (Williamson, 1878), with sources in 1880 stating that Martin’s Mental Philosophy writing was in progress (“Education works for the Chinese”, 1880). Martin did not publish his psychology work *Xing Xue Ju Yu* until 1898. After its publication, Mateer wrote a specialized review, offering both positive and strict criticism, particularly expressing great appreciation for Martin’s use of the term “性学.” He believed Martin was inspired by a traditional Chinese book *Xing Xue Da Quan* (likely an error for *Xing Li Da Quan*) to adopt this term. Mateer argued that psychology “is basically text-based, and to be easily understood in Chinese, its principles must be transformed into Chinese patterns of thought, so that Chinese characters can become a clear tool for expressing it,” and that Martin, having studied the subject for many years, showed good judgment and skill in handling Chinese expressions. Regarding Martin’s coinage of some Chinese terms, Mateer stated that Martin had a gift for inventing technical terms that both fit their meanings and matched the spirit of the Chinese language (Mateer, 1899). However, in 1900, J. L. Whiting published negative opinions about Martin’s and Mateer’s use of “性学” for “psychology,” arguing instead for “心学” (Whiting, 1900). In summary, we can see that Mateer understood psychology from at least 1877 onward, and by 1899, his review of Martin’s *Xing Xue Ju Yu* demonstrated a strong background in psychology.

6.2 Mateer’s Standardization of Psychological Terminology

Mateer’s greatest contribution to the spread of psychology in the late Qing period was his terminology standardization work, which actually involved many disciplines beyond psychology. In 1877, Mateer wrote articles discussing scien-

tific terminology standardization. From its establishment, the School and Textbook Series Committee combined terminology standardization with textbook compilation, though progress was slow. It was not until the second national Christian missionary conference in 1890 that this issue was specifically discussed and a Publication Committee was established (Wang, 1991). That year, the School and Textbook Series Committee established a Publication Committee with John Fryer as secretary, responsible for translation terminology work. In November 1891, the Publication Committee held its first meeting at the Shanghai American Presbyterian Mission Press to discuss technical terminology issues. Terminology standardization work was later handled by a five-member committee from the School and Textbook Series Committee, with Mateer as chair. Sheffield was responsible for terminology standardization in mental science and moral science (“the Educational Association of China”, 1892), showing that psychological terminology standardization was part of his work. However, progress in terminology harmonization remained slow until the first annual meeting of the Educational Association of China in 1893, and even until before the second annual meeting in 1896. At the 1896 second annual meeting, the Scientific Terminology Committee was established, with Mateer as chair, including seven members such as W. M. Hayes and G. A. Stuart (“notes and items”, 1896). Although Sheffield did not participate in this Scientific Terminology Committee, he was then president of the Educational Association of China, and his contributions were substantial, as seen from the psychological terms included in Mateer’s 1904 edited *Technical Terms, English and Chinese*. In 1896, Mateer mentioned in his diary that he had collected terminology work for 15 disciplines, including psychology (Fisher, 2009, p. 102). In 1904, *Technical Terms, English and Chinese* was officially published, with an English preface by Mateer dated June 1902, mentioning the psychology discipline (Mateer, 1904a, p. 4). The main text lists two Chinese translations under psychology: 性学 and 心灵学 (Mateer, 1904b, p. 354). This shows that Martin’s translation “性学” had great influence on Mateer, placing it first, while “心灵学” was influenced by Y. K. Yen’s translation *Xin Ling Xue*.

From the psychological terms collected in Mateer’s *Technical Terms, English and Chinese*, most were taken from terms used by Yen, Sheffield, and Martin in their respective works, such as Yen’s coinages 呈才 (presentative faculty), 意影 (conception), 原意绪 (intuitive conception); Sheffield’s coinages 自万取一 (induction), 自一推万 (deduction), 原知 (intuition); and Martin’s coinages 行梦 (hypnotism, now translated as 催眠), 梦行 (somnambulism, now 梦游), 心君 (will). However, due to the influx of Japanese academic terms from outside the religious sphere, these missionary-coined terms gradually fell into disuse and were not inherited by later generations. For example, while *Technical Terms, English and Chinese* was printed in 1904, Japanese loanwords began to enter China in large numbers after 1900, and in 1903, students returning from Japan compiled and published the new term dictionary *Xin Erya*. Chinese psychological terminology rapidly transformed toward modernization. Influenced by Yan Fu’s coinages and Japanese loanwords, among other factors, the Chinese terms created by Mateer

and other missionaries over decades did not leave much impact on academia.

6.3 The Tradition of Psychology Teaching at Tengchow College

Tengchow College indeed possibly offered mental philosophy courses in its later period (before 1904). By the Shangtung Protestant University period in 1904, mental philosophy was listed as offered in the first quarter of the fourth year of the regular division (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 101). By 1907, records show that Burt taught psychology courses here (Corbett, 1955, p. 81). We can say that Tengchow College had a tradition of offering mental philosophy courses in its later period, a tradition likely originating from Mateer's teaching of *Tian Dao Su Yuan* (which contained mental philosophy knowledge), his interactions with author W. A. P. Martin, and the college's book collection.

W. A. P. Martin was a missionary with psychological knowledge who published *Tian Dao Su Yuan* in 1854, which contains simple psychological knowledge. For example, Chapter 6 "Evidence from the Soul" includes statements like "Knowledge is obtained through spiritual faculties... The main aspects are five: sensation, consciousness, memory, thought, and imagination" and "The faculties of mind are four: desire, emotion, likes and dislikes, and right and wrong" (Martin, 1869, pp. 6–7; see also Yan, 2012). In 1878, Martin planned to write a mental philosophy textbook, while Mateer was also a member of the School and Textbook Series Committee.

In 1898, Martin published his psychology monograph *Xing Xue Ju Yu*, for which Mateer wrote a book review. This shows that Martin, who had close contact with Mateer, the first president of Tengchow College. In March 1878, Mateer wrote to Martin mentioning Martin's plan to write a physics book during his "last visit to Tengchow," and Martin later visited Mateer in Tengchow (Fisher, 2009, pp. 106–107). Some scholars state that Martin and Mateer had close interactions, often reading a manuscript together during summer visits to Mateer's home in Tengchow (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 4). Additionally, [Figure 4: see original paper] shows their close relationship, indicating they were well aware of each other's activities. In the courses offered during Tengchow College's first decade, Mateer himself mentioned that students studied Christian-related courses including *Tian Dao Su Yuan* (Fisher, 2009, p. 88). Both the 1891 English *Tengchow College Prospectus* and the 1891 *Tengchow College Regulations* specify that students should read Volume 1 of *Tian Dao Su Yuan* in their first year and other volumes in their fourth year. Thus, although Tengchow College did not offer mental philosophy courses in its early period due to lack of textbooks, psychological knowledge was integrated into other courses, allowing psychology knowledge to spread there.

The teaching of psychological knowledge from *Tian Dao Su Yuan* at Tengchow College gave some students a certain foundation in psychology. For example, Luo Shanzhi (courtesy name Ziming), a Tengchow College graduate of 1887 (Guangxu 12th year), and Qi Hongkui (courtesy name Jifu), a graduate of 1894

(Guangxu 19th year), “were proficient in various sciences such as physics and astronomy, and particularly clear about psychology (性学), which served as a great help and was considered effective” (Martin, 1898, pp. 6–7). This shows that as Tengchow College graduates, they likely encountered psychological knowledge during their studies (through the teaching of *Tian Dao Su Yuan*) and used this knowledge to assist Martin in publishing *Xing Xue Ju Yu*.

Traditional Chinese psychological knowledge was also reflected in Tengchow College’s book collection. The *Annals of Tengchow College* printed in 1913 states: “The Tengchow College regulations originally established regular and preparatory divisions, with six years of study for the regular division, covering theology, classical studies, Chinese literature, arithmetic, history, physics and chemistry, natural history, as well as mental philosophy, finance, and astronomy” (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 71). Under the “mental philosophy” category, “books purchased by the school” included *Xing Li Da Quan* (Complete Collection of Nature and Principle), *Xing Hai Yuan Yuan* (Origins of the Sea of Nature), *Shan E Li Zheng* (Rational Evidence of Good and Evil), *Ren Xue* (Study of Human Nature), *Ren Zhong Jiao She Lun Heng* (Discussions on Human Race Interactions), and *Zhe Xue Yuan Liu Kao* (Investigation of the Origins of Philosophy) (Guo & Du, 2012, p. 81). *Xing Li Da Quan* was compiled by Hu Guang and others in the Ming Dynasty in 1415 under Emperor Yongle’s orders as a collection of Song Confucian theories on nature and principle, while *Xing Hai Yuan Yuan* was German missionary Ernst Faber’s 1893 work specifically discussing Chinese theories of human nature, evaluating the views of Mencius, Zhu Xi, and others. Under the “Book Catalog” of Tengchow College, the category “mental philosophy” included content on Chinese theories of human nature and nature-principle studies. In an era when psychology had not yet been definitively named, 性理 (nature-principle) and 性学 (nature-study) could be considered Chinese concepts very close to mental philosophy.

7. Conclusion

Mateer’s contribution to the spread of psychology in the late Qing period lies in his English coinage “soullaw” to express the Chinese translation of “psychology,” mentioned in his 1877 English article “School Books for China,” which can be seen as his attention to Mental Philosophy textbook compilation work and his 1899 high praise for Martin’s *Xing Xue Ju Yu*. Mateer also wrote in his 1881 proposal to expand Tengchow College into a university, preparing to offer mental science courses in the future. In his 1896 diary, he mentioned collecting professional terminology including psychology, and in 1904, he carried out terminology standardization work, absorbing terms coined by Y. K. Yen, D. Z. Sheffield, and W. A. P. Martin. This series of activities enabled the dissemination of psychological knowledge at Tengchow College and established a tradition of offering psychology courses after 1904. However, the Chinese psychology history community’s belief that Tengchow College first offered mental philosophy courses may be incorrect. According to evidence discovered so far, no psychol-

ogy courses (then called mental science) were offered before 1891. Based on the curriculum printed in 1891, we can roughly determine that Tengchow College began offering mental philosophy courses around 1896 or 1897. Moreover, Mateer began collecting psychology terminology in 1896, during which he would have needed to consult Y. K. Yen's *Xin Ling Xue*, Sheffield's *Ling Xue Lue Lun*, and Martin's 1898 *Xing Xue Ju Yu*—works that could address Mateer's lack of mental philosophy textbooks. Determining that Tengchow College offered mental philosophy courses later than Y. K. Yen and Sheffield, who respectively began teaching at their schools in 1880 and 1891 or 1892, we can see that Mateer played a communicative role in the process of psychology's dissemination in the late Qing period, advancing the standardization of psychological terminology and disciplinary teaching. Furthermore, Mateer's attention to mental philosophy enabled Tengchow College to maintain a tradition of psychology teaching that continued at least until 1907, when Burt's psychology courses were clearly recorded.

Particularly noteworthy is Mateer's attitude toward creating Chinese translations for psychological terminology. In 1877, Mateer used the coinage “soullaw” to represent psychology in an article, a literal translation based on psychology's original meaning, yet he stated that “such wording would not only lack dignity but also be embarrassing and awkward in practice.” This shows he did not advocate creating Chinese translations based on English meanings but rather emphasized considering traditional Chinese cultural factors in terminology creation. This is also reflected in his endorsement of “性学” as a translation for psychology. In 1898, Mateer expressed deep agreement with Martin's use of “性学” as the name for psychology. This is not to say that Martin's translation strategy was necessarily the best, but rather that it reflects Mateer's recognition that traditional Chinese culture should play an appropriate role in the creation of

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.