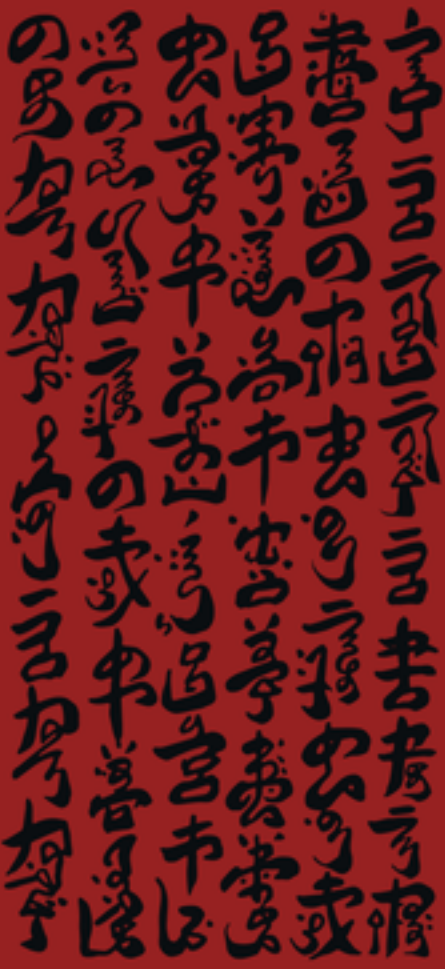
INTERPRETING ISLAM IN CHINA

Pilgrimage, Scripture, & Language in the Han Kitab



KRISTIAN PETERSEN

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Introduction

Relating Origins

An oft-repeated story about the transmission of Islam to China was recorded in the early eighteenth century, in the *Huihui Yuanlai* 回回原來 (*Origins of Muslims*).[1] The account begins with a brief meeting between one of China's most celebrated rulers, the emperor Kangxi 康熙帝 (reigned from 1661–1722), and a local Muslim general:

> In 1662, the Qing Kangxi emperor, on his return from a journey beyond the Great Wall, stopped at the yamen of General Ma to rest overnight. One night, the emperor and the general discussed principle and the Dao. The emperor asked, "You Muslim, do you know the origins of your name and the meaning of your Dao?" The general answered, "I do not know." The emperor asked again, "Do you know why Islam is called 'the Pure and True'?" The general answered, "I do not know [this either]." The emperor asked again, "Do you know why you came from the west to China? At what time and for what reason?" The answer was "I still don't know." The Emperor said, "I have a book here for you to read that will inform you of these matters." " . . . I cannot read, but I am glad to receive the book, and I beg permission to seek help from some educated person such that I might understand it."[2]

Within the emperor's book was the story of the first Muslims to come to China. We are told that their arrival was inspired by a dream that the second Chinese Tang emperor, Taizong 太宗 (reigned from 626–649), had one evening:

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> One night Emperor Taizong (626–49) of the Tang dynasty dreamt that a roof beam of his golden palace was collapsing. The roof beam nearly smashed his head, but it was intercepted and pushed back by a man standing on the right-hand side of the bed. The man wore a green robe, and a white turban was wound around his head. He had a towel draped over his shoulder and a water kettle in his left hand. He had deep eye sockets, a high nose bridge, and a brown face. Alarmed, the emperor upon waking immediately summoned his counselors. One of them, Xu Mao, knew at once what the problem was: the empire was in danger; this was the meaning of the falling roof beam. The strange man was a Hui, a Muslim from the western regions. The Great Tang Empire needed the Hui people for its defense, he concluded.[3]

According to the story, the emperor sent a diplomatic mission to the western regions and eventually received a delegation of the companions of the Prophet (*Ṣaḥāba*), led by Sayyid Sa'd Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ (*Sahaba Saade Wan Gesi* 撒哈八撒阿的輓葛思), the Prophet's maternal uncle, in order to restore harmony and deliver the message of the Qur'ān.[4] Emperor Taizong greeted Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, giving him special permission to reside in the imperial palace, and ordered his general to build a mosque where he could pray. Before one meeting, the emperor observed Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ "piously reading the Qur'an, facing west."[5] Taizong and Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ discussed Confucius and Muhammad, the notion of sagehood, and the parallels between them. Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ explained the importance of the Qur'ān, how it was revealed by God, and its similarity to the Five Chinese Classics in its communal appreciation. All together, Taizong was pleased with his teachings and concluded that Islam and Confucianism were compatible with one another.

This anecdote, taken from the broader *Han Kitab* tradition that I explore in this book, highlights the interconnected relationships among place, scripture, and the authority of tradition, which are key themes of this discussion. From this short narrative, we see that Muslims are spatially positioned: coming from afar, devotionally bound to the West, but furnished with a local space that links a place of origin with a place of habitation. Authority and tradition are connected to the origins of the tradition: placed in the Qur'ānic text and Prophetic example, continually renewed through education and scriptural engagement, and with their

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importance reasserted (even by the non-Muslim emperor Kangxi) as the basis for understanding one's present subjectivity.

Overall, the literary movements in this story's recounting illustrate that Chinese and Islamic traditions were understood as integrally connected and aligned, but that Sino-Muslims communicate and embody them singularly.[6] Within this particular story, authority is derived from textual, geographical, and political resources; knowledge is emplotted through exchange and congruence; and tradition is maintained through a mutual effort. In this way, the creation of a Sino-Islamic tradition is based on exchange, movement, conversation, negotiation, and dialogue. *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* elaborates on these processes through key architects of the *Han Kitab* genre and demonstrates how a small group of Muslim scholars constructed a meaningful discourse, invested in the significance of linguistic, spatial, and scriptural authority, so that their communities "might understand it."

Local Muslims, Global Islam: Center and Peripheries

Sino-Muslims have creatively negotiated their beliefs and practices within their local Chinese cultural context for centuries. This ongoing process required operations of linguistic arbitration and modes of theological mediation, which often led to unique rearticulations of Islamic beliefs and practices in the Chinese sphere. Some Muslims in China reinterpreted Islam through the religio-philosophical lenses of Buddhist, Daoist, and especially Confucian terminology, communicating their tradition in a uniquely self-expressed Sino-Islamic perspective. During the early modern period, intra-Asian communal interactions escalated religious exchanges within the rapidly increasing conditions of expanding globalization.[7] The result was the hardening of static global Muslim identities at the detriment of local formulations of religious understandings and expressions. Consequently, many Muslims favored a Middle Eastern perspective as the normative representation of Islam.

Modern academia has generally followed suit, and much of Western scholarship has associated Islam very closely, and at times even exclusively, with Arab Muslims in the Middle East—often establishing essentialized orientations of the center and periphery. Middle Eastern Muslim explanations of various (often competing) viewpoints are habitually regarded as

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maintaining a concrete fidelity to a pristine and authentic source. As a field, scholars in Islamic studies have generally favored and naturalized the Middle East as a continual source of "true" Islam, perceived as an unfiltered and universal message. Research has failed to sufficiently demonstrate how Islamicate civilizations at the imagined peripheries understood, expressed, and defined Islam.[8]

This study critiques the geographic emplotment of authenticity where the center is privileged as authoritative. Instead of approaching Islam as a unified essence with various subordinate local reworkings, I argue that scholars should think of the tradition as a "multiplicity of discourses produced by a whole series of mechanism operating in different institutions."[9] While each interpretation is its own "provincial" assertion, "members of differing groups work tirelessly to authorize their specific local as the universal."[10] A global understanding of a cosmopolitan Islam must simultaneously account for local specificities and the dynamism of cultural exchange that occurs in religiously plural communities. Therefore, as with any conceptual category, Islam consists of "a whole series of tensions, conflicts, efforts at adjustment, and attempts at retranscription," where various social actors all seek to claim authenticity and authority.[11] There is no accessible unfiltered essence that is not mediated through human activity.

With this accepted, so-called true Islam, outlying perspectives produced by non-Arab Muslims are regularly seen as lacking in validity, accuracy, and faithfulness to an original authentic form. However, when we examine the social processes revolving around the preservation of Islamic knowledge cross-culturally, they are more regularly marked by similar processes of reconstruction and reformulation despite their position at the edges of an assumed nucleus. Islam then "should be seen rather as a dispersion of centers from which discourses emanated, a diversification of their forms, and the complex deployment of the network connecting them."[12] Revealing how various Muslim communities replicate discursive operations over time and space offers us a glimpse of the continuities within the transregional Muslim *ummah* (community).

However, focusing on social and intellectual parallels reinforces the notion of an authentic essence that is to be duplicated in new settings. Comparative endeavors, especially in Islamic studies, regularly "constitute similarity as the fact of primary interest and regard difference as a complicating development of considerably lesser importance."[13] Therefore, this study on Sino-Muslims seeks to traverse the methodological gap between

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a quest for continuity and the underlining of divergence by demonstrating how both modes of intellectual activity have figured in the development of a *Han Kitab* discourse and served the purposes of this particular Muslim community.

Overall in this discussion, I examine the formation of local Islamic discourses that were shaped and bound by particular cultural patterns of understanding and expression and explore how three specific Sino-Muslim authors expressed the dialogical nature of their tradition through an Islamic discourse produced within a Chinese cultural landscape. This requires the investigation of interpretive, translational, and distributive processes of texts and ideas through both formal and informal networks of education and communication. These activities are situated within their specific sociohistorical contexts, but they also are understood as reliant on and interconnected with trans-regional Muslim populations.

Therefore, the refashioning of Islamic discourses within Sino-Muslim contexts is reflective of the circulations of ideas, interpretive frameworks, and translational decisions that occur in similar culturally diverse settings. Muslims have repeatedly and continually reformulated inherited discourses based on particular culturally constructed intellectual frameworks and shaped by powers and motives within historically contingent circumstances. Thus, I examine Sino-Muslims in a manner that is reflective of historical links to transregional Muslim communities and that pays attention to the ways in which the various components of Sino-Islamic thought were bound by tradition, while creatively redrawing how ideas were significant to a particular community. In the end, I attempt to repair previous shortcomings within Islamic studies by introducing unique and understudied Muslim voices within ongoing global Islamic debates, exploring vernacular presentations of Islam that simultaneously articulate universal Muslim aspirations, and illustrating the creative theological and philosophical encounters between Islamic and Chinese thought.

The Han Kitab *Genre*

A distinctive Sino-Islamic intellectual tradition fully emerges during the middle of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) and into the subsequent Qing dynasty (1644–1911). Some Muslims in China embraced Chinese literary characteristics in their Islamic texts and educational methods. Following centuries of cultural and physical division between local inhabitants and Muslim settlers, Arab, Persian, and Central Asian people were slowly

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assimilating into Chinese society, intermarrying with local people, and gradually forgetting their original languages.[14]

The passage of time and their relative isolation from Muslim-majority populations and Islamic centers of learning, however, did not prevent these Sino-Muslims from retrieving the Islamic canonical writings that they found essential in learning and teaching their faith. Several scholar-teachers began to incorporate tenets from traditional Chinese education into their promotion of Islamic knowledge. As a result, Sino-Muslim literati established an educational system called *scripture hall education* (*jingtang jiaoyu* 經堂教育), which utilized an Islamic curriculum containing Arabic, Persian, and Chinese works.[15] The *Han Kitab* is the collective name of the genre of Islamic texts written in Chinese that were produced within or extending from this system. Several *Han Kitab* texts were produced by a group of self-identified "Confucian Muslim" scholars (*Huiru* 回儒).[16] This literature, as well as the authors that produced it, are valuable resources for understanding the role of intellectual networks and literary exchanges in the formation of religious beliefs.

This rich body of Sino-Islamic literature has porous boundaries that were defined and redefined by Sino-Muslims throughout history. There is no sustained Sino-Muslim self-articulation of what constitutes *Han Kitab* texts. Yuan Guozuo 袁國做 (b. 1717), a Muslim publisher and editor from Nanjing, made an early attempt at codifying Chinese-language Islamic texts in *An Introduction to Collected Islamic Books* (*Tianfang Qunshu Xu* 天方群書序), published in 1784, which named the twenty-nine texts known to him, highlighting the work of Liu Zhi 劉智 (1670–1724), one of this book's subjects.[17] In 1852, a Muslim biographer, Lan Zixi 籃子羲, wrote *The Orthodox Learning of Islam* (*Tianfang Zhengxue* 天方正學) classifying the canon (*jingdian* 經典) of "Orthodox Learning of Islam" as *Han Qitabu* 漢啟他補, coining the phrase *Han Kitab*. Lan asserted that Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 (1590–1658), another scholar whose work is covered in this book, was the originator of this genre and reiterated the importance of Liu Zhi as representative of the tradition.[18] My research has not uncovered other premodern sources that employ the phrase "*Han Kitab*" to designate the type of work that these authors were producing, but the term has been repeatedly employed in contemporary discussions of Sino-Islamic texts.[19] Therefore, I use the term to refer to an analytical category, rather than in a descriptive sense, to signify a genre of Chinese-language Islamic texts that employ literati discourses, themes, and references. Texts and authors of this kind reproduce similarities in form, style, and subject matter. Literati

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culture gestures at the authorization of philosophical and literary knowledge established through the social rehearsal of educational Ruism (*ru* 儒), most broadly meaning the mastery of a neo-Confucian canon, but also the command of philosophical Daoism and familiarity with Chinese Buddhist systems of thought. These texts extend from institutions connected with scripture hall educational practices, where Chinese-language knowledge and instructional transmission is understood as a legitimate and effective means for Islamic teachings. I don't recognize this body of literature as being clearly defined within a tradition, where, as Zvi Ben-Dor Benite asserts, "the production of new texts ceased at the end of the eighteenth century," and "by the turn of the nineteenth century, the *Han Kitab* was, functionally, a 'fixed canon.' "[20] This genre continued to be produced through the 19th century, as we see in the work of this book's final subject, Ma Dexin 馬德新 (1794–1874). We can label his work, and that of other scholars like him, as representative of the distinctive *Han Kitab* genre because of his preservation and replication of these particular Sino-Islamic writing practices.[21]

I explore the contours of the *Han Kitab* intellectual tradition through the works of some its brightest luminaries in order to identify and explicate pivotal transitions in their engagement with the Islamic tradition. I highlight three prominent Sino-Muslim authors who represent major junctures within the history of Sino-Islamic thought and illustrate discursive transformations within this tradition: Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 (1590–1658), Liu Zhi 劉智 (1670–1724), and Ma Dexin 馬德新 (1794–1874).

While these authors explore numerous topics, three subjects remain central to each man's work and reveal the interesting edges of Sino-Islamic scholarship: pilgrimage, scripture, and language. Over the evolutionary course of the *Han Kitab* literature, the hajj, the Qur'ān, and the Arabic language persistently shape how Sino-Muslims identify and communicate their locality within the larger Muslim community. Therefore, by producing a genealogy of the discursive patterns surrounding pilgrimage, scripture, and language within *Han Kitab* texts, it both illuminates the substantive concerns of these authors and opens up the possibilities of comparative work on Muslim communities. Methodologically, limiting this study to these three topoi also allows me to examine the sizable number of sources with the greatest precision. Their writings on pilgrimage, scripture, and language grant the opportunity to answer several questions of broader concern—namely, how malleable religious categories are and why they are variously interpreted across time; how changing historical

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circumstances affect the interpretation of religious beliefs and practices; and how individuals navigate multiple sources of authority.

Overall, Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin presented an increasingly universalistic portrait of Islam, through which Sino-Muslims were encouraged to participate within the global community of Muslims in both theological and experiential ways. The growing emphasis on performing the pilgrimage to the Middle East, comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'ān, and personal knowledge of Arabic in Chinese sources further stimulated communal engagement. Through this analysis, we see that accompanying the integration of Sino-Muslims within a growing global environment, where travel and communication was increasingly possible, was the rising self-awareness of a universally engaged Muslim community. The changing perceptions of the role of the hajj, the Qur'ān, and the use of Arabic reflect the effects of this increasing networked interaction.

Sino-Muslim Authors

The authors that this book focuses on typify formative, imaginative, and encyclopedic stages of premodern Sino-Muslim thought and have been repeatedly identified as exemplary within the tradition itself. Of course, other authors could serve similar purposes. Zhang Zhong 張中 (c.1584–1661), Wu Zixian 伍子先 (1612–1680), She Yunshan 舍蘊善 (1638–1703), and Ma Zhu 馬注 (1640–1711) were all fundamental in establishing interpretive currents and discursive patterns in the *Han Kitab* tradition.

More generally, Muslims in China approached the tradition in a variety of ways and employed multiple literary strategies for interpreting Islam in the Chinese context.[22] However, Wang, Liu, and Ma are representative of those individuals who chose to couch the Islamic tradition within the dominant cultural and linguistic formations of imperial China that was characteristic of *Han Kitab* texts. Exploring these particular scholars also links the past and future of Sino-Islamic studies by putting them into a dialogue. The work of Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi have both received modest attention in Western scholarship but have yet to receive a thorough comparative analysis. As for Ma Dexin, his work has yet to be examined in any rigorous manner. Consequently, this study serves as a new model for exploring the contours of Sino-Islamic scholarship by demonstrating the dialogical nature of discursive traditions. Wang, Liu, and Ma were not solitary authors whose writings were devoid of context; I situate their works into their specific settings in order to determine historical stimuli

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shaping the discursive shifts within the broader Sino-Islamic intellectual tradition.

Within this investigation, greater weight is given to the examination of the life and works of Ma Dexin. There are two motives for concentrating on Ma within the broader context of *Han Kitab* scholarship, the first practical and the latter methodological. There is still a great deal of work to be done on Sino-Islamic literary products, and of the major pre-modern Sino-Muslim authors, there is almost no Western scholarship on Ma's work or influence. In contrast, despite the need for further studies, the contributions of both Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi have been studied at length, and a clear picture of their thoughts and motives already exists.[23] Ma requires extensive analysis in order to gather an inclusive picture of how premodern Sino-Islamic scholarship developed.

In addition, a conventional life and works project on Ma Dexin and his influence would not be able to carefully outline the nuances of his methodological and theoretical creativity. The Chinese explanation of Islam was created through a dialogical interpretation of various philosophies and beliefs. Ma's thought, in particular, was built upon the 200-year foundation of his predecessors; therefore, any attempt to understand his teachings absent this historical context would be partial and fragmentary. To do justice to Ma's contribution and outline the contextual trajectory from which his positions developed, it is necessary to juxtapose his unique teachings with those of Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi.

Wang Daiyu was the earliest important author within the Sino-Islamic tradition.[24] He was born in Nanjing, the original capital of the Ming dynasty, and died in the eventual Chinese capital of Beijing, traveling little in between. He claimed that his family came from Arabia (*Tianfang* 天房) over 300 years before his birth. Wang benefited from being educated in the local scripture hall education system, which both shaped his thought and profited from his contributions.

His works are the oldest extant Chinese texts discussing Islamic theology, philosophy, and mysticism, and he developed the framework for understanding Islam in the Chinese cultural context. During this initial period of Sino-Islamic scholarship during the seventeenth century, Wang focused on explicating the theological foundations behind Islamic faith and practice. His texts were written in a clear and direct style that focused on a range of subjects, from practical to philosophical.

Liu Zhi was one of the most systematic scholars within the Sino-Islamic tradition. In general, he had a great affection for neo-Confucian

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and Chinese symbolism, portraying Islam as the greatest *dao* 道, or way, among many. Therefore, Islam was not in competition with a Confucian system; rather, it could be viewed as a supplement to it. Liu's position was due, in part, to his wide reading of various philosophical systems, but also to his training within the scripture hall system. Liu was educated in a well-established institution in Nanjing that had produced several high-level Islamic scholars, including Wang Daiyu. Among them was his teacher and father, Liu Sanjie 劉三傑, who was an accomplished author in his own right. Liu's father often lamented that there was a lack of accessible Chinese works on Islam, and that greatly influenced Liu to write in Chinese.

In addition to training at his local school, Liu spent eight years traveling throughout China, reading an astonishing array of literature: Islamic treatises in Chinese, Arabic, and Persian; Buddhist texts; Daoist literature; classical Chinese histories and philosophy; and also a number of so-called Western books.[25] His work covered several categories of Islamic knowledge and presented these discussions in a nuanced convergence of neo-Confucian and Islamic doctrine. His expositions were written in a highly sophisticated style that used the lexicon of technical Islamic terminology, cloaked in Chinese religio-philosophical vocabulary. Liu Zhi represented a high point in the Chinese Islamic dialogue, which culminated in the presentation of his work to the Qianlong Emperor 乾隆帝 (1711–1799).[26]

Ma Dexin was the last major Sino-Muslim scholar of premodern China. He characterized the final shift in Sino-Islamic thought, which maintained a strong literary connection between Chinese and Islamic sources while also emphasizing the importance of a pragmatic and scholarly relationship with the larger Muslim world. Ma was a prolific writer whose literary output covered most of the religious sciences, including instructional materials for students, a record of his hajj pilgrimage, and the first attempt at a standardized Chinese translation of the Qur'ān. During Ma's pilgrimage, he spent many years studying in the Middle East. Upon his return, he became the most prominent scholar in southern China and the head cleric at the most important Islamic educational institution in Southern China, the Huilong 回龍 madrasa. He then began writing his works in Arabic and Chinese, often translating his own texts from one language to the other.

His theological works explored the Arabic, Persian, and Chinese treatises of his predecessors by commenting, translating, and expanding on their works in a sophisticated Sino-Islamic diction. He was directly influenced by the work of prominent scholars, such as Muhyī al- Dīn 'Alī ibn

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al-'Arabī (1165–1240), Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (1177–1256), 'Azīz al-Dīn Nasafī (d. c. 1300), and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414–1492). Ma Dexin's work illustrated the features of the final trend in premodern Sino-Muslim intellectual life, reflecting a holistic approach where Sino-Muslim scholars were in dialogue with both the larger Islamic and Chinese worlds.

Through the writings of these three authors and the reception and interpretation of their work by their contemporaries, I delineate the major shifts in the *Han Kitab* tradition of Sino-Muslims and their importance for understanding Islam in China and the Islamic intellectual traditions in general. The complexity of this objective is heightened by the hybrid quality of these authors' texts, which requires an analysis of various epochs, geographical locations, and languages. Decoding their translation of Islam involves unraveling the mystical and theological interpretation of contested understandings of their faith. It is necessary to explore the intertextuality of the Chinese and Islamic sources that were utilized by these authors in producing new texts and in delineating the dialogues between these philosophical and religious cultures.

Tradition in Dialogue

The diverse meanings of the *Han Kitab* works are contingent on the dialogical exchange not between essentialized components—"Islam" and "China"—but through the linguistic and literary contexts that were formulated and sustained among preceding generations that Sino-Muslim authors perceived as authoritative. My contention is that the literary artifacts of social communities are best understood as a dialogical process—cultural expressions created within a dialogue of multiple speakers, past, present, and future.[27] Meaning, then, is constructed by social actors responding to prior terminology, contexts, and genres that have been established as significant in particular historical moments. Responses are predicated on the contours of some generative logic, while often also being subversive to those prevailing norms in order to establish new orthodoxies.

Terminology is stained by the meaning of its use within each of its contexts and cannot eliminate the conditions in which it was formed. In this view of language, words have a trace of other words and texts echo earlier texts.[28] Within a circuit of meaning making, especially in the *Han Kitab,* the polysemic nature of signifiers allows various encodings by producers by which readers negotiate in various ways.[29] The interpretation of each reader will vary in depth and complexity due to his or her own intellectual

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preparedness, social position, cultural setting, and historical place. So, whether it is the intention of the given author or not, we must consider the presuppositions that arise with each utterance of specific contextual overtones.[30] In other words, "every work is rewritten by its reader, who imposes upon it a new grid of interpretation for which he is not generally responsible but which comes to him from his culture, from his time, in short from another discourse; all comprehension is the encounter of two discourses: a dialogue."[31] In my analysis, therefore, it is not my objective to speculate about the intended meaning of an author, but to situate the text within the creative contexts and various overlays of a given audience, thereby displaying a spectrum of meaning that is rewritten by each of its multiple readers.

In the Chinese context, there were unique social and literary factors that shaped the creation of the Sino-Islamic tradition. Chinese characters should be understood as signs that are directly related to culturally situated structures of meaning. For Sino-Muslims, this cultural repertoire of meaning markers was also immersed in a additional system of signification (namely, multiple Islamic discursive traditions). Chinese characters had preestablished accepted meanings within several Chinese traditions and genres, which were employed by Sino-Muslim authors to convey foreign ideas to the local audience—they were required to be aware of the presuppositions attached to the use of already weighted terminology. The articulation of this *Han Kitab* tradition required linguistic dexterity and translational skill.

Remembering the embeddedness of prior discourses in the *Han Kitab* texts is essential for positioning them in an Islamic intellectual history. Sino-Islamic compositions orbited around a textual constellation of authoritative sources in Arabic, Persian, and Chinese. In addition, technical terminology was malleable and self styled, informed by a web of referents in both the Islamic and Chinese literary traditions. We can see that marks of multiple intellectual systems were referenced both explicitly and implicitly throughout the *Han Kitab* literature. But it is clear that the scriptural nexus of sources from both traditions were mutually necessary for Sino-Muslim authors. Ultimately, a Sino-Islamic worldview was constructed as a field of semiotic objects that organized overlapping meanings. The task of these authors, then, was to develop hermeneutical techniques that communicated foreign expressions in a familiar intellectual environment. Translation became the essential component to mediate Islam in the local setting.

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Translating Tradition

Sino-Muslim authors were bound by the linguistic capabilities of their intended readership when communicating their understanding of Islam. It was necessary, therefore, to situate their message within their specific cultural-linguistic setting so as to make accessible concepts or themes that were largely unfamiliar to their readers. At the same time, authors hoped to transmit what they perceived as the "true" or "correct" meaning. Transmitting this knowledge required authors to place the interpretive frameworks from one discourse that they held valuable within the semiotic measures of another discursive environment, thereby further extending and modifying both systems. I assert that the same governing of discourses under consideration in the Chinese context are operating within all Muslim contexts (including Middle Eastern ones). Arab or Middle Eastern interpretations of Islam only seem natural due to the way that they have been authorized by both many scholars and practitioners. Accordingly, the volley of dialogue in establishing so-called orthodoxy (whether it be between languages or competing interpretive perspectives) requires the examination of how translation is fundamental in asserting the legitimacy of any tradition.

Many of the tensions underlying the study of non-Arabic, literate Muslim communities stem from our cultural-linguistic notions of the term *translation* itself. Throughout history, the process of rendering a text (written materials, icons, architecture, etc.) from one context to another has been varyingly understood. Some are even skeptical that translation is possible, and that in reality, everything is untranslatable.[32] As a particular cultural practice within a given community, translation may look more like what we generally think of as diffusion, dissemination, or transmission of a particular viewpoint. I maintain that the relationship between being faithful to a source and communicating its contents always depends on the objective of the translator.

As in similar Muslim contexts, Sino-Muslims sometimes stressed what they believed to be linguistic precision, while at other moments, they employed poetic creativity as part of a array of tools authorizing and expressing their perspectives.[33] Very often, translation enables authors to create anew while asserting the authority of tradition. The everyday idea that translation serves to seek equivalence between a source and product deemphasizes the shifting and contested boundaries of each language. Ultimately, there can be no static literal interpretation since meaning is created through the relationship between various readers. Fidelity is

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impossible if there is no fixed original. Again and again in Asian Muslim communities, a central component of "the creation of a translocal Islamic sphere was translation of texts, ideas, and stories."[34]

In the Chinese context, we see that different translational practices were employed to yield various ends. The dialogical hermeneutics of *Han Kitab* translational efforts expand beyond Western discourse on translation, which hinged on the triadic model of literalism, paraphrasing, and free translation.[35] In searching for equivalence, a given author has a number of choices and is not in anyway bound to a particular interpretive procedure or limited in his linguistic choices.[36] Therefore, throughout this discussion, I treat the formulation of Sino-Muslim discourse as a translingual practice and remain attuned and attentive to the "process of adaptation, translation, introduction, and domestication of words, categories, and discourses from one language to another" and thereby seek "to explain the modes of transmission, manipulation, deployment, and domination within the power structure of the target language."[37] Since this discourse is fed by multiple cultural, textual, and linguistic tributaries, the translational event, which seeks continuity and coherence within a preexisting context, cannot be limited to static, unidirectional movements of correspondence.

Han Kitab *Sources*

I explore these hermeneutic patterns and challenges by placing in conversation the following elements: original theological compositions, translations of Islamic classics, commentaries, and personal and communal histories of the educational system and its constituencies. Reading these sources in conversation with each other unveils how issues of intertexuality, translation, and tradition were simultaneously shaping how authors reworked their own interpretive framework for understanding Islam and the manners in which they expressed it.

Original theological works written by the network's teachers supply ample evidence of the influences of both Chinese and Islamic traditions. Quotations from famous texts reveal the reliance on previous work from both cultural contexts and present the foundational informants for the *Han Kitab* authors. The transformation of concepts, theories, and technical terms between Islamic and Chinese languages and philosophical traditions was delicately approached and masterfully achieved. This illustrates the multilingual dialogue that occurred within this body of literature and reveals the qualities of this unique event in both Chinese and

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Islamic history. All three of these authors have contributed key works in this regard, but each maintained his unique objective and style in keeping with his respective period.

The complexities of adapting intricate technical concepts from an Islamic idiom into Chinese lexical and philosophical systems are revealed through the examination of translations of Islamic classics. This further illustrates how Sino-Muslim literati understood these multilayered principles and determined how specific terms were translated from one system to the other. Reworking one specialized vocabulary into another reinforced both conceptual concepts while creating a new third understanding for their specific community. Both Liu Zhi and Ma Dexin translated Arabic and Persian classics into Chinese, providing evidence of the direct interpretation and transformation of ideas and terms, while Wang quoted from the Qur'ān, hadith, and early treatises. Determining the interconnections between these linguistic and conceptual systems is imperative for outlining their intellectual traditions.

Members of the scripture hall education system also produced personal and communal histories of the network and its literary products. These are made available in short biographies or local histories written in prefaces and works dedicated to sketching the structure, nature, and methodology of the entire educational system. These writings provide details on how teachers and students interacted with each other, how they were inspired to produce Chinese texts, and how a specific curriculum informed their understanding.

Overall, these sources uncover portraits of various moments within the network's development. These instances imbue our understanding of the educational system with a detailed account of the material characteristics that formulated the intellectual tradition of the *Han Kitab*. Ma's, Liu's, and Wang's students and colleagues often provided personal information about their own character or teaching ability in their texts. Their eminence in the educational network also prompted general historians of the scripture hall system to discuss their importance at length. These sources will help illustrate their significance for understanding Sino-Muslim intellectual life in general.

Approach, Structure, and Targets

Textual analysis alone can almost entirely divorce scholars and their works from the world around them by generally neglecting the historical

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milieux, which communicated, recorded, and displayed beliefs and gave rise to specific religious modes of living. However, critical historicism can often arrest the individual agency and creativity that is unveiled through personal writings. Often, historicism fails to properly address the nexus of theories that demonstrate how ideas transform over time. Utilizing both methods allows me to map the social and religious contours of the written word and understand cultural formulations of knowledge.

Approaching the *Han Kitab* authors and their thoughts within their specific historical context elucidates the world in which they lived and the broader discursive milieux informing and constraining their activities and thoughts. My reading is guided by the evolution of intellectual currents in the Islamic world and within China by analyzing the development of specific ideas and various modes of thinking from both cultural settings. By exploring the trajectory of their discursive influence, I construct an analysis that explicates ideas and teachings and at the same time situates these concepts within their broader sociopolitical and religious contexts of the premodern world.

The *Han Kitab* literature and its accompanying production by Sino-Muslim participants will be the discrete field from which I hope to examine the broader issues in the history of religions and Islamic studies. Through an interrogation of my materials, I seek to answer rehearsed methodological questions: who speaks here, to what audience, in what immediate and broader context, through what system of mediations, and with what interests.[38] In answering these particular questions, doubts about the stability of notions like tradition, authority, and authenticity arise. Therefore, while the particulars of Sino-Islamic intellectual history serve as the content from which I draw my conclusions, this study is also aimed at asking questions of various categories that are employed in religious studies. All together, in explaining the character and construction of *Han Kitab* discourses, this study attempts to delineate constructive theoretical structures for analyzing similar dynamic and dialogical environments.

With these comparative and theoretical concerns at hand, in approaching my materials, I echo Jonathan Z. Smith's reading of Ludwig Wittgenstein as he asked, "How am I to apply what the one thing shows me to the case of two things?"[39] At the heart of the matter is the basic question: Why do these subjects explain their tradition in this particular manner? In examining the creation of Sino-Islamic discourses, a particular narrative emerges through the establishment of the scripture hall education system and the production of the *Han Kitab* texts. In short,

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Sino-Muslim participants viewed their religious beliefs and practices as an extension of a continuously transmitted tradition directly derived from the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Historical circumstances damaged their ability to maintain and preserve this tradition in a complete and unbroken manner, which led to a perceived loss of tradition. Islamic knowledge was established as the essence of this tradition, which could be retrieved through authentic textual reservoirs of religious authority. The Sino-Muslim community granted authority to Arabic and Persian scriptures by gathering, teaching, and translating these texts. Finally, Islamic knowledge was rendered intelligible for a Sino-Muslim audience who had lost the ability to access authentic sources directly. The reworking of Islamic knowledge was achieved by communicating the ideas contained in Arabic and Persian sources through local discursive frameworks. This allowed Sino-Muslims to preserve their Islamic tradition while simultaneously redescribing authentic modes of signifying religious authority within the bounds of that tradition.

Several structural components within this narrative of the development of this Sino-Islamic discourse present an opportunity to develop analytical strategies for examining how and why religious discourses are constructed in particular ways, especially for Muslim communities in Asia. Below the surface of this Sino-Muslim discourse, a broader narrative of authenticity emerges that is materially placed: the peripheries of global "Islam" revolve around a geographic (Middle Eastern) center. In Asian Muslim communities, the diffusion of an authentic Islam required a process of Islamization, or the replication and adaptation of this central model of authority. Often, this process was thought to be incomplete only creating an inauthentic syncretic blending of a "pure" Islam and local practices and beliefs. I look at the creation of Sino-Muslim discourses with the purpose of complicating this simplistic narrative.

The theoretical strategies that inform my reading of this tradition posit a culturally situated and historically contingent evaluation of Islam as a category.[40] In order to break the narrative yolk of Islamic expansion and degeneration, we must consider how discursive traditions are created, transmitted, and translated in culturally diverse venues. I argue that local cultural repertoires shape discourses through dialogical reformulations of traditions, which continue a tradition while creatively reworking it within a network of learning. Literary networks of textual sources condition epistemologies of understanding in dialogic environments that create malleable canons of scriptural authority. Translational processes that rely on

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attribution to authenticity in order to assert authority render these shifting canons comprehensible. Thus, authority and authenticity are not inherent qualities of specific works or figures, but rather a continual process of identification that is socially authorized as authentic and authoritative.

Studying Sino-Islamic Intellectual History

This book investigates the *Han Kitab* intellectual heritage by delineating pivotal transformations within the methodologies of specific Sino-Muslim writers and their approaches to the Islamic tradition. I achieve this by concentrating on the hybridity of the texts that were written by some of the tradition's most important scholars—a perspective that has not been previously studied. Western scholarship on Sino-Muslim communities during the late imperial period has focused primarily on the political and physical incorporation of Muslim border territories into the empire.[41] Few have explored the religious aspects of Sino-Muslim life in premodern China, and when religious thought has been examined, it is still placed within a framework of either conflict or integration.[42] In other words, it is not a central concern of most scholarly endeavors to date.

Similarly, work focusing on Sino-Muslim scholars and intellectual life has dealt predominantly with the social history of Muslim education in China and relied primarily on Sino-centric paradigms for understanding this community. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite's social history of scripture hall education, *The Dao of Muhammad*, offers substantial historical data for understanding the inner workings and interconnections of the educational network and the scholarly exchange between its constituencies. However, his analysis covers the intellectual tradition only until the end of the eighteenth century. Also, while Benite's work furnishes the context of the intellectual tradition, it only occasionally offered an analysis of this movement's content.

A mere handful of Western scholars have looked at the literary content of the intellectual tradition of Sino-Muslims, and they have generally limited their analysis to individual texts by the most famous authors.[43] Sachiko Murata's scholarship has been the most comprehensive for understanding the intellectual currents of Sino-Muslim scholars, providing translations of several key treatises by both Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi.[44] These are important strides toward creating a comprehensive view of the intellectual currents of Sino-Muslims, and further translation and analysis of original compositions a necessary to complete the picture. Murata

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initially approached individual authors ahistorically, without addressing the temporal affiliations within the educational network among scholars, students, and officials or the sociopolitical circumstances within which each author was subsumed.[45] Greater historical contextualization of these authors' works may provide further intellectual antecedents and reveal additional literary influences from the Chinese and Islamic traditions. The wealth of primary sources for understanding the intellectual history of Sino-Muslims has been well documented, but many of these texts still await systematic study.[46]

Scholarship on Ma Dexin, specifically, is scanter. Ma has been introduced to the Western audience numerous times in scattered writings, but there are no full-length monographs on his life or teachings. He is most often described as the primary religious adviser and the leading Islamic scholar during the Panthay Rebellion (1856–1873).[47] David Atwill's *The Chinese Sultanate* is the most detailed work on this uprising, but Ma's precise role and activities during this period remain obscure. In general, we seldom hear in detail what it meant to be the leading scholar of the time, nor do we learn about the content of Ma's teaching beyond the titles of some of his books.

Historians often transmit the official Qing portrait of Ma as a "rebel," without deconstructing how this image was formulated or exploring the dynamism of Ma's breadth of knowledge. From a cursory reading of secondary literature, he is often depicted as another "revivalist" who was fighting foreign (i.e., Qing) occupation in the name of God.[48] However, this is far from the message given in his treatises, and the picture is much more complex than it is often portrayed. I would argue that this tendency to label Ma simply as a rebel is due to a shallow reading of sources; a much more nuanced image emerges from the diversity and complexity of his writings.[49]

A number of Chinese scholars writing in English have somewhat filled this lacuna. Lin Chang-Kuan outlined Ma's early life and pilgrimage and inventoried thirty-seven of his works but never detailed the contents of these texts.[50] Wang Jianping has provided the most comprehensive account of Ma's teachings while delineating the history of Islam in Yunnan.[51] Wang presents several of his statements on various aspects of Muslim life in Southern China and presents him as the representative Muslim voice of the late imperial period. Despite these contributions, Wang's goals are too far removed from laying out Ma's theological vision to deliver a primary sketch of his teachings.

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In contrast to Western scholars, Chinese scholars actually writing in Chinese have extensively discussed the contents of Ma Dexin's extant works and situated him within the scholarly tradition of Sino-Muslims. Ma has been repeatedly recognized as an important figure in Chinese Islamic history by Chinese Islamicists, such as Bai Shouyi 白壽彝, Yu Zhengui 余振貴 and Yang Huaizhong 揚懷中.[52] The efforts of Yang Guiping 揚桂萍 led to a thorough exploration and explanation of Ma Dexin's thought.[53] Yang analyzes Ma's political and religious thought by focusing on certain characteristics of his teachings. In *Research on Ma Dexin's Thought* (*Ma Dexin Sixiang Yanjiui* 馬德新思想研究), Yang explores Ma's explication of the similarities and differences between Islamic and Confucian values and concepts, such as humanity (*ren* 仁) and the Mandate of Heaven (*tianming* 天命). She showed how Ma cultivated a pietistic lifestyle and warned about otiose performance of religious rituals and the dangers of heretical practices associated with Chinese religions. In her discussion, she dedicated a chapter to Ma's appreciation for and appropriation of Islamic mysticism.

Yang's work is instrumental for our understanding of Ma's contribution to Islamic thought, but it is hampered by its tendency to interpret his works through a socialist idealism of political and communal unity. Overall, however, she has outlined many of the features of Ma's intellectual vision and provided an excellent foundation on understanding Ma's role as an Islamic scholar.

Sun Zhenyu 孫振玉 has provided the broadest and most comprehensive picture of Ma Dexin's life and works. He offered the first monograph-length analysis of his contribution to Sino-Islamic thought, *Research on Ma Dexin and Islamic Thought* (*Ma Dexin jiqi Yisilan Sixiang Yanjiu* 馬德新及其伊斯蘭思想研究).[54] In this study, Sun reconstructed Ma's early life and training, the intellectual influences upon his work, and major themes from his writings. This book is noteworthy for its historicizing and contextualizing of Ma's dual role as an Islamic scholar and an important figure in Chinese history. Sun outlined Ma's Middle Eastern travels and his pilgrimage and described his role in the Muslim uprising in Yunnan (the Panthay Rebellion). He also delineated several main features of his theological teachings, such as the immortality of the Spirit, the importance of Sages or Prophets (*Shengren* 聖人), and the qualities of this world and the afterworld. More recently, he situated Ma within the framework of the broader Sino-Muslim tradition. Sun's *A Critical Biography of Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi* (*Wang Daiyu Liu Zhi Pingzhuan* 王岱輿劉智評傳) explores the Islamic neo-Confucian philosophy (*huihui lixue* 回回理學) of scholars

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from the Ming and Qing dynasties.[55] He demonstrates the pivotal role that Ma played in preserving this system of thought by exploring the works of his predecessors and regulating how they would be interpreted by future generations.

Western scholarship on *Han Kitab* thought has been narrow and singular in focus, so I offer a comparative analysis of the genre with a specific focus on Ma Dexin's contribution. I chart how Ma's work emphasized both local and global Muslim concerns. His writings exhibit a reverence for previous Sino-Islamic scholarship while simultaneously shepherding Sino-Muslims in cosmopolitan Islamic dialogues. However, previous scholarship has not made this transition or earlier ones explicit, nor has it delineated their causes and consequences. The contours of the intellectual movement within the *Han Kitab* genre are more clearly revealed by surveying Ma's contribution in the context of earlier authors, such as Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi.

Chapter Outlines

This book is intended to both exhibit the rich literary tradition of Sino-Muslims and offer theoretical stepping stones for examining the formation of Islamic traditions in particular cultural contexts.[56] In order to approach this subject from an illustrative stance and supply aspects for future research to pursue, I focus on features of discursive phenomena that are essential to various traditions and ingredients from Muslim cultures that are valued and maintained as indispensable aspects of Islam. The core themes explored in this study are the concepts of scripture, sacred space and pilgrimage, and the authority of language. Each of these threads have been formative in how many local communities situate themselves within the broader Muslim community and identify with it. Discourses surrounding scripture, pilgrimage, and language define how the authors examined here view Islam and communicate the values and anxieties of particular Muslim communities. Examination of these pregnant signifiers enables readers to determine discursive patterns and incongruities, leading to valuable comparative work on Muslim communities. Therefore, the history of Sino-Islamic scholarship is traced through a few critical features of Islamicate civilizations that highlight the dimensions and complexity of intellectual developments, the creation of ideological sentiments, and the methodological procedures for arriving at religious convictions or traditional authenticity.

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In Chapter 1, "History of the Development of the Sino-Muslim Community: The Roles of Language, Authority, and Locality," I sketch the historical factors that contributed to the transmission of Islam to China and outline how this process shaped the intellectual development of Islamic thought in China. China's unique historical factors produced the distinctive characteristics that created Sino-Islamic scholarship. This reconstruction of transmissions and receptions provides an opportunity to examine the processes of Islamization and venacularization that occur in all locales. Here, I also interrogate notions of a global Islam through issues of the center and peripheries. The factors that contributed to the construction of a locally meaningful theological system and praxis are employed to challenge assumptions about essentialized concepts of authenticity and scrutinize the *syncretic* classification. Overall, this chapter offers a historical panorama within which we can situate these authors' lives and works in Islamic and Chinese frameworks to understand their broader contributions to both worlds.

Chapter 2, "Tradition and the Shaping of Sino-Muslim Intellectuals," introduces the literary output of Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin and contextualizes their theologies within specific historical conditions and intellectual environments. The dialogical documentary process through which Wang, Liu, and Ma translated and interpreted foreign textual sources and knowledge allows us to examine the specific interpretive vantage point of Sino-Muslims during the premodern period. All together, the lives and works of Wang, Liu, and especially Ma are placed within the educational structures, textual corpuses, scriptural patterns, and hermeneutical strategies of Muslims in China.

Chapters 3 through 5 focus on the significance of scripture, religious pilgrimage and sacred space, and linguistic authority, as they have been structured in *Han Kitab* intellectual history. Through an analysis of Sino-Muslims' attitudes toward these themes, we have an occasion to view Sino-Islamic scholarship in light of the broader Muslim world, thus making this study the basis for comparative inquiry. These chapters demonstrate that in the nineteenth century, Sino-Muslims fostered greater engagement with the broader Muslim world. Ma Dexin was at the forefront of this movement, and we can see that his work enabled Sino-Muslims to better incorporate themselves in cosmopolitan Muslim environments. He and his students reveal shifting attitudes and practices within *Han Kitab* scholarship toward scripture, pilgrimage, and language, which indicated a growing vision of their involvement and presence in the worldwide

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Muslim community. Each chapter demonstrates how Ma initiated a differing view of scripture, pilgrimage, and language, either in their religious import or aggregative quality, with the intention of encouraging Sino-Muslim universal involvement.

An exploration of the theological explanations of pilgrimage and how it factored into Sino-Muslims' practiced lives is the focus of Chapter 3, "Routes of the Hajj Pilgrimage: Belief, Practice, and Performance." From Wang, Liu, and Ma, the theological understanding of the hajj changed from a symbol of true belief, to a potential critical practice, and finally to an essential observance and religious duty. It was seen as an essential religious obligation, but its performance was not routinely emphasized until the nineteenth century, when it was a more feasible practice. Prior to this time, the pilgrimage was explained in the context of principles of belief and cosmography, contrary to its usual performative implications. Through each successive generation, these authors promoted the pilgrimage to a greater extent as it became more easily achievable by Sino-Muslims and completed by themselves. Overall, we see that accompanying the global integration of Sino-Muslims was an increasing emphasis on the obligatory observance of the pilgrimage through performance, rather than its role as an expression of personal faith and cosmic position.

In Chapter 4, "The Treasure of the Heavenly Scripture: Engaging the Qur'ān in China," I consider Sino-Islamic engagement with the Qur'ān and the transformation of scriptural readings and methodologies. I also examine the authenticity and sacredness of scripture and unravel how this was established within the *Han Kitab* tradition. All three authors were informed and guided by the Qur'ānic message, but its use and interpretation changed throughout history. Sino-Muslim procedures for engaging the Qur'ān were generally reflective of their specific historical circumstances, personal methodological approach to scripture, and specific discursive settings. Sino-Muslim authors steadily moved from the use of thematic borrowings of Qur'ānic motifs toward a careful parallel translation of scripture for legal assertions, and finally demonstrated a clear intention to offer a Chinese Qur'ān in its entirety. The shift from liberal renderings of scripture to calculated and explicit translations of specific passages or the Qur'ān in its entirety demonstrates that attitudes toward the authority of the Qur'ān and its message evolved with time. Early *Han Kitab* authors valued the Qur'ānic message over its direct rendering in Chinese, while later ones also respected the efficacy of the holy book as a whole. Translational clarity was favored for deriving religious authority,

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while Qur'ānic symbolism was preferred for explaining the principles of faith. Like advocacy of the pilgrimage, these changes accompanied the increase in networked interactions both within China itself and abroad, among the wider Muslim community.

In the final chapter of this book, "Arabic Discourse, Linguistic Authority, and Islamic Knowledge," I explore the role of language as it shaped *Han Kitab* scholarship. The works of Wang, Liu, and Ma arose within a community that generally lost the ability to approach the Arabic and Persian textual tradition, thus necessitating the use of Chinese to transmit Islamic knowledge. However, Arabic was ever-present due to its inextricable connection to the Qur'ān and its perceived sacredness. The role of Arabic changed as discursive models shifted within Sino-Islamic scholarship. Sino-Muslims within a growing global environment, where travel and communication among Muslims was increasingly possible, required greater capabilities in Arabic.

The inclusion of Arabic language, and eventually the production of Arabic Islamic sources, in the *Han Kitab* operated as a discursive linguistic tool that situated Sino-Islamic scholarship within traditional modes of Islamic knowledge. Language in this case legitimized Sino-Muslim scholarship within a broader Islamic framework and aided in the creation of a form of Islam that was perceived as authentic and reflected Sino-Muslim notions of fidelity, inclusion, and identity. Finally, Arabic also functioned as a visible sign of authenticity for Sino-Muslims, which demonstrated the community's adequacy, apprehension, and allegiance to the Islamic tradition in a global setting.

Throughout this book, I demonstrate how a historical hermeneutical approach illuminates the transformation of religious beliefs and practices. In addition, I stress how this study complicates our understanding of religious categories (namely, pilgrimage, scripture, and language), by clearly delineating a brief genealogy of various interpretations of their meaning in the Chinese context. Therefore, the book also aims to add to discussions in the domains of critical categories and procedural foci in religious studies. We must collectively revisit the distinctive classificatory systems that shape our studies with continued terminological reconsideration.

Marshall Hodgson, the great architect for Islamicate studies, regularly urged us to reflect on the consequences of our critical categories:

> The terms one uses determine the categories by which one orders a field—or at least all those categories that are not the immediate

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> focus of one's inquiry. The categories one presupposes, then, necessarily delimit the questions one can ask—at least all the constants implied in the questions, apart (again) from the special point of focus. The questions posed, in turn, determine what answers will ultimately be reached when the questions, as posed, are pursued. The story of scholarly error is largely one of questions wrongly put because their presuppositions were wrong; correspondingly, the story of scholarly achievement can almost be summed up in successive refinements of terminology.[57]

Ultimately, employing folk taxon that are emically defined in an uncritical manner delimits our investigations and conclusions. Therefore, in moving forward in the critical study of religion, we must continually return to the preestablished terminology within our own shifting disciplinary tradition, most broadly defined. Further, when we examine traditions as unstable dialogical processes, we can produce and employ methods that draw out the procedural structures of dialogue in various arenas.

The outline created in this discussion is derived from an analysis of the discursive patterns within a specific translingual textual community, but it should aid in producing a robust set of tools for thinking about communities of conversation. Sino-Muslim scholars reveal the interplay of local influences in dialogue with cosmopolitan perceptions of the global Muslim community, making the following thematic approach serve as a model for the analysis of other non-Arab Muslim communities.

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I

History of the Development of the Sino-Muslim Community

THE ROLES OF LANGUAGE, AUTHORITY, AND LOCALITY

IN THE OPENING anecdote from the *Huihui Yuanlai* 回回原來 (*Origins of Muslims*), the Tang emperor relied on the aid of "a Muslim from the Western regions," and a thousand years later, the Qing Kangxi emperor asked his local Muslim subject, "Do you know why you came from the West to China?" The *Han Kitab* narrative clearly relies on place, inheritance, and authenticity. Islam, in the eyes of the Chinese emperor, was foreign. Even when Muslim communities were locally situated, they were from the "West." Accompanying this perspective was the indigenous Sino-Muslim perspective, which generally viewed Middle Eastern Muslims as authentic and representative of the true essence of Islam. The Muslim presence in China began almost concurrently with the birth of the religion, and historical documents long recorded the presence of Middle Eastern traders, diplomats, and military figures even before the seventh century. So what exactly does the *Huihui Yuanlai* reveal to us? These types of stories are clearly mythoi intended for other purposes than delineating an accurate portrait of historical events. They link the perceived periphery with the asserted center and authorize the Sino-Muslim community through the discursive establishment of authoritative geographies and an authentic tradition. The *Huihui Yuanlai* provides an opportunity to identify the problem in creating a history of Islam in premodern China—Muslims were present throughout Chinese history, but they often operated in sectors of society that neglected to record their activities in ways that would today be recognized as historical evidence.

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This chapter sketches several episodes of the fragmentary history of Muslims in China that are essential to understanding the development of Sino-Islamic scholarship and the shifting contours of this tradition.[1] The establishment of local religious institutions and a unique body of Chinese literature was predicated by the changing attitudes of foreign and local Muslims in relation to political, economic, and cultural policies. As a result, I focus on the transmission of Islam to China as it affected the local intellectual development of Islamic thought. I situate this process first within the Chinese cultural environment, and then in the broader Eurasian historical context, focusing on global relationships and interactions across geographical boundaries. Locally, dynastic history shaped the Sino-Muslim community and their scholarly production, while developments in the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia provided episodic intellectual nourishment. In doing so, I also spar with some theoretical challenges that arise in any analysis of Asian Muslim communities—namely, the processes of Islamization, vernacularization, and syncretism.

Islamization, Vernacularization, and Syncretism

Confronting the movement of Muslims throughout Asia were various encounters with diverse local communities. These relationships were marked by exchange, trade, disagreement, and conflict, among other types of interactions.[2] In addition, over time, communities were often inspired by these meetings, affirmed their allegiance to Islam, and began identifying as Muslim in various ways. This process is generally called *Islamization,* and at a fundamental level is simply "the process by which the religious tradition of Islam becomes a major factor within a culture or ethnic group or region."[3] The crux of this alteration is "the 'change of status' implicit in Islamization, and in the appropriation of that status, both individually and communally, through the adoption of the self-designation 'Muslim' and of communal self-designations linked in some way with the 'sacred history' of the group's Islamization."[4] Some scholars have associated Islamization with mass conversion and underlined belief as a primary indicator of the success of this process.[5] Others define the process of Islamization as a revivalist urge to eliminate "composite and syncretic tendencies" consisting of a movement from "custom-centred Islam" to a "true/high Islam."[6] In this discussion, *Islamization* refers to a gradual process of localization of Islamic authority and authenticity (as perceived by its participants), whereby individuals and communities self-identify with their constructed

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ideal through ritual expression, replication of discursive signifiers, and/or adoption of cultural codings. In many premodern contexts, Islamization

> entailed a "universalizing" impulse that sought to regulate belief, maintain Muslim identity through the production of prescriptive texts, and bring the people, both Muslims and those newly entering the community, under the umbrella of Islam. On the other hand, Islamization also entailed an "indigenizing" impulse or adjustment to the local conditions and challenges they posed to Islamic identity.[7]

Therefore, when Islam becomes a major factor within a given cultural environment, the replication of a central model of authority always coexists with the creative adaptation and contestation of religious knowledge within that context.

Accompanying the adoption of "Muslim" as an identity marker is an "indigenizing" impulse, the reappropriation of Islamic discourses within the new local environment, a process that I define as *vernacularization*.[8] In selecting this categorization, I am conscious of thorny issues that may arise from the inherent dichotomies between a native language versus the lingua franca (i.e., local and universal, high and low, official and unofficial). More broadly, "vernacular religion" has been employed to designate "religion as it is lived: as human beings encounter, understand, and interpret it."[9]

This definition allies closely with other taxonomies that have received criticism, such as "lived," "folk," "common," or "popular" religion.[10] The charge is that these categories set up value-laden dichotomies reinforcing essentialized representations of religion in opposition to "religion as it is lived" (i.e., official, "true," or "orthodox"). Classification in relation to various cultural phenomena labeled (or not labeled) "religion" has historically been informed by evaluation and judgment.[11] Scholars have also contributed to the adjudication of value to social activity.[12] Therefore, one of my main concerns is that these terms are often developed as problematic analytical categories outside of the historical processes where participants actually employed them.

For example, within the study of China, the category "popular religion" has received a fair share of criticism.[13] For one, it is unclear what exactly makes "popular religion" popular. Does it point to a particular social class? An economic group? Certain social practices? Levels of literacy? Regional boundaries? Or is it just the religion of the masses? When we look at the

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scholarship, we find that "popular religion" is usually employed to designate phenomena that do not fit into other neatly designed categories, the "three teachings" (*sanjiao* 三教)—Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism. Moving beyond the bifurcating designations inherent in the notion "popular religion," we can understand cultural practices as "the 'production' of meanings, or the 'construction' of history and community" and regard "historically defined phenomenon, as data, not as an analytical tool for interpreting historical materials."[14] In the same vein, vernacularization points to modes of identification, interpretation, and dialogue that simultaneously advocate local frameworks while advancing universal ideals. Overall, what we must remember is that all cultural production and social activity are always "lived." Disparate communities are not connected without active methods of identification, the interpretation of ideas, and the communication of discourses through the cultural repertoires available to local participants. Therefore, identification, interpretation, and communication are the key operations of vernacularization.

Scholars of religion have increasingly shifted toward viewing Islam as a vernacular tradition in an attempt to combat the presentation and understanding of Islam as a universal and monolithic phenomenon.[15] This scholarly framing has occurred most frequently in anthropological examinations where "popular, non-institutionally based Islamic practice" is ushered in as representative of the heterogeneity of this thing we call "Islam." Through an anthropological approach, social activity is examined to determine how it communicates modes of Islamic signification through "the grafting of indigenous ethnic elements onto an imported substratum of religious observance."[16]

Despite vastly different cultural and geographic settings, the process of vernacularization follows parallel modes of structural patterning and human exertion. In this manner, "vernacular Islam is shaped and voiced by individuals in specific contexts and in specific relationships, individuals who change over time in social, economic, and political contexts that also shift."[17] These shifting historical contexts are what restrict discourses and performances while simultaneously informing their creative reformulation. For the multitude of Muslims in multicultural environments, "a broad range of cultural matters interact in historically and geographically specific ways to create sets of indigenous meanings that force us to question universal models of culture and society on hermeneutic grounds alone."[18] What becomes shared among these communities, then, are processes of self-fashioning and performative production.

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More recent scholarship has combined ethnographic work with textual analysis to examine how practice is negotiated in local contexts alongside literary discourses that are informed by and shape these performances. The dialogical relationship between thought and practice are jointly "reflecting universal religious ideals but also embodying local cultural values."[19] These local interpretive frameworks employ "a repertoire of various inclusive religious practices that embraces diverse devotional traditions in one specific place."[20] However, within each local context, narratives of authenticity, belonging, and authority are "produced through the dual praxis of linguistic and locative equivalence, and when the cosmopolitan becomes rooted in disparate local contexts and is vernacularized," behaviors and ideas are made "culturally, morally, and religiously meaningful."[21] The dialectical tension between local vernacular assertions and global models of normativity are calculated through active modes of identification, interpretation, and communication. The fashioning of discourses, ritual performance, and expressing visions of identity in these local contexts "emphasize the embeddedness of local Islam in a pluralistic community of both Muslim and non-Muslim populations, as well as how Islam in a particular place is linked to processes at work in the larger Islamic world."[22] Therefore, the places where the vernacular and cosmopolitan intersect reflect the discursive polytonality of Muslim spaces of dialogue and reinterpretation.

I employ vernacularization to convey many of the meanings highlighted by the category "vernacular Islam" as it has been defined by anthropological scholarship. Namely, we should examine geographically specific contexts in social, economic, and political environments that change over time, whereby indigenous interpretive and performative systems are employed to decipher and express universal ideals linked to processes in broader Muslim communities making normative archetypes that are culturally, morally, and religiously meaningful in a pluralistic local community. While anthropologists generally maintain that "the vernacular is often the site of the dynamic transformations and adaptations of Islam to remain relevant and meaningful for the average person," the process of vernacularization need not be limited to the study of "lived," "folk," "common," or "popular" practices.[23] In fact, if we examine the literary and linguistic contexts of discursive traditions, we can further develop a full framework for employing vernacularization as an analytic category for the study of religion. Within this domain of interrogation, the term *vernacularization* is generally employed to signal the "process whereby the vernacular gradually supersedes the koine."[24] I employ vernacularization to point

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to the discursive space when vernacular linguistic interpretations become a vehicle for a cosmopolitan vision of Islam, blending the global and local in a temporal and geographically specific place.

In his work in South Asian intellectual history, Sheldon Pollock has continually sought to understand the "process of people knowledgeably becoming vernacular" and to determine "what role to assign to writing and to the creation of expressive texts."[25] Literary works reveal the process of vernacularization as a negotiation of global and local visions of Islam through interpretive strategies and discursive expressions that identify the author, and by extension, the interpretive community, with a cosmopolitan Muslim community. In this way, the cosmopolitan and the vernacular "are not just historically constituted but mutually constitutive, for if the vernacular localizes the cosmopolitan as part of its own self-constitution, it is often unwittingly relocalizing what the cosmopolitan borrowed from it in the first place."[26] A genealogy of the multitude of "vernacular Islams" (including various local Middle Eastern formations) might in fact display that we always have a case of insisting on valorizing the local.[27] I trace one instance of vernacularization at work by examining "how categories of culture were created through the vernacularization process, why the memory of one textual beginning was erased in favor of another, and why this text rather than that was selected by a tradition to be preserved as primal."[28]

In doing so, I join other Islamicists who have begun to delineate the formation of literary and religious repositories that are "richly interconnected both with a distant past and with a local present."[29] Sino-Muslim authors understood themselves as part of a continuous tradition that they wished to maintain and perpetuate. Building on the creative space of particular cosmopolitan frames, they made this tradition locally appropriate and applicable to their cultural setting. The process of vernacularization visible in the construction of Sino-Muslim discourses in a particular sociohistorical place parallels that of other Muslim communities. Therefore, whether through analyzing texts, individuals, or communities, "to study vernacular Islam . . . is to identify sites of potential fluidity, flexibility, and innovation in a religious tradition that self-identifies as universal and is often perceived to be ideologically monolithic."[30] Here, I point to the specific strategies that Muslims employ to communicate their self-identity as a local participant in a global phenomenon. This dialogic space between the vernacular and cosmopolitan always requires reinterpretation and performative production through a process of self-fashioning, which is not unique to Sino-Muslims. Translating ideas and articulating them in locally

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appropriate ways constitute a continual process of interpretive communities. The remodeling of inherited discourses occurs in all times and contexts. When we examine "Islam" in this way, as the ongoing identification with and assertion of a universal tradition in locally meaningful ways, we can transcend inaccurate presentations of these constructions as stemming from and manifesting a universal and monistic essence.

Analytically, however, dichotomies of pure essence and polluted subsidiary products still remain, and their reciprocal relationship is implicit in the categorization called *syncretic*. Syncretism has generally signified a blending and mixture of various culture elements that are frequently used to explain religious practices and beliefs in multicultural contexts.[31] Implied in this notion is the assertion of two distinct stable substances, whereby a reconciliation must be accomplished through the compromise of each component's pure nature. The constitution of this *new* cultural phenomena is familiar and recognizable but separate and independent from its sources, or it simply reflects a veneer of an original. In this way, "while syncretism has often been invoked to explain what does not 'fit' into the dominant intellectual and cultural categories, it has almost without fail served to relegate its subjects to a secondary status."[32] When vernacular traditions are viewed from this perspective, they are merely derivative and inconsistent with either original tradition; thus, they are syncretic. This is problematic because it does not account for the human agency of local participants to interpret and express historical change and global influences.[33] Rather than being stigmatized as inauthentic and constituting a potential movement toward "orthodoxy," local discourses are indigenous initiatives about identifying with cosmopolitan ideals.

This categorization is important to address here because it is a prominent theme in Sino-Islamic studies. Some studies have posited two homogeneous cultural realms, Islamic and Chinese, that are either at odds with each other or mixed in a syncretic concoction.[34] Raphael Israeli, one of the formative Western scholars on Sino-Muslims, continually asserts a tension between these two distinct forces.[35] For example, in "Established Islam and Marginal Islam in China from Eclecticism to Syncretism" (from the section entitled "Normative Islam and its Derivatives"), Israeli states that in opposition to the "Islam" that resisted submersion in Confucian China, "there was another kind of Islam, syncretic or marginal, which overstepped the borders of material acculturation and borrowed enough Chinese characteristics to drift away from its sources."[36] At other times, Israeli explains,

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> Muslim presence in China, which dates back to the T'ang Dynasty, has always posed a challenge, at times even a threat, to the Chinese establishment. This was due to that Islam, far from willing to acculturate into Chinese society, on the contrary nurtured its distinctive traits and stressed its own superiority, something almost unheard of in other minority cultures in the Middle Kingdom.[37]

Whether the relationship is perceived as conflictual or accommodating, for Israeli, Islam and China are two essences with observable fixed boundaries. Their intrinsic principles are so different that they are necessarily inconsistent with each other or transformed into a debased subordinate. As with the analysis of other Muslim communities, this type of presentation "presupposes purity of religious traditions and ignores precisely the kind of *longue durée* interaction and elaboration of common cultural material."[38]

The aim of the following historical account of Muslims in China is to counter this essentialized rendering of difference and reveal the rich interplay in establishing notions of identity and authority. While the term *Islam* is useful as an analytic category to denote a set of principles and actions of a particular group of Muslims, as scholars, it is important to highlight that it is a heuristic construct employed for specific reasons. In historical reality, Muslims exist, while Islam does not. Each Muslim community enters into its own negotiation with tradition, non-Muslims, and other Muslims.[39] Therefore, instead of presenting Sino-Muslim intellectual developments as simply deriving from pure sources, I demonstrate how the interaction of multiple actors in contact zones of social, intellectual, and political difference shape the ways in which individuals think about tradition, reconcile contradictions, and represent themselves.

The Historical Legacy of Dynastic Policy

The frontiers of Chinese society where Muslims were often socially and geographically located fluctuated during transfers of political power. Generally, governing policy influenced Sino-Muslim sociopolitical circumstances, which in turn shaped the character of Chinese-language Islamic scholarship. Sino-Muslims were part of the multilayered landscape that shifted as political leadership alternated. In brief, what we conceptualize as China went from a huge cosmopolitan empire during the Tang dynasty (618–907) to a small polity laboring for power during the Song

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period (960–1279). It was the Eastern part of the massive and powerful Mongol-controlled territory during the Yuan period (1271–1368) and then a Sinocentric homogenizing power during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). Finally, it became a huge multiethnic empire under the Qing dynasty (1644–1911).

The character of the political leadership and their ruling policies had an influential effect on Sino-Muslims and commanded the orientation of local Muslims, fluctuating between external and internal engagement with Muslim communities of practice and thought. We see the direct results of the historical growing expansion, followed by extended periods of domestication, in the production of *Han Kitab* literature, which is both clearly tied to the intellectual patterns of dominant Islamic discourses and expressive of the Chinese cultural sphere of their location.

The creation of the scripture hall education system (*jingtang jiaoyu* 經堂教育), which provided the framework for the genesis of *Han Kitab* texts, is a direct product of Ming policies that take shape during the sixteenth century. The participants in the scripture hall system and the authors of Chinese-language Islamic texts viewed their activities as the recovery of a lost heritage of Islamic knowledge. The erosion of Islamic literacy in China was directly related to the social and cultural infrastructure of Chinese society, which was generally enacted and reinforced through imperial policy. The late appearance of vernacular and localized literary interpretations of Islam, beginning only in the seventeenth century, was due to the division between Chinese and Muslim communities through the Yuan dynasty. It was not until the mid-Ming dynasty that Muslim and Chinese cultural and social spheres were intermingled with greater regularity. It was through the inclusion of Chinese as a discursive Islamic language and the development of an official system to spread localized Islamic knowledge that the *Han Kitab* literature began to take shape.

The Sino-Muslim intellectual elite of the late Ming and early Qing dynasties bypassed the social isolation of past generations and developed productive systems for combining their Islamic and Chinese heritages through the production of religious knowledge. Offered here are vignettes of significant situations and settings of importance for understanding Muslims in China, which help us grasp the multiple factors that led to the production of Sino-Islamic texts. The historical legacy of imperial constraints shaped the reconstruction of the Islamic tradition in China, and therefore, our understanding of the history of Muslims in the region

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further illuminates the elements of Sino-Islamic scholarship in general and the *Han Kitab* literature in particular.[40]

Tang Dynasty (618–907) and Song Dynasty (960–1278)

Outside of the legendary encounters between the companions of the Prophet and the Chinese emperor, there are few documented accounts of Arab and Persian travelers in the East. Legends similar to the *Huihui Yuanlai* regarding the arrival of Muslims in China played an important part in developing a unique sense of Sino-Muslim identity. The appearance of these myths, beginning roughly in the fifteenth century, reflected the changing self-perception of Sino-Muslims and their position in the greater Chinese society. These origin narratives also expose the historian's relative inability to grasp the depth and diversity of Muslims in China during the first few centuries after the beginning of Islam.

Historical records of the Muslim presence in China prior to the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) are scarce, and it is unclear when Islam exactly entered China or when it took hold among local inhabitants. In early Chinese histories, Arabs and Persians were called *dashi* 大食 and *bosi* 波斯, respectively. *Dashi* became the standard term most commonly used for Muslims in official Chinese sources from this period until the Yuan dynasty. However, the terminology was fluid, and phrases denoting Muslims and their homelands varied across time; therefore, it was not always clear if a *dashi* was necessarily a Muslim in this early period.[41]

Muslim visitors were probably traveling to China with Arab embassies within a few generations after Muhammad's death in 632.[42] Others came primarily as traders, settling in port cities on the southeast coast of China and along the Silk Road. During this period, we find Muslims beginning to settle in large populations in two main areas, Chang'an 長安 (modern-day Xi'an 西安) and Quanzhou 泉州. As the capital of the Tang dynasty, Chang'an served as a crucial point along the Silk Road as a major commercial center. Arab troops and officials remained in China after the An Lushan rebellion of 756, establishing a small but significant Muslim population.[43]

On the southeastern coast of China, foreign travelers were arriving en masse in order to trade. According to Chinese and Persian records, as early as 758, Arab and Persian sailors took control of parts of Canton (Guangzhou

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廣州).[44] Chinese and Arabic sources clearly discuss an Islamic settlement in Canton by 851.[45] Muslims grew in financial power, and by this point, they soon were able to sustain their own institutions, supporting extraterritorial rights through the activities of their own Muslim judges.[46] In both regions, Muslims remained detached from Chinese culture and separated from their Chinese neighbors. In fact, they lived physically removed from the larger Chinese society in foreign quarters (*fanfang* 番坊), where they maintained the Arabic and Persian languages, as well as their own customs and religious practices.

Muslim modes of behavior were also directed by dynastic regulations that prohibited foreigners from intermarrying with Chinese women, buying land, or adopting Chinese culture, such as wearing Chinese clothing. Therefore, foreign identity was regularly preserved, and Muslims were perceived by the local Chinese population as "foreign guests" (*fanke* 番客).[47] Muslims made up a regular part of Chinese society and created institutions for their continued presence.

Toward the final years of the Tang, Arab travelers remarked that several mosques were established in major cities, such as Chang'an,[48] Guangzhou, Quanzhou, and Hangzhou 錢塘.[49] "Muslims remained sojourners, obvious and clearly designated by state and society; they were granted a measure of legal and administrative autonomy within their carefully delineated settlements, but they were not supposed to mix with the local population."[50] In these early interactions, neither the Chinese nor the Muslims encouraged cultural exchange and understanding, merely engaging each other for commercial interactions or official governmental responsibilities. Overall, Muslims asserted and maintained their foreign identities, practices, and traditions throughout this period, while Chinese society failed to fully incorporate them as an active component of the cosmopolitan dynasty.[51]

During the Song dynasty, Middle Eastern travelers gradually increased their presence in China, especially in port cities along the southeast coast. Many settled in China permanently, setting up homes, marrying Chinese wives, and adopting Chinese culture, clothing, and customs.[52] While numerous Muslims learned to speak Chinese and planned to reside on Chinese soil, they were still regarded as foreigners by the local Chinese population.[53] Travelers' and geographers' accounts of both Chinese and West Asia also increased, and it appears that Chinese and Arab authors were receiving more reliable information from their local informants.[54]

Arab and Persian traders continued their activities in southeastern port cities, often serving as the couriers through Southeast Asia, transporting

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Chinese goods to the Middle East and returning. Middle Eastern delegations to China also continued to grow in number.[55] However, very few Muslims had become Chinese subjects by participating in the broader society, and it was apparent that neither they nor the Chinese had any goal for their greater assimilation. The population of Muslims within China remained small and was concentrated in large commercial cities. Because they were not thought to be "Chinese" subjects by the local inhabitants, they often maintained this separation themselves.[56] During the Tang and Song dynasties, preservation of language and the relative ease of travel facilitated the maintenance of foreign Muslim identities and networks. During this period, Muslims became isolated from the larger society and were generally foreign (non-Chinese), not identifying as Sino-Muslim. It was not until the Yuan dynasty that Muslims would begin to be integrated into the fabric of Chinese society more generally.

Yuan Dynasty (1274–1368)

At the end of the thirteenth century, dramatic shifts in power drastically altered Chinese society and the makeup of its human landscape.[57] In 1271, Qubilai Khan (1260–1294), the grandson of the great Genghis Khan (c 1167–1227), established the Yuan Empire in North China. He defeated the last of the remaining southern Song elite in 1279 and took control of most of what makes up the contemporary borders of the People's Republic of China. The Mongol conquest of Eurasia united various ethnic, religious, and cultural civilizations, which fostered greater interchange among peoples that were previously restrained and limited in their contact. It was during the Yuan dynasty that the greatest influx of Muslims to China occurred.

The Mongol rulers employed Muslims from the Middle East and Central Asia as civil servants, court officials, and in various administrative positions.[58] They also recruited physicians, astronomers, architects, scientists, geographers, cartographers, soldiers, musicians, ballistic and military engineers, linguists, and others to serve as specialists for the expanding empire.[59] These specialized professions often required greater interaction between the various ethnic groups living in China, which further tied Muslims to local peoples and geographies. By the end of the Yuan dynasty, the responsibilities of Muslims in government and administration required them to be in close contact with Chinese subjects and to become increasingly aware of Chinese customs.

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However, the Yuan administrative system constructed a stratified social design that distinguished among various classes of people, creating an internal social hierarchy that produced structural animosity between groups of people.[60] The Muslims from West and Central Asia were perceived as collaborators with the oppressive Mongols, and hence exploiters of the Chinese people.[61] Yet Mongol rulers sporadically condemned Muslim customs. Qubilai Khan initiated several policies that negatively affected Muslims, including banning circumcision and the ritual slaughter of food, for several years. Therefore, during this period, Muslim assimilation into Chinese modes of being was not encouraged; they were merely one group among the multiethnic population.

The increasing Muslim population in China developed within both new and existing communities. Southeastern China remained a significant sphere for foreign Muslims, and their populations grew under the new administration in several major cities. In the former southern Song capital, Hangzhou, there was a substantial increase in the local Persian population. Archaeological remains of burial sites and tombstones reveal numerous inscriptions in Persian and Arabic from the late thirteenth century.[62] The famous Phoenix Mosque (*Fenghuangsi* 鳳凰寺), which was constructed in 1281, supported the growing number of Muslim inhabitants in the city—celebrated not only by Muslims, but also by Chinese administrators, and even the Qianlong emperor (1711–99).[63]

There was also a sizable growth of Muslims in Quanzhou (known as *Zaytun* in Arabic). Here too, the construction of mosques and the establishment of decorated Muslim cemeteries are evidence of this growth.[64] Quanzhou has one of the most substantial assemblages of Persian and Arabic inscriptions, both at gravesites and on architectural features.[65] Out of the forty-two gravestone inscriptions surveyed, seven were for women, and three were for those who had performed the pilgrimage. According to titles included on twenty-five graves, three individuals were Arab, two were Central Asian, and the remaining nineteen were Persian in origin.[66] Muslim travelers and historians also attested to the substantial Muslim populations in Hangzhou and Quanzhou, as well as several other cities, including Guangzhou and Kaifeng, and discussed them in their writings about China.[67]

Yuan military policy contributed to the growth of Muslim settlement by encouraging veterans to occupy and cultivate depopulated regions of the Yuan dynasty.[68] One such area was the newly acquired Southwest China, where rapid development was encouraged in Yunnan province. Under the

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Mongol regime, administrative skill and might was used to control and "civilize" the region. The main figure engaged in this transformation was Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-Dīn (1211–1279), who is credited with transforming the nomadic culture into an administrative structure with counties and prefectures, introducing modern transportation infrastructure, irrigation systems, new farming technologies, agricultural development, and Confucian education, among many other advancements.[69] His sons also played a significant role in governing Yunnan and shaping its economic and social development.[70] There is a long lineage of Sayyid 'Ajall's descendants, who hold an elevated status within the Sino-Muslim community because of their extended presence in Yunnan and their Persian ancestry going back to Muhammad. These subjects of the Yuan Empire played a crucial role in integrating Yunnan into the broader regions of China.[71]

During the Yuan period, there were several key intellectual transitions that gained exceeding importance, which will inform our understanding of some themes in the later *Han Kitab* literature. The Yuan administration employed various specialists for imperial purposes. Muslims filled many of these roles, but it was also Islamic knowledge and investigative methods that became essential for the Mongol rulers in their governing of a vast, heavily populated area. The most relevant Islamic sciences for the empire were astronomy (for calendars and timekeeping) and geography (for mapping new boundaries). The Mongols valued Muslim contribution to these fields and created institutions to support their research.

The Bureau of Islamic Astronomy (*Huihui sitianjian* 回回司天監) was established in 1271 and employed several exceptional Muslim astronomers, including the Persian Jamāl al-Dīn (*Zhamaluding* 札馬剌丁) ibn Ṭāhir ibn Muḥammad al-Zaydī al-Bukhārī (d. c.1291). Jamāl al-Dīn arrived in China in 1267 and offered the emperor, Qubilai Khan, seven astronomical instruments and an important Persian astronomical handbook, referred to as the *Ten Thousand Year Calendar* (*Wannian li* 萬年曆).[72] As the director of the bureau, he governed the activities of around forty people at any given time, who were primarily investigating a large resource of Western primary texts, written entirely in Persian.[73] Despite the existence of a distinct Muslim institution that operated parallel to the traditional Chinese Astronomical Bureau, there was little evidence of direct effect of their efforts upon Chinese procedures and processes. There are also limited records of these astronomers' activities and findings. The one exception is the *Islamic Calendar* (*Huihui lifa* 回回歷法), or *zīj* in Persian,[74] which was either written or complied by Jamāl al-Dīn himself. While the original

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text is lost, the *Huihui lifa*, translated in 1383, has been an important astronomical work among Chinese scholars since its inclusion in the *Annals of the Ming Dynasty* (*Mingshi* 明史) in the seventeenth century.[75] The collections of the Persian texts accumulated at the Bureau of Islamic Astronomy would become beneficial during the Ming dynasty, when they began being translated into Chinese.[76]

Another critical initiative under the Yuan rulers based on Islamic knowledge and sciences was the effort to have greater understanding of the physical geography of Mongol territory. The creation of cartographic knowledge enabled the Yuan administration to better govern its vast holdings. In 1286, during the later years of Jamāl al-Dīn's life, he led a project to map the entire Yuan Empire. Understanding the boundaries of this diverse swath of land alleviated some of the difficulties in administering its territory, and this endeavor was highly valued by the Mongol rulers. He worked with translators to produce the *Record of Great Unity of the Great Yuan* (*Dayuan dayi tongzhi* 大元大一統誌), a geographical survey of the entire Yuan Empire. Overall, it was the largest cartographical compendium of any Chinese empire, consisting of 755 volumes. It was presented to the emperor in 1291 and finally printed in 1347; however, only the introduction of this work remains today.[77]

Finally, during the Mongol conquest of Eurasia (1206–1368), with the integration and blending of various peoples, interpersonal and administrative exchanges required linguistic competency in multiple languages. While knowing Mongolian may be self-evident for understanding the Yuan dynasty, it was Chinese and Persian that become the most important languages for historical documentation and governmental management.[78] The Mongol government officially recognized all three languages, but Persian, called *Huihuihua* 回回話, was also the lingua franca among Muslims.[79] In 1289, Qubilai Khan established a national college in Beijing dedicated to the study of Muslim languages.[80] Many graduates were employed as interpreters and worked alongside administrators. Others served as translators after completion and worked on making Persian medical and scientific knowledge available to the broader Chinese literate population.[81]

Many key features of Muslim life in China underwent increased development during the Yuan period, such as the influx of Muslims, the increased usage of Persian, the integration of Islamic sciences (especially astronomy and geography), mosque construction, and Muslim migration and creation of new communities. Muslims were generally foreign in

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origin and maintained their native identity, including culture, language, and religion. The Mongol system, paired with the ease of travel and the continuation of traditional networks, enabled Muslims to remain distinct from the Han Chinese. Yuan institutions facilitated the social spacing between Muslims and Chinese and reinforced Muslim superiority over them under the Mongols.[82] During the Ming dynasty, these factors would be completely turned around, and Muslim assimilation into Chinese culture would begin to increase rapidly, creating the social elements that led to the production of Chinese-language Islamic texts.

Ming Dynasty (1368–1644)

It was during the Ming dynasty that we witness the most transformative circumstances that led to the formation of a distinctly Chinese vision and expression of Islam in the *Han Kitab* literature.[83] Acculturation to Chinese society and culture, detachment from traditional networks of learning, and loss of linguistic skills in Arabic and Persian all greatly contributed to the reformulation of Islam through Chinese vernacular and symbolism. After the Ming forces took power, there was a revival of Han chauvinism and an attempt to restore Chinese culture. Despite the participation by many Muslims in overthrowing the Yuan government, Ming loyalists often viewed Muslims as supporters of Mongol oppression. Initially, official policy attempted to isolate the Muslims that remained within Chinese borders by prohibiting them from marrying Chinese women and banning them from speaking Chinese. However, shortly thereafter, the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, instituted laws aimed at integrating the Muslim "foreigners" (*yi* 夷) into society.[84]

The emperor's new laws encouraged assimilation by requiring Muslims to take on Chinese names, but many retained their Arabic or Persian names within their communities.[85] Common names such as "Maḥmūd" and "Muḥammad" were rendered as "Ma" 馬.[86] Material culture also began to change: Muslims began to wear Chinese attire, build Chinese-style architecture, and follow Chinese cultural practices. This process was reinforced by laws creating Chinese family structures, codified in the *Great Ming Code* (*Daming lu* 大明律), completed in 1397, which decrees:

> Mongols and Central Asians (Semu people *semuren* 色目人) shall marry with Chinese persons. They shall not marry within their own

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> race. Any violations shall be punished by eighty strokes of beating with the heavy stick, and both the men and women shall be enslaved by the government.[87]

Generations of these families appeared more and more outwardly "Chinese." Local-born Muslim children of these mixed families became fluent in Chinese, went by Chinese names, and were seemingly indistinguishable from other Han residents.[88] Later, during the Ming period, several Muslims achieved high levels of power in the administrative system, obtaining *juren* 舉人 and *jinshi* 進士 degrees after excelling in the civil service exam, or becoming magistrates, education officials, and military figures.[89] These developments had profound effects on the religious character of the community.

The Ming dynasty sponsored a number of projects that championed the accomplishments of Muslims. The government sponsored a number of foreign explorations and sustained trade throughout sea routes. Most notable among these individuals was Admiral Zheng He 鄭和 (1371–1433, also known by his Islamic name, Ḥajjī Maḥmūd Shams al-Dīn), the famed Muslim eunuch who led seven expeditions throughout Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East. He led fleets of 48 to 317 ships, with up to 28,000 crew members, and provided some of the first Chinese accounts of many geographical regions and different societies, including Mecca.[90]

Despite these grandiose imperial ventures, the Ming government permitted foreign travel only through official avenues. Individuals were limited when it came to traveling abroad, requiring traditional networks of trade activity to fall under the supervision of the official tributary system.[91] The suspension of established circulation patterns of people, thoughts, and materials isolated Muslims in China from their coreligionists in Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and farther abroad.[92] These policies also contributed to the decreasing use of Arabic and Persian languages by the general populace of Sino-Muslims.

One result of this seclusion from broader Muslim populations was the construction of many new mosques, led by local religious leaders (*Ahong* 阿訇, Persian *ākhūnd*). Some of these mosques even claimed to be sponsored by the emperor himself, as in the case of the mosque in the new Ming capital of Nanjing.[93] Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang's successor, Zhu Di 朱棣 (1360–1424), also sponsored the renovation of several mosques throughout China.[94] These new localized religious settings allowed Muslims to transmit practical Islamic knowledge, such as the recitation of daily Arabic

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prayers and ritual activity. In the end, it failed to yield effective means for producing learned scholars of traditional Islamic knowledge.

The ability to master fields in the Islamic sciences diminished following generations of integration, isolation from traditional networks of Muslim interaction, and the loss of linguistic skills in Arabic and Persian. In general, people were unable to go on pilgrimages to Mecca or study abroad in centers of Islamic learning, leading to the fact that many religious leaders were incapable of interpreting traditional authoritative Islamic sources.[95] For many of the native-born "foreign" children, their Chinese identity and participation in Confucian culture eclipsed their Islamic character. Chinese Confucian literati education often took precedence over Islamic learning in Arabic and Persian. As these tensions escalated, many Sino-Muslims grew apprehensive about the role of Islam and level of authenticity in China. The fading understanding of Islamic knowledge motivated many Sino-Muslims to search for new methods for preserving their tradition within their circumstances.

The most significant development, which would later have a direct effect on the creation of Islamic texts in Chinese, was the establishment of the scripture hall (*jingtang jiaoyu*) education system. The scripture hall system was developed to counter the negative intellectual effects on Islamic learning caused by assimilation within the larger Chinese culture and society. Concerns about the loss of their foreign heritage spurred Muslims to construct an indigenous structure and process for preserving Islamic knowledge that would produce learned Muslim scholars. We will see throughout this book that one of the direct products of the scripture hall system was Chinese-language Islamic texts such as the *Han Kitab*. The intellectual environment fostered in this framework that would provide the institutional infrastructure for writing about Islam in Chinese.

The apprehensions and worries about the state of Islam in China during the later part of the Ming dynasty are reflected in the life story of the founder of the scripture hall system, Hu Dengzhou 胡登洲 (c.1522–1597).[96] Hu was from the city of Wei 魏, outside of Xi'an in the northwest province of Shaanxi. Like many Sino-Muslims of the time, he was educated in the Confucian Classics, which would prepare him for a civil service career. Hu was also pursuing his own training in Islam at his local mosque. He found himself disappointed with the effectiveness of the dialogical method that was used by the resident religious leader at his mosque. He felt that he was unable to fully penetrate the meaning of the Islamic scriptures and lacked an *authentic* understanding of the religion.

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These circumstances motivated Hu to seek a more traditional Islamic education abroad in centers of learning. He spent several years in Central Asia and finally arrived in Mecca, where he studied for several years. Upon his return, Hu intended to renovate the institutional structures in his local area to give many more Sino-Muslims access to Islamic classics. One of the main challenges for Sino-Muslims at this time was their difficulty in acquiring Islamic texts. The numerous books that he brought back from his travels enabled him to establish a systematic and accessible program for obtaining this knowledge.[97] After a long process of assimilation and isolation from Muslims outside of the Ming borders, "there was a shortage of books [and] learned men were few and far between and the transmission and interpretation [of the texts] were not clear."[98] Hu provided this necessary key for opening up Islamic knowledge to Sino-Muslims late in the Ming dynasty. His return marked an important advancement by providing the textual resources for establishing a sense of religious authenticity and authority within Chinese borders.

Texts alone would not make the Islamic tradition accessible, especially to a general community that had largely lost the capability to read Arabic and Persian. What made Hu's new system significant was the pedagogical structures that he put in place, such as the establishment of a set curriculum; financial support, including room, board, and study materials; and, most important, the use of Chinese as a language of instruction.[99] Hu's new school mirrored many of the madrasas (religious schools) that he had visited throughout Muslim communities. However, his center drastically differed because "in addition to books in Arabic and Persian, Chinese Muslims made use of books written in Chinese (both Islamic and non-Islamic, including the Chinese classics and official histories). This trend grew more pronounced with time."[100]

The inclusion of Chinese was one of the central features of late-Ming Islamic learning, which would be the direct catalyst for the *Han Kitab* texts. The average student was only knowledgeable of Chinese and had no access to these texts. These lower-level students studied a Qur'ānic primer (*haiting* 亥聽, Arabic *khatm*) containing two dozen or so passages, as well as an elementary Islamic textbook (*zaxue* 雜學, *Diverse Studies*), covering prayers, ablutions, faith, worship, fasting, marriage, funerals, and festivals. These teaching tools also used a Chinese phonetic transliteration system to represent the original orthography of Arabic and Persian passages.[101] More advanced students followed a curriculum made up of

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fourteen courses (eight in Arabic texts and six in Persian texts), and the fourteen scriptures (*shisi benjing* 十四本經).[102]

The linguistic flexibility of the new system, paired with the systematic program of study, made Hu's pedagogical advances capable of being easily reproduced throughout China by the graduating students who had traveled to Northwest China to study with him. Within a few generations, Hu's school was being replicated in cities with substantial Muslim populations; it was especially successful in Nanjing, where that the scripture hall framework became most prosperous in terms of significant teachers, numbers of students, and production of texts.[103]

Nanjing was a large intellectual and commercial center with a prominent literati culture, including numerous *jinshi* degree holders and wealthy Chinese-educated Muslims.[104] The Muslim communities in Southeast China were well integrated into these plural societies, and the educational network served as a means for connecting previously unassociated individuals.[105] In Nanjing, the Muslim teachers emphasized the similarities between Islam and traditional Chinese philosophical principles in their instruction, which led to the duplication of this interpretation and the reproduction of rendering in texts. The *Han Kitab* literature grew out of this intellectual environment and directly engaged with it. Chinese-language Islamic texts were utilized within the system to make advanced Islamic teaching accessible to the highly Sinicized Muslims of Southeast China. Their linguistic limitations failed to provide them direct access to Arabic and Persian texts from the Middle East, but the *Han Kitab* provided this knowledge in an intelligible form and through recognizable expressions.

Qing Dynasty (1644–1911)

Initially, most of the limiting legislation toward Muslims during the Ming dynasty was maintained as the new Qing leaders attempted to establish control over their large geographical borders. However, when the Qing had effectively contained their inherited domain, they began to expand further. After 1684, when they seized Taiwan, the Qing changed their travel policies to make foreign travel available to the Sino-Muslim populace, thus allowing their participation in the pilgrimage to Mecca and restoring previous intra-Muslim communication and connections.[106] As more Muslims studied, traveled abroad, and made pilgrimage to the Arabian Peninsula, they brought back with them new interpretations of

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Islam. Many of these were connected to global Sufi brotherhoods (*ṭarīqah*), which were most popular among Northwest Sino-Muslims.[107] In Yunnan province, Sino-Muslims reinitiated their traditional commercial and social ties with Southeast Asia.[108] Also, connections with Indian Sufi masters influenced brotherhood activity in Southwest Yunnan province, especially the Qalandarīya (*Gelandai* 格蘭岱).[109]

What is important for this study is to note that the porous borders of the Qing Empire reestablished traditional networks of travel and learning, which led Sino-Muslims to pursue these prior connections in that context. This travel enabled them to witness contemporary trends within global Muslim communities, which then informed their own understanding and interpretation of Islam, leading to a reformulation of Sino-Islamic thought and practice.

According to Qing official imperial history, Sufi brotherhoods were the catalyst for several Muslim revolts or uprisings.[110] Muslims were repeatedly portrayed as inherently violent and radically different from the Han Chinese and the Qing elite.[111] In reality, the expansionist policies of Qing emperors, especially the Kangxi 康熙 (c.1661–1722) and Qianlong 乾隆 (c.1736–1796) emperors, greatly contributed to the unrest.[112] Further, internal sectarian disputes over Islamic principles and practices were often settled in imperial courts instead of in Islamic legal settings. This became the catalyst for several occasions of violence because the Qing government took the side of one faction or another.[113] Therefore, these revolts were not representative of a homogeneous Muslim population fighting against imperial powers, pitting Muslim against Muslim in the fighting.[114] The two largest Muslim movements during the Qing period were Yaq'ūb Beg's (1820–1877) emirate in Xinjiang[115] and the Panthay Rebellion (1856–1873) in Yunnan province,[116] each of which established an Islamic state.[117]

These two campaigns, along with numerous other localized events,[118] demonstrate that during the nineteenth century, Sino-Muslims generally viewed the Qing imperial government as an oppressive political regime that failed to provide sufficient structural means for instituting Islam. Moving forward, Sino-Muslims began to relate more to their Muslim coreligionists abroad than with their multiethnic neighbors, as ease of travel and linguistic skills in foreign languages improved. Often, the Qing were seen as a colonial power by Sino-Muslims, much like the British, Dutch, or French powers that were governing large Muslim communities found in other parts of Asia and Africa.

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Global Muslim Networks of Exchange

Like their global Muslim partners, Sino-Muslims were coming in greater contact with Muslims abroad during the mid-nineteenth century, exemplified in this study by Ma Dexin, who traveled extensively and wrote texts that made interactions with non-Chinese Muslims more accessible. The integration and deployment of new technologies in Muslim societies enabled patterns of social and intellectual alteration.[119] Global changes in transportation and communication—most importantly, print and steam travel—facilitated the movement of labor migration, the distribution of intellectual commodities, and the circling of students and pilgrims.[120] These restructured Muslim geographies became important sites of interaction, where the social operations in the production of an Islamic orthodoxy could be renegotiated within dynamic environments of multiple actors from a variety of backgrounds. Therefore, "steam and print allowed for the synthesis of new social imaginaries, which were in turn validated by new social practices."[121] Steamship and rail travel accelerated movement across circuits and routes of communication, while print technologies supported the production of books, journals, and newspapers that were dispersed across these networks. These enabling technologies assembled original flows of social interaction, while bolstering long-established international networks of Muslim scholars and students revolving around Mecca and Medina.[122]

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are also generally characterized by the increased interaction between Muslims and imperial powers, which mainly occurred through colonial rule. Political decentralization of Muslim communities, due to the disintegrating power of the so-called gunpowder empires—i.e., the Ottomans (1299–1923), Safavids (1501–1736), and Mughals (1526–1858)—aided Western domination throughout Eurasia.[123] Muslim responses to colonial encounters ranged from complete rejection of Western values, violent resistance, conciliation and application of new modalities of change, and cooperation and collaboration with Europeans.[124] In many Muslim contexts, these centuries were characterized by the scholarly and public navigation between established Islamic norms and modes of revival, renewal, and reform.[125] However, Islamic social and intellectual reform was well underway before European imperialism, and it was often motivated by shifting concerns from within the Muslim community rather than being a direct response to Western "modernity."[126]

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Many Western observers have highlighted that during this period, Muslims stressed allegiance to the obedience of outward religious practice (*sharī'ah*), had a renewed interest in authoritative scriptural sources, especially the hadith, and favored personal independent reasoning (*'ijtihād*) rather than the uncritical imitation (*taqlīd*) of figures from the tradition.[127] These motivations are clear in the thoughts of figures like Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792), who promoted a scripturalist maximalism when reading traditional sources. His efforts were aimed at a return to a perceived *original* Islam that was practiced by Muhammad and his companions.[128] He asserted that all innovation (*bid'ah*) that was developed over time should be removed from Islamic practices, such as the celebration of Muhammad's birthday (*mawlid*), the visitation of saints' shrines and tombs (*ziyārah*), and the oral recitation of God's names (*dhikr*). While his innovative interpretation of Islam was not well received by his intellectual contemporaries, he did gain the support of a powerful local ruler in the Arabian Peninsula, Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd (d. 1765). This collaboration afforded 'Abd al-Wahhāb's teachings a sustained audience, and eventually their reception grew more widespread in the Middle East and abroad in the nineteenth century.[129]

The Wahhābi movement contributed to the confluence of Islamization, as the local norming of beliefs and practices within perceived notions of Islamic orthodoxy, and Arabization, which viewed an authoritative Islamic tradition as being solely situated in an Arab Islamic context. In many local Muslim communities, there was movement away from the vernacular toward what was perceived as the essence of the tradition preserved by Arab Muslims. The general trend of returning to primary Arabic Islamic sources, the Qur'ān and hadith, instead of relying on local interpretations and explanations of Islam was a new evolution in the tradition that was cloaked in ideas of the retrieval of authentic authority. However, this move undercut historical notions of the transmission of knowledge and elevated personal interpretation over developments created collectively by generations of scholars. These developments in Islamic thought had a lasting effect on Sino-Muslims that is visible in the Sino-Muslim representatives that we explore.

Global developments among Muslims are evident in the localized roles of pilgrimage, scripture, and language in Sino-Islamic thought. By the nineteenth century, advances in transportation and the freedom of Sino-Muslims to go abroad increased their exposure to other foreign Muslims.

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Exposure to scripturalist tendencies and the return to primary sacred texts directly influenced how Sino-Muslims understood religious authority and its sources. Ma Dexin and his successors pursued a similar mode of training, whereby Sino-Muslims would become proficient in the Arabic language, have comprehensive knowledge of the Qur'ān, and cooperate with their coreligionists abroad. His program foreshadowed broader responses to the intersection of modernity and tradition that shaped many proponents of a global vision of the Muslim community.[130] However, what was remarkable about Ma was that he pursued this agenda while simultaneously authorizing his own unique Sino-Islamic tradition.

Both the local and global historical circumstances shaped the evolution of Islam in China. The Mongols greatly increased the Muslim populace and settled new areas that would later become centers of Islamic learning. They were supporters of the Islamic sciences, especially astronomy and geography, and contributed to the expansion and continued importance of the Persian language outside Central Asia. Policies of isolation and integration created by the Ming rulers expedited Muslim assimilation and the adoption of Chinese language and culture. This was one of the direct impetuses for creating Chinese-language Islamic schools, the scripture hall system, which in turn would be foundational in the production of Chinese-language texts such as the *Han Kitab*.

Qing expansion and internal colonial activity, combined with the growing tensions between Muslims and rulers, heightened the distinction between being Muslim and non-Muslim. While conflict often was derived from internal Muslim disputes about Islamic principles and practices, the Qing defended one faction over another, ultimately creating a division between the Qing and Muslim rebels. The expanding network of interactions between Muslims abroad during the nineteenth century fostered this insider/outsider mentality, which contributed to the strengthening of a pan-Islamic identity and strategies to enable interactions within the global Muslim community.

Increasingly, Sino-Muslims actively engaged Muslims abroad through participation in travel, study, and pilgrimage. Those affiliated with the *Han Kitab* tradition developed their capability to access supposedly authentic Islamic scriptural materials in Arabic and comprehensively understand foundational texts like the Qur'ān.

In the next chapter, I provide a comprehensive intellectual biography of Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin, and in later chapters, I explore in

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greater detail how pilgrimage, the Qur'ān, and Arabic featured in their work. These portraits are extending from the general historical snapshot given here to promote understanding of the personal factors and intellectual structures that guided their hermeneutics and shaped their interpretations of Islam.

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2

Tradition and the Shaping of Sino-Muslim Intellectuals

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT of the distinct Sino-Islamic style found in *Han Kitab* texts was formulated in relation to the unique cultural and intellectual settings of Sino-Muslims through the Late Imperial and Early Modern periods. By the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), Islamic knowledge was locally accessible through a canon of texts, transmitted through networks of learning, and replicated through vernacular languages. Wang Daiyu (1590–1658), Liu Zhi (1670–1724), and Ma Dexin (1794–1874) all situated themselves within the heritage of Muslims, which they viewed as authentic and authoritative. The continual process of identification with this tradition was based on a narrative understanding of continuity and inheritance, whereby Sino-Muslim authors were transmitting an unmediated repository of knowledge. When Sino-Muslim scholars discussed Islam in their local Chinese context, they simultaneously offered reinterpretations of previous theologies while asserting the authenticity of their own cultural translation of these claims.

In examining this process, one of the central issues of this chapter is the thorny relationship between heritage and hermeneutics. As Jonathan Z. Smith has stressed, we should seek "to discover how to 'develop a complex model of tradition and the mechanisms for its transmission' and reinterpretation, and how to 'ground comparison and patterns in a historical process' that accounts for the role of continuity and change."[1] How, for example, did Sino-Muslim authors reference the advanced discourses of the Persian and Arabic texts that informed their writings? In what ways did they account for their own reinterpretation, adaptation, modification, and alteration of established Islamic normativities? And through what

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methods did they make these Sino-Islamic discourses meaningful to a local audience?

These queries require an explanation of the interpretive tools employed to delineate the intellectual processes that structured *Han Kitab* hermeneutics. I begin this chapter with a brief examination of the notion of tradition and narrativity in structuring discursive preferences and patterns. Next, I explore the creation and consumption of traditions as an intertextual configuration of interpretive selections because I understand texts as malleable, dynamic, and polyvalent. Following this theoretical grounding, I map out the literary networks and communities that established the textual constellation of signification for *Han Kitab* texts. Here, I investigate translational choices and interpretive structures surrounding the creation of local authoritative textual canons of Islamic works. The remainder of this chapter offers portraits of the life and major works of Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin. Priority is given to Ma, so his biography and textual output are examined at greater length, tracing his general theology, including the nature of God, faith, religious observance, and prayer. This panorama contextualizes these authors within specific personal histories, intellectual environments, and textual communities, in order to situate the genealogy of pilgrimage, scripture, and language in *Han Kitab* thought—the subject of the remainder of the book.

Islamic Discursive Tradition

The creation of a vernacular Sino-Islamic discursive intellectual movement was predicated upon the existence of an authentic tradition based on the teachings of Muhammad, which was transmitted across space and time. Sino-Muslims preserved this narrative and placed themselves at the center of this tradition's maintenance and continuation. As inheritors of this knowledge in a dissimilar cultural and linguistic environment, it was their task to render this tradition accessible to the local audience. In this manner, Sino-Muslim authors served as curators and guides of past authority. Their work relied on the authority of tradition while it simultaneously asserted its own authenticity by rendering that intellectual legacy to its audience.

Han Kitab authors, whether in theological or mythic texts, selectively emplotted components of the complex tapestry of thoughts that have been transmitted, preserved, and valued by networks of Muslims. While

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seemingly static and uniform, this intellectual heritage itself was historically constructed and contested over time in varying contexts. In contrast to an ossified entity, Talal Asad offers a helpful framework for thinking of tradition as an discursive exchange:[2]

> A tradition consists essentially of discourses that seek to instruct practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history. These discourses relate conceptually to a past (when the practice was instituted, and from which the knowledge of its point and proper performance has been transmitted) and a future (how the point of that practice can best be secured in the short or long term, or why it should be modified or abandoned), through a present (how it is linked to other practices, institutions, and social conditions). An Islamic discursive tradition is simply a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.[3]

The interrelationship between past, present, and future sustains and activates links of authority, place, and authenticity. The boundaries of tradition are simultaneously limiting and stimulating as they are navigated within particular contexts.

It is at this point where the vernacular and cosmopolitan meet through the mediation of the local with communally authorized Islamic texts and figures, which are not limited to the Qur'ān and hadith.[4] Therefore, the Islamic tradition is continually transforming within the actions and expressions of Muslim communities. Each vernacular discourse can preserve, reconstruct, or refute tradition because the "perception of 'orthodoxy,' 'heterodoxy,' and 'marginalisation,' then, is necessarily contingent on a community's perpetuation, adoption, or rejection of a tradition or series of traditions from an array of historical possibilities."[5] All together, the hierarchy of authority and authenticity relies on the verification and interpretation of a particular historical Muslim community. Tradition is "something always in the process of being defined by the course of events."[6] Every iteration of these varying intellectual strains remains bound within inherited limitations and constraints of a certain time and space while simultaneously reconstituting an appropriate interpretive framework of that heritage that is creative and original.

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Narrative of Tradition

The handling of tradition in *Han Kitab* works is useful for analyzing the processes of transmission and engagement with an intellectual heritage more generally. In this example, we can locate integral structures related to interpretation that can be extended to other communities, and also begin to map patterns of continuity and variance among Muslim actors. Sino-Muslims associated with the scripture hall education system and authors of the *Han Kitab* literature laid out a narrative that situated them squarely within their own perception of orthodoxy. The primary identification with what was viewed as Islamic normativity and the assertion of the loss of tradition in China underscored the necessity and importance of local Muslim scholars in retrieving this tradition. Sino-Muslim accounts point to the recovery of a body of Arabic and Persian texts as the moment when Islamic authority was restored within the Chinese context. However, the local audience's inability to access these newly available materials required the subsequent transmission and reformulation of Islam in local expressions. Through the construction of this narrative, Sino-Muslims authorized their own reinterpretation of Islam in the name of orthodoxy.

Pointing to a shifting canon of authoritative foreign books as source texts enabled and instigated the "community's exercise of ingenuity within the self-imposed limits."[7] Similar to social actors encountering changing settings in other times and places, the self-proclaimed ownership of authentic authority effectively enabled a "reorganization of tradition" that was "accepted because it was not recognized as a reorganization."[8] Therefore, the shifts in *Han Kitab* works were successful because they were hidden in plain sight from those who were receiving them. If this is the case, we also should reconsider our understanding of transmission and interpretation within Muslim communities in different cultural-linguistic settings.

Within this particular Sino-Islamic intellectual space, cultural expressions were informed by two domains of signification. The negotiation of meaning existed at the intersection of multiple Islamic and Chinese systems, creating structural arrangements that were only intelligible within this particular intellectual setting. Therefore, *Han Kitab* thought was not a syncretic blending of two pristine systems or entities, but rather the juncture of various webs of meaning that simultaneously informed the readers' understanding. This vibrant economy of signification was necessarily

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interpreted in dialogue, and each participant arrived at meaning based on his or her particular intellectual foundation.

Textual Communities

The heart of *Han Kitab* scholarship revolved around the reconstruction of a perceived Islamic orthodoxy, which was mediated through a rich constellation of Arabic and Persian texts used in the scripture hall system. Well-known foreign language texts represented notions of orthodoxy, and Sino-Muslims often relied on "authentic" sources as a means to obviate the need for individual justification of knowledge or propositions. Overt references or veiled allusions to Arabic and Persian works transferred the authority of the source text to the present setting and elevated the status of Sino-Islamic texts. Textual canons, often shifting, connected Muslims (if only symbolically) to repositories of a rich Islamic tradition and enabled them to access the preceding generations of intellectual luminaries.

The maintenance of and attachment to certain sets of texts fashioned thematic grids of interpretation and formulated a cohesive textual community made up of authors, readers, listeners, and interpreters. While this study is focused on those who were at the forefront in the production of meaning for this community, it is important to think about the audience. Most broadly, the *Han Kitab* textual community is "a group of individuals who think of themselves to at least some degree as a collective, who understand the world and their appropriate place within it in terms significantly influenced by their encounter with a shared set of written texts or oral teachings based on written texts, and who grant special social status to literate interpreters of authoritative written texts."[9] The social grammar of these Sino-Muslims reinforced the value of Islamic knowledge derived from Arabic and Persian texts and the documentary reproduction of that shared textual discourse communicated through Sino-Islamic reformulations.

More narrowly, the social environment where Muslims encountered *Han Kitab* texts was primarily in educational settings. The constituents of the scripture hall system and the *Han Kitab* readership were a relative minority in terms of their social position within China. Very little evidence exists documenting the everyday practices of scripture hall educational practices and engagement with *Han Kitab* texts, so it is difficult to paint a coherent picture of an audience. The most clearly narrated vision of a lived community is from Southeast China in the late seventeenth century,

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which has been extensively analyzed by Zvi Ben-Dor Benite.[10] There, Sino-Muslims involved with Islamic education also very often took part in Confucian educational institutions and held titles within the Chinese civil examination system.[11] The gentry setting of Southeast China reinforced Ruist values of education and literary mastery, even for Muslims. This region generally lacked a large cohort of established Muslim authorities, so educational practices and the preservations of Islamic knowledge through scholarly literary production became central to creating and maintaining their specific Sino-Muslim identity. Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi exemplify the intellectual distillation of this moment and location of Sino-Muslim activities.

Southwest China of the ninetieth century, the context of Ma Dexin, was quite different. In Yunnan province, large pockets of Muslims lived in communities where they were the majority. Islamic education in Yunnan prior to this point had followed localized practices of individual engagement with individual texts in conversation with a local religious leader, much like the scripture hall education founder, Hu Dengzhou, rather than working through a set serial curriculum. In the nineteenth century, this general strategy, which was marked by textual instability, changed to a systematic program of materials for Muslim students. In his own training, Ma Dexin took part in scripture hall institutions in Northwest China and replicated the practices and curriculum upon his return to Yunnan. He modified the course of study by writing an additional simplified Arabic textbook.[12] Overall, localized practices in Yunnan inaugurated a broad parallel Arabic and Chinese educational agenda (*zhong-ah bingshou* 中阿並授), which we witness in the literary production of both Ma Dexin and his students.[13]

In both Southwest and Southeast China, the negotiation of interpretive power through discursive reproduction established the authoritative structural arrangements that formulated accepted Sino-Islamic discourse. The textual nexus of Arabic and Persian literature informed the scripture hall intellectual environment, and Sino-Muslims were responding to and drawing from prominent foreign sources in the production of their own explanations of Islam. But the relationship between *Han Kitab* texts, authors, and readers was unstable—across time, we witness the tensions between individual and collective practices. The comparative study of these authors reveals "the ways that a textual community's dominant interpretive strategies are sustained and challenged by the institutional location of those who engage these strategies."[14] Through communal support and

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endorsement, the *Han Kitab* authors were established as custodians of an authoritative interpretive perspective despite variations in their individual renderings of tradition. Since many participants within this textual community were unable to access "orthodox" Islamic texts directly, the transmission of their contents by *Han Kitab* authors became essential. This primarily occurred through the translation and interpretation of theological formulations from Arabic and Persian texts.

Literary Networks

Throughout the *Han Kitab* literature, this self-styled discourse was informed by a elastic skein of texts, which were referenced both explicitly and implicitly. There are several avenues for determining what foreign Islamic texts were given positions of authority within the Chinese context, each revealing arrays of local predispositions toward dominant discourses. The clearest articulation of discursive cohesion is seen in the curriculum of the scripture hall, the referenced Arabic and Persian sources of Sino-Muslims, and the translated works by *Han Kitab* authors. For the most part, the core textual orbit revolved around issues of Qur'ānic interpretation and philosophical sufism. Determining what exact works were valued is one of our greatest analytical challenges because direct citation is infrequent, but cataloguing and outlining the key foreign Islamic sources is necessary to place the *Han Kitab* within a broader framework. Delineating a genealogy of textual sources is the starting point for understanding indigenous knowledge production and opens up issues of attribution, authority, authenticity, and textual production within Sino-Muslim communities.

The foreign sources available to the Chinese are most easily located in translations. Rendering Arabic and Persian works into Chinese was a flexible process. In order to acquire a wider audience and greater prestige, authors often would claim that their own compositions stemmed from Arabic or Persian original material. As Françoise Aubin noted, "Sometimes such originals are imaginary; but even when these actually exist . . . the alleged translation implies a total rewriting and remodeling in order to translate the philosophical notions and concepts of Sufism into an acceptable Chinese mode of thought."[15] There are several Chinese translations of Persian works in the early period of Sino-Islamic scholarship that help begin to delineate a trajectory of intellectual influence.

The earliest-known translation was of Najm al-Dīn Rāzī's (d. 1256) *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return* (*Mirṣād al-'ibād min al-madba'*

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ila'l-ma'ād),[16] which was rendered as *The Essentials of the Return to Truth* (*Guizhen Yaodao Yiyi* 歸真要道譯義) by Wu Zixian 伍子先 (1612–1680) in 1651 and is one of the oldest extent texts in the *Han Kitab*. This text was so popular that several people created their own translations, under different titles, to use in the scripture hall. Zhang Zhong 張中 (c.1584–1661) was well known for his translations. His most famous text, *General Principles of the Return* (*Guizhen Zongyi* 歸真總義), published in 1661, is a translation and commentary of *Imāni Mujmal* (*Yimani Muzhimole* 以麻尼穆直默勒). His other famous work, *Essentials of the Four Chapters* (*Sipian Yaodao* 四篇要道), published in 1653, is a translation of the famous Persian *Chahār Kitāb* (*Four Books*).[17]

Another early book is 'Azīz al-Dīn Nasafi's (d. c.1300) *The Furthest Goal* (*Maqṣad-i Aqṣā*), of which there are two early translations, possibly by the same author. The first, *The Scripture of Studying the Truth* (*Yan Zhen Jing* 研真經), was translated by She Yunshan 舍蘊善 (1638–1703) in 1679. The second is an undated copy attributed to Po Nachi 破納痴; which might be She Yunshan's pen name) called *The Outline of the Way Returning to the Truth* (*Guizhen Biyao* 歸真必要).[18] Ma Dexin 馬德新 (1796–1874) also produced his own translation of Nasafī's *Maqṣad-i aqṣā* in 1870, entitled *Daoxing Jiujing* 道行究竟 (*Completing the Path of the Way*). Liu Zhi's 劉智 (c.1670–1724) biography of Muhammad, *The Veritable Record of the Utmost Sage of Islam* (*Tianfang Zhisheng Shilu* 天方至聖實錄), written in 1724, was based on a Persian biography titled *Tarjuma-i Mawlūd-i Muṣṭafa'*, which was written in Arabic by Sa'īd al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Kāzarūnī (d. 1357) and translated into Persian by his son, 'Afīf. The Persian author 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414–1492) had two of his works translated into Chinese: *Rays of the Flashes* (*Ashi' 'at al-lama'āt*) and *Gleams* (*Lawā'iḥ*), rendered as *The Mysterious Secret of the Original Display* (*Zhaoyuan Mijue* 昭元秘訣) by Po Nachi; and *Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (*Zhenjing Zhaowei* 真境昭微) by Liu Zhi.[19] Later in the Sino-Islamic tradition, Ma Anli 馬安禮 (d. 1899) composed the *Islamic Book of Odes* (*Tianfang Shijing* 天方詩經), which is a translation of the *Mantle Ode* (*Qaṣīdat al-Burdah*) by the Egyptian poet Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd al-Būṣīrī (d. 1294–7).[20] Ma's manuscript presents the original Arabic poem along the top of the page with his Chinese translation below. And, of course, Ma Dexin translated the Qur'ān itself as *A Direct Explanation of Treasured Mandate of the True Scripture* (*Baoming Zhenjing Zhijie* 寶命真經直解) in the late nineteenth century, which we look at in much greater detail in Chapter 4.

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These translations enable us to create a catalog of influential foreign works that established a continued discourse for Sino-Muslims. Arabic and Persian texts were emphasized to varying degrees within different local Chinese contexts, but their presence does indicate both the high status that these texts held in China and their availability to Chinese readers.

Another reliable source for delineating foreign works that informed Sino-Muslims were clear citations of authors or works. These references fortify the repository of influential texts and enable us to read Sino-Islamic texts with an expanded dialogical reserve when examining specific discourses.

One of the most comprehensive sources in this regard is the work of Liu Zhi, in which he has provided the reader with bibliographic information about his personal scriptural repertoire. Liu Zhi's *Metaphysics of Islam* (*Tianfang Xingli* 天方性理) (1704) and *Rituals of Islam* (*Tianfang Dianli* 天方典禮) (1710) offer more than 60 titles of Persian and Arabic works. Many of these citations refer to the translated titles mentioned here, but there are also many other titles. We learn that he relied on a commentary on the Qur'ān, the *Tafsīr al-Qāḍī* (*Tefuxi'er Gazui* 特福西爾噶最) or *Commentary on the True Scripture by al-Qāḍī* (*Gazui Zhenjingzhu* 噶最真經註). This was a famous commentary, entitled *The Lights of Revelation and the Mysteries of Interpretation* (*Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl*), written by 'Abdullah b. 'Umar al-Bayḍāwī (d. c.1300), a well-known *tafsīr* that was reproduced throughout the Islamic world and received several commentaries of its own. Another important text that Liu used to inform his writings was *al-Mawāqif* (*Mowajifu* 默瓦吉福) or *The Complete Scripture of the Patterns and Causes* (*Gezhiquanjing* 格致全經). This was *The Standpoints in the Science of Theology* (*al-Mawāqif fi'ilm al-kalām*) by 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355).

While Liu Zhi's list of works is fairly comprehensive, it is also problematic. In most copies available, he transliterates the title of the original Arabic or Persian work (often in an abbreviated form) and provides a Chinese translation of its meaning. Very frequently, these titles are difficult to decipher with any sense of certainty, and they have troubled researchers for some time.[21]

We also find clear, but less direct, references to authors or works. For example, Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 mentions Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, or Rābi'a of Baṣra (d. 801), in a short anecdote in his *The True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching* (*Zhengjiao Zhenquan* 正教真詮).[22] Wang's story is found in the *Memorial of the Friends of God* (*Tadhkirat al-'Awliyā'*) by Farīd al-Dīn 'Attār (d. c.1230).[23] Elsewhere, Wang tells of the famous mystic Abū

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Yazīd al-Bisṭamī (d. c. 875) or Bāyazīd (*Bayelaide* 爸野賚德), who was best known as one of the originators of the concept of annihilation (*fanā'*) of the self in God.[24] These citations demonstrate that Wang personally valued the literary heritage that he inherited, and he utilized it to inform his own discussions of Islam. Referencing these well-known mystics brought with it the authority of the original sources from which they were drawn.

In a historical reflection of scripture hall education, the *Genealogy of the Transmission and Lineage of Classical Learning* (*Jingxue xi Chuan Pu* 經學系傳譜), written by Zhao Can 趙燦 circa 1677), other passing references reveal available texts. For example, anecdotes about Ma Zhenwu 馬真吾 (b. c.1600), the first scripture hall teacher in Nanjing and predecessor to Wang's own master, tell us that he loved and memorized the *Maqāmāt* (*Assemblies*). This was a standard collection of short, picaresque narratives but could have been the famed *Maqāmāt* of Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī (1054–1122), a famous poetic narrative that contained metaphors, jokes, Qur'ānic quotations, proverbs, riddles, and brief orations. Four copies of the *Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīrī* were found in the Dongsi Mosque, one dated from 1717. All together, references to people and texts reveal the scriptural landscape of China and the discursive structures that were at play during the times when Sino-Muslims were constructing their own work.

Another key source in determining the textual inclinations of Sino-Muslims is the curriculum used within scripture hall education. Arabic and Persian texts made up the majority of the Islamic curriculum for educating Sino-Muslim students. Unfortunately, detailed lists of sources used in specific training centers are sporadic, and there certainly were variations of texts used by teachers within various locations. A set of repeated texts, regularly referred to as the *thirteen or fourteen fundamental scriptures* (*shisan benjing* 十三本經 or *shisi benjing* 十四本經), is presented as a traditional course of study within scripture hall schools. When we examine this curriculum, we see that linguistic capabilities in Arabic were taken very seriously. The principal texts included *Ṣarf* (*Arabic Morphology*) and *Ḍaw' al-miṣbāḥ* (*Light of the Lamp*), which dealt with Arabic introductory and intermediate grammar, respectively. In addition, there are volumes on more advanced Arabic grammatical theory, including the work of the gifted linguist Sa'ad al-Dīn Taftāzānī (1322–1390) and 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī's *al-Fawā'id al-Ḍiyā'iyya* (*Luminescent Benefits*), a commentary on Ibn al-Ḥājib's (d. 1249) classic Arabic grammar, *al-Kāfiya* (*Sufficiency*). These linguistic works would prepare student to tackle the famous creed included in the program, the *'Aqā'id* (*Beliefs*) by Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī

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(d. 1142)[25], as well as legal works of *fiqh*, including *Mukhtaṣār al-Wiqāya fī Masāʾil al-Hidāyah* (*Summary of the Safegaurds of Transmission in Questions of Guidance*), by the famous Ḥanafi scholar Sadr al-Sharīʿa (also known as ʾUbayd Allāh ibn Masʿūd Maḥbūbī) (d. 1346).[26] Students were exposed to traditional Qur'ānic commentaries such as the famous *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (*Zhelalaine* 哲拉赖呢) (1505) by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥalī and interpreted by his student Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūtī (c.1445–1505) and the *Tafsīr al-Qāḍī* by al-Bayḍāwī, mentioned previously. The Persian *Tafsīr-i mavāhib-i ʿAlīyah* (*Lofty Gifts*), known as *Tafsīr-i Ḥusaynī* (*Housaini* 侯賽尼) in China, by Ḥusayn Vāʾiẓ Kāshifī (d. 1505), a prominent member of the Naqshbandiya Sufi order, was also regularly read. There were also several interpretations of hadith presented in Persian commentary, including an exegesis of the famous collection of *hadith qudsi, Kitāb al-Arbaʿīn*, by Abū Zakariyyā al-Nawawī (d. 1277). The famous *Gulistān* (*Rose Garden*) (1258) of Saʾdī of Shīrāz (d.1291 or 94), as well as the *Mirṣād* and *Ashiʿ ʿat al-lamaʿāt* mentioned previously, were all regularly included in advanced curriculum.[27]

The scripture hall curriculum helps round out the discursive frontiers that Sino-Muslim authors would have been familiar with. Two key points should be highlighted. First, we can reaffirm the importance of the Persian Sufi literature that has bubbled up in other influential sources. However, the second important point is that the curricular program reveals the rich engagement with other fields of Islamic literature that are not clearly visible when reading Sino-Islamic texts. From this textual reservoir, we now see the role of several linguistic, legal, and scriptural influences that inform *Han Kitab* authors. These textual inclinations are evidence of the creation of Sino-Muslim dominant discourses, which echo scriptural patterns and literary networks within other Muslim communities during the late medieval period. What becomes clearer as we develop a more nuanced understanding of the foreign textual sources for the Islamic intellectual tradition in China is that Arabic and Persian texts were foundational in the development of Sino-Islamic works. These various methods of obtaining source materials enable us to create a reservoir of textual authority that was utilized in China. In the end, the greater our understanding of Arabic and Persian Islamic texts that were present and influential in China, the more ability we have to decipher how the Sino-Muslim textual community produced its own discursive boundaries.

The *Han Kitab* literature represents the documentary process of a particular Sino-Islamic religious discourse, which offered a specific interpretive vantage point that was immersed in a skein of foreign texts. Their

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authors shared in the social praxis of authorizing a particular set of Arabic and Persian texts by communicating a translingual mediation of their perception of Islamic orthodoxy. Through the social reproduction of authenticity and authority in the production of Sino-Islamic texts, these authors adjudicated between competing interpretive claims and established their own discursive boundaries. Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin were instrumental in shaping the discourse that buoyed local redescriptions of Islam. Their work had wide currency among the membership of this textual community and were established as the criteria from which discursive practices, patterns, and rules emerged.

Wang Daiyu (1590–1658)

Wang Daiyu's writings are the earliest extant texts about Islam using Chinese. He was influential in developing an initial Sino-Islamic discourse, which offered a direct presentation of Islam that could be understood by educated Chinese-speaking Muslims of the time. Little is known about Wang Daiyu's personal life; even his dates of birth and death are uncertain.[28] He was born in the rich cultural center of Nanjing 南京 during the Wanli era 萬曆 (1573–1619) and died in the Qing capital, Beijing 北京, sometime in the Shunzhi period 順治 (1644–1661).[29] In Sino-Islamic literature, Wang was referred to as the Elder of Islam (*Zhenhui Laoren* 真回老人).[30] He reported that his ancestors were originally from "Arabia" (*Tianfang* 天房), and they had been living in China for 300 years.[31] He proudly announced that one of his ancestors was an astronomer who brought tribute to the emperor during the Ming Hongwu era 洪武 (1368–1398), who subsequently appointed him to the Directorate of Astronomy (*Qintian Jian* 欽天監) after he corrected errors in the calendar and contributed to the Chinese conception of astronomy.[32] The family settled in Nanjing and established permanent residency there.[33] Nanjing, the new Ming capital under the emperor Taizu 太祖 (ruled 1368–1398), was a lively cosmopolitan city with prosperous, intellectual, and religious communities.[34] Muslims constituted a significant percentage of the city's population and were in constant contact with various communities of people in this environment; thus they were exposed to several religious and philosophical perspectives. Nanjing continued to be a vibrant center of cultural diversity during Wang's upbringing in the early seventeenth century, and his pioneering work reflected this blending of cultural influences.

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Wang Daiyu received a traditional Islamic education, and it is presumed that he was trained in the manner of most Muslim scholars—namely, in Arabic and Persian languages, studying the Qur'ān, Hadith literature, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), theology (*kalām*), and Sufism (*tasawwuf*).[35] At twenty, Wang began studying literary Chinese because he never received a formal education in the Chinese classics as a youth and probably learned to read and write Chinese in the scripture hall system in Nanjing.[36] At thirty, he wrote, "I was so ashamed of my stupidity and smallness that I started to read [Chinese] books on metaphysics and history."[37] Then Wang began "reading books on nature and principle [i.e., neo-Confucianism] and history, and branching off into works of the various schools of philosophy."[38] Wang sought to understand local Chinese traditions in order to guide Confucian-educated Sino-Muslims who were mistaken about Islam and welcomed what he perceived as heterodox Chinese philosophies. In a preface to one of his works, Wang's student commented, "My teacher Wang Daiyu had mastered the four teachings and had studied all the doctrines of the various schools."[39]

All the while, Wang continued his study of traditional Islamic sources of knowledge. He lamented about his Muslim neighbors and colleagues, "[A]s I broadened my knowledge I discovered views which were erroneous, perverse, mutually contradictory, and as different from the Muslim religion as night from day."[40] Wang's concern for the well-being of his fellow Sino-Muslims inspired him to write his interpretation of Islam and present it in a manner that would be accessible to Muslims who had undertaken a traditional Chinese education in preparation for civil service (i.e., those who understood the Confucian classics but misunderstood the principles of Islam). All together, Wang used Islam and Confucianism in a dialogue for the purposes of clarifying their differences and elevating Islam as the superior tradition.

Wang Daiyu was the fifth generation of the scripture hall students and was taught by Ma Junshi 馬君實 (1600–1680), one of the earliest Nanjing natives to travel to Northwest China in order to become a teacher in the scripture hall system. In Nanjing, Ma Junshi initially received a Confucian education and obtained a semiofficial position, *mingjing* 明經.[41] Later, he traveled to Ningxia 寧夏 to study with Zhuangyuan Zhang 狀元張, and upon his return, he was appointed the successor of the other native Nanjing teacher, Ma Zhenwu 馬真吾 (b. c.1600), and inherited his large following.[42] During Wang Daiyu's ascent as a teacher, the use of Chinese texts in Islamic education, especially in Nanjing, was significant. Later, in

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1645, he moved to the new capital in Beijing, where he became the tutor of a wealthy Muslim merchant, Ma Siyuan 馬思遠, who sponsored Wang's teaching and writing.[43]

Wang's days were spent in dialogue and debate with students, ordinary believers, and Muslim scholars, as well as the non-Muslim intelligentsia, including literati, Buddhist monks, and Daoist priests, about Islamic principles and how they related to Chinese traditions.[44] The most famous of these arguments was one that Wang had with the abbot of Iron Mountain Buddhist monastery (*Tieshansi* 鐵山寺) in 1650. As the narrative goes, when the abbot heard of Wang's great skill in polemics, he began a multiday debate with him. However, he soon realized the inadequacy of his knowledge and ultimately became Wang's student.[45]

From these various exchanges between scholars, converts, and antagonists, Wang began to construct a formalized presentation of his teachings on the major principles of Islam. Wang recalled: "Of those superior men who willingly submitted, every one regretted that there existed no complete guidebook to the Correct Teaching [Islam]. So whenever I had been among them, I went home and noted down what had been said."[46] Wang's personal interactions informed how he presented the Islamic tradition and became the basis for his writings. His role as a teacher is reflected in the structure, presentation, approach, and content of his works. Wang spent his final years teaching at the Sanlihe 三里河 school (in modern Beijing), where he was buried.[47]

Literary Output

Wang Daiyu's style and content indicate that, as previously stated, his major objective was clarifying Islam for readers who were generally confused about Islamic teachings. He explicitly expressed that he wanted to help his colleagues comprehend their religion and "save them from the mistakes" that he had heard in the classroom.[48] In general, Wang's writing was short and explanatory, which was in accordance with his role as a teacher and reflective of a dialogical teaching method. Of course, Wang also offered more complex discussions, which reflected his desire to speak to an audience with a wide range of abilities. Ma Junshi added that Wang was well known for both his scholarly dexterity and his ability to answer any question in a friendly and kind manner, even if he had to repeat himself.[49]

Overall, due to the nature of scripture hall education and Wang's own training and intended audience, his works employed a Chinese lexicon,

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which would be clear and comprehensible to the Chinese-speaking, educated Muslims of Nanjing, and later Beijing. Wang was not trying to create "a basic curriculum for Sino-Muslim schools in general, nor was he trying to develop a systematic explanation of Muslim thought and philosophy."[50] It seems obvious that his work was not necessarily intended to have a extremely broad audience and was originally created to further the development of Wang's students and closest colleagues.[51]

The exegetical nature of much of Wang's writing reinforces this argument. He repeatedly started a section with translated quotations from the Qur'ān and hadith, followed by his own commentary on a number of basic principles, indicating that his writings were directly influenced by questions directed at him while teaching.[52] As Lipman has observed, Wang "certainly did not intend to toady or to flatter the Confucians, but he nevertheless wrote his treatise in a self-consciously Confucian vocabulary."[53] This was in part because Wang wanted to give Chinese readers access to classic Islamic treatises from the Arabic and Persian traditions.[54] However, he ultimately employed neo-Confucian rhetoric and philosophical discourse in order to criticize some of its inherent theories, thus justifying Islam.[55] Despite Wang's initial motivations and limited content, his work established much of the terminology that would be employed by later *Han Kitab* authors and served as an archetype for his literary heirs.

The *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching* (*Zhengjiao Zhenquan* 正教真詮), published in 1642, was Wang's first work, as well as his most important. Here, he covered many foundational principles of the Islamic perspective on human nature, God, theology, law, cosmology, and moral behavior. The text itself is divided into two volumes, each consisting of twenty sections. The first half was philosophically oriented, concerned with the nature of God, the origin of humans, the role of prophets, angels and jinn (spiritual beings), human nature, and various levels of spiritual reality. The second half concentrated on the relationship between belief and practice and covered the five pillars of Islam, following God's will, annihilation of the self, afterlife awarded to believers, and practical questions on the proper Muslim reaction to common Chinese practices.[56] Wang was primarily concerned with projecting a certain cosmological perspective on reality. He delineated why one should behave and think in a particular way, which was based on an Islamic theological foundation as it is explicated by traditional Islamic sciences.[57]

Orthodox Responses on the Rare Truth (*Xizhen Zhengda* 希真正答), published in 1658 by Wang's pupils, presented roughly 200 interactions in

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a question-and-answer format between Wang and various interlocutors. In this work, he responded to questions from Muslims, both educated and unlearned, as well as Buddhists, Daoists, and neo-Confucian literati. These accounts range from a single question, with a short response, to long expositions, with several rejoinders.

Wang's last important treatise was his undated *Great Learning of Islam* (*Qingzhen Daxue* 請真大學).[58] He consciously selected this title, reminiscent of the short chapter in the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記) called the *Great Learning* (*Daxue* 大學), to suggest significant similarities between Islam and Confucianism.[59] Wang's *Great Learning* was made up of an introduction, three main sections, and a long conclusion. His work and the original Confucian *Great Learning* differ in their orientation, as Wang emphasized the theological implications of the social principles that are explored in the original. By employing the framework of the Confucian *Great Learning*, he acknowledged its utility, but then went on to assert that the necessary relationship of these principles is to God, one's origin, and the afterlife. This work was principally concerned with the topic of *tawḥīd,* or the assertion of God's unity.[60]

All together, Wang's works critically engaged the philosophical systems of his day, either in his literary style or by examining the similarities and differences between them and Islam. His works are the oldest extent Chinese texts discussing Islamic theology, philosophy, and mysticism, and he developed a framework for understanding Islam in the Chinese cultural context. During this initial period, Wang focused on explicating the theological foundations behind Islamic faith and practice. His texts were written in a clear and direct style that focused on a range of subjects, from practical to philosophical. Ultimately, though, Wang also needed to demonstrate that Islam was superior to these local viewpoints that were widespread.

Liu Zhi (1670–1724)

Many consider Liu Zhi the most productive and creative of all the *Han Kitab* authors. He was certainly influential within both the Sino-Muslim community and their non-Muslim neighbors. He was born into a scholarly environment, which all but ensured his intellectual productivity. Raised within a scholarly family in Nanjing, he had an early education within the scripture hall school there. Nanjing, a very prominent and well-established center of Sino-Islamic learning, had produced several important Islamic

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scholars up to that point, including Wang Daiyu. Liu's two most important teachers were his father, Liu Sanjie 劉三傑 (c. 1630–1710), and Yuan Ruqi 袁汝椅 (b. c.1640), the son of the eminent preacher and teacher Yuan Shengzhi 袁盛之 (b. c.1620), who originally established the Yuan Mosque (*Yuansi* 袁寺) in Nanjing.[61] The Yuan family was very influential in establishing Islamic studies within the area, and the Yuan Mosque produced numerous significant scholars.[62]

In this setting, Liu must have studied Arabic and Persian languages, as well as traditional Islamic sciences.[63] He also studied Chinese, and at fifteen, he began a rigorous study of Confucian classical texts for eight years. He then dedicated six years to Islamic books in Arabic and Persian. In an exceptional example of Liu's uniqueness, he then spent three years studying Buddhist texts and one year reading Daoist texts. Liu Zhi spent eighteen years under the tutelage of Yuan and his father, but then he set out to engage his Sino-Muslim associates throughout China.[64]

While Wang Daiyu lived most of his life in Nanjing and only later moved to Beijing, Liu traveled fairly extensively throughout China. His travels were influential on his material, intellectual, and social successes. Along the way, Liu gathered rare texts that would inform his work, such as the Persian biography of the Prophet that would later be the basis of his own narrative of Muhammad's life.[65] He also met various scholars, with whom he debated and deliberated about the principles of Islam.[66] Finally, he made pragmatic connections that would help motivate and support him through his work, as he did when he gained the support of an influential Muslim, Hei Mingfeng 黑鳴鳳 (1662–1722).[67] This transitional period was transformative, shaping Liu Zhi as a scholar rather than just a student of Islam. From these journeys, he was driven to express Islam in his own voice, which reflected the Sino-Islamic character of his intellectual heritage in Nanjing. At thirty-three, Liu began writing and would come to shape much of the discourse on Islam in the Chinese language.[68]

Literary Output

While the Yuan family played an important role in educating young Liu, it was his father's legacy that loomed over his intellectual potential. The lack of accessible Chinese works on Islam greatly concerned Liu's father, which in turn influenced Liu to write about Islam in Chinese. Liu Zhi put all his scholarly interests in dialogues to produce texts written in a highly sophisticated style. They combined neo-Confucian and Chinese

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symbolism with the lexicon of technical Islamic terminology. His discourse on Islam was cloaked in Chinese religio-philosophical vocabulary and presented Confucianism and Islam not in conflict, but as complimentary systems—one purely ethical and the other deriving moral behavior from a divine source.

Liu Zhi was one of the most systematic authors in the *Han Kitab* literature, with an expansive body of texts that covered a wide array of subjects. He addressed numerous topics in his writings from the principles of faith, ritualized practice, mysticism, and the meaning of Arabic letters. However, Liu was best known for his *Tianfang* 天方 trilogy, which methodically outlined the underlying structure of Islam. These three lengthy works covered issues of faith, practice, and the greatest human model, as exemplified in the Prophet Muhammad. The first in the series was *Metaphysics of Islam* (*Tianfang Xingli* 天方性理), completed in 1704; followed by *Rituals of Islam* (*Tianfang Dianli* 天方典禮), finished in 1710; and finally, *The Veritable Record of the Utmost Sage of Islam* (*Tianfang Zhisheng Shilu* 天方至聖實錄), written in 1724. In his final work in this series, Liu described the intent of the three works: "The *Dianli* is a book that clarifies the [rules] of the teaching (*jiao* 教). The *Xingli* is a book that clarifies the [principles of the] Dao (道). Now, the *Zhisheng shilu* [Record of the Most Sagely (of Islam)], clarifies the sources where the teaching and the Dao originated in order to present [it] for all under heaven and in order to reveal the entirety of the Dao. Thus, these three books are one composition."[69] In this schema, the teaching is the worldly manifestation of the original way, thus enabling one to understand how to return to God, which is the original source.

Arguably, Liu Zhi's most sophisticated and significant work was *Metaphysics of Islam,* which presents a description of issues related to faith and covered the main principles of the "religion" (*uṣūl al-dīn*), the unity of God (*tawḥīd*), prophecy (*nubuwwa*), and the return (*ma'ād*), or end times. The *Tianfang Xingli* title is complex because it alludes to several things simultaneously. Nature (*xing* 性) and principle (*li* 理) are two foundational features of neo-Confucian thought, which in fact is often referred to as the school of nature and principle (*xingli xue* 性理學).[70] Like Wang Daiyu's *Great Learning of Islam*, the title of this work suggests a synthesis of Chinese and Islamic thought.

Metaphysics of Islam consists of an introduction, a short analysis, and five very long chapters, each of which is divided into a number of subsections. The second portion, the *Root Scripture* (*Benjing* 本經), serves as a prolegomenon that introduces and presents the material that is explored

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in the various sections of the remaining chapters. Ten diagrams that illustrate the cosmological and theological components of the text follow the *Root Scripture*.[71] The main five chapters then develop these concepts with the aid of twelve additional diagrams, totaling seventy diagrams in all.[72]

The *Root Scripture* is also significant because it is one of the only Sino-Islamic texts that revealed its sources. The prefaces to both *Metaphysics of Islam* (1704) and the *Rituals of Islam* (1710) include bibliographic references to the Arabic and Persian texts that Liu employed to write his work. The two lists contain around 66 individual sources, providing the title of each work in Chinese transliteration and translation, but with no accompanying original title in Arabic or Persian.[73]

As we have seen, several of the most influential works were translated into Chinese, especially Persian Sufi texts. The *Root Scripture* cites several sources repeatedly: Najm al-Dīn Rāzī's *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return* (*Mirṣād al-'ibād min al-madba' ila'l-ma'ād*), 'Azīz al-Dīn Nasafi's *The Furthest Goal* (*Maqṣad-i aqṣā*); 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī's *Rays of the Flashes* (*Ashi' 'at al-lama'āt*) and *Gleams* (*Lawā'iḥ*); and 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī's *The Standpoints in the Science of Theology* (*al-Mawāqif fī 'ilm al-kalām*). Liu himself translated *Gleams* (*Lawā'iḥ*) under the title *Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm,* as noted previously.[74] This was significant because from these references, we are able to determine the Arabic and Persian sources that informed Sino-Muslim scholars. Therefore, Liu's contribution to the preservation of the Sino-Islamic tradition was also substantial.

The main objective of Liu Zhi's *Rituals of Islam* was to delineate the ritualized practices of Islam and their personal meaning. This work is divided into twenty chapters of varying lengths. The first three chapters serves as an introduction or summary of the formative principles discussed in the *Metaphysics of Islam*, such as God's unicity, creation, prophets, and the role of Muhammad. The successive chapters focus on specific aspects of lived practice and relational hierarchies and interactions. He detailed the five pillars of Islam: the verbal testimony of faith, prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage; the ritual slaughter of animals; the five relationships (*wulun* 五倫); congregational prayer; marriage; and funerals. Overall, the text is divided by subheadings, often with close translation of Qur'ānic passages, which Liu explained at length. While his primary concern was rectifying practices among his Sino-Muslim community, Liu often detailed the theological or mystical aspects behind performing certain personal or relational activities.[75] The *Rituals of Islam* was also the only one of the *Han Kitab* works to be included in the *Complete Library of the Four Treasuries*

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(*Siku Quanshu* 四庫全書), the official Qing compendium of Chinese texts collected under the Qianlong emperor 乾隆帝 (1711–1799).[76]

Liu Zhi completed his comprehensive teaching on the core elements of Islam when he wrote *The Veritable Record of the Utmost Sage of Islam*. This text presented Muhammad as a sage and demonstrated that there was no necessary physical or temporal proximity for sagehood. Liu wrote a thorough narrative of Muhammad's life revealing that he should be understood as a complete model for conduct and the messenger of orthodox knowledge. Due to the rich detail in Liu's description and the expansiveness of his work, he was able to elaborate on many particulars in the life of the Prophet that were not addressed by earlier Sino-Muslim authors.

Liu's *Veritable Record of the Utmost Sage of Islam* is presented as a "translation" of a Western scripture (*xijing* 西經), and as noted previously, it supposedly was based on a Persian biography of Muhammad titled *Tarjuma-i Mawlūd-i Muṣṭafa'*.[77] Liu wrote an earlier Chinese biography of Muhammad, but he feared that it was insufficient after discussing it with some colleagues. It was then that he came across this Persian text and, believing the discovery to be a sign from God, commenced his *Veritable Record*.[78]

Liu Zhi's writings were popular long after his death and have been reprinted on a number of occasions. The *Tianfang* trilogy represents the height of Sino-Islamic scholarship. All three of these works were intended to be in a dialogue: "These books are three and at the same time one. They are like stepping up the stairs, going into the hall, and entering the inner chamber."[79] Here, he evoked Confucius's (*Kongfuzi* 孔夫子) (551–479 BC) language to delineate the tripartite division of the dimensions of his Islamic vision.[80] Liu's works were intended to inform the reader how to properly practice (the stairs), develop a proper understanding and belief in an Islamic cosmological perspective (the hall), and return to God as the origin (the inner chamber).[81] All together, these works reflected Liu's traditional perspective on the role of Islam through an innovative and highly stylized arrangement. He creatively blended the distinct lexicon of the Chinese intellectual tradition with specialized terminology from Arabic and Persian to present a uniquely Sino-Islamic portrait of Islam.

Ma Dexin (1794–1874)

Like the other scholars discussed in this chapter, Ma Dexin was born into fortuitous conditions, being raised in a religious family in Dali,

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Yunnan, in Southwest China. He was a descendant of the Muslim governor of Yunnan, Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-din Umar al-Bukhari (1211–1279) of the great Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), in the twenty-first generation.[82] This genealogical connection validated his lofty ancestry within the family of Muhammad, which confirmed his spiritual inheritance and brought him great authority within the Sino-Islamic community. His early education mirrored that of many Sino-Muslim students of the time, which included study in the dialogical reading of texts with an elder at a local religious institution or mosque. Later in life, Ma traveled to established religious centers within the scripture hall system for further training. His student Ma Anli reported:

> Old Master Fuchu was brought up in Yu 榆 [Contemporary Dali 大理] and received some knowledge transmitted from his father. Naturally he possessed extraordinary resolve and he embarked on a long journey to Shaanxi 陝西 and extensively read the canonical scriptures (*jingji* 經籍) with deep feelings of admiration for the customs handed down from Muhammad.[83]

In 1834, at the age of forty, Ma traveled to Shaanxi to study in an important scripture hall center. When he arrived, he was already proficient in Arabic and Persian from his previous training in Yunnan, where Chinese-language Islamic instruction was not widespread.[84] Here, he commenced his study of literary Chinese in order to follow the scripture hall model.[85] He studied under Master Zhou Laoye 周老爺 (1770–1850), the fourth-generation disciple of Hu Dengzhou.[86] Master Zhou played a central role in reestablishing the scripture hall structure in Northwest China and established his own Shaanxi school of thought (*Shaanxi xuepai* 陝西學派).

In the early nineteenth century, Muslims from various strains of Islamic revivalism in China, especially Sufi brotherhoods, ridiculed the use of the Chinese language for Islamic instruction and the inclusion of classical Confucian learning. Zhou established a strong following in Xi'an, including several hundred students, and produced eight great disciples who would continue the distinctive qualities of the scripture hall method (Ma Dexin being the only one from South China).[87] Ma pursued advanced textual study under Zhou for nearly eight years (1834–1841) but still believed that he had not grasped the essence of Islamic teachings.

In 1841, Ma set off for the pilgrimage, leaving through Burma via an old spice route, and headed across the Indian Ocean, with a stay in Calcutta.

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He stopped in Yemen and Jeddah; visited Mecca and Medina; traveled to Cairo twice, where he studied in al-Azhar for at least half a year; met the Sultan in Istanbul (possibly Abdülmecid), where he was granted permission to tour the imperial palace; spent some time in Damascus; and finally lived in Jerusalem for half a year. Ma Anli explained:

> He made pilgrimage to the heavenly court (*diting* 帝庭) to contemplate the traditional customs and good governance of the ancient sages. Over an eight-year period, he studied directly with famous worthies (*xian* 賢) and erudite scholars, deepening his knowledge in the study of nature (*xing* 性) and mandate (*ming* 命). Upon returning, he closed his doors in order to examine and rectify [his understanding of Islam]. He joined together that which he obtained in Arabia and that which was possessed in the ancient collected canons of the eastern lands.[88]

All together, Ma spent eight years traveling throughout the Middle East, finally returning in 1849 at the age of fifty-five. His exceptional pilgrimage to the heartlands of Islam brought him great prestige among Sino-Muslims, who regarded him as the foremost scholar of the time.

Upon his homecoming, Ma became the head cleric in Huilong 回龍, which become the main educational site in Southwest China. At this point, Ma became a teacher, gaining a strong following of disciples from throughout Yunnan. While Ma always referred to himself as a student of Islam (*tianfang xueren* 天方學人) because of his elevated reputation, most Sino-Muslims referred to him as "sheikh" (*lao baba* 老巴巴).[89]

Ma's teaching program incorporated the structure and systems of the scripture hall school from Shaanxi, while simultaneously introducing a systematic Arabic curriculum. This new parallel linguistic method, which equally stressed Chinese and Arabic (*zhong-ah bingshou* 中阿並授), valued the Chinese and Islamic intellectual heritages like no other school before, and required students to become proficient in both traditions. This system, quickly dubbed the "Yunnan school of thought" (*Yunnan xuepai* 雲南學派), became very popular, attracting students from throughout China.[90]

Ma produced two important inheritors of this approach who became very well-known scholars in their own right, Ma Lianyuan 馬聯元 (1841–1903) and Ma Anli. Both of these men preserved Ma Dexin's strategy for emphasizing equal authority between Chinese and Arabic sources for understanding the Islamic tradition.

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During the final years of Ma Dexin's life, there was an ongoing conflict between Yunnanese Muslims and the Qing military. Referred to as the Panthay Rebellion (1856–1873) by Western sources,[91] it was an uprising in western Yunnan province led by Du Wenxiu 杜文秀 (1823–1872), which eventually established an Islamic state called the Kingdom of Southern Peace (*Pingnan Guo* 平南國), with its capital in Dali. Ma was not one of the political or military leaders in the rebellion,[92] but he was the most eminent religious leader in Southwest China and taught several of the leading military officers who took part in the clashes.

Ma's precise role in the ongoing conflict is not well documented, but Qing officials monitored him. They knew that he was an important religious figure and officially recognized him as the head of Yunnan's Muslim affairs.[93] He communicated messages between neighboring communities of Muslims within Yunnan as the Qing military moved across the province, brutally crushing the rebels. His activities enabled Sino-Muslims to act quickly and both escape and combat the Qing aggression.[94] On occasion, he fostered the opposition of the Qing military. As Qing forces advanced on the sultanate's capital, he informed Du Wenxiu, "I have already secretly ordered my disciples Ma [Rulong] 馬如龍 as the Grand Commander of the Three Directions with Ma Rong 馬榮 as second in command . . . to launch a rear-guard attack from their base in Yimen."[95] In other instances, Ma advocated ceasing violence, especially the killing of Sino-Muslims.[96]

For a moment, in 1863, Ma Dexin was conferred the title "King of Southern Peace" (*Pingnan Wang* 平南王) by Du Wenxiu, but this position was soon quashed by an opposing Muslim leader. Ma was then confined to Dali for the remainder for the rebellion.[97] In 1874, after the Qing took control of Yunnan, the Qing governor-general accused Ma Dexin of attempting to incite unrest and had him executed.[98]

Literary Output

Late in his life, Ma Dexin settled in Kunming 昆明 and dedicated himself to writing, becoming the leading intellectual in the *Han Kitab* tradition of the nineteenth century. He was distinctive among scholars of his time because he attempted to preserve the Sino-Islamic tradition produced in the *Han Kitab* literature, but he also recognized the importance of Arabic-language instruction and learning for his students who would live in a global Islamic world. All together, he wrote around forty literary works,

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written in Arabic and Chinese, which covered various religious sciences and pedagogical disciplines.

The anatomy of Ma's works are structured in three ways. Many of his works were written directly in Arabic. However, the title pages of all his works were given in Chinese, whether in transliteration or translation, even in texts that contained no other Chinese in them. Other compositions were written entirely in Chinese. Ma Dexin was knowledgeable in the Chinese literary tradition and could read and write Chinese, but often Chinese-language works attributed to him were actually written down by his disciple, Ma Anli. Several of these are understood to be the Chinese translations of Ma's Arabic original compositions. The third structure that Ma employed was the dual use of Arabic and Chinese within a single text. He accomplished this in various ways. Most often, he included technical Arabic terminology or proper names in his work and presented these terms first in Arabic script, then in Chinese transliteration, and finally Chinese translation. Other bilingual texts were more complex and included parallel compositions on the same subject matter within a single text, through polydirectional rendering of complex registers of vocabulary. Before covering some of Ma Dexin's teachings, let me briefly introduce some of his most influential texts.

Ma's work covered a variety of subjects and both preserved the *Han Kitab* tradition of his predecessors and reintroduced a standard global Arabic discourse through the production of new texts. In many books, Ma highlighted and commented on the work of earlier *Han Kitab* authors. One such project focused on offering new editions of classic Sino-Islamic works. In 1864, Ma published two texts, *Commentary on the Compass of Islam* (*Qingzhen Zhinan Yaoyan* 清真指南要言), and *The Essential Record of The True Explanation* (*Zhenchuan Yaolu* 真詮要錄). These were edited and abridged versions of Wang Daiyu's *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching,* the inaugural text in the *Han Kitab;* and Ma Zhu's encyclopedic volume *Compass of Islam* (*Qingzhen Zhinan* 清真指南), which was written by Yunnan's first great Muslim scholar and Ma Dexin's ancestor. In 1867, Ma published *Exegesis of Metaphysics of Islam* (*Tianfang Xingli zhushi* 天方性理注釋), which offered his reflections on Liu Zhi's most influential work, *Metaphysics of Islam*.

Ma Dexin not only revered the early scholarship done by *Han Kitab* authors, but in a similar method, he employed motifs from traditional China to depict the creeds of his religion. In most of his Chinese treatises,

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he employed the distinct Chinese discourse of neo-Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist terminology to explain key principles in matters of faith and practice. Minor works covering these topics include *The Highest Praise in Worshipping Heaven* (*Zutian Dazan Zhenjing* 祝天大贊真經), *Tenets to Revive the World* (*Xingshi Zhen* 醒世箴), *The Purpose of Nature and Mandate* (*Xingming Zongzhi* 性命宗旨), and *Essential Discourse on Returning to God* (*Huigui Yaoyu* 會歸要語). *A General Summary of the Great Transformation* (*Dahua Zonggui* 大化總歸) dealt with these principles in a more comprehensive manner.

Ma also focused on developing rigorous educational tools for Sino-Muslims. In *Beneficent Illustration of Ritual and Prayer* (*Lifa Qi'ai* 禮法啟愛) and *Islamic Codes for Primary Education* (*Tianfang Mengyin Ge* 天方蒙引歌), he outlined the orthopraxis of Islam and focused on the sources and foundations of Islam that would prepare young students to excel in their future studies. Other times, he revived the tradition of Islamic sciences and explained geography and astronomy in texts such as *Description of the World* (*Huanyu Shuyao* 寰宇述要) and *Sources of the Islamic Calendar* (*Tianfang Liyuan* 天方曆源). He also translated Persian classics into Chinese so that his disciples could access what he perceived as authoritative Islamic knowledge. In *Completing the Path of the Way* (*Daoxing Jiujing* 道行究竟), Ma rendered 'Azīz al-dīn Nasafī's famous book, *The Furthest Goal*, using the symbolism of neo-Confucianism.

The other major strain of work in Ma's literary production was the creation of numerous Arabic texts, which again covered various topics, with titles such as *The Story of Adam* (*Qiṣat Adam*), *Secrets of the Return* (*Asrār al-Ma'ād*), *Lies of the Christians* (*Akādhīb al-Naṣāra*), *Islamic Admonitions* (*al-Naṣā'iḥ al-Islāmiyya*), *Yearning* (*Mushtāq*), *Stimuli* (*Munabihāt*), *Complete* (*Kāmil*), and *The Definite* (*al-Muhkam*). These treatises were aimed at advancing knowledge of Islam in its mother language and making it accessible to Ma's community. Others, like *Verification of Prayer* (*Taḥqīq al-Ṣalāt*), *Logic* (*Manṭiq*), *Consistent Grammar* (*al-Naḥw al-Mutasiq*), and *Consistent Morphology* (*al-Ṣarf al-Mutasiq*), were meant to prepare Muslims both practically and intellectually. In fact, several of Ma's texts became part of his own curriculum for students based on his *zhong-ah bingshou* method and utilization of texts.[99]

Ma Dexin's contribution to the intellectual landscape of nineteenth-century China continued the local strategies of previous authors while heralding new methodologies for including Sino-Muslims in international

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dialogues concerning Islam. During this period of maturation, he explored a triad of goals—initially, to provide a clear and straightforward outline of Islam in Chinese; then, to explain the depths of Islam through the technical Sino-Islamic vocabulary; and finally, to prepare future Sino-Muslims to participate in the larger Muslim world by providing both the tools for understanding and communicating with them and firsthand knowledge of the manner in which Islam was expressed in Arabic.

Therefore, Ma simultaneously elaborated on the techniques of earlier *Han Kitab* authors while developing his own procedures for teaching and explaining Islam. He used Chinese and its symbolism because he believed that it captured the true essence of Islam without contradicting its inherent claims. He also maintained that Arabic was equally valuable, if not more, in both its utility for describing his religion and the opportunities that it would provide for his disciples. Before moving to the specific topics of pilgrimage, the Qur'ān, and the use of Arabic, it is useful to get a brief, more general portrait of Ma Dexin's thoughts.

Ma wrote several works that became highly regarded by his successors, demonstrated by both the recurrence of republication and reference to them in later contexts. One of his most important works was *Essence of the Four Canons* (*Sidian Yaohui* 四典要會), in which he carefully delineated the Islamic tenets of faith and practice and displayed their theological foundations, all steeped in the Sino-Islamic vocabulary of the *Han Kitab*. Ma also described his pilgrimage to Mecca in *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* (*Chaojin Tuji* 朝覲途記), which outlined his incredible tour of the Middle East and demystified the hajj for future Chinese pilgrims. Finally, in *A Direct Explanation of the Treasured Mandate of the True Scripture* (*Baoming Zhenjing Zhijie* 寶命真經直解), he made the first concerted effort to translate the entire Qur'ān into Chinese to make it accessible to the local audience. However, Ma was only able to translate the first five chapters before his death.

Intellectual Contributions

Ma Dexin's most famous text, *Essence of the Four Canons*, provides the essential features of his teachings. Its contents cover a wide variety of topics, including faith and practice, the nature of God and the cosmos, and resurrection and final judgment. Ma makes these central doctrines accessible to the Chinese reading audience, who, as he perceived, had misunderstood how to be Muslims. Ma lamented the general hesitation to

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implement Islamic teachings in China and the inability to understand the basic principles properly. He explained:

> Shallow meaning is clear and intelligible, deep principle is difficult to know. And yet we have not exercised the learning of Islam (*tianfang*) to change what is difficult to know. I am afraid that everyone mistakenly recognizes this principle. Therefore, I employ Chinese to translate it [i.e., Islam].[100]

Ma was generally troubled by what he perceived to be the low level of religious knowledge among his Sino-Muslim neighbors. For this reason, he presented his interpretation of Islamic orthodoxy and explicitly outlined what he believed to be heterodox.

The Nature of God

One of the main features of Ma's teachings was his attention to delineating a proper understanding of God. This topic was central to any discussion of Islamic theology, and he followed many earlier Muslim authors in his description of God. Ma aimed to demonstrate the relationship between God and His creation in relation to absolute and conditional existence. His discussion employed a number of terms familiar with preexisting Chinese frameworks, but reassigned their meaning as he constructed a portrait of the Islamic worldview. Foremost in this description is the assertion of oneness of God (*tawḥīd*): "The certain and real lack falsehood, it is called True. The singular and separate stands alone, it is called One."[101] He attested that God is one in spite of being perceived in two ways: in His Essence (dhāt), which is unknowable, and through His Attributes (*ṣifāt*). He explains: "The Enumerated One (*shuyi* 數一) is the seed of heaven, earth, and the myriad things. The Real One (*zhenyi* 真一) then is the Lord of the world and myriad things."[102] Here, Ma asserted the unicity of God while pointing to the manner in which He unveils Himself to creation. The Real One is God in His Essence, while He manifests reality through His attributes, which is understood as the Enumerated One.

Ma expanded these categories: "Only the Real One then constitutes autogenous (*ziran* 自然) Being (*you* 有). Outside of the Real One, everything that has form or lacks form, they all constitute Illusory (*huan* 幻) Being."[103] While it may seem that Being is divided, it is in fact on a

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continuum of reality, where Real Being is the source and Illusory Being is the product

> How many are there which are Being? It does not exceed two extreme points: Real Being and Illusory Being. Real Being is the Being of autogeneity (*ziran*). This is called Original Being and it is not obtained and not possessed. Illusory Being is the Being of transformation and production.[104]

All together, we learn that the notion of God's Essence, the Real One, is expressed as an undifferentiated Being that is self-existing and self-arising. His Essence is ultimately unknowable, as Ma eluded to by quoting the Confucian classic, the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸): "Yet in its furthest reaches, there is that which even a sage does not know."[105] Creation is the process of that Being through God's Attributes—His role as the Enumerated One, where Being is experienced conditionally through the imaginal world.[106]

After delineating how God, as both Lord and Creator, is linked to His creation, Ma relates how this process is expressed in neo-Confucian and Daoist thought. He explains: "Non-Being, by means of comparison, is that which is difficult to explain in words. All the schools of thought put forward that which is the Non-Ultimate (*wuji* 無極) and Supreme Ultimate (*taiji* 太極) is called the oneness of enumeration."[107] The terms "Non-Ultimate" and "Supreme Ultimate" were well known and essential to both the neo-Confucian and philosophical Daoist systems. Zhou Dunyi's 周敦頤 (1017–1073) *Explanation of the Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate* (*Taiji Tushuo* 太極圖說) blended Confucian ethics with creative structures of production from Daoist thought. His short treatise was canonized when it was placed at the head of *Reflections on Things at Hand* (*Jinsilu* 近思錄), which became the authoritative text within neo-Confucian thought from the time of its compiler, the great Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200). Zhou's vision of the relationship between *wuji* and *taiji* are parallel to Ma's understanding of the unfolding of creation:

> *Wuji* and yet *Taiji*! *Taiji* in activity generates *yang* 陽; yet at the limit of activity it is still. In stillness it generates *yin* 陰; yet at the limit of stillness it is also active. Activity and stillness alternate; each the basis of the other. In distinguishing yin and yang, the Two Modes are thereby established.[108]

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Ma associated this process of exchange and production completely within Illusory Being as the consequence of the Enumerated One. He further explains this delicate distinction between God's Essence and Attributes in relation to the *Way* (*dao* 道):

> They say, "The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth. The named is the mother of the myriad things." This is also the oneness of enumeration. The Enumerated One is the seed of heaven, earth, and the myriad things. The Real One then is the Lord of the world and myriad things.[109]

Here, Ma quotes the opening passage of the *Daodejing* 道德經, by Laozi 老子, to evoke the transformative process of natural change in the imaginal world. The Enumerated One shapes the world, while the Real One serves as the source of creation. The opening line of the *Daodejing*, which would be implicitly present for most readers of these lines, begins, "The Way that can be spoken of is not the constant Way; the name that can be named is not the constant name." These words come closer to the qualities of God's Essence, and Ma describes the Real One in a similar manner:

> Therefore, as for the singular Reality, it is Reality unique without partner, it is venerable unique without partner, it is great unique without partner, it is substance unique without partner, and it is function unique without partner. That which is called separately and exclusively One is unique and exceeds heaven, earth, and the myriad things.[110]

Ma clearly distinguishes God as the source and how He should be understood as the product of creation. God is independent and transcendent, while being simultaneously essential and ingrained in the cosmos. This paradox is understandable in view of God's power to disclose Himself, the Enumerated One, while remaining unknowable in His Essence. The difficulties of understanding this relationship require faith in the veracity of God's revelation.

Faith

Ma Dexin's *Essence of the Four Canons* clearly positions faith (*xin* 信; *imān*) as central to the Islamic tradition. He relates this attitude by beginning

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the *Sidian Yaohui* with the six articles of faith according to the hadith of Gabriel, which has repeatedly been employed by Muslims to teach their religion.[111] Ma explained:

> The body is not cultivated from a heart that is not correct; submission is not sincere from faith that is not true. Therefore, faith constitutes the root of all the good meritorious acts. And the six tenets constitute the essence and serve as the source of faith. Faith in the True Lord, faith in the heavenly spirits, faith in the true scriptures, faith in predestination, and faith in resurrection.[112]

Ma clearly understood these six principles, faith in God, Angels, earlier scriptures and messengers, final judgment (*al-Qiyāmah*), and predetermination (*qadar*), and believed that they were essential in formulating a proper knowledge of the tradition. Faith in these principles leads to proper practice, and Ma intricately bound action to faith and described how they inform each other. He continued:

> The orthodox way (*dao*) of what is required of humans is the utmost. Faith and submission is the origin of what is required and that is it. Faith constitutes the substance of submission and submission constitutes the function of faith. Faith without submission is insincere faith. Submission without faith is dishonest submission.[113]

His overall description of faith demonstrated how sincerity was essential to actualizing one's convictions. Faith and acts were joined and informed each other.

After a general introduction describing the foundations and necessity of faith, Ma wrote individual chapters on the various articles of faith. In most of these chapters, he began by announcing his affirmations of these articles of faith and testified to his belief in angels, earlier messages, and earlier prophets. He announced, "I have faith in the True Lord who created the heavenly immortals (*tianxian* 天仙), which others call heavenly spirits (*tianshen* 天神)," [114] "I have faith in the True Lord who sent down the scriptures," [115] and "I have faith in the True Lord who commissioned the sages." [116]

All these concepts would appear familiar in the Chinese context. There were various sages and worthies who had dispensed knowledge throughout Chinese history, numerous scriptures that individuals interacted with,

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and scores of celestial beings (both benevolent and malicious) who interacted with Chinese people. Ma also declared his belief in the concept of predetermination or fate: "I have faith in good and evil existing in predestination."[117] This idea of destiny also would be readily accepted in the Chinese environment, where karma (*ye* 業) influenced understandings of one's future for the broader society.

Interestingly, Ma did not begin his sections on God and the resurrection in this manner. This was, by his own admission, due to the general inability to comprehend these new notions: "According to numerous people, it seems that it is difficult to have faith in what is perceived [in relation to resurrection]."[118] As Ma did elsewhere in the *Essence of the Four Canons*, he strove to clearly explain Islam in an accessible and intelligible manner. In no other Chinese religious tradition was there a concept of resurrection, so it was difficult for Sinicized Muslims to comprehend this belief. Ma explains:

> Resurrection is to be born again. Namely, the body is already perishing and the True Lord causes it to return to its original form and joins together with the original spirit for eternal life, where one does not die. In this particular case, the perishing body is brought back to life.[119]

Ma regarded a proper understanding of the resurrection essential to proper faith. He concluded, "Resurrection is the fruit of heavenly principle." All together, his traditional presentation of faith reflected both the proficiency of his audience and his views on orthodoxy. He followed long-held understandings of the articles of faith and presented them in an uncomplicated way. Ma also stressed the relationship between faith and acts, arguing that "submission to the teachings is that which serves as the principle of faith."[120] Ritual worship and religious performance also played a central role in Ma's perspective, which for him were exemplified through the five pillars.

Practice

Ritual observance constituted the formalized physical submission to God that Ma saw as central to being a good Muslim. The centrality of the five pillars of Islam (*arkān al-islām* or *arkān al-dīn*, meaning "pillars of the religion") has long been understood as the foundation of religious praxis and

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the standard of orthopraxy.[121] Ma was in complete agreement with this position and continually stressed their performance. He asserted, "The five meritorious acts are all regarded as the orthodox system of regulations."[122] From this system, one can please God and ultimately gain nearness to Him. Ma explained:

> Regarding ceremony, the sages transmitted to everyone the laws of bodily practice. Thereby one can abandon all passions and desires, sever all influences and obstructions, and by means of established bowing, prostrating, kneeling, and equivalent ceremonies seek the bodily return to the way of Reality. The prophets received this law from the True Lord and everyone observes it by means of seeking nearness to the True Lord.[123]

Through bodily submission, one practices the religiously legal obligations that God provided for dissolving hindrances along the path to union with Him. The path furnished through the five pillars leads back to God: "The five meritorious acts are, namely, these five. If one is near to the way of the Lord, then they return to the gate of the Lord."[124]

Completely abiding by these instructions is difficult, and not everyone is able to adhere to their performance. Ma claims, in regards to the five pillars: "Those who complete it are sages, those who observe it are worthies, those who are diligent in it are knowledgeable, those who negligent of it are foolish, and those who waste it are disobedient."[125] The physical actualization of faith and belief reaffirms personal convictions and commitment to God. The daily bodily remembrance of prayer continually maintains this dedication. Ma taught: "Among the five meritorious acts ceremony is regarded as the most essential. As for ceremony, one is not able to abandon it for a moment."[126] Thus, performance was the crucial aspect of proscribed service and the guiding principle for observance.

However, Ma indicated that practice could not be devoid of sincere intentions: "The five meritorious acts cannot lack sincerity and respect."[127] Deeds done without the correct objective would not only be deficient of value, but could lead to further ignorance of God's message and deviation from the path. Ma advised:

> If we maintain and observe the true meritorious acts then we honor the clear mandate of the True Lord. If we embody the utmost sage's observance then we each exhaust it for the sake of being a servant

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> of ceremony. It is incorrect to use it to seek worldly blessings. Some erroneously hope to become an immortal or a Buddha. By no means should one rely on doing good in hopes of a reward or stopping evil in fear of punishment. Nevertheless, there is reward in doing good and there is punishment in causing evil. This is a definite principle.[128]

Performing acts of duty in hope for material gain or in fear of punishment detract from the reverence given to God's commands and show a lack of appreciation for God's mercy. Therefore, one's deeds should be focused on God because He is the sustainer of life, not because He can punish. When intentions are sincere, then one's behaviors demonstrate their object of attentiveness. Ma elaborated on this point: "Learning is not honorable unless one recognizes the Lord. Meritorious acts are not honorable unless one serves the Lord. Ritual is not venerable unless one reveres the Lord."[129] An outward display of positive intentions will in itself reveal qualities of honor and respect and, thus, inform personal conduct in all aspects of life. Overall, it is through the five pillars that one is situated in the larger community and adheres to what God commanded and how this mandate was embodied through the example of Muhammad.

Despite the fact that the five pillars played such a crucial role in the lives of Muslims since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, religious leaders in China that Ma encountered failed to stress the importance of ritual performance. He took great issue with the notion that so-called true Islam was achieved when the essence of the five pillars was obtained by transcending them. He lamented: "There are those who completely abandon the five meritorious acts. They erroneously say that what they transmit and practice are inner meritorious acts, which illuminates the heart and completes the meritorious acts of nature."[130] Here, Ma was probably referring to charismatic spiritual teachers who promoted mystical ideas about the relationship between the individual and the divine.

Sufi brotherhoods were present in Yunnan for centuries and challenged Ma's conception of orthodoxy.[131] Ma went to great lengths to reject what he saw as unorthodox beliefs and behavior ("heterodoxy"; *yiduan* 異端).[132] He witnessed many of his fellow Sino-Muslims failing to perform the obligations because of these false teachings. He explained:

> According to them, the image of fasting and worship are ordinary customs and is not the meritorious work of the heart. They are

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> not able to exceed and cast off these conventions. Moreover, as for ablution, they say that it is cleaning; namely, the cleaning of the heart and not the cleaning of the body. As for worship, they say it is respect; namely, respect of the heart and not of bodily matters. As for fasting, they say it is guarding, namely, guarding against all passions and desires and not guarding against eating and beauty. As for pilgrimage, they say it is returning, namely, the myriad intentions returning to the Lord and not retuning to the native land. As for tax, they say it is abandoning namely, abandoning the self and not abandoning profit.[133]

These symbolic interpretations of ritual obligations fail to adhere to the physical performance of Islamic teachings. While Ma in many places focused on the inner transformative power of practice, he never excluded the necessity of religious obligations. In reference to the interpretations of the five pillars by these mistaken masters, Ma cautioned: "Alas! The sages from the beginning to the end never lost one day of fasting or missed one period of worship. A thousand scriptures and myriad treatises all record the ritual law of fasting and worship."[134] The precedent established by these authoritative sources affirm the importance of physical practice. And as Ma mentioned, practice that is not informed by faith is misguided. Therefore, he emphasized the paired observance of faith and good deeds.

All together, Ma Dexin offered a traditionalist interpretation of Islam that drew attention to both the physical submission to God's will through ritualistic obligations and sincere faith that motivates one's intentions toward pleasing God. His many Arabic and Chinese works reflect these fundamental principles and their various attendant doctrines in a multitude of ways. His life and work demonstrate his desire to reassert what he believed to be the essential qualities of Islam.

Ma's return to original sources, both as references in his work but also through his translations of the Qur'ān and other texts, combined with his literal return to Islam's birthplace in the Middle East, reveal that for these Sino-Muslims in the late nineteenth century, there was a eager longing for a genuine Islam. Ma also promoted this notion through his writing in Arabic and stress on language education, which led to pragmatic relationships between Sino-Muslims and their Arabic-speaking coreligionists abroad.

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Conclusion

While in many ways, Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin presented a similar traditional interpretation of Islam, they differed in varying degrees of emphasis. They all strove to provide a clear outline of Islam in Chinese language and imagery, which would be accessible to their local audience. These accounts differed in detail and focus, but all revolved around core principles of the nature of God, the world, and humankind's position within this relationship. They all utilized and developed a specific Sino-Islamic lexis, which transformed the definitions of certain words and expanded their meanings to possess simultaneous interpretations within differing philosophical systems.

However, there also were a number of differences among the works of all three authors. These reflect their training, exposure to various foreign textual sources, and shifting interpretations of Islam. I argue that many of them were influenced by the maturing discursive patterns and practices, emerging within their specific historical vantage point within China. Changing social and intellectual developments in the local context, such as the increasing sophistication of students, the ossification of scriptural patterns and literary networks, or the growing populations of participants in Islamic education, pressed scholars to refine their presentation of the Islamic tradition.

The other important factor that affected the shifting nature of Sino-Islamic scholarship among these three authors was geographical propinquity and spatial perceptions. In the case of Wang, Liu, and Ma, the theological scope and intentional discourses of their work alter in relation to their perceived religious geographies and communal engagement. Wang had a limited connection to the broader Muslim community, as he remained stationed in Nanjing and Beijing, which made him write for his direct audience of students and peers in these cities. Liu traveled widely throughout China and sought the scholarly approval of his Sino-Muslim peers. His work reflected a more comprehensive vision of *Han Kitab* scholarship, which situated his work within an ongoing dialogue of scholars writing in Chinese about Islam. And Ma envisioned himself as a participant of the global Muslim community and contributed to it. His travels took him to many Muslim-majority populations, and his writing reflected his perception of a united community of Muslims that were linked through linguistic bonds and sacred cosmographies, thus connecting them both physically and intellectually. His work was aimed at

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his local Chinese audience, but for the purpose of global participation, achieved through greater linguistic capability in Arabic and further knowledge of the Qur'ān.

All together, through the *Han Kitab* documentary process, dominant discourses were communicated in local redescriptions to a textual community at varying levels of nuance and concentration. While sharing in the ongoing negotiation of translingual discursive boundaries, these three authors continually revised and refined their presentation of Islamic orthodoxy. These differences become much clearer as we look specifically at their thoughts on pilgrimage, the use of the Qur'ān, and the importance of Arabic in the following chapters of this book.

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3

Routes of the Hajj Pilgrimage: Belief, Practice, and Performance

MUHAMMAD IS REPORTED to have said, "Seek knowledge even if in China, for verily, seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim."[1] This oft-quoted hadith posits that the search for knowledge is a necessary component of submission to God's will, even if it is, from Muhammad's perspective, at the other end of the Earth. But it also implies the interconnectedness between the accessibility of knowledge, personal exploration, and spatial journeying. For Muslim communities living in China, Islamic knowledge was intrinsically linked to their spiritual homeland, Mecca, and necessarily sought within it. This search for wisdom extended, in part, from a clear promotion for and performance of the hajj pilgrimage—one feature of Muslim religiosity that formulated a sense of belonging and authenticity within the broader Muslim community.

This chapter examines *Han Kitab* discursive practices at work in the construction of meaning related to the idea of pilgrimage. For these authors, the hajj embodied several central characteristics of religious substance. In the broadest terms, the pilgrimage conveyed a sense of communal identification, which transferred Muslims' collective memory or cultural heritage, brought with it religious and social authority, and united Muslims under the banner of Islam as a unified congregation. Advocacy for the pilgrimage, or participation in it, allowed Muslims at the imagined periphery of the Islamicate world to feel their centrality within the Muslim community. Their physical distance from the sacred heart of Islamic geography did not keep them from connecting with their coreligionists through their perceptions, beliefs, or practices.

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In what follows, I delineate the changing attitudes toward the hajj through Wang Daiyu's, Liu Zhi's, and Ma Dexin's works. All three authors highly regarded (even cherished) the performance of pilgrimage as a religious duty, but it is clear that its requirement was given greater weight by authors in each successive generation. As Sino-Muslims were gradually absorbed into a global context, the hajj was increasingly underlined in writings as an indispensable and obligatory observance of Islamic practice.

I am locating Sino-Muslim rhetoric about pilgrimage vis-a-vis significations and semiotics. To do so, I analyze each scholar's positioning of the hajj in this discussion and examine how their approaches situated it as an intellectual concept and enacted practice within their broader dominant discourses of orthodoxy. I trace Wang's and Liu's descriptions of and support for the hajj, and then outline Ma's journey throughout the Middle East and reflections about its significance as he made his own pilgrimage. Of course, their views were not the only voices regarding the hajj, and a number of other Sino-Muslims performed the pilgrimage.[2] Again, attention is being paid to these authors due to their unique discussions of pilgrimage, which mark significant discursive shifts within the *Han Kitab*.

In short, the perception of the hajj changed from a symbol of true belief, to a potential critical practice, and finally to an essential observance and religious duty. Wang Daiyu outlined the theological foundations of the pilgrimage and its role as a link to the time of creation and union with God. Liu Zhi underlined the physical practice of potential pilgrims when he stressed the ceremonial and experiential aspects of the pilgrimage by detailing the practices associated with it. Meanwhile, Ma Dexin emphasized the performance aspect of the journey itself, while arguing for its ability to rectify and renew religious understanding and asserting its doctrinal necessity.

Place and Space

Pilgrimage both represents and evokes a number of social, political, and religious sentiments through its performance and invocation. For the individual pilgrim, a journey is given meaning through the potential for personal spiritual transformation, elevation of social status, or the declaration of fidelity and allegiance to a sacred power or temporal polity. Pilgrimage can also unite communities by eliminating conventional differences of social standing, gender, and race. All of this revolves around the proclamation of the significance of pilgrimage by specific social actors whose

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opinions are authorized within a textual community. In *Han Kitab* texts, the authors point to a spectrum of meanings behind the concept.

The ritualization of a specific activity at a particular location establishes the grounds for demarcating the character of meaning that rests in the interpretive negotiation of motion, space, memory, and time. In order to understand these activities, the pilgrim seeks to ascribe ontological significance to the externality of relationships, actions, and places. The pilgrimage is shaped through these individual systems of meaning, and pilgrims understand their actions and beliefs through these various significations. The interrelations of symbols and meanings frame and motivate pilgrim behavior, thus giving extended substance to their activity. Meaning is thus captured and inscribed in experience, observation, participation, and/or remembering.

Central to the negotiation of pilgrimage's meaning is the arrangement of physical sites, environments, and the relationship between them. The semiotic geographies of pilgrimage are mapped onto material topographies existing in physical and mythical realms. We can think of places as lived sites that are interpreted through our encounters with them and defined by the relational emplacement of stable locations.[3] Through the collective positioning of sites of a particular geography, place is marked by familiarity and stability. However, place is further signified within the broader context of space, which facilitates movement.[4] Place and space are structured by social movement, interaction, practice, and activity. Space requires movement from one place to another, while a place requires space to be identified as different from another place. Hence, the two notions are codependent.[5] Thinking about spatialization, then, is not related to space in and of itself; rather, it is an examination of the production and consumption of conceptualizing place in relation to multiple contexts.[6] While all places are marked by their difference from others, specific points (in our case pilgrimage sites) are constructed as ontologically unique.[7]

Through modes of authorization, these sites are transformed from a mundane to a sanctified position. Jonathan Z. Smith has demonstrated that the reproduction of communal values are articulated through the sacrilization of landscapes. He explains, "somethings or someone is made sacred by ritual . . . divine and human, sacred and profane, are transitive categories; they serve as maps and labels, not substances; they are distinctions of office, indices of difference."[8] Sacredness is italicized through the discursive or linguistic marking of space and place as unique, distinct, and different. Sites of pilgrimage are considered valuable only through the

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social construction of their meaning within a particular discursive system and do not hold any intrinsic extraordinary essence. Ritual serves as the material manifestation of these meaning markers: Smith says that "ritual is, first and foremost, a mode of paying attention. It is a process of marking interest . . . It is this characteristic, as well, that explains the role of place as a fundamental component of ritual: place directs attention."[9] The communal authentication of difference of a specific place through ritualized acts declares value that is continually negotiated by its participants.

Nostalgia and Meaning

The social authorization of place coincides with the imagined idealization of its inherent value, personal meaning, and transformative power. Here, place is simultaneously real and imagined being, constructed both in relation and in opposition to other places. They are sites of contrast to the normative social order in which the relationship between places are defined by an asserted ontological difference. Michel Foucault calls these places heterotopia:

> real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.[10]

Heterotopias serve as sites for the negotiation of identity, social memory, and the constructions of sacrality. Being both imagined and real, they enable communities to establish alternative modes of ordering the social world that connect a glorified past, lived present, and idyllic future. For these authors, we can use the term *heterotopia* to denote the relationship between a distant idealized space that orders and defines one's own localized place through the installation and transference of meaning. In cases where pilgrimage is not a practiced ritual, but instead a discursive marker of identity and orthodoxy, as we see in the cases of Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi, analyzing it as the mediation of meaning between place, space, and

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time—or as heterotopia—is constructive when determining why authors think about pilgrimage and explain it in the ways they do. We find that pilgrimage, as a category, often serves as a metonym for the negotiation of tensions that Sino-Muslims perform in relation to their place within Islamic space.

Orientation is constantly reaffirmed through processes of movement between places of "here" and "there" and, temporally, between "now" and "then." Thus, pilgrimage juxtaposes the experiences of movement and emplacement by situating the individual within the dichotomous constructed world of sacred and profane. Pilgrimage, then, can "map the contours of the terrestrial" and "orient devotees temporally and spatially by creating cosmogonies and teleographies that represent the origin and destiny of the universe."[11] This map prescribes the routes of ritual commitments that elevate their action. The mandatory quality of the prescribed rituals qualifies their authenticity and establishes their authority for ingraining meaning. These routes "conjoin to create institutional networks that, in turn, prescribe, transmit, and transform tropes, beliefs, values, emotions, artifacts, and rituals."[12] Movement to and fro across space, or the creation of a dwelling place and paradisal domain, creates spatial longing. A sense of nostalgia is established for the sacrilized place as one moves away from it or awaits the return to it. Nostalgia manifests itself as a sensation of yearning, indicated.[13] Individual pilgrims do not create the teleographies of ritual spaces; rather, they participate in collective actions using prescribed socially constructed "universal" maps to navigate the routes back to a material or temporal origin.

For the pilgrim, the authentic sacred site is displaced in time and space and spatially located in a symbolically intangible place, which is continually renewed and accessed through religious meaning and reaffirmed by their oscillation between the two realms. In pilgrimage, access to the sacred remains unachievable without the subjective experience of dwelling outside it. Nostalgia impregnates the world with meaning, and the notions of otherworldliness and pilgrimage allow one to access the locus of divinity and punctuate existence with the sacred.

The meanings created through pilgrimage are affiliated with this cosmography and are maintained through the collective memory of the community. Nostalgic representation can thus be substituted for historical consciousness.[14] The nostalgic semiotic economy develops a longing for that which the pilgrim or collective memory created and maintains. The process of mapping space and creating routes for navigating the cosmos

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thus constructs collective identities and imagines degrees of social distance by drawing boundaries. Nostalgia is more than the remembering of the past; it attaches supplementary meaning to history by recovering or ingraining its significance.

Pilgrimage, as a spatial practice, bridges the existence between our everyday world and the nostaligized past by designating the boundaries of identify and communal history, thus prescribing how one positions themselves within their social, cultural, and religious geographies. In all three authors' work, the category of pilgrimage traverses this spectrum of connotations, and these perspectives aid in our interpretation of pilgrimage in the *Han Kitab*, especially since it is frequently described not as a practice, but as a guiding principle. More narrowly, the hajj is given meaning through broader Islamic scriptural tradition.

Hajj Origins

The hajj pilgrimage directs a metaphorical return to the origins of Islam in order to satisfy the nostalgic yearning to transcend the mundane and become closer to God. Movement through the temporal world transforms the pilgrims as they approach the sacred environs of the holy city of Mecca. The ritual observances conducted during the pilgrimage ingrain activity with religious meaning, bringing with them personal spiritual transformation and social elevation. The significance of the hajj for individual pilgrims is underlined by their physical and symbolic integration with the larger Muslim community. Overall, it reestablishes the pilgrims' commitment to Islam, renews their communal bonds, reshapes their personal outlook, and reconstructs their perceived societal status. These changes are as true for Chinese pilgrims as they would be for an Anatolian, a Bukharan, a Jakartan, or a Fulani Muslim.

The hajj pilgrimage has its origins in the story of Ibrāhīm (Abraham), his son 'Ismā'īl (Ishmael), and his wife Hājar (Hagar). Ibrāhīm's wife Sārah was not pleased with his relationship with Hājar and her son, 'Ismā'īl, so God ordered Ibrāhīm to take them away. They traveled in search of the place of God's house, and eventually Hājar and 'Ismā'īl were stranded in the desert. 'Ismā'īl became thirsty, so Hājar went looking for water, running back and forth between the hills of al-Ṣafā and al-Marwah. When she returned to 'Ismā'īl, he had scratched the ground and discovered the waters of *zamzam*. Ibrāhīm responded to God's mercy by exclaiming, "Our Lord, I have established some of my offspring in an uncultivated

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valley, close to Your Sacred House, Lord, so that they may keep up the prayer" (Qur'ān 14:37).[15] Ibrāhīm was also the builder of the Ka'bah, where it was established that the ritual observances should take place:

> We made the House a resort and a sanctuary for people, saying, "Take the spot where Abraham stood as your place of prayer." We commanded Abraham and Ishmael: "Purify My House for those who walk round it, those who stay there, and those who bow and prostrate themselves in worship." Abraham said, "My Lord, make this land secure and provide with produce those of its people who believe in God and the Last Day." God said, "As for those who disbelieve, I will grant them enjoyment for a short while and then subject them to the torment of the Fire– an evil destination." As Abraham and Ishmael built up the foundations of the House [they prayed], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. You are the All Hearing, the All Knowing" (2:125-7).[16]

This narrative outlined the mythic beginnings of the hajj and the origination of several rituals. The hajj was established as one of the five pillars of Islam (*arkān al-islām* or *arkān al-dīn,* meaning "pillars of the religion").[17] A hadith demonstrates its early and central importance for Islamic faith: "Islam is based on five (principles): To testify that none has the right to be worshipped but God and Muhammad is God's Apostle. To offer the prayers dutifully and perfectly. To pay Zakat. To perform Hajj. To observe fast during the month of Ramadan."[18] Muhammad also affirmed Mecca's status as special and unique: "Of all God's earth, thou art the dearest place unto me and the dearest unto God."[19] The early tradition established the significance of place, space, and performance, which was subsequently redescribed in numerous ways.

Hajj from China

Historically, Muslims across Eurasia had been making the hajj for centuries, including Sino-Muslims.[20] We have contemporaneous Muslim written accounts from Southeast Asia,[21] South Asia,[22] and Ottoman lands[23] describing pilgrimage journeys. Soon after Ma Dexin's travels, the hajj became an integral opportunity for transnational infrastructure building, political negotiations, and later nation building.[24] Sino-Muslims have always valued this requirement, and there were numerous pilgrims from

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China throughout the generations. Most notably were two eighteenth-century sufi leaders from Northwest China, Ma Laichi (馬來遲; c.1681–c.1766) and Ma Mingxin (馬明心; 1719–1781). Abu al-Futūh Ma Laichi was an important figure in the history of Islam in China, who would go on to be the "founder" of the first *menhuan* 門宦, or saintly lineage, in China.[25] Ma Laichi taught for roughly thirty years in China before undertaking the arduous journey for the hajj in 1728.[26] During his travels, he studied at various centers of Islamic knowledge, including Bukhara and Yemen, before returning to China. In Arabia, Ma Laichi was accepted as a student under the tutelage of an Indian Naqshbandi sheikh, Mawlānā Makdhūm.[27] Ma Laichi returned to China in 1734, bringing with him many books and the ability to read and expound on the meanings of these religious texts.[28] His new knowledge, practices, and position brought great esteem and authority within the community of Muslims in Northwest China, and Ma Laichi began to gain a significant following.

A few decades later, another pilgrim, Muḥammad Amīn Ma Mingxin, set out for the hajj, first stopping in Bukhara and then going to Yemen for further study. In Yemen, Ma Mingxin was initiated by a sheikh and remained there to study for twenty years.[29] On Ma Mingxin's return to China in 1761, Ma Laichi had already established a large following in the Hezhou and Xunhua districts of Gansu. At first, Ma Mingxin recognized the spiritual authority of Ma Laichi, but as his personal following grew, he became more independent and began to implement his own understanding of the Naqshbandī teachings.[30] It is at this point that Northwest China became increasingly violent due to internal discrepancies within the Naqshbandī orders and the developing rivalry between these two masters.

Unfortunately, Ma Laichi and Ma Mingxin never recorded their pilgrimage journeys, nor do we have any documented accounts of hajj travels from any of their Chinese contemporaries. Ma Dexin was the earliest to transmit a full record of his pilgrimage journey, but there is a brief account of the environs of Mecca from earlier Chinese travelers. So before exploring how Sino-Muslim authors explained the importance of the hajj, I briefly examine where it stood in the social consciousness of the Chinese.

Ma Huan and Mecca

One of the earliest historical descriptions of Mecca from a Chinese perspective was by Ma Huan 馬歡 (1380–1460), in *Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores* (*Yingya Shenglan* 瀛涯勝覽).[31] Ma was an official translator for three

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expeditions of the famed Muslim admiral Zheng He (鄭和; 1371–1435). There is little biographical info on Ma, but we can conclude that he was trained in the Chinese classics as a young man, as evident from his quotations of classicisms.[32] Later in life, he converted to Islam and became fluent in Arabic and Persian. These linguistic skills qualified him to be appointed as a translator and interpreter for Zheng's journeys. Ma joined the crew for the fourth expedition, which was the first to go beyond South Asia into the Persian Gulf. For this journey, Zheng commanded sixty-three ships with 28,560 men. In several trips between 1413 and 1431, they traveled through the Malay archipelago, Sri Lanka, South India, and as far as the Strait of Hormuz. At each locale, Ma explored the local environs and recorded his impressions. He continued to do this for his subsequent two journeys, later compiling from his notes a register of the peoples, sites, and commodities of each location.

Ma did not join Zheng He on his fifth expedition for an unknown reason, but he did accompany him on the sixth. This voyage consisted of 41 ships and went to Aden (*'Aden*) and Zafar (*Dhafār*) in Yemen. During the seventh and final journey, the company's explorations were recorded in the greatest detail. The fleet consisted of over 100 ships, and 27,550 men were employed. They left Nanjing in 1431 and returned two years later. This journey brought the sailors to East Africa and farther along the Arabian Peninsula. Ma, along with six other Muslim emissaries, traveled to Mecca and remained there for approximately three months. Upon his return, Ma diligently compiled his accounts of the twenty countries that he visited and produced the *Overall Survey*, which was finally published in 1451.

Ma's portrait of Mecca and its environs was detailed, but often incorrect or peculiar in its descriptions.[33] Ma said that from Calcutta, one would travel for three months before arriving in Jeddah (*Zhida* 秩達). To get to Mecca (*Mojia* 默伽), he directed one to go east, but in actuality, Mecca is west of Jiddah. From Mecca, he suggested that the Kab'ah (*Kai'apen* 愷阿呠) was more than half a day's journey away instead of situating it at the heart of the city. He then described the features of the mosque, including the gates, accurate measurements and lengths, and the black covering (*kiswah*). He noted that there were two black lions guarding the door, which are not otherwise attested.[34] From Mecca, Ma directed individuals to head west for one day to reach Medina (*Modina* 驀底納), when one would need to head north for several days. Here, he described the tomb of Muhammad (*Mahama* 馬哈嘛), where "right down to the present day, a bright light rises day and night from the top of the grave and

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penetrates into the clouds."[35] Ma also described more mundane features of the environment, such as the weather, food and livestock, language, currency, and commodities. He viewed the people of Arabia in a favorable light, recalling:

> They profess the Muslim religion. A holy man first expounded and spread the doctrine of his teaching in this country, and right down to the present day, the people of the country all observe the regulations of the doctrine in their actions, not daring to commit the slightest transgression.[36]

In general, Ma's account is straightforward, unemotional, and laconic. He seems to show his idealization of the sacred center, as much as his affinity for the real population of Mecca, but reveals no particular personal familiarity with the city or its holy sites.

Ma's *Overall Survey* was one text in the large corpus of expedition and geographical works written in Chinese during the Ming dynasty.[37] It would have had only very modest circulation among the general public, and it probably was not likely to be accessible to most Muslims. While it is evident from the *Overall Survey* that Ma revered Mecca, his treatise was not evangelic in nature, nor was it intended to inspire other Muslims to perform the pilgrimage or travel to the Middle East. In fact, there is no specific mention of the hajj or its importance.

We can see that Mecca was already understood as an important religious center during the premodern period. However, while Ma Huan's work provided us with an early description of Mecca and its environs, it does so without any intention to inspire participation in the hajj. On the other hand, Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin created their works with much more forethought and purpose, intending to illustrate, motivate, and authenticate the importance of the hajj.

Wang Daiyu and the Hajj Pilgrimage

Wang Daiyu wrote about the hajj as a religious duty and rewarding spiritual exercise. His discussion was concise in length and modest in detail, but overall, his message was one of faith in the benefits of the pilgrimage and the sacred geography that it established. He delineated the theological implications of performing the hajj and the establishment of the Kab'ah at the time of creation. While he never personally went on the hajj, he

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stressed the direct harm of neglecting it and emphasized the transformative qualities that it can provide for a believer. His presentation offers a heterotopic explanation of Mecca as an imaginal space that served to construct a sacred geography whereby pilgrims could move toward to their eternal origins.

The Pillars of Virtue in Chinese Culture

Wang directly explored the hajj in a chapter entitled "Five Constant Virtues (*Wuchang* 五常)" in his *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching* (*Zhengjiao Zhenquan* 正教真詮). This was the first chapter of the second half of the book, which often dealt more with practical matters of religious praxis than specific theological discussions. Here, Wang assigned a recognizable and esteemed status to the five pillars of Islam within the Chinese context. The five constant virtues were reproduced from traditional Confucian ethical values and virtues: humaneness/benevolence (*ren* 仁), righteousness/morality (*yi* 義), ritual/propriety (*li* 禮), wisdom/knowledge (*zhi* 智) and integrity/faithfulness (*xin* 信). These were cardinal principles in the Confucian philosophical tradition that, when followed, would make the world operate as a unitive whole.

The foundation for this perspective was initially laid out by Confucius (*Kongfuzi* 孔夫子) and Mencius (*Mengzi* 孟子) and replicated throughout the generations by later authors.[38] Wang linked the primary actions of Islamic religious commitment with the moral dispositions of traditional Chinese thought. This method both accentuated the importance of the five pillars from the Islamic perspective and appropriated the authority of Confucian ideology within this specific semiotic framework.

Wang began his discussion by delineating the five principles within their Islamic context. "The five constant virtues of the orthodox teaching are God's clear command. Namely, the five constant virtues are remembrance (*nian* 念),[39] giving (*shi* 施), fasting (*jie* 戒),[40] worship (*bai* 拜), and gathering (*ju* 聚)."[41] The remainder of this comparatively long chapter of the *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching* outlined the nature of the five pillars and sketched their theological foundations and import. He explained that "the last meritorious act is called gathering. Gathering together is called a covenant (*yue* 約). A complete covenant is called faith (*xin* 信)."[42] Here, Wang demonstrated the significance of the hajj for pilgrims. In performing the hajj, each pilgrim completes his or her individual covenant with God and reaffirms the faith. Historically, the hajj was

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very often the culmination of a life of religious observance, and Wang stressed its capacity for demonstrating the faith of an observant.

The Covenant and Cosmography

God's covenant (*mīthāq* and *'ahd*) is both personal and communal (Qur'ān 2:40, 3:81, 3:112, 5:7, 33:7).[43] Individually, the personal commitment to obey God's commands is verified by the confirmation that His acts are not capricious or arbitrary (Qur'ān 6:164, 17:15). Wang related one's personal covenant and commitment to faith to the communal covenant established through the relationship between God and creation through Adam:

> When the beginning itself began to open up, the human ancestor descended to the Heavenly Square. The Heavenly Square lies precisely at the center of the four poles, just as a state has a ruler, and the body has a heart. How the shadows cast by the sun can confirm this! Afterwards, the human ancestor, Adam (*adan* 阿丹), obeyed the True Lord's clear command and then possessed the orthodox teaching.[44]

This relationship established Adam's pivotal role as the bearer of God's trust (*amāna*) (Qur'ān 33:72) and the establishment of the Kab'ah as the center of God's sacred geography. The Kab'ah is both the terrestrial nucleus of the cosmos and its most crucial organ or leader. By returning to this central axis, the faithful proclaim their allegiance and fidelity to God and continue to fulfill their obligation of the covenant.

In Wang's explanation, the obligation to return to the Kab'ah to perform the hajj was established during creation, and Adam disseminated this duty:

> The imperial command of the human ancestor, Adam, expounded and propagated to the masses that one time in all of one's life they should go on pilgrimage to the Heavenly Square. One should part with what one loves and leave home. Continuously, in the past and present, we mutually inherit the traces of the orthodox teaching because we do not forget the experience of the foundation.[45]

The movement from the profane world to the sacred center reinforces the principles of the tradition. Pilgrims inherit the legacy of those believers

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who previously returned, and they will continue to fortify the faith for future pilgrims. Wang explained that during the hajj, the pilgrim would also be inwardly transformed:

> Arriving at this space, one travels to His courtyard building and does not see their former person. During the pilgrimage experience of the Heavenly Square, one returns to consider the original Lord and the self opens up and begins to awaken. What is this that creates and transforms heaven and earth?[46]

This change positions the pilgrim within the communal and cosmographical environments by generating a feeling of belonging to both a community of believers and a sacred cosmos, ingrained with purpose and meaning. Wang demonstrated that the theological motivations for the process of returning established within the hajj verify the foundations of Islam and locate the intersection of God's interaction with humankind at the Kab'ah. The individual and communal aspects of the covenant between God and creation are reestablished with each pilgrim, and the sacred center of the cosmos is confirmed.

Embodying the Five Pillars

Finally, Wang presented the hajj as the quintessence of the five pillars and asserted its crucial importance for Islamic praxis. He declared, "This orthodox teaching of gathering is the faith of the congregation; it covers the five constant virtues of the orthodox teaching."[47] For Wang, performing the pilgrimage demonstrated the believers' commitment and dedication to fulfill their duties as Muslims and encompassed the deeds actualized through their declaration of faith (*shahādah*), giving of alms (*zakāt*), daily prayer (*salāt*), and fasting during Ramaḍān (*ṣawm*). He also argued for the importance of completing the hajj, not regarding it as a supplementary requirement. He viewed pilgrimage as an essential aspect of Islam that was the foundation of the Islamic *dao* (道 or path). He cautioned:

> In general, when one knows this path but does not observe and adhere to it, their transgressions are increased doubly, and their heart is even more confused. Namely, it is like being able to eat yet not digesting. Surely they are stagnant and not comfortable. Not

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> only do they lack benefit but they turn back to transferring harm. Are they not able to stop and reflect?[48]

Wang condemned those who did not observe this duty because of its difficulty to accomplish or the abundance of resources required. He understood pilgrimage to be an integral part of the primary practices of Islam and thought that not performing it would be a grave detriment to their personal salvation and communal fellowship.

In general, Wang situated the pilgrimage as a paramount practice that embodied the qualities of the other pillars of faith and personally transformed the believer from the former self. He greatly valued the hajj because it enabled Muslims to actualize their covenant with God and return to the heart of their sacred geography. He also likened the five pillars to the five constant virtues of the Confucian tradition, bringing authenticity and authority to Islamic practices in the Chinese setting. Ironically, Wang never performed the pilgrimage himself. There is no discussion about why he did not go to Mecca, but we know that his activities were very localized, as he lived most of his life in Nanjing and moved to Beijing only toward the end of his life.

What we can glean from Wang's treatment of the pilgrimage and his personal activities are that the hajj was seen as essential to religious observance and personal redemption, but it was difficult to realize. As stated earlier, even Wang himself never went on hajj despite his clear criticism of those who did not perform this ritual. This may be why Wang stressed the theological underpinnings of the pilgrimage and the symbolic dimensions of the Kab'ah's cosmography and connection to creation and Adam. Wang discussed the pilgrimage within a field of belief because for him, as well as the Sino-Muslim community that he was addressing, the most essential feature of their Muslim identity was belief in the principles of the religion. He wanted to clearly define what he interpreted as the traditional features of the religion even if their ideal was not achievable in practice. Therefore, Wang defined Islam as a series of beliefs that, when followed, situated the adherent as an observant Muslim. This indicates that for the Sino-Muslim community in Southeast China in the mid-seventeenth century, the pilgrimage was a foundation of their belief rather than a critical aspect of their religious practice. In this regard, the concept of the pilgrimage generated a sacred geography that instilled life with purpose for a community who understood the signs of God. Believers reflected on their desire to

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return to the Kab'ah and understood the hajj as a symbol of their future union with God and the fulfillment of His covenant.

Liu Zhi and the Hajj Pilgrimage

Liu Zhi also viewed the hajj as both a personal transformative experience and a religious responsibility of utmost importance. He discussed the pilgrimage at length in his *Rituals of Islam* and outlined each phase of the pilgrimage rites performed during the hajj. Liu clarified the theological and liturgical aspects of the hajj in order to bolster a strong faith in its benefit, establish the Kab'ah's sacred geography, and urge all believers to perform the pilgrimage. However, he simultaneously set forth acceptable reasons for not performing the pilgrimage and methods for gaining equivalent merit when not going on hajj. Therefore, similar to Wang, he emphasized the doctrinal foundations and transformative rewards of the hajj, but he did not belabor its necessity. He creatively demonstrated Sino-Muslims' ability to perform obligatory observances and identify with the larger Muslim community while remaining geographically isolated from them.[49]

Meritorious Acts and Chinese Culture

Like Wang, Liu discussed the pilgrimage within a broader discussion of the five pillars of Islam, but he referred to them as the five meritorious acts (*wugong* 五功), emphasizing their somatic quality rather than their ethical grounding as virtues. He declared, "To reverently admire the five meritorious acts is the completion of the way of Heaven."[50] Here too, Liu bonded Islamic practices with admirable and exemplary behavior within the Chinese context. *Gong* 功, or a meritorious act, was a concept developed in the medieval Daoist tradition, adapted in Buddhist sources and popularized during late imperial China, when Liu was writing, through *Ledgers of Merits and Demerits* (*Gongguo Ge* 功過格).[51] These were used to define and measure meritorious acts in order to help individuals determine what behaviors should be performed to accumulate positive merit and direct their fate to an advantageous end.[52]

Therefore, Liu skillfully tied the five compulsory observances of Islam with the moral ethics of Confucianism, the accumulation of good and removing of evil of Daoism, and the Buddhist concept of karma. This method captured the authority of these traditions on behalf of Islamic

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practices by associating them with recognizable and admirable actions within the Chinese setting.

His discussion of the pilgrimage reflected his overall view of the five pillars as means to achieve union with God. He wondered:

> How is the body to be rectified? The five affairs of the Sage's teaching are these: Remembrance, by which one knows the place of coming home; propriety, by which one practices on the path of coming home; setting aside, by which one releases oneself from loves; fasting, by which one cuts oneself off from things; and assembly, by which one goes home to the Real.[53]

These actions enable believers to enact their individual religiosity through embodied practices. The pilgrimage completes that commitment, as Liu declared, "Once in a lifetime, one makes pilgrimage to the Heavenly Tower in order to realize the true aspiration that one is sincerely inclined towards."[54] Through pilgrimage, the participant can join in the communal establishment of meaning, through which the actions of the pilgrim reflect certain spiritual, social, and political significance. In this regard, Liu's analysis, like Wang's before him, outlined the transformative power of the hajj for individual pilgrims. He maintained:

> As for the pilgrimage, one goes from distant to near and from outer to inner, returning to the position of knowing the original substance (*benti* 本體). The external aspect of the pilgrimage maintains the traces of swiftly moving one's feet, but the internal aspect makes the pilgrim one with the substance of the True Lord (*zhenzai* 真宰) without leaving a trace. How could there be anything that surpasses these meritorious works of cultivating the way?[55]

Liu's explanation regarded the physical movement from one's mundane setting to the sacred center as a symbol for the internal change that occurred as one approached God through the cosmographical hub positioned at the Kab'ah. Liu gave pilgrimage utmost theological import because, out of the five pillars, it most clearly demonstrated the internal progress of the believer through the completion of each ritual action performed during the hajj, which was ingrained with added religious meaning.

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Sacred Cosmos

Liu also echoed Wang's discussion of the Kab'ah as the center of a sacred geography. In the beginning of the *Rituals of Islam,* Liu declared, "A western proverb says, 'The earth is like a millstone.' The heavenly square is the navel of the millstone. As for its shape, the four sides are all below because this land is the axis of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, all places are drawn to it."[56] This description situated the Kab'ah as the nucleus of creation, from which all life forms are sustained as if they were connected as embryos. The Kab'ah then connects humans to the origin of this creation and allows them to return to this source. As Liu began his direct examination of the pilgrimage, he again asserted the Kab'ah's centrality in the universe as the center of the cosmos and the origin of creation:

> The Heavenly Tower is none other than the hall of pilgrimage, also called the Heavenly House (*tianfang* 天房) (Heavenly Square (*tianfang* 天方) or *Ka'ba* (*ke'erbai* 克而白)). The Creator (*zaowu* 造物) constructed it as a place to which people in all places would make pilgrimage. It is located in Mecca (*moke* 墨克) in Arabia. Mecca is really the ancestral land for everything under Heaven. The Heavenly Square is exactly at the correct position of Heaven and Earth. Located at the center of the whole earth, Mecca is also located at the center of Arabia. Thus, the pilgrimage hall also resides in the center of Mecca. Therefore, it is the direction of pilgrimage in all places. It is as if it is the heart of the four limbs of pilgrimage. It is the place that people must accept a personal investigation as pilgrims, returning to the place of the beginning of human life.[57]

Here, Liu described a cosmic world made up of a temporal environment that is pierced by a locus of divine creation. Returning to the Kab'ah allowed pilgrims to reconnect with this power that underlay creation. Throughout his discussion, Liu reiterated many of the arguments that Wang had previously made. He clearly outlined the theological conditions for understanding the role of the hajj for situating the Kab'ah as a physical access point to the sacred. He also explained how participating in it internally transforms the individual.

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Practice and Ritual

Liu also continued the discussion of the hajj to include several other details of the rituals associated with the pilgrimage. Where he diverged the most in his methods from other Sino-Muslim authors was in his considerable explanation of the practices that were associated with the pilgrimage. The bulk of the examination in the *Rituals of Islam* focused on the order and performance of the pilgrimage rituals. This perspective is significant because in addition to belief in the efficacy of the pilgrimage, Liu thought that knowledge of the ritual practices would reinforce believers' efforts to perform the hajj themselves. Therefore, Liu took the discussion one step further than Wang by explicating the details of how one would perform the hajj and why each of those processes symbolized deeper religious meaning and were important for spiritual growth.

The structure of Liu's analysis listed the significant moments of the pilgrimage in chronological order. He would make a statement and then spend from a few lines to several paragraphs explaining the reasons and logic behind each assertion. He began with preparations that should be made by the pilgrim before even starting the trip. He warned, "The journey's route extends a far distance and preparations must be made in advance. The journey is more than one to two years. If one has the ability, they must go there."[58] He continued to explain the responsibilities to perform immediately before entering the sacred precinct. The headings of the following few sections read:

> Thus, upon reaching the gate, one adopts prohibitions.
> One first cleans oneself and bathes.
> One changes one's clothing and wears fragrance.
> Pray and convey a declaration.
> One should recite the confession [i.e., the declaration of faith, *shahada*]
> Entering the state of prohibitions (*jie* 戒) [i.e., consecration, *iḥrām*]
> One wears the clothing of the consecrated state of prohibitions.[59]

In explaining each of these items, Liu went into great detail describing the way one should act and think, how things should look, and the minutia for each necessary object or action. For example, in describing the state of ritual purity, (*jie* 戒, *iḥrām*) Liu explained that

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> one reveals the top of one's head; exposes one's feet; does not wear yellow or purple clothing; does not wear anything containing an odor; does not smell of fragrant fruit; does not wash the head; does not cut or shave one's hair; does not trim one's mustache; does not clip one's fingernails; does not wear any decorations; and does not kill any living spirit.[60]

After these brief instructions, he then took the reader through each step of the pilgrimage by outlining the meanings behind the acts. He described the various circumambulations, the preparing of sacrificial animals, the activities at Arafat and Mina, the stonings, ritual sacrifice, and the visit to Muhammad's tomb. This comprehensive description gave pilgrims a firm foundation in their understanding of the various implications of the hajj. It could also be used as a pilgrimage manual for those undertaking the hajj.

Substitution for the Pilgrimage

Despite this detailed description and compelling recommendation in favor of performing the pilgrimage, Liu Zhi was also never able to do it himself. While he traveled widely throughout China, he was never able to voyage past its borders, and he does not explain why he was unable to go to Mecca. This makes his passionate endorsement for the hajj more interesting. How was he able to reconcile this disparity and mitigate his personal inability to perform the pilgrimage? As we saw earlier, Liu directly instructed his readers to perform the pilgrimage. He went into great detail to insist on the necessity of Muslim participation and the transformative results it provided for pilgrims. In a section titled "Through Pilgrimage, One Restores the Mandate and Returns to the Truth," he explained:

> If a person's remembrance of their longing for home is deep, then their remembrance of their devotion to the way is shallow. The command to perform the pilgrimage causes one to commence a journey to an outermost frontier, leaving their passions and desires, in order to approach the original source. Therefore, the pilgrim must part with what they love and leave home on a rugged trek after which they visit this realm. Then, those who cultivate the way must also overcome and depart from selfishness. Thereafter, one may return to the truth by diligently cultivating ascetic practices. In this manner,

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> one borrows the palpability of the pilgrimage in order to open up to the meaning of pilgrimage's impalpability.[61]

This perspective demonstrated that even in the midst of dire circumstances, one should perform the pilgrimage. Neither distance, nor attachment to family, nor poverty should impede one's participation in this key observance. Still, at the conclusion of his pilgrimage chapter, Liu discussed at length the reasons why Muslims do not *have* to go on the hajj. One section sets forth, "Scripture says, 'Believers must perform the pilgrimage. If the road is arduous it is permissible to wait.'[62] A tradition (*chaun* 傳) says, 'When one is blocked, or is in hardship, has no kin or friends, or is disabled, then they are permitted not to go on pilgrimage.' "[63] These justifications for not performing the pilgrimage are commonly held positions in Muslim societies, and Liu is not unique in his explanation. He continued to clarify:

> In general, all believers should go on the pilgrimage in order to complete the five meritorious acts commanded by the True Lord. However, if the journey is too difficult or obstructed, or one does not possess traveling expenses, or father and mother are living, or one is crippled by illness, then it is permitted not to go on the pilgrimage.[64]

Therefore, Muslims need not go on pilgrimage for a number of reasons related to themselves or those who rely on them in some manner. We do not know the circumstances for Liu not going on hajj, but we can assume that with his critical analysis and encouragement for participation, the reason was related to one of the preceding issues.

However, Liu did not leave the discussion at that. He employed a creative, rhetorical interpretation in his treatment of the duty to perform the hajj. His intentions behind stressing the importance of ritual practice became clear in his work. Through performing rituals, Sino-Muslims are able to participate in the community of Muslims despite their remote position from the sacred center. Ritual activity enabled this community to be in contact with the *ummah* and God through the meaningful sense of belonging that rituals created. For those who were unable to return to the Kab'ah, they could rely on other rituals to cooperate in the observance. In this regard, Liu asserted:

> *Qurbān* (*guerbang* 古而邦) and pilgrimage have the same meaning. All together, they are intended to seek closeness to the Lord.

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> However, while the pilgrimage is the ceremony of personally visiting the Heavenly House, *Qurbān* is for people from a far distance, who cannot reach the Heavenly House and is a ceremony that is practiced everywhere. Therefore, their ceremonial rules are more or less the same.[65]

Qurbān is celebrated at the end of the hajj during *'Eīd al-'Aḍḥā* to commemorate Ibrāhīm's willingness to sacrifice his son 'Ismā'īl. Through the celebration of *Qurbān* and the sacrifice of a sheep, Sino-Muslims were able to demonstrate their desire to participate in the hajj even if they were obstructed in some way from participating in it. Liu's justification for this ritual substitution was derived from the Qur'ān, where it says, "Complete the pilgrimages, major and minor, for the sake of God. If you are prevented [from doing so], then [send] whatever offering for sacrifice you can afford" (2:196). Liu highlighted this point to compensate for Sino-Muslims who were generally too distant to perform the hajj. By making the *Qurbān* sacrifice equivalent in merit with the pilgrimage, Liu presented his readers the means for understanding their relationship to God and the Muslim community without culpability for contravening one of the pillars.

Liu also likened the pilgrimage ritual to more common activities that a much broader population of Sino-Muslims could do. These activities extended moral and ethical merit to familiar relationships and deeds. He maintained:

> Father and Mother are the origin of one's birth. Morning and evening, one should visit one's parents. This is the pilgrimage of residing at home. Worthies and erudite individuals are the origin of thoroughly understanding the teachings. Morning and evening one should intimate with them. This is the pilgrimage of residing at a natural position. The heart is the origin of a hundred affairs. Examine and investigate it while in motion and at rest. This is the pilgrimage of oneself. The Lord Ruler (*zhuzai* 主宰) is the root origin of the myriad transformations. Within the mouth silently invoke Him, within the heart praise and extol Him. This is the pilgrimage of the most earnest. Generally, most people are unable to go on pilgrimage to the heavenly square; but they can observe these several things. They are also able to have the merits and achievements of personally going on pilgrimage to the heavenly square.[66]

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Here, Liu's unique perspective is revealed in full. While participation in the pilgrimage would be most desirable, and knowledge and belief in its benefits are essential to spiritual development, sincere intentions produce equal merit from quotidian behavior to that of the hajj. Liu derived this perspective from a reading of Qur'ānic passages that elevate sincerity (7:29, 40:14, 98:5) and hadith, such as the opening passage of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, which reads, "I heard God's Apostle saying, "The reward of deeds depends upon the intentions and every person will get the reward according to what he has intended."[67] Liu extrapolated this concept to members of his local community who would not easily be able to perform the pilgrimage but would feel connected to the larger Muslim community through their ritual participation. Their sincere deeds would be judged based on their intention, not the fact that they were not able to perform one of the five pillars. Therefore, this method enabled Sino-Muslims to feel secure with both their personal redemption and their communal belonging.

Overall, Liu Zhi emphasized the theological and practical aspects of the hajj while simultaneously advocating for participation in it and alleviating regret for not being able to do so. He outlined a cosmic geography revolving around the Kab'ah and demonstrated how believers could participate in returning to that sacred center. However, he also established how those who were unable to go to Mecca could gain equal merit for their intentions to go on hajj and performing alternative rituals. This ritual exchange reveals that for Liu, the meaning ingrained in the hajj could be attained through other processes. Therefore, an authentic and authoritative expression of faith was present in other meaningful religious activities that could be performed at any time and in any location. This enabled Sino-Muslims to feel that they belonged to the broader Muslim community despite their inability to return to the Kab'ah.

Ma Dexin and the Hajj Pilgrimage

Ma Dexin most clearly advocated the importance of performing the pilgrimage and its status as one of the foundational aspects of religious observance. He viewed the hajj as both personally transformational and religiously obligated, as his predecessors did, but he also believed that it was individually attainable and doctrinally rectifying. He discussed the pilgrimage directly in *Scripture of Bright Virtue* (*Mingde Jing* 明德經) and *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* (*Chaojin Tuji* 朝覲途記), as well as intermittently throughout the rest of his writings.

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In *Scripture of Bright Virtue*, Ma described the liturgical aspects of the pilgrimage, echoing Liu's treatment of the hajj in the *Rituals of Islam,* and laid out the physical geography of the Meccan religious environment and the stages of passing through it. While he reiterated the importance of the hajj, he did not distinguish it from the other pillars of faith, nor did he allow it to be abandoned. He urged all believers to go on the pilgrimage and enumerated the conditions that necessitated the journey, in contrast to Liu's description of factors that permitted believers to neglect its performance. This discursive shift promoted the notion that all Muslims should perform the hajj rather than identifying acceptable reasons for not performing it.

In *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*, Ma mapped out the physical realities of the entire journey from China to the Middle East. In it, he demystified the hajj for Sino-Muslims, while simultaneously asserting its importance as an essential Islamic observance. Overall, in his account, the hajj was a means for engaging the broader Muslim world and a vehicle for gaining what he perceived as a traditional interpretation of Islam. By detailing the particulars of the voyage, he enabled Sino-Muslims to acquire both the logistical knowledge about the pilgrimage and the determination and resolve for undertaking it.

Islamic Practices in China

Ma addressed the hajj directly in a chapter entitled "Pilgrimage" (*Chaojin* 朝覲) in *Scripture of Bright Virtue,* transmitted to us via one of Ma's foremost disciples, Ma Anli 馬安禮 (d. 1899). It is a chapter in the second part of the text, called "Opening Love for Ritual and Law" (*Lifa Qi'ai* 禮法啟愛). This short section reflected the earlier discussions by Wang and Liu, in that it addressed more legal and theological conditions for or explanations of performing the hajj. Overall, the discussion is prosaic in style and pragmatic in tone. He presented foreign names in transliterated Chinese next to the original Arabic.

Ma's treatment of the pilgrimage in the *Scripture of Bright Virtue* was situated differently from those of Wang and Liu, however. The pilgrimage was discussed in the broader context of ritualistic activity as it can be broadly conceived of in the Islamic context. Therefore, the hajj was treated in the same vein as wedding ceremonies, burial rituals, divorce, ablution, and other acts of observance. The shift in discursive procedures indicated that by the time Ma was writing, most Muslims who would be

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reading his texts understood the importance of the hajj, both as a necessary observance that was ethically compelling and one that would produce benefits.

Obligation and Observance

The content of Ma's *Scripture of Bright Virtue* was reminiscent of Liu's *Rituals of Islam*. It dealt primarily with the legal conditions of the pilgrimage and the traditional behaviors associated with the various stages of the ritual. He described how pilgrims ritually prepare themselves for the hajj, the clothing they wear, and permissible and prohibited activities and items. Throughout his narration, Ma outlined the geographical routes within the Meccan sanctuary and referred to several specific locations. For example, he declared, "Taking the oath (*shoujie* 受戒)[68] of the pilgrimage ceremony, one stays at Arafat (*erleifate* 爾勒法特, *'Arafāt*). . . . Arriving at *muzdalifah* (*muzideleifa* 母資德勒法), one halts."[69] In many ways, this made his explanation reliable for understanding the journey. His real-life experience gave him authority in his outline of ritual observances. Each leg of the ceremony was detailed until the completion of the pilgrimage. Finally, he explained, "At Mina (*mile* 彌勒, *mitā* [misspelled in Arabic], one emits from the right point. Together they [pilgrims] recite the word in praise. The pilgrimage is completed with a measure of hair and the breaking of prohibitions."[70]

The physicality of the description in the *Scripture of Bright Virtue* enabled Muslims to both understand their obligations and imagine themselves in the Meccan surroundings. In general, Ma highlighted the importance of the religious journey as an integral component of faith and practice. He instructed, "Visitation (*jiyalei* 擠呀勒, *ziyāra*) is the travel of the orthodox pilgrimage. It all belongs to the Lord's regulations."[71] Here, he emphasized that religious travel was part of the path of God's directives. The fact that the hajj was the most essential directive, but also the most difficult to complete, made it extraordinary, but it remained compulsory. He related, "In all of one's life, one only has to go one time."[72] Ma relayed the significance of the pilgrimage by outlining the liturgical details of the pilgrimage and bringing them to life through his experiential description. Knowledge of each facet and feature of the hajj equipped believers with the tools to enact and actualize their religious journey.

The *Scripture of Bright Virtue* also most clearly asserted that the pilgrimage was not a peripheral activity of secondary importance. The hajj

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was set as one of the cardinal observances of the Islamic tradition, and Ma believed that it should be understood in this manner and followed in accordance. The most revealing point about the importance of the hajj was from Ma's opening passage, where he specified who was required to perform the pilgrimage:

> As for the ceremony of pilgrimage, it is for good believers (*mumin* 穆民) who are twelve years old or above, those in good health and lacking illness, who have traveling expenses, sufficient strength, have a steed, and is one who has practical miscellaneous things, or who is rich and has much to spare, or whose house expenses are sufficient.[73]

Ma was clear in his promotion of the hajj as a required practice for Muslims. He asserted that Sino-Muslims should not be remiss about performing the pilgrimage. Unlike Wang and Liu, he was direct in defining who was obliged to perform the pilgrimage, rather than stating, "If one is able, he must go there." Ma delineated who should be able to go on hajj and, therefore, established who should perform the pilgrimage.

The contrast in Ma's and Liu's respective arguments for who was required to go on hajj or who was able to refrain from going marked their distinctive perspectives. The explicit contrast between these exemptive and warranted approaches to religious duty demonstrated that Ma was the most forthright of these authors in stipulating the observance of the pilgrimage. Liu clearly drafted several possibilities for overlooking this duty, while Ma outlined measures that encompassed a much larger portion of the Sino-Muslim population. For Ma, the hajj was a tangible experience that he felt many more Sino-Muslims could perform. For that reason, he illustrated that it should be thought of in the same vein as the other pillars of Islam and actualized by all faithful Muslims.

Ma's Pilgrimage

Ma Dexin was the first Chinese pilgrim to record his hajj. His pilgrimage was extensive in its geographical exploration and extended in duration. He began his pilgrimage in 1841 and spent the next eight years traveling throughout the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Upon his return in 1849, he became the most prominent scholar in southern China, and his travel journal, *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*, was completed.

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He originally wrote it in Arabic, but that manuscript has since been lost. However, Ma Anli translated the text into Chinese, making it accessible to the broader Sino-Muslim population in 1861.[74]

The *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* was long compared to many of Ma's theological works. In it, Ma rarely reflected on his personal emotions or spiritual advancements; rather, he chose to describe in detail the characteristics of the pilgrimage journey itself, a convention of the travel writing genre during this period. Along the way, he described the places, lengths of time, and approximate distances between locations. The narrative was markedly formal, laconic, and impersonal. It outlined each juncture of the journey and detailed the practical and advantageous features of travel. Throughout, foreign words for people, places, and ideas were translated into Chinese, transliterated with Chinese characters, and finally written in Arabic. He also noted the date of each phase of his trip in both the western Islamic calendar (*al-taqwīm al-hijrī*) and the Qing dynasty's Daoguang period.

The aesthetic style of his travel writing—focusing on the particular features of his travels and the places he visited, rather than the experiential sentiments that he gained or emotions he felt along the way—opens up interesting interpretive possibilities for Sino-Muslim audiences. By removing himself from the experience, Ma demonstrated what every pilgrim might encounter. This enabled his Sino-Muslim readers to imagine how their own pilgrimage might unfold.

While Ma Dexin was an exceptional figure, this text eschewed his unparalleled knowledge and remarkable achievements in favor of presenting the stages of a journey to the Middle East. In addition, these details provided the logistical knowledge that pilgrims would need to embark on their own hajj. This text provided the lengths of time that a pilgrim would require, locations where individuals could stay, and detailed descriptions of the features of the holy city of Mecca and the Sacred Mosque (*al-Masjid al-Ḥarām*). Further, by withholding his personal feelings from his description, he aided others in renewing or sustaining their determination to begin their own pilgrimage. Certainly, Ma had troubled times and reservations about his travels, but we are acutely unaware of them from a reading of *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*. Removing these elements from Ma's text, which would have made it more of a personal diary than a travel journal, encouraged other Sino-Muslims to make the pilgrimage much more effectively.

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The Journey

Ma began the pilgrimage by passing through Yangon (Rangoon), Burma, via an old spice route. Yunnanese traders had been exchanging goods along this route for hundreds of years, covering the eastern frontiers of Tibet, through Burma, Thailand, Laos, and North Vietnam, and including the southern Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Guizhou, and Guangxi. Along this first phase of the journey, Ma traveled alongside merchants, often on foot, stopping at various smaller cities and villages. He would travel for several days at a time, sometimes for over a week, before staying in a particular location several days to recover and interact with the local community. He often pointed out the features of the local Muslim community in his tale, describing the many believers in the Hanafī system and a few from the Shāfi'ī system, for example. Ma stayed in Ava, the capital of Burma, for almost three weeks and met with the king before his departure. He then arrived in Yangon and spent five months there waiting for a ship to take him to the Middle East. From the port of Yangon, Ma headed to Mecca by sea.

Ma's sea travel was often rough. He reported that the Indian Ocean was extremely stormy, and the wind did not cooperate with them in getting them to their destination. This forced Ma to live on the ship for 40 days, often being forced to stay out at sea for periods of up to half a month at a time before reaching a location where they could even dock. He finally reached Calcutta, India, where he resided for four months. He described this city as featuring great buildings whose walls were decorated with engravings. At the time, Calcutta was both a cultural and commercial hub, and Ma also described its bustling industry. He outlined a religious landscape that was made up in large part of Muslims, some of whom he described as people of *Rāfidah*, an Iranian Shi'a community. He also recalled that there were number of Wahhābi Muslims in the area.

In general, Ma seemed to appreciate the Muslim community of Calcutta and their dedication to preserving their religion through textual reproduction. He made specific note of the high level of publishing of sacred scriptures and religious texts. After his Indian sojourn, Ma boarded *The Will of Solomon* (*shā' Sulaymān*), heading southwest to round Cape Comorin and turn toward Arabia. After a long journey, Ma eventually arrived in Yemen at the port city of Aden, where he visited the shrine of Sayyīd Abū Bakr al-'Aydarūs (d. 1509).[75] He then stopped briefly in Mocha and Hudaydah before heading to Jeddah. From here, Ma began

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his final phase before approaching Mecca. He traveled by camel for two nights, and by horse and donkey for one night; finally, as dawn began to break, he reached Mecca.

The Heavenly Square and the Sacred Environment

Ma described the characteristics of the Ka'bah and its environs in great detail. He illustrated its shape, length, height, and the cardinal direction of each of its sides.[76] He then detailed its adornments, such as the brocade curtain covering it (*kiswah*), the entrance, and the black stone surrounded by a silver frame (*al-ḥajar al-aswad*). He related, "At approximately twenty steps in the front of the holy court there is Abraham's position, which was his stepping stone for building the Ka'bah. This stone is above his footprint."[77] He told of the ancient wall *ḥijr Isma'il*, formed like a bow, with its height reaching a person's chest, which some say is the location of his tomb. He also designated the sites where religious leaders were positioned in order to make legal rulings on ritual observance and spiritual matters.[78] Ma catalogued at great length the names and positions of the numerous gates to the Sacred Mosque.[79] He ended his description by stating that "the sacred courtyard has seven towers to announce the rites [i.e., minarets]."[80] Finally, Ma sketched a portrait of the Sacred Mosque, with all the details he previously described, in an image entitled *The Form of the Sacred Mosque and Ka'bah* (see Figure 3.1).

Ma's travels did not end in Mecca. He went on explore the celebrated sites of the area, such as the birthplace of the Prophet and the battlegrounds of Badr, before heading to Medina. Here, he again provides a description of the distances between the two cities, how he traveled, and the places he visited. He explained Muhammad's tomb in the Mosque of the Prophet (*al-Masjid al-Nabawi*) in complete detail. He discussed the architecture, the religious institutions, and the positions and practices of those people paying respect to the Prophet.

The precise descriptions of the Ka'bah, the Sacred Mosque, and the Prophet's tomb are essential elements of Ma's capacity to demystify the hajj for Sino-Muslims. Through a thorough examination and mapping of the Sacred Mosque, Sino-Muslims were able to become as familiar with it as they were with their local mosque. The intersubjectivity between Ma Dexin and his readers facilitated the domestication of the spiritual axis

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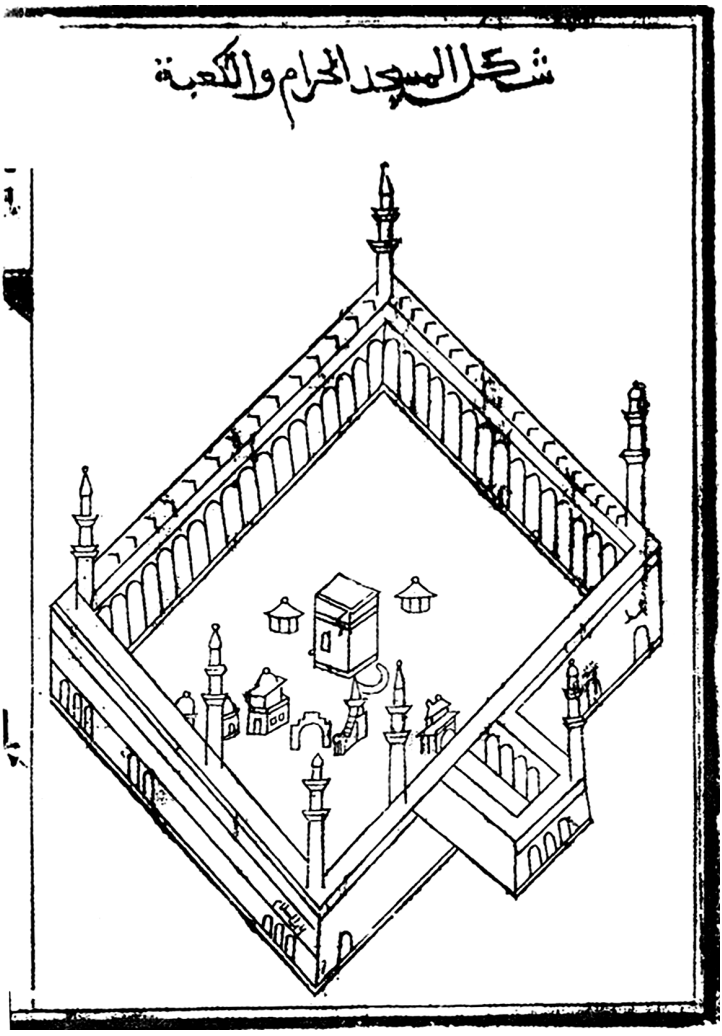


FIGURE 3.1 The Form of the Sacred Mosque and Ka'bah. *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*.

of the cosmos centered in Mecca, thus making it simultaneously native and foreign (or familiar and unfamiliar) for the reader. This catalyzed the deconstruction of Sino-Muslim alienation from the broader Muslim world and began the process of eliminating self-perceived social, financial, and geographic obstructions and limitations. Ma's *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* also could help remove the anxieties and fortify the hopes of Muslims as they returned to their religious homeland.

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Middle Eastern Expedition

Ma's travels through the Middle East were extensive. Throughout *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey,* Ma continued to demarcate locations, large and small; distances; time lengths; points of interest; and the cultural, economic, political, and religious customs and circumstances of the places that he visited. In Egypt, for example, he noted the general prosperity under the reign of Muḥammad 'Alī Pāshā (*Muhanmode Erli* 母罕默德爾里). He recalled, "This king has tremendous courage and wisdom and was a good administrator. The Egyptian government renovated the tombs, established and amassed goods, and increased every class [of people]."[81] The considerable number of Muslims throughout Egypt and the overall religious enthusiasm of its subjects further impressed him. He noted the majestic beauty and grandeur of al-Azhar Mosque (*jāmi' al-Azhar; miera-zixie* 米耳阿茲偕) and the many disciples of the holy people (*shengmen* 聖門). He visited the graves and tombs of such notable Muslims as "the great worthy (*daxian* 大賢)" al-Shāfi'ī (767–820) (*Shafeier* 沙菲爾), "the great worthy" Abu'l-'Abbas al-Mursī (d. 1288) (*Ebailaierboshi* 額白來爾波士), and "the revered (*zunzhe* 尊者)" Muḥammad al-Būṣīrī (1211–1294) (*Muhamode Busuili* 母哈默德補雖里), as well as Galen of Pergamon (129–216) (*jālīnūs, zhoulinushi* 卓裡努士) and Ptolemy (90–c.168) (*baṭalīmūs, tuanlimushi* 白團裡穆士).

Before heading home to China, Ma visited the sultan in Istanbul (possibly Abdülmecid), where he was granted permission to visit the imperial palace, spent some time in Damascus, returned to Egypt, lived in Jerusalem for half a year, and studied astronomy and geography in Southeast Asia. It is hard to say what kind of circulation this text had, either in Southwestern China or beyond, but several copies of the manuscript are available and the text has been reprinted in modern editions up to the present day, which may indicate a significant readership.

The *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* demonstrated the significance of the pilgrimage as a necessary and obtainable Islamic observance. Ma also eliminated any uncertainty and wonder about the hajj by mapping the physical terrain and delineating the logistical details for Chinese pilgrims. He deromanticized the pilgrimage and eliminated its unknown extraordinary and exceptional characteristics, making it tenable for Sino-Muslims to perform the journey. It is evident that Ma believed the hajj was a valuable method to explore the rich Islamic history of his predecessors and engage his contemporary coreligionists.

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All together, *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* revealed that the pilgrimage was a means for engaging the broader Muslim world and a channel for doctrinal exchange and dialogue. This text, more than any other, offered a new perspective on the pilgrimage from the Chinese vantage point by detailing the particulars of the voyage, which provided both logistical knowledge of the journey and inspiration to embark upon it.

Ideological Reformation

For all Muslims, the pilgrimage was a monumental event both spiritually and socially. There can be both an inner and outer transformation that reflected how pilgrims viewed the world and situated themselves within it. *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* was consistent with pilgrimage accounts that came out in the face of colonial presences and the expanding communities within a globalizing world. Pilgrimage travel writing became a prominent genre beginning in the eighteenth century, but, similar to Ma's work, most accounts were concentrated on the details of travel, as opposed to being autobiographical in nature.[82] However, Ma revealed his individual metamorphosis in some of his writings and allowed us to glimpse his feelings about the personally intimate change that happened to him as a result of performing the hajj. One of the long-term effects of Ma's pilgrimage experience was the shift in his interpretive viewpoint. This period of his life was transformative for his doctrinal beliefs, and his encounters with Middle Eastern Muslims certainly shaped his interpretation of Islam.

Overall, Ma's work was characterized by a strong literary connection between Chinese and Islamic sources, and it emphasized the importance of a pragmatic relationship with the larger Muslim world. These broader themes were evident in *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* and teased out through his writings in general. Ma made it clear that his reliance on and deference to the traditional Islamic sources were sources underlying his explanation of Islam. In particular, in a preface to Ma Dexin's major work, the *Essence of the Four Canons* (*Sidian Yaohui* 四典要會), his student Ma Anli informs us that Ma Dexin's knowledge gained on the pilgrimage journey enabled him to explicate the tenets of Islam:

> He made pilgrimage to the heavenly court (*diting* 帝庭) to contemplate the traditional customs and good governance of the ancient sages (*xiansheng* 先聖). Over an eight-year period, he studied directly with famous worthies (*xian* 賢) and erudite scholars, deepening

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> his knowledge in the study of nature (*xing* 性) and mandate (*ming* 命). Upon returning, he closed his doors in order to examine and rectify [his understanding of Islam]. He joined together that which he obtained in Arabia and that which was possessed in the ancient collected canons of the eastern lands. He uncovered the essence [of Islam] by drawing out and gathering. This constitutes what is bound in the chapters of this book and serves as a kindness to my companions.[83]

From this passage, we see that the convictions and customs that Ma developed before his pilgrimage needed to be reexamined after his exposure to currents of Islamic thought in the Middle East. The experiential knowledge that he gained from his trip combined with his intellectual training produced the fruits of his literary output. Therefore, Ma was directly influenced by the pilgrimage, and it shaped how he understood the Islamic tradition and transformed his theological grounding.

Through his works, Ma tried to encourage his followers to regard the pilgrimage as a consequential religious obligation comparable to daily prayer and fasting. Simultaneously, Ma asserted the importance of having a dialogue between Sino-Muslims and the broader Muslim world. It was through his Middle Eastern encounter that Ma rectified his religious opinions and began to understand the significance of Islam's foundational observances. He explained his experience in *Essence of the Four Canons*:

> Arriving in Arabia, I asked a scholar named 'Ismā'īl (*yisimoenlai* 以斯莫恩來) "In this land is there one who transmits the true way (*dao* 道), shining (upon it) by means of investigation?"
>
> He answered, "Do you consider the five meritorious acts (*wugong* 五功), which everyone performs, as a falsehood? That which the Prophet gave to his disciples to perform are the five meritorious acts. That which the four famous worthies (*xian* 賢), and the millions of learned worthies observe are the five meritorious acts. That which a thousand scriptures and myriad canons publish are also the five meritorious acts. How can this not be the true way? Contemporary scholars and many thousands of this land invariably regard them as an effort. Is it only you who consider them to be petty?"
>
> I said, "I do not dare to look at them as petty. But I hear each scripture speak of the three paths, the vehicle of principle (*lisheng* 理

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乘), the vehicle of the way (*daosheng* 道乘), and the vehicle of truth (*zhensheng* 真乘). I gaze at the truth and rise to enter it."

He said, "Yes, but shallow people make the truth shallow; deep people make the truth deep. If small people do it, then it is small; if great people do it, then it is great. Generally, there is nothing beyond the five meritorious acts. Moreover, as for shining [upon it] by means of investigation, even if there is the brightness of the sun, what is its benefit for blind eyes?"

I heard these words and felt deeply ashamed, knowing that my views on this were not enough. I requested that he add to the lesson.

He said, "Among that which is commanded, in the end, must be obtained. Among that which is not commanded, excise what lacks an imperative. If other things seek you, then it is easy, but if you seek other things, then it is difficult. Furthermore, the five meritorious acts are considered that, which the True Lord commanded, and I distinguish them as that which should be observed. The vehicle of the way and the vehicle of truth are not what the Lord commanded. Therefore, they are acts that I add myself and they are supplementary acts."[84]

This clearly established that Ma was resolute in his position and was determined to cultivate a stronger adherence to the five pillars among Sino-Muslims, including the hajj. In this regard, the *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* simplified the orchestration and execution of the pilgrimage by taking pilgrims through the entire journey and disclosing the obstacles that one may encounter. This precedent enabled Sino-Muslims to acquire both the logistical knowledge of the journey and the determination and resolve for undertaking it.

Unfortunately, we do not have any testimonial accounts linking Ma's work directly to later pilgrims. For example, there are no statistical data about pilgrims from this period. What we do see, however, is that the number of influential Sino-Muslims making the pilgrimage increased after his death, which was most likely a product of new technologies, increased communal financial support, and strengthening intra-Muslim ties. Closest to home in relation to Ma Dexin was Ma Lianyuan 馬聯元 (1841–1903), the foremost scholar in Yunnan after Ma Dexin's death in 1864. He made the pilgrimage twice, which was part of what brought him his prestige within the local community.

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Continuing throughout the twentieth century, pilgrims were going abroad and returning with new ideas, which they then applied to their local context. For example, there was Ma Wanfu 馬萬福 (1849–1934), who founded the *Yihewani* 伊赫瓦尼, or "Brotherhood" (*Ikhwan*), movement in Northwest China after traveling in Arabia from 1888–1892.[85] Ma Qixi 馬啟西 (1857–1914) founded the *Xidaotang* 西道堂 (Hall of the Western Way), a system that advocated a blending of Islamic and Chinese cultures and upheld the *Han Kitab* writings, after making the pilgrimage in 1905.[86] Wang Haoran 王浩然 (1848–1918), who went in 1906, became the first director of the Muslim Association for Mutual Progress (*Zhongguo Huijiao Jujin Hui* 中國回教俱進會) when it was founded in 1912 in Beijing.[87] Wang Jingzhai 王靜齋 (1879–1949), one of the four great imams of modern China (*sida ahong* 四大阿訇) and translator of the Qur'ān, went on hajj in 1921 and studied in the Middle East in the 1920s.[88] Hu Songshan 虎嵩山 (1880–1955), an important *Yihewani* leader and Ma Wanfu's disciple, went on hajj in 1924 at the age of 45 and received harsh treatment because of being Chinese, resulting in a radical shift in his position on nationalist endeavors and scripturalist interpretations of Islam.[89]

Of course, greater participation in the pilgrimage during the twentieth century was a sign of the global times that these Sino-Muslims found themselves in, where travel and exchange were becoming increasingly manageable.[90] What we can say about Ma Dexin's contribution is that he was the first figure to self-consciously develop a robust discursive position on the hajj, which included both theological and operational features.

Overall, Ma Dexin created the most complete picture of the hajj for the Sino-Muslim audience. He delineated the details involved in orchestrating and executing a pilgrimage journey, provided the ritual requirements from a legalistic and terrestrial standpoint, and demonstrated the transformative power of the pilgrimage experience from his own perspective. The *Scripture of Bright Virtue* clearly outlined the individual observances of the pilgrimage, enabling believers to enact their faith in embodied practice. It also established that numerous Sino-Muslims should be qualified in both their individual and familial lives to undertake the hajj. He attempted to modify the position that Sino-Muslims could forgo their pilgrimage duty because of their relative remoteness. His personal observance of the hajj and realization of religious travel set a precedent for others to follow.

Ma's description of his hajj provided a valuable tool for Sino-Muslims who would embark on the journey for themselves. *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* alleviated the anxieties and concerns of Muslims and stressed

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the importance of greater engagement with the broader Muslim world. It encouraged others to return to their heterotopic homeland, where they could reestablish an understanding of faith and practice.

The presentation of analytic details, combined with the lack of intimate personal sentiments from Ma, allowed readers to experience the pilgrimage journey in vivid detail while interweaving their own emotive qualities into it. It was possible for them to imagine how they would experience each phase of the pilgrimage through the clear illustration delineated in the *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*. Finally, he showed that the experiences gained during the journey would reshape personal understanding and faith in Islam. The rich literary history of earlier Muslims could provide established understandings of Islam once pilgrims was exposed to their teachings during their travel. His work could inspire others to commence their own journey, while simultaneously outlining the tangible factors for embarking on such a trip. These strategies established a strong framework for understanding why the pilgrimage was important and how one could overcome their specific circumstances to undertake the journey.

Conclusions

All three of these authors treated the hajj as an important activity that embodied deep theological meaning and brought with it rich communal and individual results. The pilgrimage connected Sino-Muslims to the larger Muslim world, both physically (in the Meccan setting) and symbolically (as part of the *umma*). It also represented characteristics of the origins of the cosmos and exemplified features of the collective memory of the Muslim community, thus communicating a sense of communal identification. Finally, it produced religious and social authority, as well as authentication for individuals and their interpretation of Islam, either by elevating one's status as a teacher or renewing an individual's personal commitment through sincere action.

For Wang Daiyu, the pilgrimage was a principle of faith and a symbolic ritual for understanding one's place in the cosmos. However, he showed little inclination to insist that Sino-Muslims embark on an actual journey to the Kab'ah, and he never went on hajj himself. Liu reiterated these cosmographical notions but also delineated the bodily manifestation of these theological ideals. His description added a layer of meaning to the pilgrimage by detailing each specific action undertaken during the hajj ritual. However, he also never went to Mecca, and he cataloged various

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reasons why one could omit the observance of this ritual. These justifications for neglecting the pilgrimage emphasized that Sino-Muslims had unique circumstances for embarking on the hajj, and they could be validated in neglecting to take the ritual journey.

On the other hand, Ma Dexin promoted the pilgrimage as an Islamic principle with theological and spiritual meaning, but also as an example of religious duty to be performed by all Muslims. His own pilgrimage experience enhanced his promotion of the hajj. His emphasis on the benefits of the pilgrimage was not merely theoretical, but embodied and experienced personally. Through his explanation of the religious journey, he evoked a longing for a Mecca-centered devotional practice, promoting sectarian unity among Muslims and pan-Islamic sentiments that brought Sino-Muslims into the broader Muslim community.

The scholarly treatment of the hajj by these authors transformed an inward personal commitment into an outward physical movement through time and space. As Sino-Muslims became more immersed in a globalizing world, their fidelity to perform the hajj became greater, creating new patterns of religious exchange and interaction.

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4

The Treasure of the Heavenly Scripture

ENGAGING THE QUR'ĀN IN CHINA

WHILE THERE ARE several Western treatments of the Chinese Qur'ān, there has been surprisingly little in-depth discussion of the translation methods used by premodern Sino-Muslims.[1] The Qur'ān played a significant role in shaping Sino-Islamic scholarship, and Sino-Muslim authors thoroughly engaged the Arabic scripture from the inception of their works in the seventeenth century. Early *Han Kitab* authors' contributions to the rendering of the Qur'ān in Chinese influenced subsequent translations through the twentieth century, when full translations of the holy book were first completed. Therefore, it is essential to begin an analysis of the significance of the Qur'ān in China by looking at some of the earliest Sino-Muslim authors who rendered the Qur'ān within Sino-Islamic thought. Failing to recognize their importance in this process would deny their significance and obscure their influence on later translations.

This chapter offers an analysis of the Qur'ān as reflected in the works of Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 (1590–1658), Liu Zhi 劉智 (1670–1724), and Ma Dexin 馬德新 (1794–1874). Wang's, Liu's, and Ma's works represent transitional periods within the Sino-Islamic intellectual tradition, and they reveal how Sino-Muslims' engagement with the Qur'ān changed over time. Each author translated and used the Qur'ān in a different way, while simultaneously building on the work of his predecessors. This was due to their individualized methodological approaches to scripture, paired with their historical circumstances and discursive settings. From a reading of their engagement with the Qur'ān, we see that over time, Sino-Muslims gradually shifted from the use of approximate thematic renditions of Qur'ānic sentiments to a clear intention to offer the entire Qur'ān to the Sino-Muslim community.

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Overall, Wang revealed foundational Qur'ānic beliefs without feeling bound to the particularities of presenting a precise translation. He loosely adapted passages of the Qur'ān, and on occasion he would translate the same passage in various ways. For him, the Qur'ān was the source of foundational religious knowledge that he was able to present more clearly to his readers through his prose. Wang's texts were intended to reach Sino-Muslims who at the time were not sufficiently literate in Arabic and Persian sources. Wang's approach assumes that a direct exploration of the Qur'ān for these novice students was far too complex, and focusing on the kernel of its teachings was more appropriate for their religious sensibilities.

Liu presented both accurate and symbolic renditions of the Qur'ān based on the theological or liturgical discursive setting. When he wanted to convey the principles behind broader teachings, he evoked Qur'ānic themes or motifs and included these concepts in his writings on belief, leaving behind only a scriptural residue of terms or phrases. Liu translated passages in a precise manner when he wanted to elicit the scriptural authority of the Qur'ān in discussing ritual activity. In his estimation, the Qur'ān was the basis of both personal faith, which could be conveyed through a conceptual gloss, and obligated action, which required a direct rendering. During this medial period of intellectual development, Sino-Muslims within the scripture hall system regularly studied Chinese, Arabic, and Persian texts. Therefore, Liu assumed some knowledge of the Qur'ān in his writings when exploring theology and relied on its legalistic authority for issues of practice. Consequently, advanced students who were conversant in the three teachings of China and the classic sources of Islam could most appreciate Liu's internal dialogue.

For his part, Ma favored a holistic presentation that was systematic and faithful to the original Qur'ānic model. This approach outlined not only the content of the Qur'ān, but also its rich and complicated literary unfolding. Ma revealed the nonlinear narrative of the Qur'ān by closely following the sequential development of its first four chapters. This presentation provided Chinese readers with a thoroughly complex text that was true to its Arabic origins. Ma believed that the Qur'ān should be available in its entirety because it was a revealed text that had intention and meaning in both its content and form. Therefore, presenting Sino-Muslims with only fragments of the Qur'ān would be a disservice to their understanding of Islam. Ma approached the Qur'ān as a single unit because the Qur'ānic narrative, teachings, structural progression, and distinctive idiosyncrasies all have religious significance and benefit the reader.

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Ma's determination to provide a complete translation of the Qur'ān further reflects his wide-reaching model for enabling Sino-Muslims to participate in the global Muslim community. During the nineteenth century, the Muslim world was expanding intellectually and shrinking geographically. Sino-Muslims were able to travel to the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia on a much more regular basis and access a wide range of intellectual debates through the production and transmission of texts. Therefore, greater knowledge of the content and structure of the Qur'ān equipped ambitious Sino-Muslims to engage their coreligionists more broadly in these discussions. Ma supplied one more piece of the puzzle to allow Sino-Muslims to become enveloped within this broader tradition.

The Qur'ān in China

The Qur'ān had a long history in China, but it was not until the development of *Han Kitab* literature that it was ever translated into Chinese. It is not my purpose, nor do I have the room here, to delineate a complete history of the Qur'ān in China.[2] However, a brief outline will contextualize its presence for the purposes of this discussion. Muslims traveled to China as early as the late seventh century, and presumably they brought the Qur'ān with them. The holy book became increasingly relevant for Sino-Muslim communities throughout the centuries. However, it was not until the Mongol conquest of Eurasia (1206–1368) that a significant and sustained Muslim community in China emerges in the written sources. Muslim inscriptions from Southern China attest to the physical presence of the Qur'ān from as early as the twelfth century, and its use grew in frequency through the fourteenth century. During this time, Arabic inscriptions of Qur'ānic verses were produced on grave stele and architecture.[3] We find that the majority of the inscriptions were in Quanzhou (known as *Zaytun* in Arabic), a major port city on the eastern coast of China. Muslim travelers and merchants, or those who intermarried with Chinese people and remained in China permanently, were buried in an Islamic cemetery near the Qingjing mosque (*Qingjingsi* 清淨寺), first built in 1009. One of the most popular inscriptions for headstones was verse 28:88, "Everything is perishing except for His face."[4] In the *Qingjingsi Ji* 清淨寺記 (*Record of the Qingjing Mosque*), a history of the Quanzhou mosque written in 1350, Wu Jian 吳鑒 indicated that at this time, Muslims copied the Qur'ān in three styles: the seal character style, by regular hand, and in cursive script.[5] The oldest-known Qur'ān manuscript in China, dated 1318, is currently

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housed in the Dongsi Mosque in Beijing.[6] Circumstances during the Ming dynasty, such as forced intermarriage and limited travel abroad, accelerated Muslim assimilation into Chinese society, requiring Muslims to rely more and more on the Chinese language and leading to Sino-Islamic interpretation as a result.

The engagement with the Qur'ān through a Chinese lens was concurrent with the development of Sino-Islamic scholarship in the scripture hall system, beginning in the late sixteenth century. Despite initial hesitation about approaching the Qur'ān through the Chinese language, it was not immune to translation within the *Han Kitab*. Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin all rendered the Qur'ān into Chinese, and translations of the scripture became increasingly central to Sino-Islamic works with each successive generation. Overall, the history of translation of the Qur'ān into Chinese can be divided into three separate thematic categories: extract translation, partial translation, and whole translation.[7]

Extract translations integrated individual translated verses of the Qur'ān into the works of a particular author. Usually, these verses were used to contextualize a given idea or bring a sense of authority to a statement. Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi used the extract method in their writings to convey the meaning of the Qur'ān.[8] Both authors combined the activity of translation with their own writing and commentary. Nonetheless, they certainly did not translate the Qur'ān with the intention of providing a portrait of its overall message. Rather, they rendered individual verses when necessary to substantiate their interpretation of Islamic thought.

Partial translation began in the late nineteenth century and was used for the practical purpose of memorizing the Qur'ān or understanding its content. This type of translation included an extended Chinese translation and commentary on individual passages or whole chapters of the book. Generally, partial translations were longer than extract translations and included consecutive verses or entire chapters of the Qur'ān. These differed from extract translations, in that the commentary was intended to elucidate the complexity of the Qur'ānic verses as opposed to using Qur'ānic attestations to justify individual statements. Here, the Qur'ān was at the forefront of study, and the translation was intended to reveal its context, structure, message, and arguments, while the commentary provided an explanation of these components.

Whole translations began with the work of Ma Dexin and continue into the present day. Ma's translation was the first concerted effort to produce a whole translation of the Qur'ān. Such translations offered a rendering

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of the Arabic into Chinese, without commentary or interpretation. They were intended to reveal some of the depth of the Qur'ānic narrative to an audience that lacked the ability to access the Qur'ān in its original Arabic.

The first complete translation of the Qur'ān was by Li Tiezheng 李鐵錚, a non-Muslim, entitled *Kelanjing* 可蘭經; it was published in Beijing in 1927. This was followed by another non-Muslim translation, the *Hanyi Gulanjing* 漢譯古蘭經, by Ji Juemi 姬覺彌, which came out in 1931. Both of these translations were generally thought to be inadequate by the Sino-Muslim community and were largely ignored. The first Muslim translation was by Wang Jingzhai 王靜齋 (1879–1949), a graduate of al-Azhar University in Cairo; entitled *Gulanjing Yijie* 古蘭經譯解, it came out in 1932 and was revised in 1943 and 1946.[9] The most popular translation of the Qur'ān to date is the *Gulanjing* 古蘭經, by another al-Azhar-trained scholar, Ma Jian 馬堅 (1906–1978), published partly between 1949 and 1951 and entirely in 1981.[10] Ma Dexin's work laid the foundation for these scholars, who were trained in the Middle East and fluent in Arabic. His precedent and example created effective criteria for translating the Qur'ān in its entirety. His reintroduction of Arabic and promotion of Middle Eastern engagement set the stage for Sino-Muslim scholars to study at international Islamic institutions and participate in religious debate.

Problems and Possibilities in Qur'āanic Translation

Several obstacles faced anyone who wanted to render the Qur'ān in Chinese. The glyphic nature of Chinese characters lacked the exact precision of a syllabary that could communicate Arabic names and terms in a transliterated form. While the most common terms, such as *Allāh* and *Muḥammad*, found standard renditions early, this linguistic deficiency led to various transliterations for a more technical vocabulary.[11] A more important task for the Chinese translator was rendering the Arabic content of the Qur'ān in an intelligible, meaningful manner for the Chinese audience. Most Sino-Muslims knew only a smattering of Arabic that would be used in ritual prayer. However, many of them would be well acquainted with the religo-philosophical worldview of their Chinese cultural environment. The interpreters' mission, then, was both to be faithful to the Arabic and to reveal the essence of its Qur'ānic meaning, while simultaneously creating a portrait that reflected the nuances of Chinese discourse.

Another inherent challenge were the internal Muslim debate over the permissibility of translating the Qur'ān.[12] For many Muslims, the Qur'ān

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was intended to be an *Arabic* Qur'ān. This is repeatedly revealed in the scripture; "These are the verses of the Scripture that makes things clear. We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an so that you [people] may understand" (12:1–2); "So We have sent down the Qur'an to give judgment in the Arabic language" (13:37); and "We have sent the Qur'an down in the Arabic tongue and given all kinds of warnings in it, so that they may beware or take heed" (20:113).[13] A general understanding was that the Qur'ān was God's exact speech, and thus was holy in and of itself, which led many Muslims to argue that it cannot—and should not—be translated into any language.[14]

For the Sino-Muslim community, the debate oscillated between providing renditions of the Qur'ān that could enlighten the local Chinese-speaking community or approaching the Qur'ān only in Arabic. While translating the Qur'ān would provide a good source to allow Sino-Muslims to comprehend Islamic faith, translations may vary greatly, which could lead to a multitude of interpretations. As for the Qur'ān in the Chinese context, it was observed:

> While the Book had one Arabic canonical version, which was universally recognized, like the canons in other faiths, different translations of the Qur'an into Chinese necessarily produce various meanings thereof, with all attending difficulties of interpretation and relevance.[15]

Each translation highlighted differing agendas through its choice of vocabulary and individual approaches to religious understanding. I demonstrate in the following discussion how terminology and discursive setting affected how the Qur'ān was translated and the purposes for which it was used.

The dilemma of whether to translate the Qur'ān into the local language or maintain its sacred but inaccessible nature in Arabic was a universal problem for non-Arab Muslims.[16] Ultimately, in a literary setting with a well-established textual tradition, such as China, authors employed the terminology from their inherited indigenous tradition to make the Qur'ān relevant and intelligible to the local audience. The translation was necessarily a dialogical melding of the local tradition and an interpretation of Islam. Luckily, the Qur'ān was easily adapted into foreign environments because of its interpretive fluidity.[17] In China, the process of acculturation was self-conscious among the highly educated translators. Like other

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non-Arab authors, they underscored the close resemblances between Islam and their local tradition, while raising the former above the latter. This process was extremely complicated and required great philosophical and linguistic skill from the author. However, making the Qur'ān accessible to local readers was one of the key accomplishments of the *Han Kitab* translators.

Wang Daiyu

Wang Daiyu's direct treatment of the Qur'ān was far from comprehensive, despite his telling us that in the composition of his *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching* (*Zhengjiao Zhenquan* 正教真詮), "the ideas all come from the Holy Scripture."[18] Wang translated the Qur'ān in over thirty instances throughout his *True Explanation*, and over a dozen times in his other works. From these passages, two conclusions can be drawn: Wang was inconsistent when designating scriptural sources and often interchanged hadith for Qur'ānic passages; and he was sometimes vague or indistinct in his translation of Qur'ānic passages.

Citing Scriptural Sources

For all Sino-Islamic scholars, referring to the Qur'ān was essential to their religious authority and clarification of their beliefs. The term most commonly used to refer to the Qur'ān was *scripture* (*jing* 經). The designation *jing* was used throughout Chinese history in a variety of contexts to designate a celebrated text; the term is traditionally translated as *classic*, as in the record of ancient sages in the Confucian or pre-Confucian context. The earliest *jing* were considered part of the famous Confucian Four Books and Five Classics (*Sishu Wujing* 四書五經), such as the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經), the *Classic of History* (*shujing* 書經), and the *Classic of Odes* (*Shijing* 詩經). Other important early *jing* include the *Classic of Music* (*yuejing* 樂經), *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing* 孝經), and *Classic of Law* (*Fajing* 法經), as well as Daoist classics, like the *Classic of the Way and Virtue* (*Daodejing* 道德經). The Qur'ān was also referred to as the "Heavenly Scripture" (*Tianjing* 天經), "True Scripture" (*zhenjing* 真經), or "True Word" (*Zhenyan* 真言), earlier used for a Sanskrit mantra.

Muslim adaptation of the Qur'ān in the Chinese culture followed the path of other foreign traditions.[19] For Muslims, the difficulty was transforming the idea of a holy scripture into a textual tradition that was ethically

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grounded but lacked the Islamic concept of God. Fortunately, by the time the *Han Kitab* authors were writing, the conception of sacred scripture (with all its accompanying implications) was well established within the contexts of Buddhists, Christians, and Daoists. Therefore, God's words as they were transmitted through the prophet Muhammad and recorded throughout the generations encompassed the Chinese understanding of the Qur'ān as a *jing* containing the teachings of the utmost sage of Arabia.

Wang quoted the Qur'ān by using the phrase "the scripture says" (*jingyun* 經云 or *jingyue* 經曰) to introduce individual verses.[20] However, one key characteristic of Wang's application of the term *jing* is that he often used it to cite non-Qur'ānic passages. In all the following instances, he used *jing* to quote hadith, and in a few instances, well-known expressions. Wang quoted a number of famous hadith, such as the *ḥadīth qudsī*, "My heavens and My earth embrace Me not, but the heart of My servant with faith does embrace me," which he translated as "Heaven and Earth are not able to encompass the True Lord, only the heart of the correct person can [encompass Him]."[21] He also used the famed "Hidden Treasure" hadith: "I was a hidden treasure but was not known, so I created the creatures that I might be known."[22] Wang again used *jing* to introduce it: "The Real Lord manifested His great power when He created heaven and earth. Heaven and earth have no power. He wanted to manifest Himself, and He created the Human Ultimate."[23] He quoted the hadith "God was, and nothing was with Him," rendering it as "the Real Lord is the Original Being, the Unique One, and at root nothing is with Him."[24] As a final example, he added, "You must die before you die," recalling the famous "Die before you die" hadith.[25]

In addition, on a few other occasions, Wang used *jing* to render sayings that came from sources outside of canonical writings altogether. For instance, he wrote, "Wine is the key to all evils."[26] Rather than being a reference to a specific hadith, this is an allusion to the term *umm al-khabā'ith* (mother of loathsome things), which 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān (d. 656) attributed to the quality of wine.[27]

Wang's unsystematic qualification of passages as being derived from scripture (*jing*) is unclear. While hadith can be understood as a scriptural body of authoritative texts, he usually qualified specific hadiths by introducing them with the phrase "Sage" or "Utmost Sage said" (*sheng* 聖; or *zhisheng yun* 至聖云). The designation of *jing* for these particular passages could have been done for several reasons. The principle of parsimony would have us determine that Wang simply thought that these expressions

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were Qur'ānic verses. However, his general aptitude for Islamic learning requires further investigation.

One hadith that Wang quoted in his work stated, "This world is the field of the afterworld."[28] This is his translation of "This world is a tillage for the hereafter," as it was quoted in *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return* (*Mirṣād al-'ibād min al-madba' ila'l-ma'ād*), by Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 1256).[29] This could be an indication that Wang used *jing* to designate passages that he took directly from other physical texts that he had access to. The *Mirṣād* was very popular among Muslims in seventeenth-century China, as it was part of the traditional curriculum and translated into Chinese very early.[30] In these cases, Wang used *jing* to designate the larger body of collected Islamic classics that were transmitted to China and not necessarily limited to the Qur'ān and hadith collections.

By extension, this demonstrated that Wang believed that the essence of the Prophetic message, in both its revealed Qur'ānic sense and its embodied teaching through the example of the Prophet Muhammad, had equivalent importance. This body of Islamic knowledge, whether expressed through the Qur'ān, hadiths, or the words of other learned scholars, revealed the principles of Islam that Wang considered scripturally authoritative, earning them that designation.

Qur'ānic Location—Accuracy and Significance

Wang always recalled the Qur'ān in the context of larger explanations of practical or theological arguments, often beginning with a verse and teasing out its meaning. For example, when explaining the nature of God's Being in relation to created things, Wang quoted verse 3:18, saying, "The Real Lord witnesses Himself; there is no being but the being of the Real Lord."[31] The original verse is nearly identical: "God bears witness that there is no god but Him."[32] Again, in a discussion of God's celestial, corporeal, and scriptural mercies, Wang questioned, "Why do you not reflect upon what is in yourself? (Qur'ān 30:8)."[33] Here, he alluded to the fact that humankind is regularly unable to perceive God's signs, even though their own identities are manifestations of God's creation. Then, he wondered, "Do they not reflect in themselves?" as the Arabic says. These are among the few instances where Wang was careful to translate the passage in an exact manner, capturing both the linguistic features of the verse and the implications of its theological content.

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However, Wang more often attempted to encompass the key message of a verse that he translated and circumvent details that did not express the passage's overall meaning. For example, in the chapter entitled "Accepting or Rejecting" (*Qushe* 取舍), Wang explains the proper relationship between our conditional reality and of God's unlimited reality. When we recognize that nothing exists outside of God's Being, then we know the correct correlation between God and His creation. To emphasize this reality, Wang begins with his translation of verse 28:88, stating, "The myriad things are decaying, only that belonging to the True Lord lacks decay."[34] Here, we can see that Wang translated the verse closely, but he did not attempt to be precise (the original passage reads, "Everything is perishing except for His face"). In this instance, Wang embodied the implications of this verse by highlighting the fact that everything is contingent on God's existence and that all things are in a constant state of decay, while ignoring the detail of God's face.

In another instance, Wang did not translate the verse verbatim but rather made it intelligible in the Chinese context. He related, "The Real Lord did not create humans and spirits for themselves. Rather, the creation of humans and spirits is for the sake of recognizing the Lord at the origin."[35] Wang's translation captured the sense of the original Arabic but extends it linguistically to clarify its meaning, "I created *jinn* and humankind only to worship Me" (Qur'ān 51:56).[36] He also rendered *worship* (*ya'budūn*) as *recognize* (*ren* 認), extending the meaning of spiritual reverence to a knowledge-based acknowledgment of reality, which would make sense to philosophically trained Chinese scholars.

Wang generally offered the kernel of Qur'ānic passages when making translations, rather than feeling obligated to provide a clear and equivalent rendering of the Arabic. This method reflected Wang's objective to present Islamic teachings in a clear and concise manner for an audience of Sino-Muslims with limited religious education. He preferred transferring the Qur'ān into the Chinese cultural setting by utilizing its religio-philosophical symbolism and characteristics, rather than attempting to render the particularities of the Arabic Qur'ān.

Conflation and Reiteration

The final unique feature of Wang's treatment of the Qur'ān was twofold. First, Wang sometimes conflated passages of the Qur'ān into a gestalt of their meaning. For example, he said, "The joy of the Real

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Lord is entrusted to the joy of parents and children."[37] This assertion most closely resembles the Qur'ānic verse "And be good to your parents and kinsfolk . . . And show kindness to parents and near of kin" (*wabi'l-wālidayni ihsānan wa thī al-qurba*) (Qur'ān 2:83, 6:151). However, it evokes several other verses that embody these sentiments, such as "We have enjoined on humankind being kind to their parents" (*wa wassayna al-insāna bi wālidayhi husnan*) (Qur'ān 29:8); "We have enjoined on humankind kindness to their parents" (*wa wassayna al-insāna bi wālidayhi ihsānan*) (46:15); and "Show kindness to your parents" (*wa bi'l-wālidayni ihsānan*) (Qur'ān 17:23).[38] While these verses are almost identical, there are small semantic differences in the Arabic rendition that slightly alter their meaning, and it appears that all the verses could have informed Wang's rendition.

Wang also translated a single verse in a number of ways. In *Orthodox Responses on the Rare Truth,* Wang used verse 67:2 on two occasions to answer questions.[39] The Qur'ānic verse reads, "Who has created death and life that He may test you and reveal which of you is best in deeds." In the first instance, Wang said, "The Real Lord created and transformed the life and death of humans specifically to test whether or not they have loyalty and filial piety."[40] In this first instance, Wang related one's loyalty (*zhong* 忠) to God to the Confucian virtue of filial piety (*xiao* 孝). These two terms were often paired in Confucian contexts and commonly stressed in Chinese social life, hence situating one's duty to God in a recognizable cultural reference. Traditional commentators most often understood *zhong* as loyalty through which one exhausted oneself completely to a given responsibility.

Wang's clever use of this term also elicited the sense of dutifulness, which can be derived from the *Analects* alone. In the *Analects*, Confucius (*Kongfuzi* 孔夫子) (551–479 BC) described *zhong* as the quality of serving a ruler without the supposition of compensation, but solely on the basis of fulfilling one's role as a servant.[41] Therefore, Wang submitted the notion of performing obligations as they were ritually and morally prescribed by God.[42]

The latter term, *xiao*, is explained most thoroughly in the *Classic of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing* 孝經), written circa 400 BC and attributed to Confucius, which was later designated as one of the thirteen Confucian classics (*shisan jing* 十三經). In this text, *xiao* is located at the paramount position of ethical behavior and leads to further personal growth. "It is family reverence (*xiao*), said the Master, that is the root of excellence, and whence

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education itself is born."[43] *Xiao* is explained as the relational activity of love and respect that situates the individual for sustaining designated roles of association. These relationships were explained further by Mencius (*Mengzi* 孟子) (372–289 BC), in a text by the same name, in his theory of the five relationships (*wulun* 五倫): "The relation of father and children is one of love, ruler and minister is one of righteousness, husband and wife is one of distinction, elder and younger is one of precedence, and that between friends is one of trust."[44] Wang's employment of *xiao* in this translation was intended to underscore the necessity to uphold ethical and moral behavior in all relational affairs when enacting their faith from a Chinese philosophical perspective.

He later repeated verse 67:2, translating it differently: "The Real Lord created and transformed life and death to test and examine among you people who will have deeds of loyalty."[45] The variation between these two translations is slight but significant. In the second translation, Wang associated humankind's ability to be successful in life's trials to their deeds, thus highlighting the Islamic principles of ethical behavior (*adab*) and virtuous character (*akhlāq*). The term *adab* most broadly relates to knowledge, customs, prescribed etiquette, moral conduct, and courtesy. In Islamic mysticism, individual behaviors were highly developed and became codes of conduct (plural *ādāb*). Sufi sheikhs produced a substantial literature of manuals, which extensively outlined precise directives for pietistic practice and personal demeanor, referred to as the *ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* (conduct of the Sufis) or *ādāb al-murīdīn* (conduct of the novice).[46] *Akhlāq* also covers a broad range of meanings, including behavior, character traits, ethics, and morality, and is often interchangeable with *adab* in some literature. It typifies a high moral disposition and demands the assimilation of virtues and character traits. Wang evokes the notion of cultivating virtue, which in turn motivates all personal behavior toward morality. *Adab* and *akhlāq* reflect the principles of moral and ethical behavior while providing their proper application through virtuous action from an Islamic position.

Wang cited the same verse a third time in his *Great Learning of Islam:* "Creation of this life and death is at root for the sake of experiencing who are the loyal and faithful among you."[47] In this version, Wang equated loyalty with being faithful (*xin* 信), another Confucian virtue. In the Confucian tradition, *xin* was the one of the five constant virtues (*wuchang* 五常), which also included benevolence (*ren* 仁), righteousness (*yi* 義), propriety (*li* 禮), and wisdom (*zhi* 智). The character's two parts, a person

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(*ren* 人) and speech (*yan* 言), convey the meaning of keeping one's word. Confucius explained, "Faithfulness comes close to rightness, in that your word can be counted upon" (*Lunyu* 1:13). In this sense, one is faithful, sincere, truthful, and trustworthy, when he has demonstrated his ability to maintain fidelity to his word.

For Wang, acting upon personal commitments is directed by a sense of morality and righteousness, which is provided through Islam. Therefore, for Sino-Muslims reading Wang's work, this translation resonated with their sense of ethical behavior in addition to their philosophical sensibilities. The individual's engaged commitment to perform religious and fraternal obligations should be ingrained with the virtues of reciprocity and empathy. In all these renditions, Wang stressed that God was in control of humankind's life and death, and people were created so that He could test the obedience of His believers, either in faith or deeds.

Both these techniques demonstrate Wang's belief that direct, uniform examples of the Qur'ān in Chinese were peripheral and extraneous to understanding the kernel of the Qur'ānic message. While he sometimes attempted to render verses in a precise manner, he more often chose passages that expressed principles of Islamic doctrine within the context that he was trying to portray. Therefore, for Wang, the Qur'ān and other scriptural (*jing*) forms of knowledge were the sources of authority and verification, and were not necessarily sacrosanct in and of themselves when translated into Chinese.

If Wang had considered Chinese translations of passages to be equivalent to the word of God, as most Muslims conceive of them in the original Arabic, then he would have been much clearer in his designation of verses and more consistent in his translation of the same verse, as in the case of Qur'ān 67:2. This demonstrates that Wang believed that the religious benefit of verses was most valuable for his audience, not knowledge of the Qur'ānic text in a direct and accurate form.

Overall, Wang Daiyu was the first individual to approach and address how, when, and why the Qur'ān should be rendered in Chinese. Within his writings, the Qur'ān was valued as the source of revealed wisdom and the foundation for other scriptural forms of knowledge, as in the records of the words and deeds of Muhammad as the embodiment of its message, and in scholars grounded in canonical teachings. Wang's methods suggest two possible currents in this early stage of the Sino-Islamic intellectual tradition. Neither potential conclusion is entirely observable from Wang's texts alone, nor are they mutually exclusive.

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It is likely that there was a range of intellectual capacities and knowledge bases among Wang's readers and students, and he was attempting to reach all of them. First, the lack of a comprehensive analysis of the Qur'ān and Wang's somewhat unsystematic approach to Qur'ānic translation suggest that he believed that a complete portrait of the Qur'ānic narrative was ill suited for the Sinicized Muslim audience. At this early stage, the general audience of Chinese readers that Wang addressed may have inadequately understood Islamic principles in general. Therefore, he felt that the Qur'ān itself was not essential to illuminate their limited understanding, and that an explanation of beliefs and practices were more consequential for their religious comprehension. He trusted that an account of the complex nature of the Qur'ān, including the formulation of its arguments, would be wasted on them due to the difficulty in understanding the multifaceted narrative it outlined.

Another suggestion from Wang's writings was that for advanced Muslims, the Arabic Qur'ān would still have been actively studied within academic circles, and the need for a Chinese version (as a whole or in part) was not necessary. Those who were familiar with the Qur'ān would have been able to glean the elucidation of its core principles from Wang's exposition. And similar to treatises developing in the Arabic cosmopolis, the Qur'ān was used to underscore or direct a discussion, as opposed to authors' direct engagement with it.[48]

In the end, Wang chose not to deliver the Qur'ān in a comprehensive manner because no one in his audience would benefit from such a presentation. Therefore, he used the Qur'ān to inform his own understanding of Islam, and transmitted its teachings through his own writings rather than reproducing the Qur'ān in its totality.

Liu Zhi

Liu Zhi had a systematic and thorough approach to the Qur'ān. He quoted from it throughout his teaching, and we can see that he had a deep and intimate understanding of it. It is also clear that Liu used different translational approaches depending on his context. While others have concluded that Liu merely "rendered freely excerpts from the Qur'an in his books without making a close translation," my reading suggests a more nuanced approach.[49] Throughout his works, Liu offered both clear direct translations and approximate adaptations of certain verses. Further, Liu employed

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rich allusions to Qur'ānic themes throughout his writings without making direct reference to the scripture.

Liu's unique contribution to the Chinese understanding of the Qur'ān was derived from his sophisticated methodology and theory of translation. Several differences between Liu and Wang Daiyu are evident from a reading of the Qur'ān within Liu's writings on theology and practice. First, Liu made a clearer distinction between the Qur'ān and other canonical writings, such as hadiths, when citing his sources. Also, Liu's methodology for the translation of verses of the Qur'ān was applied in various ways depending on the discursive context of his overall theme.

In terms of classification, Liu followed the practice of Wang and other early scholars by prefacing his Qur'ānic citations with established phrase "the scripture says." Liu was much more consistent than Wang in classifying what he determined to be Qur'ānic and extra-Qur'ānic sources. When he recalled passages from the hadith literature, he too used the "Sage" or "Utmost Sage said" language. It seems by Liu's time, these designations became standardized for referencing canonical scriptural materials in Chinese writings, and Ma Dexin and others continued to use these designations for classifying the Qur'ān and hadiths.

Liu covered an array of topics in his numerous compositions, and for each theme, he approached the Qur'ān in a slightly different manner. Liu employed the Qur'ān differently in his writing, and we can outline three distinct methods corresponding to his theological works, liturgical texts, and translations of earlier Islamic texts. From an examination of the use of the Qur'ān in these types of treatises, we see that he translated it according to thematic context. In theological works, such as his *Metaphysics of Islam*, he alluded to larger Qur'ānic narratives rather than translating verses in an exact mode. In his *Rituals of Islam,* he utilized short direct renderings of Qur'ānic verses that directed Islamic practice or provided the theological foundations for religious observance. Finally, in translations of earlier Islamic works, such as *Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (*Zhenjing Zhaowei* 真境昭微), Liu attempted to follow both the semantic structure and doctrinal import of given verses in his translations.

Metaphysics of Islam (*Tianfang Xingli* 天方性理)

In *Metaphysics of Islam*, Liu did not often make explicit use of the Qur'ān for explaining Islamic principles, citing it specifically only once.

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Generally, he alluded to Qur'ānic themes, rather than translating particular verses. While he listed the Qur'ān as a primary source, its influence may be taken more as an indication of his personal verification of its truth than as a source of direct reference.[50] In this work, Liu relies heavily on a number of popular Sufi texts, which he cites regularly. When he does invoke the Qur'ān in the *Metaphysics of Islam,* he does so to illuminate a larger thematic issue that he was trying to explicate. For example, in a discussion of the nature of humankind's spiritual composition and capacity for transformation, Liu evokes the famous "light verse" (*ayat an-nūr*) of the Qur'ān (24:35). He declares, "The real light is like a lamp."[51] While Liu does not quote anything specific from the original verse, those familiar with the Qur'ān would immediately be drawn into a recognizable and established theological context on the character of humanity. The original reads:

> God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is a niche, wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as a shining star kindled from a blessed olive tree, neither of the East nor of the West. Its oil would well-nigh shine forth, even if no fire had touched it. Light upon light. God guides unto His Light whomsoever He will, and God sets forth parables for mankind, and God is Knower of all things (Qur'ān 24:35).[52]

Liu maintained *ayat an-nūr*'s symbolism throughout this chapter, called "Diagram of the Great Completion of the Human Ultimate," which incorporates the lamp's entire apparatus, such as the wick, oil, reservoir, and shade. These features represented the human potential—as yet completely unrealized—to receive the light of God in order to be illuminated. Liu explains:

> Humans have the five sense organs, the bodily body, the five awarenesses, the heart, wisdom, nature, and virtue, all of which are the apparatus of the subtlety. These are similar to the wick, oil, reservoir, and shade of a lamp. As long as the lamp's wick, oil, reservoir, and shade do not fully realize their subtlety, the lamp also will not fully realize its subtlety. As long as the subtlety of the wick, oil, reservoir, and shade of humans is not fully realized, the lamp of the real light will not be manifest in the apparatus of the subtlety.[53]

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Here, we can see that Liu's discussion was fully couched in a Qur'ānic context without making specific translation of the verse itself or calling attention to it. He never explicitly mentions the Qur'ānic verse or the subsequent exegetical discourse of earlier Muslims. Despite this fact, the Qur'ānic context is entirely visible to those familiar with the text. This passage, among others, demonstrates that Liu used Qur'ānic verses very loosely in a theological context and relied on their imagery and credal tropes to encapsulate their meaning.

In another discussion, Liu recalled the Prophet Muhammad's ascension (*mi'rāj*) and night journey (*isrā'*) in relation to the individual spiritual movement to and from God. Early in the *Metaphysics of Islam,* he explained, " 'When the worlds of the two arcs are united,' they go back to the fullness of the round form."[54] This quotation is a paraphrase of Qur'ān 53:9, and its meaning became clearer in the chapter entitled "Diagram of the Ascent and Descent, the Coming and the Going Back." In that chapter, Liu explained, "When the worlds of the two arcs were united, he went back to the utmost nearness."[55] The original is similar to his translation but is used to establish his larger theological discussion: "Until he was two bowlengths away or even closer" (Qur'ān 53:9).[56]

While many commentators associated Muhammad's night journey with his exalted position and nearness to God, Liu used this verse to explain one's personal ability to attain nearness to God. He explained its significance in understanding one's own journey to God: "The two arcs are the coming and descent, which make one arc, and the going and coming back, which make the other arc. When the descent and the ascent have been completed, the worlds of the two arcs are united."[57] Therefore, both the macrocosm and microcosm bring about completion of God's creation in the individual believer. Again, this demonstrated that Liu's use of Qur'ānic motifs was unfettered by the implementation of direct translation. Instead, Liu's central goal was integrating thematic imagery into his theological discussions and situating his discourse in a clearly recognizable Qur'ānic context.

Rituals of Islam (*Tianfang Dianli* 天方典禮)

Liu's use of the Qur'ān in *Rituals of Islam* was often rather different. Here, he cited the Qur'ān on numerous occasions and attempted to make clear and concise translations of its passages. He utilized short,

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straightforward renderings of Qur'ānic verses that directed Islamic practice or provided the theological foundations for religious observance. For instance, he declared, "O you who believe, when they declare the ritual on the day of gathering, hasten to remember the Lord, putting aside your business. This is better for you if you understood."[58] The original is almost exactly the same: "Believers! When the call to prayer is made on the day of congregation, hurry toward the reminder of God and leave off your trading—that is better for you, if only you knew" (Qur'ān 62:9).[59] On another occasion, he exclaimed, "All of you, ritually worship [i.e., pray]! Strive with devotion to observe the middle,"[60] which closely resembled the verse, "Be mindful of your prayers, and the middlemost prayer, and stand before God in devout obedience" (Qur'ān 2:238).[61] A final example asserted, "You People, show gratitude to the Lord and both of your parents,"[62] which is a translation of "Give thanks unto Me and unto your parents" (Qur'ān 31:14).[63]

From all these passages, we can determine that Liu utilized the Qur'ān in a liturgical context to specify how one should behave. Here, he used an exact translation in order to possess the authority of the Qur'ānic commandments while explaining their principles. The difference between these verses and verses in a theological setting was that because they were directives related to action and not belief, Liu had to appeal to the Qur'ān as a sacred mandate that was unassailable to human interpretation. Belief (*imān*) in God is achievable outside of the specific Qur'ānic worldview, as we can see from the examples of previous prophets, such as Abraham or Jesus. However, due to historical circumstances, the Qur'ān finalized how one should act in response, or submit (*islām*), to God's commands.

Further, in the Chinese context (as opposed to the Ottoman or Mughal Empires), it would have been necessary for Liu to appeal to scriptural authority, since Islamic legal directives were not socially established through institutional structures. The burden of ritual and ethical observance remained centered on the individual level, rather than the understanding that obeying God could be achieved by adhering to social practices generated and operated by the state's Islamic apparatus of religious professionals and institutions. Therefore, it was clever of Liu to use both faithful and precise translations for issues concerning religious observance in conjunction with detailed glosses of Qur'ānic concepts when speaking of matters concerning faith and belief.

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Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm (*Zhenjing Zhaowei* 真境昭微)

In the final category, translation of earlier Islamic works, Liu seemed to apply a close rendering of the Arabic Qur'ān, but he also adapted the text where he felt necessary, primarily through omission. Liu translated a short work of 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (1414–1492) entitled *Lawā'iḥ* (*Gleams*). The *Lawā'iḥ* was a mix of prose and poetry that explicated the teachings of the school of Ibn al-Arabī. The most conspicuous general characteristic of Liu's translation of the *Lawā'iḥ* was his hesitation to provide an interpretation of Jāmī's poetry. He almost always omitted all the lyrical verse of the original Persian treatise, with the accompanying Qur'ānic passages. Liu's text, *Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm*, maintained a high level of philosophical discourse throughout and was peppered with Qur'ānic verses to justify the claims made in the discussion. The perpetual modification of Sino-Islamic translations of Arabic and Persian Islamic texts was routine, and Liu's *Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* was emblematic of these Chinese renderings in general.[64]

The *Lawā'iḥ* had fewer than ten references to the Qur'ān, often using it to heighten the poetic symbolism of Jāmī's theological exploration. For example, Jāmī explained "O man of the journey, 'asserting unity' in the Sufi's terms is to deliver the heart from attending to others. This intimation of the birds' final stations have I voiced for you, if you understand the 'language of the birds' (Qur'ān 27:16)."[65] Here, as he did elsewhere, Liu ignored the poetic explication of the discussion altogether, in favor of highlighting the theological underpinnings of God's unity (*tawhīd*) through a prosaic model. Consequently, Liu excluded the prosody of the Persian original and the attending Qur'ānic allusions and references.

Liu's treatment of the Qur'ān in the *Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* demonstrated that he did not believe that the Qur'ānic pronouncements included in the original treatise were essential to transmitting the text's theological import.[66] This method echoed his approach to the Qur'ān in his own theological works, where he only alluded to the scriptural foundations of his discussions. Therefore, Liu's translation was constructed without the poetic lyricism of Jāmī's *Lawā'iḥ* and resulted in the exclusion of a few direct verses and associated Qur'ānic imagery. For Liu, the poetry, with the accompanying Qur'ānic references, was seen as auxiliary to the kernel of the message, which for him was located in the theoretical parlance of the philosopher.

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When Liu did include the Qur'ānic verses cited by Jāmī, he reproduced the methodological approach from his liturgical works by clearly relaying the syntax and thrust of a given passage. In almost every case, he was faithful to the original presentation of the Qur'ān in his translation. The opening gleam began with the verse "God does not put two hearts within a man's breast" (Qur'ān 33:4), in order to justify the directive to love God wholeheartedly.[67] Liu rendered this as "The Real Lord did not give humans two hearts in their bellies."[68] Later, he replicated the verse "Surely God is wealthy beyond the worlds" (Qur'ān 29:6) as "Only the Real Lord is wealthy beyond the ten thousand worlds" in his discussion of the perfection of creation.[69] Finally, when delineating the nature of one's actions, Liu translated "God created you and that which you make" (Qur'ān 37:96)[70] as "The Real Lord transforms you and what you do."[71]

All these examples accurately corresponded to the original Arabic language of the Qur'ān. Further, Liu's manner of translation corresponded to the general technique of his treatises on orthopraxis, which was precise and systematic. However, Liu's omission of various verses demonstrated that he simultaneously applied his methodology from his theological works. Translation of original Islamic treatises in Liu's writings was unique because it allowed his creative participation while maintaining his loyalty to the original text.

The interpretative creativity of Liu Zhi is clearly demonstrated through his engagement with the Qur'ān. His ability to render and make the text intelligible in a variety of discursive settings reveals his intellectual strengths and talents. The diversity of his Qur'ānic application also signals his belief in the high level of capabilities in the audience that he was addressing—one that would understand rich allusions to the Qur'ān as well as the direct translation of its verses. His approach to the application and translation of the Qur'ān was fluid, and it varied based on the liturgical or theological context. The role of the Qur'ān in his writings served both as spiritual inspiration for personal belief and as a definitive authority for ceremonial or pietistic practice. Therefore, the Qur'ān served to clarify ritualistic activity though its direct pronouncements and to nourish principles of faith through vivid symbolism.

For Liu, the thematic setting influenced whether he applied translational clarity by means of an exact rendering of the Qur'ān, or whether he resorted to metaphor and allegory using Qur'ānic themes and motifs. Liu depended on Qur'ānic teachings rather than precise Qur'ānic passages

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when concerning objects of faith. On the other hand, when exploring the external behavior and activity of humans, he translated verses in a literal and explicit way to elicit the scriptural authority of the Qur'ān. The holy book operated as the foundation of both obligatory conduct and individual belief. Regarding personal faith, Liu conveyed the Qur'ānic import through thematic invocations, while presenting direct translations in relation to actions. The combined circumstances of Liu's flexible interpretive approach and the fertile scholastic environment provided the conditions for a rich scope of Qur'ānic interpretation.

Ma Dexin

Among Ma Dexin's many contributions to Sino-Islamic scholarship, one of the most significant for later generations was the first concerted effort to translate the Qur'ān in its entirety. Ma's edition owed its production to the patronage of Du Wenxiu 杜文秀 (1823–1872), ruler of an Islamic state in Yunnan (r. 1856–1872), who sponsored the first engraving and printing of the Qur'ān in 1862.[72] Ma translated the Qur'ān as he wrote other works, but ultimately the project was left incomplete, and he was only able to finish twenty volumes. From these twenty volumes, only five sets of woodblocks were saved from fire where they were stored, and the four translated chapters of the Qur'ān therein were published posthumously as a work entitled *A Direct Explanation of Treasured Mandate of the True Scripture* (*Baoming Zhenjing Zhjie* 寶命真經直解) or *Chinese Translation of Treasured Mandate of the True Scripture* (*Hanyi Baoming Zhenjing* 漢譯寶命真經).[73]

Overall, Ma's translation was very systematic, and he generally attempted to be faithful to the diction of the original verses. His effort to provide a full Chinese translation that was equivalent to the Arabic original demonstrates that he believed that the Qur'ān, in and of itself, was valuable for all Muslims to access. It was not only the principles derived from the text, but the volume itself that benefited believers.

The Opening of a Chinese Qur'ān

Ma began his translation with the *bismala* and continued with the Qur'ān's opening chapter, *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*. Instead of translating the title of the chapter, Ma transliterated its name as *Fadihai* 發諦海, to maintain its original properties.[74] He then rendered the chapter:

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> (1) I recite the most beneficent, the most intimate, the True Lord's (*zhenzai* 真宰) name and begin. (2) This praise all returns to the most revered and respected (*zhizun* 至尊), He transforms and nourishes all the worlds. (3) The most beneficent, the most intimate, (4) controller of the true world. (5) Serve alone the most revered and respected, and only look for the most revered and respected one's assistance. (6) Indeed! Most revered and respected one lead your foolish servant to the straight path (*zhenglu* 正路). (7) As for the straight path, the True Lord specially entrusts a great responsibility, not for those who excessively transgress, also not for those who do not turn back.[75]

Ma was careful to follow the flow of the Arabic Qur'ān but was also attentive to most of the linguistic details of the verses. In addition, he was able to skillfully integrate elements of classical Chinese learning into his rendition, thus making it accessible and meaningful for both the student of Islam and the Chinese scholar (which, in most readings, were one and the same).

Throughout his translation, Ma referred to God as the "True Lord" (*zhenzai* 真宰), a term derived from a treatise of the same name by Zhuangzi 莊子 (369–286 BC), an early philosophical Daoist prosateur whose work was broadly read by the Chinese and whose symbolism was widely adapted in literary works since the fourth century BC, including *Han Kitab* authors. Zhuangzi claimed:

> If there were no other, there would be no I. If there were no I, there would be nothing to apprehend the other.—This is near the mark, but I do not know what causes it to be so. It seems as though there is a True Ruler (*zhenzai*), but there is no particular evidence for it. We may have faith in its ability to function, but cannot see its form. It has attributes but is without form.[76]

Much of Zhuangzi's philosophy was adapted in Sino-Islamic works to express the principles of Islam. Here, we see that his conception of a True Lord coincided with the Islamic understanding of a powerful overseer who is tangibly nonexistent in Himself but necessary for existence.

The epithet "most revered and respected" (*zhizun* 至尊) is also derived from the native Chinese tradition. *Zun* 尊 is the Chinese translation of the

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Sanskrit term *ārya* in the sense of "noble" or "exalted," which was used in the early translations of Buddhist scriptures. In this body of literature, the Buddha was often referred to as "the world honored one" (*shizun* 世尊) (equivalent to the Sanskrit *lokajyeṣṭha*), "the great holy and world honored one" (*dasheng shizun* 大聖世尊), "the great holy and honored one" (*dashengzun* 大聖尊), and "the great holy and most honored one" (*dasheng zhizun* 大聖至尊).[77] Again, Ma adopted terminology from the Buddhist tradition that would be recognizable to Chinese intellectuals and useful for conceptual comparisons.

In discussing the straight path (*sirāt al-mustaqīm*), Ma used an equivalent term: *zhenglu* 正路, which could be translated as orthodox path, correct path, proper path, or straight path. Mencius, the most celebrated Confucian scholar after Confucius himself, discussed the *zhenglu* in his discourse on proper action. He explained, "Benevolence is man's peaceful abode and rightness his proper path (*zhenglu*). It is indeed lamentable for anyone not to live in his peaceful abode and not follow his proper path (*zhenglu*)."[78] Mencius's words rang true for Ma, who embraced them for transmitting the gravity of following God's way. And for anyone familiar with the Chinese classics, Mencius's proper path (*zhenglu*) would evoke the complete notion of a life of benevolence and righteousness. This would convey corresponding Islamic principles of virtuous and ethically moral action, which would thereby be significant in both the Chinese and Islamic contexts.

Perspicuity and Precision

Ma continued his careful rendering of the Qur'ān throughout the remaining four chapters that we possess. He infused his translation with Chinese religio-philosophical tropes, thus appealing to the intellectual sensibilities of the literate Muslim population in late imperial China while providing a broader avenue for accessing Islamic scripture. Throughout his translation, Ma attempted to stay close to the linguistic composition and thematic meaning of the Qur'ān. This method furnished readers with the nearest portrait of the Qur'ān available to the Chinese reader.

Overall, Ma's comprehensive translation supplied Sino-Muslims with the all-encompassing nature of the Qur'ān in its common, though seemingly irregular, form and design. It was thus replete with admonitions to nonbelievers, demonstrations of God's power, and promise of His rewards.

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Unbelievers Qur'ān 2:6–7 and 2:17–20

Belief (*imān*) is of utmost importance to most Muslims, and the Sino-Muslim community in China also positioned it as a cardinal virtue. Accordingly, those who have a firm belief in God and the principles of Islam and perform righteous deeds need not fear the wrath of God. However, Ma's direct translation of verses 2:6–7 demonstrates that the unbelievers will receive their retribution:

> Indeed, those who are opposed to the circulation of faith, even if you warn them, or cast them away, it is one (in the same), they do not have faith. The True Lord seals their hearts, and obstructs their ears and eyes, and they shall encounter an extreme punishment. (2:6–7)[79]

Those who choose not to believe, or who have lost the capacity to believe, are destined for God's punishment. God bestows belief in God only if He wills it.[80] Those who cannot believe are in a state of bewilderment that affects all their abilities. In verses 2:17–20, Ma presented the condition of those unbelievers:

> Fire is all around those people when Heaven suddenly eliminates its splendor and discards it [the fire], they exist in deep darkness where one cannot see therein. Their ears are unable to hear, their mouth is unable to speak, their eyes are unable to see; thereupon they are misled and not able to return. Or it is as if they suddenly encounter a huge rain sent down by Heaven, within it is a dark haze with thunder and lightning, being in shock of the thunder crash, they use their fingers to fill their ears, fearing they will meet their death. The lighting nearly dazzles their eyes, when they see the brightness, then they move, when they meet darkness, then they stop. If the True Lord desired He could eliminate their vision and hearing, surely He can eliminate them. Sincerely! The True Lord is the utmost power over the myriad things. (2:17–20)[81]

The unbelievers' inability to "see" or "hear" the truth of the Qur'ānic message leads them away from the path to salvation. Sight, hearing, and speech are metonyms for humankind's capacity to discern between good and evil, thus contributing to their moral character and responsibility. God's refusal to eliminate these people, despite His power to do

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so, reveals His compassion for them, as well as His hope that they may recognize the truth and mend their ways. Therefore, with the revelation of the Qur'ān, Muhammad's message became the final scriptural disclosure, thus requiring belief in its teachings.[82] Ultimately, the Sino-Muslim community must stay firmly committed to belief in God, despite cultural and societal impediments to upholding their religious convictions.

Patience and Prayer—Qur'ān 2:24 and 2:153

In the face of tribulations, believers must remain steadfast in their faith. While life may appear difficult, in reality, existence consists of a series of trials where God tests individuals.[83] Nevertheless, no individual will be stretched beyond his or her capacity.[84] The key exercise to maintain one's faith is patience (*ṣabr*), and God promised that those who practice patience will be in His favor.[85] Ma revealed the importance of this quality in his translation of verse 2:153: "Oh, you people who are believers (*xinshi* 信士)![86] By means of patience (*renru* 忍辱) and the true meritorious act (*zhengong* 真功),[87] one seeks help from Heaven. As for those who are patient, surely they possess Heaven reciprocally" (2:153).[88] He also rendered verse 2:45, explaining that one should "[s]eek help by employing the virtue of patience (*ren* 忍) and observing the meritorious act (*gong* 功)" (2:45).[89]

In this translation, *ṣabr* is likened to *ren*, patience, forbearance, and forgiveness (*kṣānti'* in Sanskrit), as it is understood in the Buddhist *Pāramitā*s (*Boluomiduo* 波罗蜜多), the perfections or virtues of the Bodhisattva. In addition, in both of these passages patience is paired with prayer (*ṣalāt*), which Ma translates as a meritorious act (*gong* 功), thus linking prayer with moral ethical behavior in the Chinese context.

Patience is reinforced through persistent reflection and supplication, which circumscribes the necessary steps in the cultivation of virtue. Overcoming personal obstacles or misconduct will be rewarded when they are achieved through the combination of perseverance in the face of hurdles and prayer.[90] Accordingly, one must follow the teachings of Islam in the example of the Prophet to receive God's favor.

Dīn and Dao—Qur'ān 2:132, 2:193, 2:256, and 3:19

Dīn is the Arabic term generally used to encompass the theological and operational characteristics that make up what we understand to be the tradition of Islam. It may be most familiar to the Western reader through

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the Qur'ānic dictum *lā ikrāha fī al-dīn,* commonly translated as "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256). The opaque meaning of the English word *religion* does not correspond exactly with the word *dīn,* and the complexities of this term can be seen from its etymology.[91] The root meaning of the word is "to obey," "to be submissive," or "to serve,"[92] and is closely related to the word *dayn,* which means "debt."[93] In this understanding one who is indebted to someone must submit to his or her instructions, and conversely, submitting to someone is acknowledging one's obligation to fulfill a debt to him or her. Accordingly, *dīn* can mean "obedience," "abasement," "devotion," "submission";[94] "religion," in the sense that one serves God and believes in His unity;[95] "following a particular law, statute, or ordinance"; "an inherited system of rites and ceremonies";[96] "custom," "habit"; "way," "course," "mode of activity"; or "management of affairs." The Qur'ānic vision presents the believer with the religion of truth (*dīn al-ḥaqq*)[97] and an Abrahamic religion (*dīn Ibrāhīm*).[98] The meanings of *dīn* can also be "repayment," "requital," "recompense," "retaliation," "reckoning," and "the Day of Reckoning."[99] As is evident from this brief discussion, the term *dīn* has a polysemic array of connotations.[100]

The difficulty of translating *dīn* as "religion" becomes increasingly complicated when we examine the Chinese translation of the term. For this well-known verse, "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256), Ma rendered it as "The way (*dao* 道) lacks compulsion. Wrong and right are self-evident, do not believe in evil demons, only those who obey the True Lord, firmly hold the secure rope, which lacks breaking off. The True Lord is the original hearer, the original knower" (2:256).[101]

Dao is also a complex and loaded term that has been perpetually reinterpreted throughout history. Etymologically, the word consists of two parts: *chuo* 辶, meaning "go," and *shou* 首, meaning "head," signifying the head leading the way.[102] In pre-Han philosophical discourse, it meant "way," "path," "road," "guide," or "lead."[103] For example, in the *Analects, dao* is a guiding principle, pattern, formula, or teaching that is central to some action or behavior leading to societal or personal transformation.[104] Confucius explained that his *dao* consisted of observing loyalty (*zhong* 忠) combined with consideration or understanding (*shu* 恕).[105] He positioned *dao* as his leading principle: "Set your heart upon the way (*dao*), rely upon virtue (*de*), lean upon benevolence (*ren*), and explore widely in your cultivation of the arts."[106]

Mencius continued to elaborate on the *dao,* describing it as the proper manner of activity in the pattern of ancient sages.[107] Further, *dao* also

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described natural activity, such as the *dao* of water,[108] the *dao* of Heaven,[109] or the *dao* of humans.[110] In early philosophical Daoist texts, the term was unclear, carrying a variety of connotations. The *Daodejing* declares that the *dao* is nameless,[111] ineffable,[112] empty,[113] indistinct,[114] and natural.[115] It is a productive force,[116] eternal and without beginning or end.[117] It is also the source of creation,[118] arising before Heaven and Earth,[119] and producing and sustaining beings[120] by generating the One, thus leading to the multiplicity of the creation.[121] The *dao* underlies the transformation of creation, the process regulating the spontaneous cycle of the cosmos, and the basis for natural order itself. If individuals can harness this organic activity, they will embody the *dao* and act in accordance with it.[122] Therefore, *dao* encompasses the dual understanding of both source and process in the operation of the cosmos.

Ma encountered the term *dīn* on five instances during his translation of the Qur'ān.[123] He repeated his rendering of *dīn* as *dao* in verse 2:193, "The way (*dao* 道) returns to the True."[124] The original Arabic reads, "The religion belongs to God (*wa yakūn al-dīn Allāh*)." Later, for verse 3:19, "Truly, the religion (*al-dīn*), in God's eyes, is submission (*islām*)," Ma translated it as "The way (*dao*) is the guideline of the True Lord's teaching. It is only pure and true."[125] This general direction was also duplicated in verse 2:132, but the direct correlation between Arabic and Chinese terminology is more fluid. Ma rendered the passage, "Oh sons! Originally, the True Lord favored the multitudes with a special gift of the orthodox teaching (*zhengjiao* 正教). Die after you undertake hearing the way (*dao* 道)."[126]

On this occasion, in the excerpt "Verily, God has chosen [your] religion for you (*inna Allāh iṣṭafā lakum al-dīn*)," Ma equated *al-dīn* with the orthodox teaching (*zhengjiao*). Here, Ma was much more direct in his delineation of Islam as a specific tradition. *Zhengjiao* limited his discussion to a particular way (*dao*), which he understood as being transmitted through time after its revelation from God. You will remember that Wang Daiyu employed the same term, *zhengjiao*, in the title of his famous text, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, to indicate the religion of Islam. In the second portion of verse 2:132, "Therefore, die not unless you are those who have surrendered (*falā tamūtun illā wa antum muslimūn*)," Ma used *dao* to evoke the meaning of being a *muslimūn*. One who has submitted (*muslim*) to God's pronouncement of beliefs and practices was governed by a way (*dao*), in the broad sense of a teaching. Accordingly, Ma identified that being a Muslim was following a particular *dao*, which he equated with Islam and called the orthodox teaching (*zhengjiao*).

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Ma saw *dīn* and *dao* as parallel concepts, the simultaneous, patterned evolving and orchestration of the cosmos. Each directed the organic and natural behaviors of people in accordance with the unfolding of creation. By following the patterns of *dīn* and *dao,* individuals act in harmony with the universe, thus submitting to God's natural world and following its way or mode of activity. The natural order of the trodden path makes itself apparent as the cosmos unfolds in continual disclosure of the divine. Therefore, individual awareness of the world, whether it is from a Chinese or Islamic perspective, was in tune with God's creation and the principles guiding the universe.

Overall, for Ma, both *dīn* and *dao* represent the inherited system of natural behavior that is accord with God's ineffable productive force. If people obey these patterns and devote themselves to these teachings and formulas, they will be guided and led along the worn path of ancient sages and prophets, leading to societal and personal transformation. These passages show that Ma ventured to accurately transmit both the meaning and form of the Arabic Qur'ān. He was able to outline the Qur'ānic arguments and themes as they unfolded within their original narrative structure and formation.

Compared to earlier authors, this brought an seemingly authentic reading of scripture to the Sino-Muslim audience. In general, reading the Qur'ān sequentially provides a number of challenges for comprehension because of its irregular narrative pattern due to the long duration of the revealed passages. However, Ma's translation provided a comprehensive picture of what the Qur'ān is—a nonlinear, irregular chronicle that explores numerous seemingly unrelated topics in a single chapter. He presented the Qur'ān with all its complexities and idiosyncrasies, allowing Sino-Muslims to approach the text directly within its original structural context. Therefore, Ma's translation revealed the nonlinear and multileveled nature of the Qur'ān, which is obscured and imperceptible in works that explicated the theological or mystical meanings of certain passages. Thus, Ma ingrained his translation of the Qur'ān with a notion of sacredness in and of itself by the very nature of its structure and methods.

Challenges and Peculiarities

One of the merits of translating the Qur'ān as a single, complete entity is that it presented Ma, and thereby the audience, with characteristics that would not have arisen for earlier authors, who selectively chose appropriate

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verses to discuss. Some of these unique Qur'ānic features appear to have been problematic for authors adapting the Arabic language into Chinese. While we should not underestimate the weight of Ma's contribution to the understanding of the Chinese Qur'ān, we need to recognize and unravel these intertextual quandaries to describe his success in greater detail.

Mystical Letters

One of the unique features of Ma's translation was the introduction of the prefatory letters at the heads of some chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 of the Qur'ān, for example, are headed by the letters *'Alif Lām Mīm*. In two of the chapters that Ma translated, he attempted to render the disconnected letters, variously called "isolated letters" (*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭaʿāt*), "opening letters" (*al-ḥurūf al-fawātiḥ*), and "openings of the chapters" (*fawātiḥ as-sūr*).[127] These letters ranged from two to five letters and were at the heads of twenty-nine chapters. There were various explanations for their presence: they were mystical signs with symbolic meaning, or a mnemonic device, or a means of ordering chapters, or initials of editors. Nonetheless, there was never a consensus on their meaning within this exegetical tradition.[128]

In line with Ma's vision of presenting a complete view of the Qur'ānic message, he rendered the text at the beginning of Chapters 2 and 3 as *ailifu* 哎立福 *lia'amu* 俩阿穆 *miyimu* 密一穆. This choice suggests that Ma believed that not only the internal meanings of the text, but also the words themselves, carried salvific virtues for the Sino-Muslim audience. The transliterated form of these letters would not necessarily carry the sacred relevance for believers because they were not in Arabic, but it did offer a total portrait for the Arabic audience of what the Qur'ān set forth. In addition, Ma's translations enabled Sino-Muslims to encounter the capacity of the Qur'ān for transforming individuals in a multitude of ways.

In the Name of God

One of the structural and theological anomalies found within Ma's translation is his treatment of the *bismala*. *Bismala* is used to refer to the phrase *Bismi'llāhi al-raḥmāni al-raḥīmi* (In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful), which is recited at the beginning of every chapter of the Qur'ān except the ninth. Muslims also often recite the phrase before they perform many daily actions, such as eating, and before significant events.

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While translating the first four chapters of the Qur'ān, Ma approached the *bismala* in various ways. We have already seen how he rendered the *bismala* in the opening chapter of the Qur'ān: "I recite the most beneficent, the most intimate, the True Lord's name and begin (*wusong zhiren zhiqin, zhenzai zhiming erqi* 吾誦至仁至親,真宰之名而起)." Ma repeated this rendering in the second chapter. However, he completely retranslated the *bismala* in Chapter 3 as "Honor and respect God's (*anla* 安喇) revered name, the greatest benevolence, the greatest compassion (*zunfeng daren ci anla zunming* 遵奉大仁大慈安喇尊名)."

Even more peculiar was that Ma did not include the *bismala* at the head of Chapter 4 at all. Why he would change his translation and fail to include the *bismala* in this chapter is unclear. One could conjecture that because this translation was still in progress at the time of his death, Ma had not yet decided how he should render such an essential passage. There could also have been complications in the transcribing and printing process, which caused discrepancies within the source text as it was being made available for a broader audience. It is difficult to determine exactly why these discrepancies exist, since we have no clear understanding of how the text was written and published, nor do we know the state of completion of individual translated chapters.

Theologically, there are differences in his two translations. Regrettably, closer examination does not indicate his exclusion of the *bismala* in Chapter 4 was for theological reasons. The main components of the *bismala* are the designation of God by His name (*Bismi'llāhi*) and the enumeration of His attributes, the Compassionate (*al-raḥmān*) and the Merciful (*al-raḥīm*).

Ma employed two strategies for naming God. In the first, he used a conventional phrase used throughout *Han Kitab* texts to designate God, "True Lord" (*zhenzai*). We have already seen how this term was derived from the philosophical works of Zhuangzi. Ma, as well as earlier Sino-Islamic scholars, appropriated the cultural implications of this term by appealing to the philosophical sensibilities of many of their Chinese readers. In the second translation, Ma attempted to render the Arabic word *Allāh* in a transliterated form using Chinese characters: *anla*. *Allāh* has been understood by many Muslims to be the proper name of God, and thus untranslatable. However, it was used in pre-Islamic Arabia to mean the God, *al-ilāh*, and is used by Arabic-speaking Christians to refer to God.[129] In English, it is also translated as "God." Ma tried to maintain the more universally appealing aspect of the word *Allāh* by transliterating it.

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Language could serve as a unifier connecting Muslims to their coreligionists for a community that was generally removed from the broader Muslim world. Ma enabled Sino-Muslims to identify with all Muslims by preserving, as closely as possible, the original nature of God's all-encompassing epithet *Allāh*. This also reflected Ma's opinion that Arabic was the primary means for understanding the nature of God. God self-designated as *Allāh* and should thus be given that name. Sino-Muslims should also understand Him through the name *Allāh*. These two methods reflect Ma's oscillating attitudes toward being Muslim in China. He simultaneously asserted the importance of the Arabic discursive heritage that all Muslims inherited and sustained and confirmed the significance of the Sino-Islamic tradition.

Ma also employed a number of terms that carried a heavy intellectual history with them. The most important term was the notion of *ren*, which he used in both translations of the *bismala* to rephrase the notion of compassion. *Ren*, which has variously been rendered as "humaneness," "benevolence," "compassion," "human-heartedness," "humanity," "love," "altruism," "goodness," and "kindness," is the central Confucian virtue and has been reinterpreted and explained for generations. The character itself is composed of two components: *ren* 人 (person) and *er* 二 (two), thus meaning at root the relationship between two people. *Ren* was the principal quality of the five constant virtues (*wuchang* 五常). In the *Analects* of Confucius, the word *ren* appeared over 100 times, but he never formally defined the term. Generally, Confucius explained how to embody *ren*, how to avoid moving away from it, and what a person of *ren* would do.[130] For example, he described *ren* as meaning slow or modest in speech (12.3), to be resolute and firm (13.27), to be possessed of courage (14.4), to be free from worry (9.29), to delight in mountains (6.23), to subdue the self and return to propriety (12.1), to be respectful, tolerant, trustworthy, diligent, and kind (17.5), and to love others (12.22).[131]

Mencius echoed Confucius's explanation of *ren*. He explained the concept as follows: "*ren* is being a human. To bring them [all things] into harmony is the Way" (7B: 16); "The heart of compassion is the sprout of *ren*" (2A: 6); "*ren* is people's peaceful abode" (4a: 10); and "A person of *ren* has no enemies in the world" (7B: 3). As a final example of the importance of *ren*, one of the inaugurators of neo-Confucianism, Cheng Hao 程顥 (1033–1107), famously added, "The man of *ren* forms one body with all things without any differentiation. Righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faithfulness are all [expressions of] *ren*."[132]

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Ma Dexin was acutely aware of the intellectual history of this term, and he used it to designate one of the key characteristics of God. He magnified God's disposition by adding the qualifier of being the utmost (*zhi* 至) or greatest (*da* 大) version of *ren*. God thus typified the recognizable human virtue of *ren* and magnified this quality to the highest level. Therefore, Ma explained God in terms of the foremost Confucian ethical quality, depicting Him as the principal holder and exemplar of *ren*, thereby raising the character of God above the human realm and requiring belief in Him for virtue to be applied properly.

Completing the Qur'ān

Ma's translation of the Qur'ān was influential because it marked a significant change in the intellectual approaches to the Qur'ān and the scriptural consumption of readers. This transition prepared later scholars to conceptualize the utility and benefit of the entire Qur'ān rendered in Chinese, thereby creating full translations in the twentieth century. Despite the complexities of the Qur'ānic narrative and structure, believers would certainly profit from knowing the text in its entirety. Ma's desire to translate the Qur'ān stemmed from the fact that many people were not proficient in Arabic and thus needed to have a Chinese translation of the Qur'ān. Soon after his efforts, many other individuals began to translate large sections of the Qur'ān to promote knowledge of the Qur'ān for its own sake, and not necessarily to explore some theological or liturgical principles.

Ma's translation served as a means for conveying meaning within modern settings. This coincided with the increased use of Arabic instruction in Sino-Muslim education and broader engagement with the Arabic-speaking Muslim world. Firsthand knowledge of the Qur'ān would be the basis for much of students' learning in Arabic. Ma's version of it thus served a dual purpose: It acted as an aid in exploring the contents of the Qur'ān in a familiar linguistic setting, and it prepared individuals to delve into the Arabic Qur'ān with an established foundation already in place.

Ma's translation of the Qur'ān was also exemplary because it attempted to explain Islam in the distinctive *Han Kitab* vocabulary previously developed by authors like Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi, as well as to provide an accurate linguistic rendering of the Qur'ān in its original structural context through the translation of entire chapters. Ma expertly intertwined the *Han Kitab* symbolism of his predecessors with a direct translation of the Arabic form and syntax. Therefore, his work was essential to a globalizing

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community of Sino-Muslims who were expanding their linguistic and geographical boundaries in order to participate in contemporary Muslim dialogue.

The Diversity of Your Tongues

All together, these authors' works reflected the changing historical circumstances of the Sino-Muslim community and the intellectual development within *Han Kitab* thought. The shifting attitudes toward the Qur'ān can be understood within the specific discursive settings and varying intellectual environments. During the early stages in the development of *Han Kitab* literature, these scholars were addressing an audience that was Sinicized, and its ability to access Arabic and Persian Islamic texts in their original language was limited. Wang Daiyu wrote his texts in Chinese and used a classical vocabulary to reach Muslim students who had often been trained in traditional Chinese academies, but were also determined to learn more about their tradition. The structure, content, and straightforwardness of Wang's texts indicate that he was trying to explain key principles about Islam, rather than expounding upon esoteric philosophical theories. His limited application of the Qur'ān itself demonstrates that the kernel of the Qur'ānic message was more important than translating it directly for his audience.

By the mid-eighteenth century in southeast China, Sino-Islamic education was well established, and *Han Kitab* literature had matured. The scripture hall system simultaneously used Chinese, Arabic, and Persian texts, making intertextual references and advanced theological arguments the subject of study for advanced students. These factors, combined with the creativity and skill of Liu Zhi, enabled him to produce sophisticated treatises that utilized the Qur'ān in a variety of manners. Sino-Muslim students' familiarity with the Qur'ān allowed Liu to allude to its rich palette of themes and motifs without specifically translating its passages when exploring notions of belief. However, due to the students' confidence in the Qur'ān as a legally authoritative scripture, Liu also provided detailed renditions of exact verses in discussions of religious practice. The scholastic environment, discursive flexibility, and Liu's own intellectual artistry furnished the appropriate circumstances for a wide spectrum of Qur'ānic interaction.

The growing interaction between Muslims throughout the world was heightened during the nineteenth century, which provided the impetus

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for global Muslim cooperation and exchange. Intellectual dialogue and debate, combined with personal association and communication, enabled Sino-Muslims to engage their coreligionists in a manner that previous generations could not attain. Ma Dexin's matrix of writings promotes this congregational unity of all Muslims by providing his students and readers with practical and intellectual tools that would incorporate them into these conversations.

A complete portrait of the Qur'ān was a key part of this objective. A comprehensive translation of the holy book equipped Sino-Muslims with the essential intellectual apparatus for participating in these discussions. Greater knowledge of the content and structure of the Qur'ān, combined with regular travel to the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, and access to texts and the production and transmission of knowledge facilitated Sino-Muslims' involvement in the global Muslim community.

The transition from imprecise renderings of broader thematic elements to calculated and explicit translations of specific passages, and then the Qur'ān in its entirety, showed how some attitudes toward the Qur'ān and its message evolved. Early *Han Kitab* authors valued the Qur'ānic message over its direct rendering in Chinese, while later authors also respected the efficacy of the Qur'ān as a whole. Translational clarity was favored for deriving religious authority, while Qur'ānic symbolism was preferred for explaining the principles of faith.

Understanding the approaches and attitudes toward the Qur'ān by *Han Kitab* authors is essential for grasping the trajectories of Sino-Islamic intellectual history. Failing to recognize these authors' contributions and their specific methodologies limits our understanding of Sino-Islamic thought and the role of the Qur'ān in Chinese society. It was apparent that each author built atop the foundation of his intellectual ancestors, thus creating a dynamic tradition in dialogue with each other.

Qur'ānic engagement is directly related to the *Han Kitab* authors' encounters with the Arabic language more generally. All these authors were fluent in Arabic and used various Arabic texts to inform their writings. The following chapter examines their commitment to incorporating Arabic terminology and writings within their own works. The Arabic language tied the Sino-Muslim community to the broader Muslim world, and the level of philosophical convergence in the *Han Kitab* texts demonstrates the dynamic and simultaneous nature of these works.

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5

Arabic Discourse, Linguistic Authority, and Islamic Knowledge

THE UNIQUE COMBINATION of linguistic registers used in the *Han Kitab* literature allowed Sino-Muslim scholars to fashion a new interpretive framework for understanding Islam. The rich semiotic backdrop of the Islamic and Chinese religio-philosophical systems enabled these authors to create individual expressions that put multiple traditions in dialogue. The Chinese lexicon was replete with organic meaning and was expressively sonorous for articulating the principles of Islam to the Sino-Muslim community. However, these authors' engagement with Arabic was markedly dissimilar. Its use in daily prayers and social activities combined with the importance of the Qur'ān established Arabic's perpetual presence within the Chinese cultural sphere. However, its use as a discursive linguistic tool drastically changed throughout the years.

Wang Daiyu's limited engagement with Arabic took shape through his use of key Islamic terms and the names of Islamic personas. However, Arabic terminology was conveyed solely through the use of phonetic transliteration. Overall, Arabic served as a source of authoritative knowledge for Wang, and he often relied on its literary heritage to inform his own writings rather than submitting it as a discourse in itself for the Chinese audience.

Liu Zhi continued articulating Arabic terminology and names through transliteration, introducing numerous expressions, but generally wrote primarily in Chinese in his texts. Sustaining and increasing this hybrid lexicon demonstrated that Liu valued Arabic discourse and wanted to present it to his Chinese readers, who generally had limited linguistic capabilities in Arabic. In addition, he outlined the theological underpinnings

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of the Arabic language and introduced the form, sound, and meaning of individual letters. The movement toward the inclusion of Arabic indicates that it was becoming incorporated into *Han Kitab* discourse and used more widely in scripture hall education in the mid-eighteenth century.

Ma Dexin reintroduced Arabic as an authoritative discourse for approaching Islam in the Chinese context. He employed transliteration in several texts, but also wrote entirely in Arabic for various compositions. This complete incorporation of Arabic illustrates the importance of the language for Sino-Muslims, who were beginning to enter broader debates with their Arabic-speaking coreligionists during the mid-nineteenth century. Ma's texts prepared readers to approach Islam from a more cosmopolitan perspective by communicating the logistics of Arabic and introducing his readers to recurring Islamic debates directly in Arabic. His success was confirmed by the continuation of this Arabic discourse, which was maintained by his followers into the twentieth century.

This chapter outlines each author's use of Arabic and the guiding principles underlying it. I trace the shifting motivations that caused them to employ Arabic and determine why they chose to utilize it in their writings. I argue that the use of Arabic became more prominent over time because Sino-Muslims envisioned themselves in a shrinking world, where the global Muslim population was establishing greater contact and communication between disparate local communities. Arabic acted as a unifying element between divergent linguistic and cultural Muslim communities in both theological and practical levels. It bound them together as a unified group of believers and tied them to an authoritative tradition. Arabic served as a means for social and religious positioning through the posturing of *Han Kitab* discursive models and linguistic revision.

Han Kitab scholarship joined the perceived orthodox Islamic intellectual tradition through the use of an established discursive framework when employing Arabic. The use of language legitimized Sino-Muslims' religious authority because Arabization and Islamization were inseparable parts of a single religious ideal. Various social and religious layers of meaning and symbolic values were intertwined with the employment of Arabic. Sino-Muslim authors became custodians of a 1,400-year-old intellectual heritage by using Arabic and promoting a specific discursive trajectory. This made their worldview traditional in a new manner by simultaneously bestriding their Chinese and Islamic legacies in order to situate themselves in a modern globalizing world.

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Wang Daiyu

Wang Daiyu's central role in the development of *Han Kitab* scholarship positioned him as an important figure for our understanding of Chinese texts on Islam. However, he refrained from writing in Arabic altogether. This was understandable within his historical conditions, where many Sino-Muslims had generally lost the ability to read Arabic and only used it in ritual or social circumstances. Students of Islam, especially those in the scripture hall system, would have varying levels of Arabic competency, but their ability to understand Chinese would be far greater. Therefore, Wang chose to be the pioneer of a new discursive tradition that relied primarily on Chinese as the linguistic conduit for expressing the principles of Islam. By extension, Arabic was degraded as a scholarly language within the Chinese context. Its sacrality was maintained, and Wang certainly appreciated and relied in part on the Arabic intellectual tradition, but the transition to Chinese-language literature and religious instruction devalued the superiority of Arabic as a favored means for articulating Islamic thought.

Qur'ānic Personas

There were, however, a few instances where Wang was required to invoke Arabic terminology or names in order to fully convey his point. When this occurred, he chose to transliterate the terms with Chinese characters. We have already seen that Wang referred to a few individuals including some of the prophets. The sanctity of the Prophet Muhammad was an essential component of Islamic belief, and Wang clearly designated his elevated position throughout his works by identifying him as the utmost sage (*zhisheng* 至聖), although in a few instances he explicitly recognized him by name. He stated, for example, "Before creation, the surplus light of the Real Lord made manifest the original chief of the ten thousand sages, who is Muhammad (M*uhanmode* 穆罕默德), the root origin of the Non-Ultimate."[1] Wang also chose to utilize the Arabic epithets of several prophets. While explaining the creation of the cosmos, Wang mentioned both Adam (*adan* 阿丹) and Eve (Hawwā' in Arabic, *haowa* 好媧). He stated, "The creation of the human ancestor Adam's form and body is precisely the ancestor of the form and body of the ancient and modern humans."[2] He added, "When the human ancestor was sleeping deeply, the Real Lord created his wife from his left rib and named her Hawwā'."[3] He further evaluated the qualities of previous prophets, such as Solomon (Sulaymān

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in Arabic, *shulaimana* 數賴瑪納), Jesus ('Īsā in Arabic; *ersa* 爾撒), and Job (Ayūb in Arabic; *aiyubu* 藹玉卜):

> There was the sage Solomon, who arrived at wealth and honor but lacked disobedience. This is the model for the affirmation of those who have wealth and honor. There was the sage Jesus, who arrived at poverty and difficulties but lacked expressing resentment. This is the model for the affirmation of those who have poverty and difficulties. There was the sage Job, who had many ailments and misfortune but lacked indolence. This is the model for the affirmation of those who have ailments and misfortune.[4]

Elsewhere, he invoked the chief satan (*shayṭān*) as an manifestation of wrongdoing, relating "There is one great spirit (*shen* 神) named Iblīs (*yibulisi* 以捕哩私), whose deeds are engaged in transgressing the heavenly worthies (*tianxian* 天仙)."[5] Through these figures, Wang delineated patterns of virtue and piety by referring to individual prophets rather than relying on speaking of the general characteristics of sagacity. He also outlined inferior behavior by indicating the antithesis of goodness through the character of Iblīs.

Wang clearly defined his interpretation of the faith by clarifying the actions and behaviors of specific Qur'ānic personas. Through references to certain individuals, he conveyed the meaning of all the attending themes and contextual relationships affiliated with those characters. Thereby, he gained further authority in his statements when he could use examples to accentuate his points and verify the qualities of piety and moral behavior.

Words of the Saints

Wang also quoted from several authors and translated their Arabic writings. When he referred to these authors' works, he again transliterated their names. In his discussion of the heart, he offered a story: "Someone asked their senior Rābi'a (*labi'an* 喇必安), saying 'Do you take pleasure in the Lord?' She said, 'That is correct.' 'Do you hate the Devil?' She said 'No!' 'Why is this?' She said, 'I only have one heart, how could I always possess two?' "[6] Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya or Rābi'a of Baṣra (d. 801), a worthy (*xian* 賢) as Wang described her, was one of the most famous female Sufis.[7] She is well-known for her absolute devotion to God and for telling stories of her life and her thoughts about the intimacy she shared with Him. Through

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these accounts, we can see the basic themes that she touched upon: absolute trust in God (*tawakkul*), contentment (*riḍā*), poverty (*faqr*), affirmation of God's unity (*tawḥīd*), and sincerity (*ṣidq*).

Later, Wang related another tale, noting the wisdom of ancient worthies. He said, "Someone visited their senior Rābi'a and thereupon saw birds and beasts gathered around her. At the first instance, they all fled, avoiding him. The guest asked, 'Why do all the animals avoid me?' She replied, 'What did you eat today?' The guest said, 'I ate meat.' She replied, 'How could they not avoid you when you eat their meat?' "[8]

Wang utilized Rābi'a's expressions to illustrate key Islamic principles and simultaneously profited from her authority within the Islamic context. He also cited the "sage" (*xiansheng* 先聖) Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭamī (d. c. 875). Bāyazīd, as he was also known, was a famous mystic best known as one of the originators of the concept of annihilation (*fanā'*) of the self in God. He is also renowned for his ecstatic sayings (*shaṭḥiyāt*), such as "Glory be to me! How great is my majesty?" (*Subḥānī mā a'ẓama sha'nī*). When discussing individuals who do good deeds to gain profit or fame instead of from their heart, Wang cited, "Bāyazīd (*bayelaide* 爸野賚德) said, 'Repentance for mistakes and errors occurs once in a lifetime, but why should repentance for the virtue of endeavor stop at a thousand times?' "[9] Later, Wang discussed the proper modes of aquiring and saving what one needs. He said:

> Bāyazīd said, "Purity and modesty are deeds of endeavor, and I did them for only three days. On the first day I put away the wealth and nobility of the lodging place, which is this world. On the second day, I put away the glory of the eternal abode, which is the next world. On the third day, I put away myself, which is no-I."[10]

These quotations demonstrate that Wang personally valued the literary heritage that he inherited and utilized it to inform his own discussions of Islam. Again, referencing these well-known mystics brought with it the authority of the Arabic originals from which they were drawn.

Nomenclature

Finally, Wang employed a number of Arabic terms throughout his writings. The Arabic terminology that Wang used were generally well-known expressions that shaped the basics of Islam. He explained the relationship

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among God, creation, and humankind using several critical Arabic expressions: *tawḥīd* (*taoheide* 討黑德), the assertion of God's unity; *ittiḥād* (*yitihade* 一體哈德), meaning "union"; *waḥdat* (*wahadete* 宅哈德特), meaning "oneness"; and *imān* (*yimana* 以媽納), meaning belief. When he referred to these terms, he did not give expansive descriptions of their meaning; rather, he glossed them within the broader context of his discussions. This indicates that among Wang's intended audience, individuals would have been familiar with these terms, at least the most basic level of recognition.

In his discussion of how to understand the unity of God within the multiplicity of existence, Wang said, "This stage is called *tawḥīd* (which means 'practicing one'). When you reach this station, only then can you trace the activity of the Real Lord, though it is not possible to grasp everything."[11] Understanding *tawḥīd* enables one to view the unfolding world and be aware of its actual operations. While the world may appear to be multiple, everything relies on God for its existence and therefore is part of the unicity of God. Once individuals recognize the unity of God, then they can begin to grasp the qualities of creation even though God's essence (*dhāt*) is unknowable. Before people can understand God in His entirety, they must reach a level of union (*ittiḥād*), in the sense that they are one with God only because their existence relies on His.[12] Wang explained:

> If you have an astonishing awakening, such that you turn your intention and return your heart, this is the beginning [of] discrimination between the newborn and the Original Being and the clear division between the Lord and the servant, none of this depending on your own self. This is "attaining one from two." Even though the subtle clarity is manifest, unity in union has not yet been reached. This stage is called *ittiḥād* (which means "self-one").[13]

Wang infers that this state is obtainable only by the grace of God. After realizing the transformation of a created being from the creator, one can further understand *tawḥīd* and its relation to their personal self.

The final stage that Wang refers to is a state of oneness, *waḥdat*. He proposed:

> No matter how much you can delve into the principle and investigate the things: through seeing, hearing, knowledge, and power, you cannot penetrate the Original Being. To do that, self-being must

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> be completely molded. Only then will you gain the subtle clarity of the immediate manifestation of the Root Nature's movement and quietude. From this moment, everything will become clear, and you will know through the knowledge of the Lord, see through the sight of the Lord, and speak with the tongue of the Lord. This is "one from one," and it is called *waḥdat* (which means unmixed one).[14]

When individuals can surpass their limited self-being, they will attain annihilation of the self in God (*fanā' fī Allāh*). From that position, they have achieved union with God and no longer experience the world from a personal perspective. One's personal journey from the assertion of *tawḥīd,* then being graced with the realization of *ittiḥād* before finally achieving *waḥdat,* is an advanced spiritual achievement not attained by many. This relationship is complex and required a detailed explanation to outline the ideal of personal perfection. Wang's use of these key terms demonstrates that there was a linguistic register of Arabic phrases that would be understood by his intended audience.

Wang continued his use of Arabic to express another essential principle of Islam: *imān*. *Imān* (meaning "faith" or "belief"), is one of the foundational tenets of Islam and was outlined by Muhammad as one of the core elements of the religion. Accordingly, *imān* means to believe in God, His messengers, His books, angels, and the resurrection.[15] Wang explained that *imān* is conferred by the grace of God:

> The real solicitude is called *imān*. It is the Real Lord's movement and quietude showing solicitude to human beings. Hence, with this solicitude, people finally come to recognize the Real Lord correctly and properly. Thus it is called the real solicitude. It is not a reward for effort. The signs of the real solicitude are three: fear and dread, hope and expectation, and real happiness.[16]

One must have faith in both God's mercy and His power. Then it can become a fixed aspect of one's being. Wang elaborated:

> When you carefully reflect upon all the details, only one affair—*imān*—always is and exists eternally. It neither decreases nor increases. It is the ultimate equilibrium and the ultimate truth. It transcends the ten thousand beings and transforms all evils into surrender to it. Indeed, it is the real solicitude.[17]

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Faith is constant because it is bestowed by God, and it shapes human behavior by continually requiring the enactment of beliefs. Faith brings together knowledge and intention through righteous and pious behavior. Wang regarded *imān* as an essential concept that Sino-Muslims should understand in the original Arabic because of its central role in Islam.

Overall, it is clear that Wang believed that Arabic was critical for understanding Islam, but it was not the ideal means for discussing it with his intended audience of Sino-Muslims. While Wang believed the best way to reach the Sino-Muslim congregation of his day was through the Chinese language, he still valued Arabic as a mode of elucidating on Islamic beliefs. The necessity of writing in Chinese for a readership that was not fluent in Arabic did not prevent Wang from quoting from Arabic sources or using Arabic terminology.

His writing indicates that on a few occasions, he believed that Arabic terms would be more productive in their heuristic value than a Chinese translation. While his audience may not have been able to read Arabic, it is clear that he wanted them to know these phrases in their original language. His periodic use of Arabic concepts and names demonstrates that there was a general parlance used by Wang and his audience that was peppered by key Arabic terms.

The use of these terms without a thorough explanation indicates that his works were intended for an audience who would be familiar with such vocabulary. This linguistic register marks the hybrid nature of the scholarly language used in the early Sino-Islamic context. However, the absence of Arabic characters and the reliance on transliteration indicates that his readership would not have the linguistic capability to decipher the terms directly. This early stage required a phonetic reliance on linguistic parallels and probably was supported through extensive oral teaching.

Liu Zhi

Liu Zhi also highly valued the Arabic Islamic tradition and utilized it to inform his discussions of the tradition. But he rarely used Arabic to discuss Islamic theology or orthopraxy. He generally followed Wang's method of transliterating key terminology, places, and people, but he greatly increased the application of these words. In addition, Liu wrote two bibliographies that cataloged the Arabic works that he referenced while writing his texts, listed in both transliterated and translated forms. He also wrote an explanation of Arabic letters for the purpose of demonstrating

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the theological import of their creation. This work indicated a key shift in methodology by including Arabic words instead of transliterated interpretations of them.

Liu Zhi's writings indicate that Arabic was becoming more important for the participants in the *Han Kitab* tradition. His recurrent use of various Arabic terms, the citation of specific texts, and the inclusion of Arabic in his writings indicated that Sino-Muslims were actively engaged with Arabic resources. His various methods for approaching Arabic demonstrates that he was addressing a readership who anticipated discursive nomenclature that incorporated Arabic terminology, personas, and texts.

Liu was well aware of the linguistic hurdles that he would have to overcome. However, he was also mindful of the benefits and necessity of including Arabic. In his introduction to the *Rituals of Islam,* he discussed these challenges. He explained:

> This book uses Islamic speech but uses Chinese to translate and come to (their meaning). In it, there are things that can be translated and there are some that cannot be translated. As for recounting affairs and explaining doctrines (*daoli* 道理), these can all be translated. As for names of people and places, these cannot all be translated. For instance, in the "Original Teaching" chapter, there are a number of sages' names, and in the "Pilgrimage" chapter, there are mountain and city names, all which cannot be translated. Among these, there are still occasions where using translation does not grasp the meaning entirely and I reproduce the form. In such instances, the two types of translation methods are combined and are employed simultaneously. For instance, one term is *mu'min* (*mumin* 穆民), which is the laudatory title for Muslims. I translate it as "gentleman" (*junzi* 君子), or as "believer" (*xinshi* 信士), or as "follower" (*shunzhe* 顺者). None of these translations is far off from the meaning of *mu'min*.[18]

Liu's calculated methodology ensured that Sino-Muslim readers would be exposed to both the inherent meaning of important Arabic terminology and their aural forms. This approach revealed aspects of the Arabic discursive frameworks used throughout the Muslim world. Liu prepared his readers for a more comprehensive exploration of Islamic sources in Arabic. While most Chinese readers would resonate with Liu's sophisticated

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assimilation of Islamic theology in Chinese religio-philosophical expressions, many who desired a thorough investigation of Islam in Arabic would be situated to understand this discourse more easily. Liu's writings demonstrate that his intended audience was actively involved in discursive systems that included Arabic and attempted to convey this terminology through the Chinese language.

Geography

Liu's use of Arabic in his works generally reflected the style of Wang's works by most often transliterating terms that he viewed as necessary within his discussions. One aspect of Liu's writing that required the use of Arabic was his detailed description of place names. This was done most systematically in his account of the pilgrimage, where he detailed the stations of ritual throughout the sacred environs. He mentioned Mecca (*Moke* 墨克), Medina (*Modena* 默德那), and the Kab'ah (*Ke'erbai* 克而白) on several occasions. In Liu's account, he first drew the readers' attention to the focus of journey, saying, "The Heavenly Tower is none other than the hall of pilgrimage, also called the Heavenly Square (*Ka'bah* (*Ke'erbai* 克而白)). . . . It is located in Mecca (*Moke* 墨克)."[19] Next, he delineated the locations (*mawāqit*) where Muslims enter the state of ritual purification (*iḥrām*) before entering the sacred environs:

> Mecca has five frontiers, which are the boundaries of the hallowed land. The eastern frontier is called Dhāt al-'Irq (*Zhati Erlige* 查惕二里格). It is the place where the people of Iraq (*Erlage* 而剌胳) adopt prohibitions. The northern frontier is called Qarn al-Manāzil (*Ge'erni* 格而匿). It is the place where the people of al-Najd (*Nazhidi* 納止地) adopt prohibitions. The western frontier is called al-Juhfah (*Zhuhefa* 祝合琺). It is the place where the people of al-Shām (*Shamu* 沙目) adopt prohibitions. The southern frontier is called Yalamlam (*Yelanlan* 葉蘭蘭). It is the place where the people of Yemen (*Yeman* 耶滿) adopt prohibitions. The central frontier is called Dhu'l-Hulayfah (*Zulihoulaipu* 祖里候來脯). It is the place where the people of Mecca adopt prohibitions.[20]

He then detailed the minutia of the pilgrimage rituals and mapped out the sacred geography, including places like Mina (*Mina* 彌拿), Arafat (*Erlifati* 爾立法堤), Muzdalifah (*Muzidelifu* 母子得里脯), 'Aqabah (*Ergebai*

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爾肹白), al-Ṣafā (*Suofa* 索法), and al-Marwah (*Moerwa* 默爾禡). All these locations are required stations during the ritual journey.

Liu provided as much detail as possible in his description of the hajj in order to enable Chinese pilgrims to participate fully and be prepared for what they may encounter. In addition, this detailed knowledge of the pilgrimage raised the general awareness of those who were not able to go to Mecca. The inclusion of Arabic here is necessitated by the content of the discussions, but it also was reflective of Liu's approach, which included a growing number of transliterated Arabic terms. In this instance, Arabic made the reader familiar with a world that was at once foreign and intimate because the geography was religiously saturated and meaningful to the Muslim reader. Liu made that landscape more personal by using its Arabic designations, rather than glossing over the details and avoiding direct titles.

The Sages and Worthies

The Islamic prophets also received a thorough examination from Liu. In this respect, he continued the precedent set by Wang, transliterating the names of the messengers. However, Liu offered a much more comprehensive account of the prophets than Wang, therefore including several new renditions of the prophets' names. Liu's goal in explaining the roles of the prophets was to demonstrate the importance of Muhammad and demonstrate that Islam has been transmitted continuously since the earliest messengers. Liu explained:

> Beginning with Adam (*Adan* 阿丹) until Muhammad (*Muhanmode* 穆罕默德), among them are those who received the command and promoted the teaching. They are called sages, indicating they cannot be wrong. While they were all sages, their character was not the same. If one arranges and counts them, there are four classes of sage. All those who received the command and promoted the teaching, having portents, without exception, are called sages, such as Saul (Ṭālūt [in Arabic]; *Tuolutai* 脫魯太) and Joshua (Yusha' [in Arabic]; *Yushiershi* 鬱實爾是). Those who received the command and promoted the teaching, having portents and regulating by virtue of the scriptures, are called by the appellation revered sage, such as Seth (Shīth [in Arabic]; *Shishi* 施師), Jacob (Ya'qūb [in Arabic]; *Ye'ergubai* 葉而孤白) and Solomon (Sulaymān [in Arabic]; *Sulaimani*

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> 素來馬尼). Those who received the command and promoted the teaching, having portents and regulating by virtue of the scriptures, but who were able to act in accordance with the circumstances, and neither increased or decreased the standard of the ancient sages, are called by the appellation great sage, like Noah (Nūḥ [in Arabic]; *Nuhai* 努海), Abraham (Ibrāhīm [in Arabic]; *Yibulaxin;* 易卜拉欣), Moses (Mūsa [in Arabic]; *Musa* 母撒), David (Dāwud [in Arabic]; *Dawude* 達五德) and Jesus ('Īsā [in Arabic]; *Ersa* 爾撒). His receiving the command and promoting the teaching, especially receiving the great tradition, while abrogating the scriptures of the prior sages so that all under Heaven for ten thousand generations, act in accordance with what is permitted, is called by the appellation utmost sage. This is only the single individual Muhammad, and none other. Now, the purpose of the whole way has been transmitted. Originally, it started from Adam. Adam received the True Lord's clear command and transmitted it to Seth. Seth transmitted it to Noah. Noah transmitted it to Abraham. Abraham transmitted it to Ishmael. Ishmael transmitted it to Moses. Moses transmitted it to David. David transmitted it to Jesus. When Jesus passed away, there was none to receive his transmission. As a consequence, law and social order broke down and heresy rose in swarms. Six hundred years after the passing of Jesus, Muhammad was born. He received the command to expel evil creeds. He made known the clear orthodox teachings to inaugurate great harmony for ten thousand generations.[21]

Muhammad completed the transmission of Islam by continuing the teachings of earlier messengers. Liu emphasized that the teachings of earlier prophets were the same as the message of Muhammad. He added:

> Our teaching, from Adam, going through Seth, Noah, and Abraham, has no less than a hundred generations of sages following upon the heels of one another in succession. It has continued up until Muhammad who assembled the great completion (of the teachings). Afterwards the worthies and scholars expound and propagate the main ideas of the religious doctrines. They did not know weariness, tirelessly transmitting and conferring it to others. The reception of the teachings has been maintained continuously until the present day extending over seven thousand years. Its systems and

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> purview today resemble what they were in antiquity. The longer it has continued, the more it has flourished, and the more it has been transmitted and disseminated, the more distant it has reached. It sufficiently passes on for ten thousand generations, prospering in antiquity and today. How can this still be doubted?[22]

Liu made sure that his readers knew that Muhammad at once continued and revived the previous prophetic tradition by preserving and abrogating earlier teachings. This concept of continuity is essential for understanding the relationship of Islam to earlier traditions, and Liu skillfully tied them together by specifically citing Judeo-Christian prophets by name. Using transliterations of Arabic names demonstrated that these messengers had a genuine role in the Islamic tradition and made the readers familiar with how they corresponded to the transmission of its teachings.

Liu mentioned a few other figures from the Qur'ānic worldview and the Islamic tradition. He described the division of male and female and explained the meaning of their relationship in marriage. For this subject, he used Adam and Eve as the models and initiators. He explained:

> Heaven and Earth are the origin of all living things. The Male and the Female are the origin of human life. The very first Male and Female, who inherited the Lord and established the ultimate. Adam is the primary ancestor of the ten thousand generations of humans under Heaven. From his axilla was born Hawwā' (*Haowa* 好娃). They were joined together as husband and wife. Therefore, husband and wife originally emerged from a single body. They were born, began to age, and increased gradually in number. They were matched as spouses for one another.[23]

According to Liu, this relationship was initiated by Adam and Eve and thus necessitated specifically naming their role in its inauguration. On another occasion, Liu offered a story about Hagar (Hājar in Arabic) and her son Ishmael ('Ismā'īl in Arabic), in order to add depth to the mythology behind ritual activity. He explained:

> In the past, Abraham's wife, Hājar (*Hazhe* 哈哲), the mother of the newborn sage 'Ismā'īl (*Yisimayi* 易司馬義), was without water. Therefore, she searched looking between two mounds, rushing back and forth seven times, but was unable to find any. She had

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> no choice but to return, only to see flowing water pouring out from under 'Ismā'īl's foot. This is today's Zamzam (*Shenshen* 滲滲) spring.[24]

This explanation tied figures to doctrine and gave ritual action greater contextualization and meaning.[25] Liu also added doctrinal weight to assertions by quoting celebrated scholars of Islam. While describing proper burial practices, he quoted the most famous scholar of hadith, Muhammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī (810–870). Liu stated, "The scholar al-Bukhārī (*Buhalie* 補哈烈) said, It is proper that the front face (of the individual) should lay supine, in order to let the vital energy (*qi* 氣) and nature (*xing* 性) easily go out."[26] Liu's inclusion of this statement verified his position by adding traditional authority. This method meshed well with his strategy of including Arabic in many instances to enhance a generic discussion.

Liu effectively delineated a variety of figures from the Islamic tradition and specifically outlined who these figures were. By naming exact individuals, he revealed the rich literary tradition that he inherited. His readers would recognize these individuals by name and gain a greater understanding of Islam when used in specific contexts. If Liu had avoided specifically naming people and opted for generalizations instead, his readers would have lacked a firm contextualization of his teachings. Therefore, by adding Arabic transliterations of names, he gave weight to his proclamations. When teachings regarding sagacity or ritual were situated within a narrative context, they gained in significance and meaning for readers. They were then able to transcend generalizations about Islam and position it within the broader historical and mythological accounts with which they were familiar.

Lexicon and Discourse

Liu also used a variety of technical Arabic terms throughout his works, which indicates that his audience expected and was familiar with a discursive lexicon that included Arabic phrases. These expressions brought with them a fixed sense of authority and credibility. Many were key terms from the discursive tradition that Liu inherited, and their use demonstrates his familiarity with this legacy and his promotion of it. His readers would greatly benefit from their inclusion because it unveiled a direct glance at a seemingly authentic Arabic discourse for understanding Islam without themselves having advanced knowledge of the language.

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In this regard, Liu explained the relationship between Muhammad and the Qur'ān with the other messengers and their scriptures. He stated that Muhammad

> Received the command and promoted the teaching, continuing the tradition which had been severed for six hundred years since the time of Jesus. He was called the *khātam* (*heting* 合聽), or seal. The True Lord handed down [to him] six thousand six hundred and sixty-six sections named the *al-furqān* (*fuerruni* 甫爾如尼).[27]

Therefore, Muhammad both completed and sustained the tradition of the earlier prophets. In the Qur'ān, we are told that Muhammad was the seal of the prophets (*khātam al-nabiyīn*), indicating the finality of prophethood and the revelatory relationship with God (Qur'ān 33:40). The message that he received was sent down as the criterion (*al-furqān*) (Qur'ān 25:1) that one should use to judge right from wrong. As he was the final prophet, Muhammad's message, embodied in the Qur'ān, built upon these earlier scriptures while clarifying and abrogating the teachings of these texts. Liu elaborated on this point:

> These scriptures are the scriptures that the True Lord sent down to the previous sages. From Adam to Jesus, the world received one hundred in four categories, such as the Torah (*Tawrāt* [in Arabic]; *Taocite* 討剌特) (the name of the scripture revealed to Moses), the Psalms (Zabūr [in Arabic]; *Zebuer* 則逋邇) (the name of the scripture revealed to David), and the Gospels (*Injīl* [in Arabic]; *Yinzhilei* 引支勒) (the name of the scripture revealed to Jesus). These are all the great scriptures. Since the emergence of Muhammad, the True Lord completed the command and cut the leather, thus conferring the scripture known as the *Furqān*.[28]

Liu outlined where the Qur'ān stood in relation to the continued revelatory message of God. He maintained that the Qur'ān was preserving earlier teachings, while repealing many of them. The prophet Muhammad was an important messenger, serving as the final individual to receive a teaching from God. Liu highlighted this point by including terms from the standard discourse on this position, seeing Muhammad as the seal (*khātam*) and the message as the criterion (*al-furqān*). Liu also outlined the Qur'ān's relationship to other important scriptures. By using their direct

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titles, he demonstrated the weight of the Qur'ān in relation to these major scriptures.

Liu spent a great deal of time explaining the logistics of worship and ritual. Throughout his discussion, he included technical Arabic terms to help explain more fully how one enacted a belief or participated in Islamic ritual activity. He discussed the operations of prayer, explaining that one begins with the recitation of several verses from the Qur'ān. Liu stated, "[F]irst recite the head chapter of the True Scripture (its name is called *al-Fātihah* (*Fatihai* 法體海)."[29] He also explained how one signaled the intention to perform the prayer:

> While raising one's hands, one utters aloud words of prohibition. This is to signify that one is entering the ritual. As for the words of prohibition, are words intended to repress all worldly thoughts of earthly affairs. (In Arabic, it is named *takbīr* (*tekebi'er* 特克比爾)).[30]

Takbīr is the formulaic pronouncement of God's glory, God is the Greatest (*Allāhu akbar*), which is invoked during each cycle of obligatory prayer. When the person has finished the prayer, he or she officially concludes the ritual. Liu explained:

> Looking right and left, one says *salām* (*selan* 色蘭), and thereby exits worship. (*Salām* is the phrase whereby one shares their felicitations of peace with others. Is not ritual worship the pure way of Heaven? As for using *salām*, it indicates the state of human affairs as one exits worship. When praying in a congregation, these words are for the congregation. When praying alone, these words are for the spirits (*shenming* 神明) on one's left and right.) [31]

These details sustain the reader's understanding of daily ritual activity while providing the theological underpinnings for those practices. Whether his readers knew the meaning of these terms or recognized them from obligatory practices, Liu furnished the Arabic context that would be understood throughout the Muslim world.

Liu detailed the key terms for understanding significant Islamic holidays, specifically *'Eīd al-'Aḍḥā*. He related, "Every twelve months there is one pilgrimage. The pilgrimage month is called the month of pilgrimage. (In Arabic, its name is *Dhu al-Hijjah* (*Zulihouzhe* 祖立後哲)). The pilgrimage period is the eighth day of the month until the thirteenth

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day."[32] During this period, Muslims perform the ritual slaughter of an animal, *Qurbān*. Liu explained, "*Qurbān* (*guerbang* 古而邦) is a ceremony for self-purification, through hoping to approach the pattern of the True Lord.[33] *Dhu al-Hijjah* is the final month of the Islamic calendar, and on the thirteenth day, Muslims celebrate *'Eīd al-'Aḍḥā* in commemoration of Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son 'Ismā'īl. *Qurbān* serves as the replacement and reenactment of this sacrifice. Liu explained, "This worship is called the Gathering of Sacrifice. (In Arabic, it is called *'Eīd al-'Aḍḥā* (*eryide'eziha* 二一德額子哈)."[34] Through the explanation of these Arabic terms, Liu empowered his readers by imparting a firmer understanding of the rituals that they performed or hoped to participate in by adding depth to their meaning.

Liu also introduced a number of key Arabic phrases in relation to traditional spiritual processes to gain closeness to God. He introduced a widespread notion of a tripartite division of faith and practice in his discussion of the interdependence of belief and action. He explained:

> The method of cultivating the way has three vehicles (*sheng* 乘) of preparation while the essence of principle is only one.
>
> The vehicles sustain meaning. They are used to sustain the meritorious acts and cultivate the various methods of significance. They are employed to prepare the seekers of the way to examine the sequence for obtaining methods for pursuing advanced studies. Of these methods, prepare to have three vehicles, the first being called the vehicle of ritual (*lisheng* 禮乘). (In Arabic it is called *Shari'a* (*sheli'er* 舍礼二)). It fully conveys the way of Heaven and the way of humans and is the regulations for the cultivation of every matter and meritorious act. This is the fortitude of cultivating the qualities of virtue. Those people who cultivate the self with a single heart of devotion adopt this model. The second is called the vehicle of the way (*daosheng* 道乘). (In Arabic it is called *Ṭarīqa* (*Tuolige* 脱礼格)). It fully conveys both the principle of humans and the principle of phenomena. Human nature is entirely in accordance with the model of the principle of Heaven. This is the limit of the principle of phenomena. Those people who entirely conquer the principle of humans adopt this model. The third is called the vehicle of principle (*lisheng* 理乘). It is also called the vehicle of truth (in Arabic it is called *Haqīqa* (*Hejige* 合幾格)). It fully conveys all of the colors

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> and appearances of disappearance, namely the conditions of no-self and no-thing. Thus, it causes the principle of Heaven and the pure nature of humans to return to the single source of sublime words and subtle righteousness. This is being able to conquer all the selfish desires of the personal self. Those people who completely turn towards the True Lord adopt this model.[35]

In this scheme, the practitioner learns how to embody the religion through action, enact their faith through activity, and unite with God through the annihilation of the self. This threefold model was typically expressed in circles that promoted an interpretation of Islamic mysticism. The example is often derived from a hadith that read, "The *sharī'a* are my words, the *ṭarīqa* are my actions, and the *ḥaqīqa* is my interior states."[36] While readers were introduced to these theological concepts throughout Liu's writing, the Arabic designation for these methods strengthened their value. Students now were able to link their beliefs and practices with traditional discursive structures that provided a personal foundation for spiritual exploration.

Anthologizing Arabic

Another key development in Liu's works was his inclusion of bibliographic information of the sources for his writings. He wrote two bibliographies cataloging the Islamic works that he referenced, listed in both transliterated and translated forms. This demonstrates that he viewed his work in relation to these earlier texts. Liu was maintaining and sustaining their teachings by referencing these Arabic works. It also indicates that Arabic works were both accessible and in reading circulation, at least among scholars. We can also discern what resources Liu found valuable and determine which texts he believed required a broader readership through his transmission of their teachings.

Liu included lists of the sources he referenced in his *Metaphysics of Islam* (c.1704) and *Rituals of Islam* (c.1710). *Metaphysics of Islam* listed 40 titles, and *Rituals of Islam* had 45; 19 of these were entirely or nearly identical, so the total number of distinct works was 66 to 68. Many of these works were Persian treatises, but the inclusion of several Arabic works demonstrates the discursive influence that Arabic had at this time. There were several notable titles, including the *Tafsīr al-Qāḍī* (*Tefuxi'er Gazaui* 特福西爾噶最) of al-Bayḍāwī (d. ca. 1300) and *The Standpoints in the Science*

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of Theology (*al-Mawāqif Fi'ilm al-Kalām*) by 'Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 1355), but since Liu did not include Arabic in his bibliography, most of the other texts listed are still unidentifiable.

In addition to listing the bibliography, Liu specifically cited a handful of texts in his *Root Scripture* (*Benjing* 本經), the comprehensive prolegomenon to his *Metaphysics of Islam*.[37] We see that the Arabic literary tradition held great weight in Liu's writings. While his citations were not direct translations of these texts, he paraphrased their content in the *Root Scripture*. This opened up his readers to the authority and substance of these texts. Overall, he revealed a glimpse of the discursive tradition of these Arab theologians.

Characters of Faith

The dynamics of Arabic were also a prominent feature of Liu's work. In his *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet* (*Tianfang Zimu Jieyi* 天方字母解義), he included a description and interpretation of the letters of the Arabic alphabet. This text began with the forms and sounds of Arabic letters. Liu also went into the theological meaning behind the letters and what they symbolize when they are put together in words, such as *Muḥammad*. Evidently, Liu believed that personal knowledge of Arabic was valuable for Sino-Muslims. *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet* unveils the world of Arabic to the Chinese reader at an elementary level, but it also constructs this brief account on a theological foundation that demonstrates the greater value of the Arabic language. Liu enabled Sino-Muslims to become more familiar with Arabic, but he situated the discourse within the Sino-Islamic vocabulary of his other works. This step toward greater inclusion of Arabic in the Sino-Muslim literary tradition was only a preliminary initiative that emphasized the importance of Arabic as a holy language; the general incorporation of Arabic as a discursive tool came at a later date.

Liu's interest in the theological meaning of the Arabic alphabet is part of a larger intellectual examination of letters in various fields of Islamic knowledge.[38] Lettrism is not a specific school of thought or approach; it is best understood as "any type of methodology centered on letters as keys to deciphering (and manipulating) all levels of physical, imaginal, and spiritual reality; to this end, letters are held to be matrices of numerological, astrological, alchemical, magical, and other correspondences."[39] Many Muslim scholars have focused their examination on the isolated letters

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(*al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭaʿāt*) with the Qur'ān, which we have already seen Ma Dexin tackling in his translation.

The science of letters (*'ilm al-ḥurūf*) developed in various ways, but ultimately lettrism can be conceived of through three flexible thematic categories: gnostic-messianic occult traditions, mystical theologies, and a rational intellectual science.[40] Liu's work would echo the mystical theological explanations following the example of earlier Sufi authors, especially the interpretive perspective of Ibn al-'Arabī (1165–1240). In this hermeneutical approach, commentators examined Arabic letters in pursuit of "the mystical meaning hidden in the letters" in order to divulge their symbolic significance.[41]

Liu began his discussion by outlining the composition of letters and how this related to their theological significance. He printed a large dot and explained, "This one dot is the original root of the ten thousand letters. Every letter comes from this one dot, emerging and being born by transformation."[42] Here, he was referring to the dot (*nuqṭa*) that makes up the pointing diacritics distinguishing many Arabic letters from one another (*'ï'jām*). The dot was likened to the oneness of God and His creative power. Similar to creation, the dot transforms itself to produce all the possible letters. He continued, "This one encircling is the original substance of the ten thousand letters. Every letter, all from this one encircling, are dissected and are considered two halves, interlocking the model to it."[43]

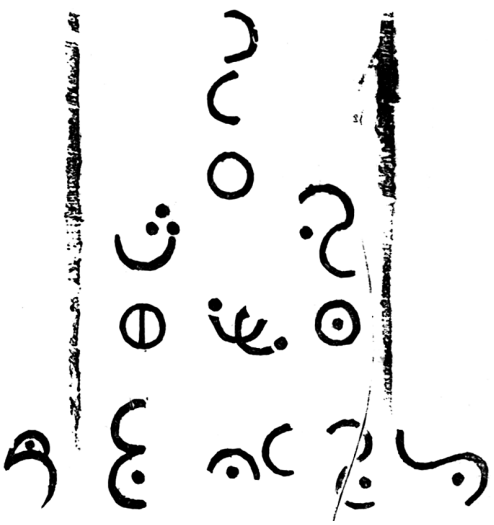


FIGURE 5.1 Arabic Letters in Ancient Form. *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet.*

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The lines of the letters make up their structure and shape, which joins them to their ancestral essence. Liu included the image in Figure 5.1, which shows various letters in their ancient form. *Rasm* was the original written portion of the Qur'ān, which was composed of only lines, lacking diacritics and voweling. The "encircling" (*wei* 圍), or linear script of Arabic letters, makes up the substructure of each letter, which is then distinguished by the *'i'jām* dots.

In the subsequent few pages of *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet*, Liu printed the ancient (*gu* 古) and contemporary (*jin* 今) forms of each letter of the Arabic alphabet and included a Chinese transliteration that reflected each pronunciation. He began with the first four letters, *'alif, elifu* 額立甫; *bā', bawu* 巴物; *tā', tawu* 他物; and *thā', xiewu* 些物; see Figures 5.2 and 5.3.

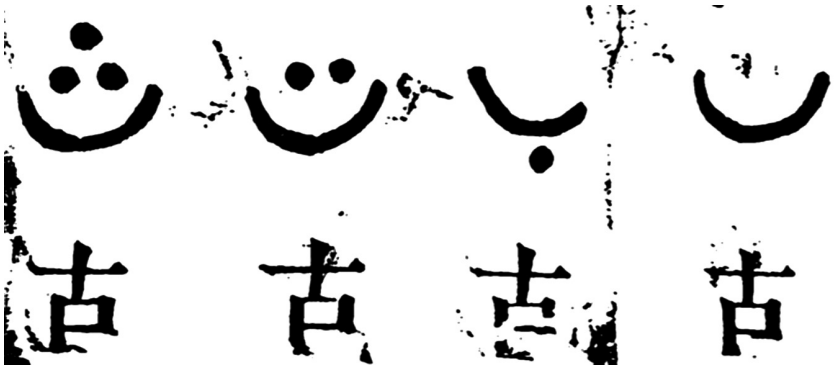


FIGURE 5.2 First Four Arabic Letters in Ancient Form. *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet*.



FIGURE 5.3 First Four Arabic Letters in Contemporary Form. *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet*.

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This section delineated how one would read, write, and pronounce the Arabic alphabet. Liu discussed the entire Arabic alphabet, including linguistic features such as *shaddah*, *hamza*, and *maddah*. This set the stage for the ensuing theological discussion.

After the introduction of the form and sounds of letters, Liu elaborated on their meaning and significance more broadly. While many scholars limited their theological discussions to the *al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭaʿāt* of the Qur'ān, Liu's approach of commenting on each and every letter was not unprecedented.[44] Each letter embodies different qualities of creation, and Liu delineated how they were understood as both receptive and creative entities within the cosmos. The letters transformed and developed in relation to one another. The *nuqṭa* remains central to the unfolding of creation; Liu stated, "Again, we consider the one dot as the true substance. Therefore, movement is considered the encircling of the dot's subtle substance." Earlier authors had likened the *nuqṭa*'s pivotal position in writing letters, like *'alif* and *lām*, to the pattern of descent and accent to God.[45] Others read the *nuqṭa* beneath the *bā'* of the *bismala* as being representative of God's creation.[46] Therefore, in this tradition of the *nuqṭa*'s creative production, Liu asserts that each letter extends from this single point. He explained how each of the first seven letters of the alphabet produces each other in a reciprocal manner from this single point:

> As for *'alif*, it is the transformation and circulation of the dot's subtle substance. As for *bā'*, it is the manifestation of the alteration of vital energy (*qi* 氣) and hidden principle (*li* 理) of *'alif*. As for *tā'*, it is the manifestation of the bright form and hidden vital energy of *ḥā'*. As for *thā'*, it is the manifestation of the appearance and the principle view of *ḥā'*. As for *jīm*, it is the turbidity of principle and vital energy becoming the same subtle color and mutually gathering together of *ḥā'*. The principle of the ten thousand transformations reaches this and orders [creation]. *Ḥā'* is vital energy. The singularity of the Supreme Ultimate (*taiji* 太極) is the heavenly command circulating deeds and circulating substance. *Khā'* is the created being. Each and every correct life is a tool of the singular Supreme Ultimate. The forms of the ten thousand creatures reach this and halt.[47]

In this discussion, Liu employed well-known technical vocabulary from neo-Confucian and Daoist philosophical discourses. Liu's text

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can be viewed against Zhuxi's reading of Zhou Dunyi's explanation of *Taiji*. For Zhu Xi, vital energy (*qi* 氣) is ordered by principle (*li* 理), while principle is made up of vital energy. The oscillation of the cosmological compliments, yin 陰 and yang 陽, make up the creative substance of existence. Here, the letters experience the same original formation as the rest of creation, enact the inner principles of the creative forces of God's operations, and express both cosmological and metaphysical principles.

Later, Liu states that letters exemplify the qualities of created beings. He maintained that "*Dāl* is the heart. *Dhāl* is nature (*xing* 性). *Rā'* is knowledge. *Zāy* is the condition of appearance."[48] Still others represent creation itself: "*Sīn* is heaven. The sun and stars adorn what is below. *Shīn* is earth. The disposition of the created beings exhibits what is above."[49]

Liu continued to explain that *ṣād* is man, *ḍād* is woman, *ṭā'* is birds, *ẓā'* is beasts, *'ayn* is metals, *ghayn* is stone, *fā'* is plants and trees, *qāf* is mountains, *kāf* is rivers, *lām* is ancient grains, and *mīm* is fruit.[50] Finally, we learn that *nūn* is the birth of humans, *wāw* is the death of humans, and *yā'* is the self. Each letter has an inner meaning that has nothing to do with its linguistic function. This demonstrated that knowledge of the Arabic language was valuable for the Sino-Muslim audience in and of itself.

Liu continued to explain how the Arabic language gains various meanings as words are constructed with various selections of letters. This concern is exemplified through his discussion of the name *Muḥammad*. Here, Liu outlined how the combination of four Arabic letters created three interrelated meanings. He observed:

> Muhammad (*Muḥammad* [in Arabic]; *Muhanmode* 穆罕默德) is the name of our sage. Originally there were four writings and four sounds, *mīm*, *ḥā'*, *mīm*, *dāl*, when complete. All together, there are three theories (about the word), the first is about the shape and form, the second is about grasping the meaning, and the third is about the theory of principle. The shape and form of Muhammad (*Muḥammad*) can be regarded as a human. The apex of its form, the *mīm*, appears as a head. The *ḥā'* appears as its arms. The second *mīm* appears as its belly. The *dāl* appears as a pair of feet. All together its appearance is like this.

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FIGURE 5.4 Muhammad Form in Arabic Letters. *Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet*.

> In grasping the meaning of Muhammad (*Muḥammad*), he can be regarded as the universality of Heaven praising the God of universal Heaven. All together, the spirit of the earth humbly respects its own True Lord and gives life to spirituality. Everyone praises his virtue and appreciates his beauty. Then, in the theory of principle, *mīm* is the fruit, *ḥā'* is the vital energy (*qi* 氣), and *dāl* is the heart. He is created as a special tree. Muhammad (*Muḥammad*) can be regarded as its seed and also as its fruit. Before Heaven and Earth, we can consider the seed as the original root of the ten thousand principles. After Heaven and Earth, we can consider the fruit the seal of the ten thousand sages. Therefore, the one word has a pair of *mīm*s. The *ḥā'* resides in the vital energy between the pair of *mīm*s. The Real resides between the before Heaven and after Heaven. Through this [process] before Heaven and after Heaven are completed and establish the command. Those who receive the command are the heart. Therefore the *dāl* resides at its end. One says the first *mīm* serves as the first substance (*awāl jawhar*), while the second is the second substance (*dovvom jawhar*). The *ḥā'* is the world of spirits (*'ālam arwāḥ*) and the *dāl* is the world of bodies (*'ālam ajsād*). Generally, before Heaven and after Heaven are singular in God's image (*'ajalahu Āllah sūrah*). Therefore, it is said Muhammad is for God's image (*Muḥammad 'ajalahu Āllah sūrah*).[51]

This single word has meaning in the physical combination of letters, as an exemplary model of behavior, and as a personification of creation in

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totality. Liu demonstrated that the name *Muḥammad* had beneficial qualities that could only be grasped through the Arabic iteration of its linguistic manifestation. Muhammad functioned at different levels of reality, both as the source and product of creation, in addition to serving as the sagacious paragon of lived faith. Liu's goal was to magnify his importance through an explanation of his name. However, this further meaning is only inherent in the Arabic form of his name. Therefore, Liu's introduction and description of Arabic was intended to detail the theological benefits of understanding the Arabic language.

Liu provided a rich tapestry of Arabic terminology that empowered the readers' ability to explore Islam more fully. The Arabic terms, individuals, and concepts that Liu introduced to his readers would bolster their belief and comprehension of the various interpretations of Islam. It also prepared them for further study in primary Arabic sources. In addition, Liu's explanation of the Arabic alphabet gave Chinese readers firsthand interaction with the language. This text encouraged readers to examine Arabic closely for their own purposes because Liu linked comprehension of the language with further theological meanings. It is clear that Arabic was becoming more essential for readers of Liu's works. We can surmise that Arabic was a noticeable feature of *Han Kitab* scholarship and the scripture hall system. However, the language still played a minor but growing role in Liu's oeuvre in general, and his readers would come away with only a modest linguistic toolbox for approaching Islam through an Arabic discursive framework.

Ma Dexin

Ma Dexin was a cosmopolitan Muslim who was well aware of the shifting global reunification of the broader Muslim community during the mid-nineteenth century. His travels enabled him to witness the changing dynamics within the community and the rising importance of Arabic as a means for accessing Islamic knowledge and joining in contemporary debate. At the time, Persian was slowly waning as a dominant discourse for surrounding Muslim communities.[52] Ma increasingly employed Arabic as a means for discussing Islam while simultaneously writing in Chinese, often having his texts translated into the other language.

This variation in the Sino-Islamic compositional routine accentuates an ideological departure from the Sinic culture that continued to dominate *Han Kitab* scholarly activity until the 1800s. However, we should not read this incorporation as Ma's departure from the discursive patterns of

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the *Han Kitab* in his larger oeuvre. His Chinese works closely replicated textual models from Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi, and he also committed to the *Han Kitab*'s preservation by editing and republishing their works. Ma's Arabic work provided Sino-Muslims a foundation for employing Arabic as a tool for engaging the Muslim community in both lived physical realities and in theological literary debates. Through greater contact and communication with Muslims throughout the globe, and their increasing familiarity with Arabic, Sino-Muslims were able to participate in dialogues. Thus, Sino-Islamic scholarship of the *Han Kitab* began to participate in the perceived orthodox Islamic intellectual tradition by reintroducing this Arabic discursive framework.

Ma Dexin was the first within the *Han Kitab* tradition to incorporate Arabic fully into his writings. His works included the translation, transliteration, and inclusion of complex vocabulary from the Arabic Islamic tradition. Many of Ma's Arabic texts expressed Islam using the same terminology and sources as popular Arabic texts from the Middle East. While he followed Wang's and Liu's method of transliterating key expressions, places, and people, he delivered a more thorough presentation of Islam through firsthand knowledge of Arabic discourse. The recurring inclusion of Arabic with Chinese texts indicates that Ma's Sino-Muslim audience was eager and prepared to embrace Arabic resources.

Like Liu before him, Ma evidently encountered readers who anticipated a linguistic register including Arabic terminology. However, his repeated use of Arabic as the central language for writing texts illustrates that some of his students were becoming well versed in Arabic religious discourse. Arabic served as the link between divergent linguistic and cultural Muslim communities, both theologically and pragmatically, and provided Sino-Muslims with tools for accessing an authorized literary tradition for understanding Islam.

Ma's elevation of Arabic signaled a repositioning of linguistic authority in Sino-Islamic discourse. Arabic now served as the means for accessing Islamic authority and engaging in religious understanding. By promoting this discursive trajectory, Ma's work prepared Sino-Muslims to play an active role in the further development of global Islamic discourses. This linguistic revision also situated *Han Kitab* thought within a broader discourse and symbolically wed it to the long Islamic intellectual tradition. Therefore, while Ma's Arabic teachings readied Sino-Muslims for inclusion in early modern dialogues, it also elevated their social and intellectual status as authoritative scholars.

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Inclusion and Transliteration

Many of Ma Dexin's texts echoed the methods of his predecessors by including transliterations of numerous Arabic terms, names, and places. The preceding sections of this chapter have discussed a number of these terms, such as *Muḥammad, 'Alī, Arafat, 'umrah*, and *salām*. However, Ma's writings expose his instructive intentions because he included the Arabic for each of these items in a number of works. The didactic nature of these insertions demonstrates that Ma wrote as a teacher, trying to enable his readers to grasp the complexities of the Arabic language within a natural and familiar setting—the Chinese language. In a number of works, including *Opening Love for Ritual and Law* (*Lifa Qi'ai* 禮法啟愛), *Precious Instructions from the Veritable Records* (*Shilu Baoshun* 實錄寶訓), and especially *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey* (*Chaojin Tuji* 朝覲途記), Ma repeated the same pattern when using Arabic words. Within these Chinese treatises, he would write the Arabic term followed by its transliteration—for instance, *ziyāra, jiyalei* 擠呀勒; *'Arafāt, Erleifate* 爾勒法特; *salām, seluemu* 色略母; Muḥammad al-Būṣīrī, *Muhamode Busuili* 母哈默德補雖里; and al-Shāfi'ī, *Shafeier* 沙菲爾. This procedure provided Sino-Muslim readers with the original Arabic script, which would simultaneously reinforce their practical knowledge of the language and their discursive understanding of its meaning. The pedagogical objective became unambiguous as readers encountered reoccurring words as Ma repeated this method, continuously providing the Arabic text. In *Precious Instructions from the Veritable Records*, for example, Ma always wrote Adam, *Adan* 阿丹.

Placing Arabic within the context of the Chinese text moved beyond the aural recollection that was evoked by transliteration alone, as in the works of Wang and Liu. This inclusion also indicates that some readers were capable of reading Arabic, at least in a very basic fashion. The texts in which Ma used this method were instructive or informational treatises, as opposed to his more philosophical works, which either did not include Arabic at all or were written entirely in Arabic. This fact may indicate that these specific works—namely, a primer on prayer, a prophetic genealogy, and a hajj diary—were intended for a more general audience than his other works, which might have been written for more advanced readers with a command of Arabic and knowledge of classical Chinese philosophical concepts. Overall, the repeated inclusion of Arabic terms alongside their Chinese transliterations signals that many of his readers were familiar with written Arabic and would appreciate its inclusion.

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Linguistic Parity and Sororal Composition

Another group of Ma's works demonstrates his admiration for the Arabic literary tradition, from which he culled many of his ideas. In *Description of the World* (*Huanyu Shuyao* 寰宇述要)[53] and *Sources of the Islamic Calendar* (*Tianfang Liyuan* 天方曆源) Ma employed a parallel system of producing the same text in both Chinese and Arabic. This fraternal pairing of treatises in two languages reveals dual targets. Providing corresponding texts enabled Ma's Muslim readers to enhance their linguistic skills in complex primary sources and to explore authentic Islamic discourse in Arabic. The Arabic version of *Description of the World* provides a number of details for tracking time via the solar system and understanding how one can understand their position in the cosmos. For example, Ma explained:

> The universe is round in its production and is similar to the nature of quicksilver. . . . Every period [of time] mentioned is natural and its environment is divided into twelve signs of the zodiac. They are Aries (*al-ḥamal*), Taurus (*al-thawr*), Gemini (*al-jawzā*), Cancer (*al-saraṭān*), Leo (*al-asad*), Virgo (*al-sunbula*),[54] Libra (*al-mīzān*), Scorpio (*al-'aqrab*), Sagittarius (*al-qaws*), Capricorn (*al-jadī*), Aquarius (*al-dalū*), and Pisces (*al-hūt*).[55]

Ma explored various topics describing how the heavens and the Earth work together in harmony and how we can witness God's unveiling through creation. Muslim students would advance their knowledge and gain an advanced linguistic register, which they could employ to discuss the cosmos in scientific language with other Arabic-speaking Muslims abroad. Through his assertion of the primacy of the Islamic sciences, Ma reaffirmed the accuracy of Islamic knowledge. He further verified his opinions by physically locating his knowledge in a foreign area where Arab Islamic sciences were practiced. He spent several years living in Singapore exploring these disciplines and claimed, "I tried what they said yearly and found the precision of the Arab dates to be correct."[56] For Ma's Muslim audience, these comments could shore up their confidence in their Islamic heritage and provide them with practical skills in reading through Arabic scientific materials or discussing them with coreligionists.

A second result was the demonstration of the continued contribution of the Islamic sciences to Chinese civilization. As one can gather from

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the titles of the abovementioned texts, they outline geography, astronomy, astrology, and calendrical systems, which played an integral role in advancing Chinese civilization throughout history.[57] When writing in Chinese, Ma placed earlier Muslim thinkers in a position of local authority by clothing them in clear Chinese symbolism. For example, in the Chinese version of *Description of the World,* he argued for understanding the Islamic sciences as an accurate and reliable account of the cosmos. He explained:

> Indeed, Great Heaven (*huangtian* 皇天) hangs down an expansive image, thus showing humankind the highest of Heavens (*jiutian* 九天), the sun, and the stars. You must be aware of this. Therefore, ancient sages and former kings comprehensively examined it and wrote their scriptures of history to cause later generations to examine the form. By means of differentiating righteousness and observing appearances, thereby one now realizes the principle of this.[58]

Here, he positioned previous Muslim scholars as "sages" and "kings" who probed the cosmos in an authoritative posture. These culturally loaded roles would further authorize the contributions of Muslim scientists for Chinese readers by drawing attention to the contribution of Islamic writings to the development of indigenous Chinese sciences.

Ma also achieved the authorizing of Islamic sciences within Chinese society by relating the Islamic sciences to Chinese knowledge. When he translated the previous passage on the zodiacal constellations in the Chinese version of *Description of the World,* he linked the Arabic understanding of the zodiac to traditional Chinese notions of the Earthly Branches (*dizhi* 地支), the traditional manner of timekeeping in premodern China.

> Our surroundings are divided into the twelve constellations of the zodiac, Aries (*Baiyang* 白羊), the eleventh palace of the twelve earthly branches (*xu* 戌), Taurus (*Jinniu* 金牛), the tenth palace of the twelve earthly branches (*you* 酉), Yin and Yang are the central palace, Cancer (*Jujie* 巨解), the eighth palace of the twelve earthly branches (*wei* 未), Leo (*Shizi* 獅子), seventh palace of the twelve earthly branches (*wu* 午), Gemini (*Shuangnu* 雙女), the sixth palace of the twelve earthly branches (*si* 巳), Libra (*Tiancheng* 天秤), the fifth palace of the twelve earthly branches (*Chen* 辰), Scorpio (*Tianxie* 天蝎), the fourth palace of the twelve earthly branches (*mao* 卯), Sagittarius (*Renma* 人馬), the third palace of the twelve earthly

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branches (*yin* 寅), Capricorn (*Mojie* 磨羯), the second palace of the twelve earthly branches (*chou* 丑), Aquarius (*Baoping* 葆瓶), the first palace of the twelve earthly branches (*zi* 子), and Pisces (Shuangyu 雙魚), the twelfth palace of the twelve earthly branches (*hai* 亥).[59]

Here, Ma unites Islamic astronomy with Chinese calendrical systems, further demonstrating the translingual nature of *Han Kitab* scholarship. Islamic and Chinese sources of knowledge were not necessarily competing for readers but mutually informative. In these types of texts, Ma documented the significant contribution that Muslims made to scientific advancement, while establishing a corpus of parallel texts for Sino-Muslim readers to master new knowledge.

Describing Discourse

One of Ma's most important contributions to *Han Kitab* intellectual development was the reintroduction of Arabic as a practical, discursive language. Prior to this period, Arabic was overshadowed by the Persian literary tradition, and was seldom used outside of ritual observances. Ma wrote a number of works solely in Arabic for various purposes, such as *The Story of Adam* (*Qiṣat Adam*), *Secrets of the Return* (*Asrār al-Ma'ād*), *Lies of the Christians* (*Akādhīb al-Naṣāra*), *Yearning* (*Mushtāq*), *Stimuli* (*Munabihāt*), *Complete* (*Kāmil*), *The Definite* (*al-Muhkam*), *Verification of Prayer* (*Taḥqīq al-Ṣalāt*), *Logic* (*Manṭiq*), *Consistent Grammar* (*al-Naḥw al-Mutasiq*), *Consistent Morphology* (*al-Ṣarf al-Mutasiq*), and *Islamic Admonitions* (*al-Naṣā'iḥ al-Islāmiyya*).[60]

The diverse subject matter of these works indicates that Ma hoped that his readers and students would be able to advance their knowledge of Islam in its mother language, regardless of their intellectual interests and background. These works would also prepare Muslims to engage with the broader Arabic-speaking Muslim world by providing them with the linguistic apparatus for complex discussion and debate.

One of the most basic but essential features of Arabic Islamic texts is their opening invocation, the *bismala*. The Qur'ān repeatedly begins its chapters with the declaration "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful," and most written works throughout Islamic history have followed this pattern. Ma's texts are no different; he began *Description of the World, Sources of the Islamic Calendar, A Breviary of Ritual and Prayer* (*Lifa Jiejing* 禮法捷徑), *Translation of the Five Chapters of the Root Scripture* (*Benjing*

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FIGURE 5.5 Bismala. *Sources of the Islamic Calendar*.

Wuzhang Yijie 本經五章譯解), and *Harmonizing the Study of Principle* (*Lixue Zhezhong* 理學折衷) with the *bismala*. In each of these examples, the *bismala* is written in raised *Ṣīnī* style calligraphy (see Figure 5.5).[61]

As mentioned in Chapter 4, many Muslims invoke the *bismala* whenever they do something that they consider worthwhile. The visual admiration for the *bismala* and the literary replication of this tradition in Ma's texts demonstrate that he held the *bismala* in high regard. This simple act of duplicating this prefatory remark carried great theological merit and reflected the continued efforts by Ma to unify the Muslim community through discursive processes.

Ma employed Arabic in a variety of settings, but one of his most lasting uses was in advanced theological treatises, including, most notably, *Harmonizing the Study of Principle*. The text introduces Ma's readers to a variety of theological opinions and a specific literary discourse that is often employed more generally in Arabic Islamic thought. This process already begins from the opening passages. Ma began in a traditional manner, expressing reverence for God:

> Praise be to God, the Most High,[62] the Majestic,[63] the Generous,[64] the Protector,[65] the Beautiful, the Holy One being free from obstruction, the Promenade exceeding in glory, the Exemplification, the Invitation, and the Source of Peace upon its emanations. By the most perfect revelation, with the perfection of the most beautiful, and upon his family and the companions who have reached their destination. By pursuing towards the conclusion of their high predilection is the following treatise.[66]

From the beginning of his treatise, Ma employed terminology and wrote in a manner that would be familiar to Arabic readers anywhere. For example, he used several of the ninety-nine names of God (*al-ʾasmāʾ*

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al-ḥusnā), which have been used repeatedly to honor God in His various attributes in Islamic texts throughout history.[67] This opening passage also mirrored the passionate oaths found in many verses of the Qur'ān.[68] In testifying to the veracity of his writings, he swore by the inspiration of the Qur'ān, the perfected model of Muhammad, his descendants, and his closest companions.

This general schema was replicated in Ma's other key Arabic theological text, *Translation of the Five Chapters*, which he begins by saying, "Praises due to God, lord of the worlds."[69] This phrase is uttered by millions of Muslims during each prayer as part of the recitation of the opening chapter of the Qur'ān, *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*. He also continued his reverence for the Prophet Muhammad and those associated with him: "And peace be upon the messenger Muhammad and his family and companions."[70] In these remarks, Ma offered various models for understanding traditional praises and affirmations of the Islamic tradition and its sources.

Throughout these texts, Ma developed detailed explanations of the cosmos and the unfolding of creation using technical Arabic terminology from traditional discourses. In *Harmonizing the Study of Principle*, for example, he sketched an outline of the complex relationship between God and His creation. In trying to explain the true nature of this association, he described the various manners in which one can understand God while remaining aware of the possible misunderstandings. He suggests:

> Almighty God is sometimes necessary (*wājib*), sometimes possible (*mumkin*), sometimes eternal (*qadīm*), sometimes newly arrived (*ḥādath*), sometimes Creator (*khāliq*), sometimes created (*makhluq*). In this, it is possible to stray from the path of God's unity (*tawhīd*).[71]

These interpretations depend on the perspective that one uses to view the relationship between God and creation. Ma develops God's role further, saying, "He is its [creation] quintessence (*'ayn*) because of His impression. . . . Surely, God is the donor for the creature (*makhlūq*)."[72] When viewed from the perspective of creation, the creatures are utterly reliant on God for their contingent existence. Ma expanded this notion further by saying, "Almighty God is an eternal (*qadīm*) necessity (*wājib*) and the world is a possible (*mumkin*) new arrival (*ḥādath*)."[73] Creation is only a possibility and is totally dependent on God for its existence. When viewed from the perspective of God, creation is the manifestation of His actualized qualities. Ma clarifies this relationship:

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> He [God] says to them the world is the manifestation of the Real (*al-ḥaqq*), and the Real is the hidden (*bātin*) of the world. He says to them before the manifestation of the world is the quintessence of God, and after manifestation the Real is the quintessence of the world. This impression that God, glorious is He, is the substance of the world and the world is His image, it means that God distinguishes and differentiates and turned towards existence (*mawjūd*) but is intrinsically different.[74]

Here, we see that God is clearly distinguished from creation while being innately tied to it and the foundation of it. This description of creation needs to be understood in relation to God's essence (*dhāt*) and His attributes (*ṣifāt*). Through revelation and the signs of creation, God unveils Himself to His creation. God does not manifest His essence, which is eternally unknowable in and of itself. Ma explains, "It is not the Essence of God, the Holy, that turns towards bodies of existents (*mawjūdāt*) because the unified Essence is not ever manifested."[75] *Al-ḥaqq* is the foundation for creation because it gives creation its appropriate position in the cosmos and clothes the creatures with their correct mode of being.[76] However, the reality of *al-ḥaqq* is never detectable apart from the things themselves. Therefore, as Ma insists, "Verily, the essence of the Real is the essences of the things."[77]

Ma's discussion reflected ongoing conversations about the nature of the cosmos throughout history. Overall, creation is the manifestation of God's attributes (*ṣifāt*), thus making Him knowable, while His eternal essence (*dhāt*) remains unknowable from the human perspective. The debate about the relationship between God and creation is highly complex and technical. What we can gather from Ma's presentation is that he was well versed in traditional fields of theology and philosophy and wanted to make that knowledge available to the Sino-Muslim readers who understood Arabic. His texts provided a clear explanation of this sophisticated discourse using normative technical vocabulary, which was employed by authoritative Muslim authors over time, such as Abu Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn 'Isḥāq al-Kindī (d. c.866), Abū Naṣr Muḥammad al-Fārābī (870–950), Abū-ʿAlī al-Ḥusayn ibn-ʿAbdallāh ibn Sīnā (c. 970–1037), Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (1058–1111), Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (1153–1191), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1149–1209), Muhyī al-Dīn 'Alī ibn al-'Arabī (1165–1240), Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (1201–1273), and Mullā Ṣadrā (1571–1640).

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Since Ma does not cite any sources for his own reinterpretation of Islamic theology, it would difficult to construct any direct scriptural connections here. What we can conclude is that he adapted his explanation from this discursive tradition and presented in a coherent and approachable manner. For the Sino-Muslim audience, Ma's Arabic texts on metaphysics further reinforced their theological understanding of the tradition and their linguistic capacity for engaging Muslims across geographical boundaries. They gained a linguistic toolbox from these works, which could be mastered and used in new dialogues.

Maintaining the Inheritance

Despite the evident benefits and advantages of mastering Arabic as a means for participation in a global Muslim community, Ma did not outline this as an explicit objective. However, it is clear that he valued Arabic as a crucial linguistic instrument for gaining Islamic knowledge that was not accessible through the Chinese language alone. When we look at Ma's contribution collectively, it does become clear that his combined efforts toward knowledge of scripture, linguistic dexterity, and religious mobility were aimed at better situating Sino-Muslims in a globally networked world. Ma witnessed firsthand the rewards of interacting with coreligionists in intellectual and communal settings and encouraged his readers to go abroad. Advanced knowledge of Arabic was not only a means for basic communication on these journeys, but also a venue for forging webs of transformative learning processes created through universal Muslim dialogues. Discursive proficiency enabled Sino-Muslims to navigate complex systems of thought and lived practice, thus providing the foundation for personal experiential growth.

One of the most conclusive signs of the new prominence of Arabic after Ma Dexin's reintroduction of it was the replication and reproduction of Arabic discursive patterns by Ma's followers. Therefore, despite Ma's intentionality when emphasizing Arabic in *Han Kitab* intellectual discourses, his disciples continued to concentrate on the language and employed it as a means for engaging broader international Muslim discourses in both literary and lived environments.

The most revealing examples of Ma's influence on later generations of Sino-Muslims are seen in his leading intellectual inheritors, Ma Lianyuan 馬聯元 (1841–1903) and Ma Anli 馬安禮 (d. 1899). These two individuals embraced Ma Dexin's model of simultaneously combining the local

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conservation of Chinese-language interpretations of Islam with a concerted return to Arabic Islamic sources by both consuming and producing them. For Ma Lianyuan and Ma Anli, Arabic served as a tool to engage the local and global Muslim communities through the transmission and transference of Islamic knowledge, as well as the foundation for connecting with global networks of Islamic education.

When Ma Lianyuan and Ma Anli are examined out of historical context, they may appear to have little in common, but in actuality, they are two sides of the same coin. Ma Lianyuan wrote primarily pedagogical texts aimed at shaping the growing institutionalization of Islamic education in Southwest China, which were almost exclusively penned in Arabic. He traveled widely throughout the Muslim world, making the hajj on two occasions and spending years studying with masters in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. In constrast, Ma Anli never left China, and his works are nearly all written in Chinese, and the few that do include Arabic are part of a larger Chinese text. He also focused more on theological and philosophical content in his writing and generally continued the *Han Kitab* tradition established by Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin. At first glance, it might not be evident how these figures all fit together and relate to Arabic discourse, but both Ma Lianyuan and Ma Anli preserved and developed Ma Dexin's efforts to extend the boundaries of Sino-Islamic scholarship to global Muslim intellectual conversation.

The role of Arabic in shaping Ma Lianyuan's Islamic identity and its importance in establishing his religious knowledge are identifiable from one's first introduction to his writing. Ma Lianyuan referred to himself by his Arabic name, 'Abd al-Hakīm al-Ḥajj al-Sayyid Muḥammad Nūr al-Ḥaqq ibn al-Sayyid Luqmān al-Ṣīnī, in his works. The name immediately situated Ma Lianyuan in a family lineage of Islamic scholars, "The Servant of the Wise, the person who has gone on pilgrimage to Mecca, the Sayyid [descendant of the Prophet], Muḥammad, the Light of the Real, the son of Sayyid, Luqmān, of China."[78] Arabic also enabled Ma Lianyuan to travel and study in various places using the language as a way to communicate despite local linguistic diversity.

Ma Lianyuan made the hajj on two occasions, possibly using Ma Dexin's *Record of a Pilgrimage Journey* as his guide. Throughout his years abroad, he studied with several well-known scholars, such as Raḥmatullāh Ibn Khalīl al-'Uthmānī al-Kairānawī (1818–1891) in India. Arabic provided Ma Lianyuan with the linguistic tool and discursive ability to engage in discussions with Islamic scholars abroad. His success in these endeavors

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among the global Muslim community is compelling evidence demonstrating Ma Dexin's success in reintroducing Arabic.

Ma Lianyuan's engagement with Arabic is also shown by his numerous writings: of the more than twenty works he penned, at least three were written in Chinese, and most of the remainder were in Arabic, but there also were some in Persian. He came from a long lineage of Islamic scholars originating from Central Asia. He studied under his father as a child, and by the age of twenty, he had mastered Chinese, Arabic, and Persian. Ma Lianyuan took over for his aging father as the leader of the Muslim community in Hexi. At that point, he focused his attention on reworking institutional religious instruction, and we can recognize these instructional goals from the types of texts that he wrote. Ma's efforts were all focused on greater understanding of the Arabic language and primary knowledge of scriptural resources and practices, which were chiefly centered on linguistic skills, introduction to basic practices, and the preservation and dissemination of the Qur'ān.

The initial focus of Ma Lianyuan was imparting basic linguistic skills that would enable his students to access Arabic works. This emphasis on grammar can be seen in his Arabic texts, such as *First Rules of Character Methodology* (*Zifa Chucheng* 字法初程), *A Summary of Character Methodology* (*Zifa Cuoyao* 字法撮要), and *First Rules of Arabic Grammar* (*Tianfang Wenfa Chucheng* 天方文法初程).[79] These works reflect his direct goals of offering teaching initiatives that revolved around the use of Arabic. The second body of work focused on fundamental understandings of the core teachings and scriptures of Islam. Ma wrote Arabic instructional materials introducing basic practices, *The Islamic Divisions of Faith* (*Tianfang Fenxin Bian* 天方分信篇); reproductions of important hadiths in Arabic, *Treasured Saying of the Utmost Sage* (*Zhisheng Bayou* 至聖寶諭); and a reader of Qur'ānic passages in Arabic, *Interpretation of Qur'anic Verses* (*Haiting Chiayi* 孩聽解譯). His aspiration to advance Sino-Muslim knowledge of primary scriptures is also demonstrated by his efforts to assemble a complete woodblock print edition of the Qur'ān. This project, which took three years, produced a hand-calligraphed block-print edition.[80]

Numerous students used these works in the newly structured educational system that Ma Lianyuan was implementing during the same period, when he was composing theological treatises for more advanced readers. The most celebrated of these was *Sublime Words on Nature and Principle* (*Xingli Weiyan* 性理微言), or *Subtleties* (*Laṭā'if*), as it was titled in

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Arabic.[81] This work is especially interesting because the *Laṭā'if* is actually Ma Lianyuan's translation of Liu Zhi's *Root Scripture*.

Ma Lianyuan's decision to translate the *Root Scripture* into Arabic demonstrates that he highly valued the *Han Kitab* tradition of his predecessors, despite not following their literary style or covering similar intellectual content in his own writings. It also shows that he believed that Liu's representation of Islamic theology was exemplary and worthy of a wider distribution outside of the Chinese-speaking community. The translation also served as another text that enabled Sino-Muslims to become familiar with complex Arabic Islamic discourses that would be used abroad. Having access to a widely available and regularly read Chinese source in Arabic translation made the complicated Arabic literary setting more accessible.

A cross-analysis of the two texts in Chinese and Arabic made the continued interpretation and understanding of technical terminology. To develop the understanding of these key texts further, Ma Lianyuan also wrote his own commentary on his translation, *Commentary on the Subtleties* (*Sharḥ al-laṭā'if*). From Ma Lianyuan's contribution, we can see that at the dawn of the twentieth century, Sino-Muslims used Arabic in order to understand their own literary tradition in relation to the larger Islamic discourses by participating in its evolution. While the majority of his works were in Arabic, he also aimed to circulate the religious heritage of his Chinese coreligionists with the broader, non-Chinese-reading world. His translations of early *Han Kitab* works into Arabic and his commentary on them are clear evidence for the conscious inclusion of Sino-Muslims in the global Muslim world.

Ma Dexin's primary student was Ma Anli, his frequent Chinese scribe and translator. Ma Anli generally highlighted the Chinese side of his teacher's work and did not pen a complete Arabic work himself. He was a master of employing neo-Confucian vocabulary to express an advanced literary explanation of Islamic theology. Therefore, his contribution to the continuation of Arabic Islamic discourse in the *Han Kitab* environment can easily be overlooked. However, he aimed to reintroduce Sino-Muslims to widespread Islamic theological and spiritual concepts from foundational Arabic texts.

Ma Anli accomplished this objective in his most important work, the *Islamic Book of Odes* (*Tianfang Shijing* 天方詩經). This was a massive work written in a highly stylized manner that utilized the rich palette of Chinese motifs and expressions. It was published in three volumes totalling 386

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pages, and manuscript copies were generally of better quality than most other Chinese printings of Islamic texts. The project was first conceived by Ma Dexin in 1867, who planned to write the work himself before he died in 1874, but it was completed by Ma Anli and published in 1890.

The title *Islamic Book of Odes* makes reference to the Chinese *Book of Odes* (*Shijing* 詩經), the earliest existing collection of Chinese poems, from roughly the tenth to the seventh centuries BC. The *Book of Odes* is said to be edited by Confucius (551–479 BC), codified by scholars during the Han dynasty (206 BC–220 AD), and included as one of the Confucian Four Books and Five Classics (*Sishu Wujing* 四書五經). The *Shijing* became the model of poetics in the Chinese literary environment, and the text was influential in various aspects of social life throughout Chinese history, up until the present. Ma Anli was trying to evoke this authority and influence for his text, as he was writing in an Islamic (*Tianfang* 天方) context. Therefore, the *Islamic Book of Odes* was meant to be the foremost example of Islamic poetics and demonstrate how the influence of the Islamic tradition on human experience.

This goal of spreading global Arabic Islamic discourses to the Sino-Muslim audience becomes very lucid when we delve into the text itself. Ma Anli's *Islamic Book of Odes* is a translational commentary about the most famous Arabic Islamic poem, the *Mantle Ode* (*Qaṣīdat al-Burdah*) by the Egyptian poet Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd al-Būṣīrī (d. 1294–1297).[82] The *Mantle Ode* is a devotional homily in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. As the story goes, the poem was written after al-Būṣīrī had a dream wherein he recited his poem to the Prophet, who in return offered al-Būṣīrī his cloak (*al-burdah*). This offering from Muhammad also cured al-Būṣīrī of his paralysis when he awoke.

The impact of the *Mantle Ode* within Islamicate societies is difficult to quantify, but this poem is one of the universal and ubiquitous symbols in Muslim communities everywhere. There are hundreds of commentaries, numerous translations, and thousands of Arabic manuscripts about it, some elaborately decorated; and there are even some handwritten personal copies. It has been popularized throughout Muslim societies in every corner of the world and is recited often in congregations as devotional practice. Copies have even been employed as talismans and amulets for positive physical and psychological effects.[83]

In Ma Anli's text, he presented the original Arabic poem along the top of the page with his Chinese translation below it, followed by his own

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commentary. In some versions, the Arabic poem and with the Chinese translation were written in bright red ink, while the commentary was in black. The *Islamic Book of Odes* provides another valuable text for determining the conceptual relationship and intertexuality between Chinese and Arabic in *Han Kitab* scholarship. Ma Anli's major work reveals the continued value of Arabic Islamic discourses by Sino-Muslims. The translation of this key Arabic work demonstrates that Ma Anli also believed that even Sino-Muslims who were not conversant in this language and discourse should have knowledge of the *Mantle Ode* in order to benefit from it.

Ma Dexin instituted an authoritative linguistic discourse that fostered wider participation by Sino-Muslims in a global world where Arabic could be used as a *lingau farnca*. His audience was eager and able to exercise their social and intellectual authority through the act of writing and reading in Arabic. The distinctive perspectives of Ma Lianyuan and Ma Anli on the authority, uses, and role of Arabic followed from Ma Dexin's dynamic integrated approach to the Islamic tradition. Their continued engagement with the Arabic Islamic tradition is persuasive evidence that Ma Dexin played an instrumental part in instituting a new discursive environment in the Chinese setting.

It is evident that his followers greatly appreciated this new discourse, and their attempts to facilitate dialogue with the broader Muslim community in their own work reveals the effects of Ma Dexin's guidance on his students. Ma Dexin's success was confirmed by the continuation of this Arabic discourse, which was maintained by succeeding generations of Sino-Muslims throughout the twentieth century. Further, the diglossic nature of Ma Dexin's works imbued symbolic meaning from various authoritative traditions to his readers, which underlined the rich contributions of both their Muslim and Chinese forefathers.

The methods that Ma Dexin employed—inclusion of Arabic terminology, parallel Chinese-Arabic texts, translations of Arabic works into Chinese, and authentic Arabic theological discourse—all urged readers and students to reproduce traditional Islamic linguistic and thematic patterns in their understanding of Islam. This advocacy for intimate knowledge of Arabic Islamic discourses highlights Ma Dexin's expectations for his students, which anticipate the increased contact between Sino-Muslims and their Muslim neighbors throughout the world.

Overall, for Ma Dexin, the use of Arabic served a dual purpose. First and foremost, it prepared students to gain discursive fluency and engage

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in global debates pertaining to Islam. Second, it socially and intellectually situated Sino-Muslims within the broader Islamic heritage and symbolically united them with their Muslim coreligionists.

Conclusions

Over time, Arabic increasingly shaped Sino-Islamic discourse in the *Han Kitab* literature. The approaches to Arabic in the works of Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin demonstrate a shifting engagement with the language and changing perceptions toward linguistic authority and utility. The increased employment of the language demonstrates that Arabic Islamic knowledge was becoming more essential in non-Arabic-speaking societies. During the late modern period, Sino-Muslims perceived themselves to be in a networked environment where travel and communication was becoming increasingly possible and achievable. Thus, Arabic and Islamic knowledge became the key to fostering Sino-Muslim relations within the larger Muslim community. This transition is observable from the expanding inclusion of not only Arabic language, but also Arabic Islamic sources in each successive generation's works.

In the seventeenth century, Sino-Muslims were generally disconnected from their coreligionists abroad. Therefore, for Wang Daiyu, Arabic served as a source of personal inspiration and authority. He used examples of prophets and mystics to inform his understanding of the Islamic tradition and included select examples for his readers and included several key Arabic terms in transliteration. Wang presented only what he believed that his readers needed at the time—authentic knowledge that was derived from traditional sources, but without the original language and Arabic discourse.

Liu Zhi generally maintained this method of transliterating by adding numerous individual names, phrases, and geographical titles. The increasing breadth of this translingual lexicon indicates that Liu believed that his readers should master a detailed Arabic lexis, even without knowing the language itself. He also provided the sources that informed his understanding, making Arabic knowledge accessible for those who wanted to seek it out in original texts. Instructional developments and growing numbers of exceptional students in the scripture hall system made Arabic texts themselves accessible to a few. Liu's inclusion of more and more Arabic expressions implies that students would recognize these terms and

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readers would have a heightened knowledge of Arabic Islamic discourse. Therefore, during the eighteenth century, Liu's contributions indicate a movement toward direct understandings of Arabic discourse through terms and awareness of key texts as a source of knowledge.

In the nineteenth century, Sino-Muslims were developing material connections with Muslims through advancements in travel. Networks of knowledge were beginning to be created between Muslims in China and those living in the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Ma Dexin's efforts show that intellectuals were conscious of these changing circumstances and aiming to prepare themselves for participating in global Islamic dialogues. Ma created a discursive space wherein Arabic was central. His complete incorporation of Arabic enabled his students and readers to engage Islam from a more universal perspective. The reproduction of Arabic terms in Chinese texts, appearance of corresponding Chinese-Arabic texts, translation of Arabic works into Chinese, and introduction to common Arabic theological dialogues encouraged and aided in the mastering and duplication of a recognizable Arabic Islamic discourse. This in turn facilitated Sino-Muslim incorporation into and participation in the global Muslim community. Discursive fluency and linguistic expertise were the key elements for Sino-Muslims in this process. Ma anticipated the growing need for knowledge of Arabic, and the continuation of this Arabic discourse by successive generations in the following centuries demonstrates his success.

The use of Arabic reflected the position of *Han Kitab* scholarship and education within specific historical periods. As the possibilities and expectations for Sino-Muslims to participate in the larger Muslim world grew, Arabic became increasingly essential. However, while these authors' engagements with Arabic were distinctly dissimilar, their efforts to straddle multiple traditions in the creation of a new discursive framework ran parallel to each other.

The varying levels of importance given to the Arabic language and Arabic Islamic discourse over time reveal that they were seen as discursive linguistic tools that situated *Han Kitab* scholarship within traditional modes of Islamic knowledge. These scholars' use of Arabic discourses bound them to a perceived orthodox and authoritative Islamic tradition when they employed established discursive frameworks through writing, reading, and referring to Arabic. Sino-Muslims envisioned themselves in a global world where contact and communication between diverse local

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communities was desirable to establish the veracity and authenticity of Sino-Islamic scholarship. Therefore, Arabic became the most salient quality that Sino-Muslims could demonstrate to indicate their competence, comprehension, and commitment to the Islamic tradition in a global environment.

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Epilogue

Making the Dao *Meaningful*

We began *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* by introducing the emperor Kangxi (who reigned from 1661 to 1722), who was having an overnight stay with a local Muslim general as he journeyed home. Through their conversation, we discovered that the emperor possessed a book that revealed answers to all the queries that his Muslim host was seeking. Despite being illiterate, the Muslim general eagerly received this book so that he could learn about his tradition through the guidance of scholars who could interpret it on his behalf. This framing narrative of the *Huihui Yuanlai* 回回原來 (*Origins of Muslims*) underlines a key concern for Muslims living in China—*do you know the meaning of your Dao*?

Of course, one could argue that this is the overall objective of the *Huihui Yuanlai*, as well as the broader *Han Kitab* literature of which it is a part—that is, to define the boundaries and key doctrines of the Islamic tradition for the local Chinese audience. What becomes clear from the investigation of this definitional process, however, is that we cannot assume a homogeneous interpretive perspective, even on central components of the tradition. Sino-Muslim convictions about universal Muslim concerns, such as the directive to perform the pilgrimage, the desire to understand and engage the Qur'ān, and the necessity to use Arabic, reveal a deeper understanding of the variety of Islamic perspectives. By examining the specific circumstances of Sino-Muslim reinterpretations of these three issues, we determine that even at the microlevel of Islamic thought, there are variations in perspective. Consequently, the seeming consensus in opinion toward a given category, principle, or object among a group of scholars

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must be analyzed according to the various factors that shape individual interpretations. Thus, I encouraged us to question the perceived unity of "schools of thought," such as the *Han Kitab* tradition.

Despite the continuation of a parallel discourse between *Han Kitab* works, it is evident that certain categories were reinterpreted and reexamined in relation to specific times and places. Then, what does this lead us to believe about Muslims more generally? Does this not encourage us to reassess the usefulness of the parlance of our times, which situates perspectives into neatly organized categories, such as Salafi, Wahhabi, Islamist, Traditionalist, Progressive, etc.? All together, this study encourages comparative analysis of various Muslim perspectives regarding the hajj, the Qur'ān, and the use of Arabic, and anticipates collaborative theoretical exploration of pilgrimage, scripture, and language in religion more generally.

Privileging these thematic questions obscures others, which some readers may believe are more central to understanding the intellectual development of the *Han Kitab* literature, or Islam in China more generally. Of course, a single book cannot turn every plot, so key domains of exploration remain untilled and numerous questions need to be cultivated in the future. For those working on Islam in China, much of the background history and communal narratives explored herein may very well be widely known, but the parallel deep reading of *Han Kitab* authors reveals new horizons in the development of the tradition. The multiple variations on these themes are meant to reference the range of interpretive articulations and solicit further comparative analysis of Sino-Muslim authors writing about pilgrimage, scripture, and language. I have illustrated that we should tackle our rich textual archive in deep conversation, but one that signals beyond a singular discursive formation of any given interpretation. Ultimately, Sino-Islamic discourses are dynamic, dialogical, and relational in both their production and reading, so we should examine them while attuned to the range of possible meanings.

Islamic studies scholars' collective understanding of a global Islamic tradition benefits from detailed knowledge of the long relationship between Chinese and Islamic civilizations. My research explores a vernacular Islam grounded in the Chinese context, but simultaneously articulates cross-cultural processes of identification with an inherited tradition. As a global civilization, with roots in an Arab context, Muslims had to adapt to their changing local environments as they moved throughout Asia, where the majority of Muslims have lived for much of history. An examination of Muslims in China can offer broader patterns of Islamization and the

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contestation of religious knowledge that is echoed throughout South, Southeast, and Central Asia, not to mention the Middle East. Therefore, I provided insights into key junctures within the development of Islam as a global religious and cultural phenomenon and opens up a provisional map for examining how interpretive claims are invested with localized meaning and reimagined through alternative intellectual grids.

I narrated the contours of an interpretive trajectory in a manner that is attentive to theoretical concerns while attempting to keep readers invested in the subjects of this history. My reflections extend from my engagement with scholars working primarily in Religious Studies. For these readers, I wove together a range of interrelated texts that illuminate a rubric of analytical grammar for approaching questions of pluralism, translation, venacularization, peripheries, and interpretation. The case studies on pilgrimage, scripture, and language given in this book help disentangle the dominant analysis of these themes and provoke further theoretical investigation in the study of religion.

Purposes of Pilgrimage, Structures of Scripture, Leverage of Language

More narrowly, I have argued that we must investigate the discursive deployment of the pilgrimage category and ask for what purpose is this particular ritual practice being brought in service. Pilgrimage as an interpretive category is utilized in a wide range of settings, from cosmological to pragmatic, and defined in a multitude of ways that legitimize and authorize a range of practices and principles. Frequently, the theological underpinning of pilgrimage is employed to formulate a sacred geography and a cosmographical mapping for the individual that is seen as being essential to the spiritual health of the community. The category is put into the service of delineating fundamental principles of faith, rather than being an actual ritual observance to be performed. At other times, the benefits of the pilgrimage were not merely theoretical, but embodied and experienced personally. In these instances, the category is called upon for its capacity to rectify and renew religious participation and adherence to ritual practices. What is key is to identify the social effects of the categories—in these cases, establishing both orthodox understanding and orthopraxic behavior.

As with pilgrimage, scripture is used in a variety of interpretive efforts, from theological excavation to citational authority. From this investigation, we can conclude that scripture was at different points in time theologically

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informative, legally authoritative, practically valuable, and spiritually efficacious. These various dimensions do not exclude the other, but for the authors discussed here, we have witnessed a shifting emphasis on one of these aspects in relation to an intellectually developing audience. Scripture should not merely be approached as an exegetical domain from which to view the establishment of particular orthodoxies. While scripture usually serves as an authoritative source for an author's assertions, it is frequently obscured from the audience's view. At other times, scripture cloaks interpretive statements or positions in the fabric of authority. A key element in my analysis has been to think through the structural purposes of scripture—what the strategies of asserting or forgetting scripture are, what work is done through its deployment, and how it shapes readers' understanding. I have shown that these types of interpretive choices are interwoven into seemingly traditional theological assertions but greatly aid in moving readers in particular interpretive directions.

Language too can do a tremendous amount of work for authors—not only in its communicative formation but also, and frequently of more importance, in its lingual power. Language, as a category of analysis, should be examined for the particular strategic objectives that it serves. When a certain language is interpreted as authoritative in itself—as with Arabic in Muslim contexts—it can contribute to an audience's reception of the communicative act and produce a variety of consequential effects. The inclusion of Arabic language in non-Arabic Muslim domains operates as a discursive linguistic tool that situates scholarship within assumed modes of reliability and legitimizes textual production within a perceived orthodox framework. This strategy aids in the formulation of a supposedly "valid" expression of the tradition, which reflects notions of fidelity, inclusion, and identity by the reading community. Arabic functions as a visible sign of authenticity. It reveals the community's adequacy, apprehension, and allegiance to the Islamic tradition in a global setting, binding together divergent linguistic and cultural Muslim communities.

In addition, the seemingly straightforward nature of communication needs to be questioned. Its symbolic meaning varies significantly depending on the community within which it is being defined or explained—and this is all the more true with hybrid lexicons operating in non-Arab Muslim communities. We should keep our eye on how language informs readers about the sources of knowledge, dialogical interpretation of the textual materials, and the broader implications of communal reproduction of distinct linguistic patterns.

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Dwelling in China

At the conclusion of the *Huihui Yuanlai,* the author makes a telling query: "Formerly Islam was found only beyond the western border. Who would know that Muslims were to dwell in China forever?"[1] To answer this question, we might want to ask another one: What mechanisms make this community's establishment possible? The *Han Kitab* reveals some of the explanations to us. These works helped create a relational interpretive identity that is situated at the nexus of geographies, scriptural traditions, and linguistic registers.

The character of this identity is worked out though the discursive arrangement of beliefs about these key factors of their tradition. In this way, the hajj, the Qur'ān, and Arabic are deployed in various ways that shape specific interpretations of what it means to be a Muslim. And for Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin, these elements were comfortably placed in the operations of Chinese social and intellectual life. They found strategies for establishing their continued presence in a society where they were at the intersection of a variety of traditions that were continually negotiated and redeployed by Sino-Muslims. And while I have focused here on China, this research points to analytical directions for examining global Muslim communities more generally.

This book has established a preliminary analytical rubric for thinking through cosmopolitan sites of local formulations of Islam. What is revealed in this analysis of these key figures is that meaning is constructed in a multitude of ways, even within this limited archival domain. While there are continuities that are threaded between the works, what is more striking is the rearticulation of key themes in new interpretive arrangements, shaped by each author's moment in space and time. Thus, our analysis must not only explore how and what authors create, but also investigate why they formulate their thoughts in a particular way for audiences.

This realm is key to determining how discursive and interpretive patterns serve their intellectual terrains. The redescription of critical categories in the study of religion provided here is intended, in part, as a methodological corrective that will benefit others who pursue a thematic approach in the analysis of other translingual Muslim communities. I say that we must remain attentive to the *purposes* of pilgrimage, the *structures* of scripture, and the *leverage* of language.

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Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. The *Huihui Yuanlai* was first printed in Nanjing c.1712, but it is found in various reworkings, each of which differs in the details of the story. It is attributed to Liu Sanjie 劉三杰 (c.1630–1710), but the story is believed to have been told during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). A modern edited edition is available in Ma Kuangyuan 馬曠源, "*Huihui Yuanlai (Zhengli Ben)* 回回原來 (整理本) *(Origins of Muslims (Edited Volume),"* in *Huizu Wenhua Lunji* 回族文化論集 (*Collected Essays in Hui Nationality Culture*), ed. Ma Kuangyuan (Kunming, China: Zhonggu Wenlian, 1998), 53–77. For an analysis and translation of various retellings of this narrative, see Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Chinese Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005) 204–209; Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "From 'Literati' to 'Ulama'—The Origins of Chinese Muslim Nationalist Historiography," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 9 (2004): 93–114; Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1910), 62–70; Svetlana Rimsky-Korsakoff Dyer, "T'ang T'ai-Tsung's Dream—A Soviet Dungan Version of a Legend on the Origin of the Chinese Muslims," *Monumenta Serica: Journal of Oriental Studies*, 35, no. 1 (1981): 545–570; and Li Shujiang and Karl W. Luckert (ed.), *Mythology and Folklore of the Hui, A Muslim Chinese People* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 239–240.
2. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 204.
3. Ibid., 205.
4. Sayyid Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ is also reported to have founded the first mosque in China, the *Huaisheng* 懷聖 (*Cherished Sage*) or *Aṣḥab* (*Companions*) mosque in Guangzhou, and he had a tomb built in his honor nearby, despite being buried in Medina (c.673–675). For more on Sayyid Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and the *Ṣaḥāba* in China, see Donald Leslie, "The Sahaba Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas in China," in *The Legacy of Islam in China: An International Symposium in Memory of Joseph*

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F. Fletcher, ed. Dru C. Gladney (unpublished conference volume, Cambridge, MA: John King Fairbank Center, Harvard University, 1989); idem, *Islam in Traditional China: A Short History to 1800* (Canberra: Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1986), 74–75; Anthony Garnaut, "Hui Legends of the Companions of the Prophet," *China Heritage Newsletter*, no. 5, 2006, http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/articles.php?searchterm=005_legends.inc&issue=005 (retrieved May 16, 2011); and Haiyun Ma, "The Mythology of Prophet's Ambassadors in China: Histories of Sa'd Waqqas and Gess in Chinese Sources," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 26, no. 3 (2006): 445–452.

5. These details come from oral retellings of this narrative in 1979 and 1983. Li and Luckert, *Mythology and Folklore of the Hui*, 237–243.
6. The *Huihui Yuanlai* reflects a narrative pattern linking Islam with indigenous values, whereby the origin and legitimacy of communities are made sacred. See, for example, Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).
7. Green calls these sites of interaction "terrains of exchange." Nile Green, *Terrains of Exchange: Religious Economies of Global Islam* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015).
8. This claim is echoed by scholars of Islam in Africa. "I try to shed light on the invisibility of the Bilad al-Sudan in the academic study of Islamic ideas in the West until the recent developments in the early twenty-first century. . . . Assumed to be superficially Islamized, peripheral to the Islamic world, intellectually inferior, and completely outside of history, West Africa was to a large extent left to African studies scholars who had little interest in Islam." Ousmane Oumar Kane, *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 22. "*Islamic and African studies need to take African Muslims seriously as bearers and interpreters of forms of Islamic knowledge and embodied practice with powerful claims to scriptural authority and prophetic precedent*" (emphasis in original). Rudolph T. Ware III, *The Walking Qur'an: Islamic Education, Embodied Knowledge, and History in West Africa* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 14.
9. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 33.
10. Russell T. McCutcheon, *The Discipline of Religion: Structure, Meaning, Rhetoric* (London and New York, Routledge, 2003), xvi.
11. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 34.
12. Ibid.
13. Bruce Lincoln and Cristiano Grottanelli, "Theses on Comparison," in *Gods and Demons, Priests and Scholars: Critical Explorations in the History of Religions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 122.

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14. For an outline of the early history of Muslims in China, see Donald Daniel Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China* (Canberra: Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1986); and Jonathan Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 24–57.
15. Scripture hall education is examined in Chapter 1 of this book. For an introduction to the topic, see Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*.
16. The earliest detection of this identification is from 1680, in the preface to Ma Zhu's *Compass of Islam* (*Qingzhen Zhinan* 清真脂南), where eleven scholars were labeled *Huiru*. Later authors continued to use the term *Huiru*, such as Lan Zixi 籃子羲, *The Orthodox Learning of Islam* (*Tianfang Zhengxue* 天方正學). Also see Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 143 and 160.
17. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 155.
18. Ibid., 159.
19. "The understanding of these texts among contemporary Sino-Muslims is far from unified; they are even called by two different names. In the northwest, they are called the *Han Kitab*. Elsewhere in China, especially among intellectuals, the genre is known by the purely Chinese title *Zhongwen Yisilanjiao yizhu* 中文伊斯兰教译注 (Chinese-language Islamic translations and commentaries)." Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 74.
20. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 234.
21. There is no singular Sino-Muslim experience or interpretive position—indeed, a great diversity exists among Muslims in China. In fact, many Sino-Muslims, especially in the Muslim-majority Northwest China, rejected the integrative approach of *Han Kitab* authors. My use of the terms *Sino-Muslim, Sino-Islamic, Sino-Islamic intellectual tradition*, and *Sino-Islamic scholarship,* are not generalizations about all Sino-Muslim scholarship; rather, it is meant to point specifically to the Chinese-language Islamic scholarship of the *Han Kitab,* as described previously.
22. Another Sino-Muslim literary approach was the creation of *xiao'erjing* 小兒經 literature, a method of transliterating the Chinese language using Arabic script. See, for example, Ayesha Qurratulain and Sabiha Zunnorain, "Acculturation Through Means of Communication: A Study of Linguistic Exchanges Between Chinese and Arabic," *Trames Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 19, no. 1 (2015): 51–71.
23. A systematic study of these authors' perspectives, based on a reading of their entire oeuvre, remains to be constructed. One of the most important contributions toward achieving this goal is Sachiko Murata, William C. Chittick, and Tu Weiming, *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).
24. The earliest Islamic theological texts in Chinese, of which there are no extant copies, are *Investigation of the Teachings of Pure and True* (*Qingzhen Jiaokao* 情真教

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考), *Lord's Book of Explaining Obstructions* (*Junshu Shiyi* 君書釋疑), and *Teachings of the Arabian Sage* (*Tianfang Shengjiao* 天方聖教), all of which are only known from their inclusion in Liu Zhi's *The Veritable Record of the Utmost Sage of Islam* (*Tianfang Zhisheng Shilu* 天方至聖實錄). Donald Daniel Leslie, *Islamic Literature in Chinese* (Canberra: Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1981), 21.

25. Liu refers to "Occidental Books" (*Xiyang Shu* 西洋書), which probably refers to books introduced by the Jesuits who populated Southeast China during the eighteenth century. See Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 146; and James D. Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name: Liu Zhi's Confucian Translation of Monotheism and Islamic Law* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011), 7.
26. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 215–235.
27. For example, Bakhtin argues, "Thus at any given moment of its historical existence, language is heteroglot from top to bottom: it represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form" (Discourse in the Novel)." Mikhail Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 291.
28. Kristeva explained that "each word (text) is an intersection of words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" and "any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another." Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," in *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 66.
29. Stuart Hall, "Encoding/decoding," in *Culture, Media, Language* eds. Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Love, and Paul Willis (London: Hutchinson, 1980), 128–138.
30. Ricœur maintained that "writing renders the text autonomous with respect to the intention of the author. What the text signifies no longer coincides with what the author meant," while Barthes noted that "it is language which speaks, not the author." Roland Barthes, "Death of the Author," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 146; and Paul Ricœur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 83.
31. Tzvetan Todorov, *Introduction to Poetics*, trans. Richard Howard (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), xxx.
32. Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other, or The Prosthesis of Origin*, trans. Patrick Mensah (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 57.
33. Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 31–65.
34. Ibid., 271.

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35. George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998), 319.
36. Tony Stewart, "In Search of Equivalence: Conceiving Muslim-Hindu Encounter through Translation Theory," *History of Religions*, 40, no. 3 (2001): 261–288.
37. Lydia Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity—China, 1900–1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 26–27.
38. Bruce Lincoln, "Theses on Method," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 8, no. 3 (1996): 225–27.
39. Jonathan Z. Smith, "In Comparison a Magic Dwells." In *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 35.
40. For a thorough theoretical examination of the category of "Islam," see Shahab Ahmed, *What Is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).
41. See, for example, Peter C. Purdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).
42. See, especially, Joseph Fletcher, "Central Asian Sufism and Ma Ming-hsin's New Teaching," in *Proceedings of the Fourth East Asian Altaica Conference*, ed. Ch'en Chieh-hsien (Taipei: National Taiwan University, 1975), 75–96; Joseph Fletcher, ed. by Jonathan N. Lipman, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China," in *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia*, ed. Beatrice Manz (London: Variorum, 1995), 1–46; and Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*.
43. See J. F. Ford, "Some Chinese Muslims of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Asian Affairs*, 61 (1974): 144–156; Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*; Lee Cheuk Yin, "Islamic Values in Confucian Terms: Wang Daiyu (ca. 1580–1658) and Zhengjiao Zhenquan (Genuine Annotation of the Orthodox Teachings)," in *Islam and Confucianism: A Civilizational Dialogue*, eds. Osman Baker and Cheng Gek Nai (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1996), 75–94; and Isaac Mason, *The Arabian Prophet: A Life of Mohamed from Chinese and Arabic Sources, a Chinese-Moslem Work by Liu Chia-lien* (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1921).
44. Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); and Murata et al., *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi*.
45. Her most recent work amends this limitation by incorporating current research on the historical context of Sino-Islamic scholarship. See Murata et al., *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi*, xxii, 3–10.
46. François Aubin, "Chinese Islam: In Pursuit of Its Sources," *Central Asian Survey*, 5 no. 2 (1986): 73–80; Leslie, *Islamic Literature in Chinese*; Isaac Mason, "Notes on Chinese Mohammedan Literature," *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 56 (1925): 172–215; and Ludmilla Panskaya with Donald Daniel

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Leslie, *Introduction to Palladi's Chinese Literature of Muslims* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1977); Kristian Petersen, "Understanding the Sources of the Sino-Islamic Intellectual Tradition: Review Essay on The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi and Recent Chinese Literary Treasuries," *Philosophy East and West*, 61, no. 3 (2011): 546–560.

47. See, for example, "The Hui Islamic rebels, led by Ma Dexin and two of his former students . . . " David G. Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856–1873* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 4; Raphael Israeli, *Islam in China: Religion, Ethnicity, Culture, and Politics* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books), 30, n. 74, "Ma Dexin, one of the initial leaders of the Muslim Rebellion in Yunnan . . . "; and Liu Kwang-Ching and Richard J. Smith, "The Military Challenge: The Northwest and the Coast," in *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 11, ed. John K. Fairbank and Liu Kwang-ching (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 213, "Ma Ju-lung's capitulation had the blessing of Ma Te-hsin (1794–1874), a respected religious leader . . . "
48. Raphael Israeli exemplifies this characterization of Ma Dexin. See Israeli, *Islam in China*, 126: "Muslim disaffection in nineteenth-century China was universal and generated millenarian cravings . . . including Ma Dexin, who played a prominent part in the revivalist movement of nineteenth-century Chinese Islam." He associated Ma's career with concurrent movements, such as the Wahhabi, neo-Sufis, and the Sudanese Mahdists.
49. A limited reading of sources can easily lead to an inaccurate or incomplete representation of an individual scholar. For example, see a similarly deficient reading or distortion of sources in the portrayal of the famous Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1690). Compare the differing portraits in Basheer Nafi, "Tasawwuf and Reform in Pre-Modern Islamic Culture: In Search of Ibrahim al-Kurani," *Die Welt des Islams*, 42 no. 3 (2002): 307–355; and Alexander Knysh, "Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1101/1690), an Apologist for Wahdat al-Wujud," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 5 no. 1 (1995): 39–47.
50. Lin Chang-Kuan, "Three Eminent Chinese 'Ulama' of Yunnan," *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 11, no. 1 (1990): 100–117.
51. Wang Jianping, *Concord and Conflict: The Hui Communities of Yunnan Society in a Historical Perspective* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1996).
52. In most major Chinese works on Muslim intellectuals, Ma Dexin is always prominently highlighted. See Bai Shouyi (ed.), *Huizu Renwu Zhi* 回族人物志 (*Records of Muslim Personalities*) 2 vols. (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 2000), 1552–1562; and Yang Huaizhong and Yu Zhengui (eds.), *Yisilan Yu Zhongguo Wenhua* 伊斯蘭與中國文化 (*Islam and Chinese Culture*) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia People's Press, 1995), 412–419.
53. Yang Guiping, *Ma Dexin Sixiang Yanjiui* 馬德新思想研究 (*A Study of Ma Dexin's Thought*) (Beijing: Zongjiao Wenhua Chubanshe, 2004).

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54. Sun Zhenyu, *Ma Dexin Jiqi Yisilan Sixiang Yanjiu* 馬德新及其伊斯蘭思想研究 (*Research on Ma Dexin and Islamic Thought*) (Lanzhou, China: Lanzhou Daxue Chubanshe, 2002).
55. Sun Zhenyu, *Wang Daiyu Liu Zhi Pingzhuan* 王岱輿劉智評傳 (*A Critical Biography of Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi*) (Nanjing, China: Nanjing Daxue Chubanshe, 2006).
56. A continued critique of Islamicists working within the discipline of religious studies has been their failure to engage theoretical scholarship or contribute to the theorization of categories in the study of religion more generally. While the short theoretical reflections throughout the book may be tedious to some readers, they are intended to address these gaps. See, for example, Aaron Hughes, *Situating Islam: The Past and Future of an Academic Discipline* (London: Equinox, 2008); Aaron Hughes, "The Study of Islam Before and After September 11: A Provocation." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, 24, nos. 4–5 (2012): 314–336; Aaron Hughes, *Theorizing Islam: Disciplinary Deconstruction and Reconstruction* (London: Routledge, 2014); Aaron Hughes, *Islam and the Tyranny of Authenticity: An Inquiry into Disciplinary Apologetics* (London: Equinox, 2016); and Russell McCutcheon, *Religion and the Domestication of Dissent: Or How to Live in a Less Than Perfect Nation* (London: Equinox, 2005).
57. Marshall Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Volume 1: The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 46.

CHAPTER 1

1. The second half of this chapter is not intended as a comprehensive historical survey of Islam in China. It is offered as a way of signaling to readers unfamiliar with the expansion of Muslim communities within China the key developments that led to the production of Sino-Islamic texts.
2. For an excellent study on Muslim interaction with Buddhists, see Johan Elverskog, *Buddhism and Islam on the Silk Road* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).
3. John Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image: Themes in Literature and the Visual Arts* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993), 14.
4. Devin DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 530.
5. Richard Eaton has thoughtfully examined the process of Islamization and the following delineated theoretical patterns for Islamization in South Asia: immigration, religion of the sword, religion of patronage, and social liberation. Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204–1760* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Nehemia Levtzion has examined the process in Africa and the Near East. Nehemia Levtzion, "Patterns of Islamization in West Africa," in *Conversion to Islam*, ed. Nehemia Levtzion (New York: Holmes and

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Meier, 1979), 207–216; and Nehemia Levtzion, "Towards a Comparative Study of Islamization," in *Conversion to Islam*, ed. Nehemia Levtzion (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979), 1–23.

6. Mushirul Hasan, *Islam in the Subcontinent: Muslims in a Plural Society* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002), 81; and David Emmanuel Singh, *Islamization in Modern South Asia: Deobandi Reform and the Gujjar Response* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 3, respectively.
7. Tijana Krstic, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 28.
8. John Renard pairs Islamization with the concept of "indigenization," which is the "process by which a culture, ethnic group, or region puts its own stamp on Islam, and it accounts at least in part for the diversity within Islamdom." This category is close in meaning to "vernacularization." John Renard, *Islam and the Heroic Image*, 14.
9. Leonard Norman Primiano, "Vernacular Religion and the Search for Method in Religious Folklife," *Western Folklore,* 54, no. 1: 44.
10. For some critics, see Natalie Zemon Davis, "Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion," in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion*, eds. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1974), 307–36; idem, "From 'Popular Religion' to Religious Culture," in *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research*, ed. Steven Ozment (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1982), 321–341; Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem* (New Haven: Yale University Press); and Pieter Hendrik Vrijhoff and Jacques Waardenburg, *Official and Popular Religion: Analysis of a Theme for Religious Studies* (The Hague, Netherlands: Mouton, 1979).
11. Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 269–284.
12. See, for example, Robert Redfield's "great" and "little" traditions, Max Weber's "traditional" versus "rational" religion, Joachim Wach's "primitive" and "founded" religions, and Robert Bellah's primitive (tribal), archaic, historic, early modern, and modern religions. See Robert Bellah, *Beyond Belief* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Robert Redfield, *Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956); Joachim Wach, *Sociology of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944); and Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans. E. Fischoff (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).
13. Phillip Clart is critical of the use of "popular religion" in scholarship on Chinese religions, but he does not believe that it should be discarded completely. See Phillip Clart, "The Concept of 'Popular Religion' in the Study of Chinese Religions: Retrospects and Prospects," in *The Fourth Fu Jen University Sinological Symposium: Research on Religions in China: Status Quo and Perspectives*, ed.

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Zbigniew Wesolowski (New Taipei, Taiwan: Fu Jen Catholic University Press, 2007), 166–204.

14. Catherine Bell, "Religion and Chinese Culture: Toward an Assessment of 'Popular Religion,'" *History of Religions*, 29, no. 1 (1989): 43, 56.
15. Ahmet Karamustafa's work clearly demonstrates this shift over the course of his scholarship. He has continually challenged normative classifications of Islamic practices and beliefs as heterodox. See Ahmet Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994); idem, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). In his most recent work, he has used "vernacular" as a local mode of styling Islamic discourses. See idem, "Islamic Dīn as an Alternative to Western Models of 'Religion,'" in *Theory/Religion/Critique: Classical and Contemporary Approaches*, ed. Richard King (New York: Columbia University Press).
16. Frank J. Korom, *Hosay Trinidad: Muharram Performances in an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 194.
17. Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger, *In Amma's Healing Room: Gender and Vernacular Islam in South India* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 2.
18. Korom, *Hosay Trinidad*, 218.
19. Karen Ruffle, *Gender, Sainthood, and Everyday Practice in South Asian Shi'ism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 37.
20. Afsar Mohammad, *The Festival of Pirs: Popular Islam and Shared Devotion in South India* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3.
21. Ruffle, *Gender, Sainthood, and Everyday Practice*, 161.
22. Mohammad, *The Festival of Pirs*, 7.
23. Ruffle, *Gender, Sainthood, and Everyday Practice*, 162.
24. Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway (eds.), *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 423.
25. Sheldon Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 20.
26. Sheldon Pollock, "Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History," *Public Culture*, 12, no. 3 (2000): 616.
27. Engseng Ho calls this insistence a "resolute localism." Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility Across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).
28. Pollock, *The Language of the Gods*, 286.
29. Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 245. See also Audrey Truschke, *Culture of Encounters: Sanskrit at the Mughal Court* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).
30. Flueckiger, *In Amma's Healing Room*, 2.

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31. Charles Stewart, "Syncretism and Its Synonyms: Reflections on Cultural Mixture," *Diacritics*, 29, no. 3, 40–62.
32. Tony K. Stewart and Carl W. Ernst, "Syncretism," in *South Asian Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, eds. Peter J. Claus and Margaret A. Mills (New York: Routledge, 2003), 588.
33. Michael Satlow, "Beyond Influence: Toward a New Historiographic Paradigm," in *Jewish Literatures and Cultures: Context and Intertext*, eds. Yaron Eliav and Anita Norwich (Providence: BrownJudaic Studies, Brown University, 2008), 37–53.
34. Wang Jianping, *Concord and Conflict: The Hui Communities of Yunnan Society in a Historical Perspective* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1996).
35. For example, his first book was titled *Muslims in China: A Study in Cultural Confrontation* (London: Curzon, 1980).
36. Raphael Israeli, "Established Islam and Marginal Islam in China from Eclecticism to Syncretism," in *Islam in China: Religion, Ethnicity, Culture, and Politics* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002), 104.
37. Raphael Israeli, "Muslims in China: The Incompatibility Between Islam and the Chinese Order," in *Islam in China: Religion, Ethnicity, Culture, and Politics* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002), 7.
38. Krstic, *Contested Conversions to Islam*, 16.
39. Satlow, "Beyond Influence," 40–44.
40. Jonathan Lipman asserts that we are able to deconstruct the inherent problems of a hegemonic, Sinocentric history of China only when we present alternative narratives that acknowledge the multiplicity of human existence. Therefore, this chapter attempts to offer only some of the conditions that defined Sino-Muslim life and consequently are ingrained in the production of Sino-Islamic literature. All together, this is not the history of the Muslims in China, but rather a few histories of Muslims in China. I mirror Lipman's process of narrowing, beginning with this general history and proceeding toward the individual stories of Wang Daiyu, Liu Zhi, and Ma Dexin. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), xxxiii–xxxv.
41. Donald Daniel Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China: A Short History to 1800* (Canberra: Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1986), 195–196.
42. One Chinese source states that the king of the *dashi* sent a pearl as a gift for the Tang emperor in 627. This is probably due to a mistaken character (making the date 785), but it could refer to an embassy sent by the Prophet himself. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 36, 42–55.
43. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 42–55.
44. Donald Daniel Leslie, "Arabic Sources," in *Essays on the Sources for Chinese History*, ed. Donald Daniel Leslie, Colin Mackerras, and Gungwu Wang (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), 147.
45. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 35–37.

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46. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "Follow the White Camel: Islam in China to 1800," in *New Cambridge History of Islam*, Vol. 3, ed. Francis Robinson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 414.
47. These efforts to segregate foreigners largely failed, and the children of those Muslims who did begin to marry Chinese were also seen as outsiders and identified as "native-born foreigners" (*tusheng fanke* 土生番客). See Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 195; and idem, "Living with the Chinese: the Muslim Experience in China, T'ang to Ming," in *Chinese Ideas About Nature and Society: Studies in Honor of Derk Bodde*, ed. Charles Le Blanc and Susan Blader (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1987), 177.
48. The Great Mosque of Xi'an (*Da Qingzhensi* 大清真寺) probably was not established during the Tang dynasty, but evidence indicates that the intention was present during this early period. Claude L. Pickens found an undated inscription that refers to a building permit in 705. Claude L. Pickens, "The Great West Mosque of Ch'ang An (Sian)," *Friends of Moslems* 9, no. 3 (1935): 44.
49. See, for example, the account in *News of China and India* (*Akhbār al-Sīn wa al-Hind*), c.851. Gabriel Ferrand, *Voyage du Marchand Arabe Sulaymān en Inde et en Chine* (Paris, Editions Bossard 1922), 75–78, and "Sulayman al-Tajir, *Akhbar al-Sin wal-Hind*," in *Arabic Classical Accounts of India and China*, trans. S. Maqbul Ahmad (Shimla, India: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1989).
50. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 26.
51. For a richer description of Islam during the Tang period, see Chang Yung-Ho, *The Development of Chinese Islam During the Tang and Song Dynasties (618–1276 A.D.)* (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1999), F. S. Drake, "Mohammedism in the T'ang Dynasty," *Monumenta Serica* 8 (1943): 1–40; Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 20–39; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 24–31; Claude L. Pickens, "China and Arabia Prior to the T'ang Dynasty (618 A.D.)," *Muslim World*, 32 (1942): 195–211, and Zhang Jun-yan, "Relations Between China and the Arabs in Early Times," *Journal of Oman Studies*, 6 (1980): 91–109.
52. Wealthy merchants were often able to bypass laws prohibiting foreigners from buying houses inside city walls. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 68.
53. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, chs. 4–7. This is the most complete documentary history of Muslims prior to the Yuan dynasty in English.
54. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 58–61.
55. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 61–64.
56. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 28–30.
57. For a comprehensive overview of this period, see Morris Rossabi, "The Muslims in the Early Yüan Dynasty," in *China Under Mongol Rule*, ed. John Langlois (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 257–295.
58. James A. Millward and Peter Purdue, "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region Through the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Xinjiang: China's*

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Muslim Borderland, ed. S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2004), 44; and Thomas Allsen, *Commodity and Exchange in Mongol Eurasia: A Cultural History of Islamic Textiles* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

59. Benite, "Follow the White Camel," 417.
60. Many Western authors highlight the four-tiered class system that was on official Yuan record, but descriptions of the lived reality seem to demonstrate that this was generally implemented in a strict manner. Elizabeth Endicott-West, "The Yuan Government and Society," in *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 6: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907–1368,* eds. Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 610–615.
61. Donald Daniel Leslie, "The Mongol Attitude to Jews in China," *Central Asiatic Journal,* 39 (1995): 237–241.
62. Arnold Jacque Vissière, "L'Islamisme à Hang-tcheou," *Revue de Monde Musulman,* 22 (1913): 1–84.
63. George Lane, "Phoenix Mosque, Hangzhou," *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online* (2009), http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/phoenix-mosque (retrieved February 16, 2011); and Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt, "China's Earliest Mosques," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians,* 67, no. 3 (2008): 342–343.
64. One example is the Sage's Companion Mosque (*Shenyousi* 聖友寺), also known as the Companions (*Aṣḥab*) Mosque. It was the largest of seven mosques in Quanzhou during the Yuan dynasty. It is debated whether it is different from the Qingjing mosque (*Qingjingsi* 清淨寺), first built in 1009 and later restored in 1310. If the Shenyou Mosque is actually the current construction of the Qingjing mosque, then it would be the oldest stone mosque in China. See Steinhardt, "China's Earliest Mosques," 339–341. For evidence of distinct mosques, see Chen Dasheng 陈达生, *Islamic Inscriptions of Quanzhou* (*Quanzhou Yisilanjiao Shike* 泉州伊斯兰教石刻) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1984), 8–14. For general descriptions and history of mosques in China, see Wolfgang Franke, "Notes on Some Ancient Chinese Mosques," in *Documenta Barbarorum, für W. Heissig zum 70,* ed. Klaus Sagaster and Michael Weiers (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983), 111–126; Luo Xiaowei, "China," in *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, ed. Martin Frishman and Hasan-Uddin Khan (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 209–223; and Sun Dazhang, *Ancient Chinese Architecture: Islamic Buildings*, trans. Z. Guodong and Z. Long (Vienna and New York: Springer-Verlag/Wien, 2003).
65. For more information on early Muslim archeological material, see Wu Wenliang 吳文良, *Quanzhou Zongjiao Shike* 泉州宗教石刻 (*Religious Inscriptions of Quanzhou*) (Beijing: Kexue Chubanshe, 2005); Chen, *Islamic Inscriptions*; Richard Pearson, Li Min, and Li Guo, "Quanzhou Archaeology: A Brief Review," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology,* 6, no. 1 (2002): 23–58. Currently, Dr. Samuel Lieu is conducting a large-scale archeological project to reconstruct the history of Quanzhou.

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66. Chen, *Islamic Inscriptions*, 38–39. Research on Southeast China more generally indicates that the overwhelming majority of inscriptions indicate that deceased individuals came from Persia. See Chen Dasheng 陈达生, "Synthetical Study Program on the Islamic Inscriptions on the Southeast Coastland of China," in *Zhongguo yu haishang sichou zhi lu* 中國與海上絲綢之路 (*China and the Maritime Silk Route*) (Quanzhou, China: Fujian Publishing House, 1991), 159–182.
67. See, for example, Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, ed. and trans. H. A. R. Gibb (London: Routledge, 1929).
68. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 34–35.
69. For an extended assessment of the contributions of Sayyid 'Ajall, see Jacqueline Armijo, *Sayyid 'Ajall Shams al-Din: A Muslim from Central Asia, Serving the Mongols in China, and Bringing "Civilization" to Yunnan* (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1997).
70. For biographies of Sayyid 'Ajall and some of his descendants, see Igor de Rachewiltz et al., eds., *In the Service of the Khan: Eminent Personalities of the Early Mongol-Yüan Period (1200–1300)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1993), 466–479, 539–557.
71. Wang, *Concord and Conflict*, 72–73.
72. Benno van Dalen, "Islamic Astronomical Tables in China: The Sources for the *Huihui li*," in *History of Oriental Astronomy: Proceedings of the Joint Discussion-17 at the 23rd General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union*, ed. S. M. Razaullah Ansari (Dordrecht, the Netherlands: Kluwer, 2002), 19.
73. There were twenty-three unique titles that were recorded in transliteration based on Persian rather than Arabic, which is determined by grammatical patterns and small variation in terminology. Tasaka Kōdō, "An Aspect of Islam Culture Introduced into China," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko*, 16 (1957): 75–160.
74. *Zīj* is a generic name for Islamic astronomical books.
75. Benno van Dalen, "*Zhamaluding*," in *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Astronomers*, vol. 2, eds. Thomas A. Hockey et al. (Berlin: Springer, 2007), 1262–1263.
76. Yabuuchi Kiyoshi, "Islamic Astronomy in China During the Yuan and Ming Dynasties," *Historia Scientiarum*, 7 (1997): 11–43.
77. Dalen, "*Zhamaluding*," 1263.
78. David Morgan, "Persian as a Lingua Franca in the Mongol Empire," in *Literacy in the Persianate World: Writing and the Social Order*, eds. Brian Spooner and William L. Hanaway. He also notes that, for studying Mongol history, the challenge is determining what language will became central to one's approach. Idem, *The Mongols*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 6–7.
79. Leslie argues that Persian was already established as a common language among foreigners by the Song dynasty. Donald Daniel Leslie, *The Survival of the Chinese Jews: The Jewish Community of Kaifeng* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1972), 118–119.

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80. Huang Shijian, "Chinese-Iranian Relations VIII: Persian Language and Literature in China," in *Encyclopedia Iranica* (Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 1992), 446.
81. Huang Shijian, "The Persian Language in China During the Yuan Dynasty," *Papers on Far Eastern History,* 34 (1986): 83–95.
82. Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 194.
83. This notion has been repeatedly echoed in Western scholarship through the corresponding notion that, during the Ming period, we can begin to speak of "Chinese Muslims" rather than "Muslims in China." For the most recent expression, see Benite, "Follow the White Camel," 421.
84. *Yi* 夷 is often translated and understood by the Chinese to mean "barbarian." However, many foreigners had lived in China for decades, or even generations. Despite this fact, they were still seen as "other" by the Han Chinese.
85. Tsai Yuan-Lin, "Sufism in Wang Daiyu's San Yi (the Threefold of Oneness) Theory—the Advent of a Creative Dialogue Between Islam and Confucianism." Unpublished paper presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, November 20–23, 2004.
86. Benite, "Follow the White Camel," 421.
87. Jiang Yonglin, *The Great Ming Code: Da Ming lü* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 88.
88. Lee Cheuk Yin, "Islamic Values in Confucian Terms: Wang Daiyu (ca. 1580–1658) and His *Zhengjiao Zhenquan* (Genuine Annotation of the Orthodox Teachings)," in *Islam and Confucianism: A Civilizational Dialogue*, eds. Osman Baker and Cheng Gek Nai (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1996), 78.
89. Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China*, 120–121. For example, in 1661, Ma Shijun came in first in the *jinshi* examination and met with the emperor.
90. See J. V. G. Mills, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan: "The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores" (1433)* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970).
91. Joseph Fletcher, "China and Central Asia, 13-68-1884," in *Chinese World Order*, ed. John Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 207–208.
92. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 46.
93. This attribution is according to a stele at the mosque. Translated in P. C. Low, "100-Character Psalm on Islam by the First Ming Emperor," *Friends of Moslems,* 11, no. 2 (1937): 39.
94. Benite, "Follow the White Camel," 422.
95. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 73.
96. He was also known as Grand Teacher Hu (Taishi 胡太師), by his style name, (*zi* 子) Hu Puzhao 胡普照, and his Islamic name, Muḥammad 'Ibrāhīm Iliyās.
97. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 39–42.
98. Zhao Can 趙燦, *Jingxue xi chuan pu* 經學系傳譜 (*Genealogy of the Transmission and Lineage of Classical Learning*), quoted in Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 41.

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This catalogue, written c.1677, narrates the success of the scripture hall education system and outlines the scholastic history of the system, including teachers, students, curriculum, literary output, and the establishment of mosque schools.

99. A few students even lived with Hu in his home on a work-study program. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 50.
100. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 75.
101. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 50.
102. Michael Dillon, *China's Muslim Hui Community: Migration, Settlement, and Sects* (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1999) 37.
103. Nanjing was one of the most eminent centers of the scripture hall system, producing both Wang Daiyu and Liu Zhi. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 21.
104. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 21–22.
105. This high level of integration contrasts with the social pattern for the Muslim communities of Northwest and Southwest China, where Muslims often lived in large secluded rural communities. See Jonathan Lipman, "Patchwork Society, Network Society: A Study of Sino-Muslim Communities," in *Islam in Asia, Vol. II*, ed. Raphael Israeli (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984).
106. Ma Tong 馬通, *Zhongguo Yisilan jiaopai yu menhuan zhidu shilue* 中国伊斯兰教派与门宦制度史略 (*A Brief History of the Sects and menhuan Organizations of Chinese Islam*) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 3d ed., 2000), 115–116.
107. The ongoing transitions within Sufi practice are witnessed most clearly in the Naqshbandiyya Sufi order in China. See Joseph Fletcher (ed.) by Jonathan N. Lipman, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China," in *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia*, ed. Beatrice Manz (London: Variorum, 1995), 1–46.
108. David Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856–1873* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 43–46.
109. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 81.
110. The most comprehensive study of Muslim rebellions is Bai Shouyi 白壽彝 (ed.), *Huimin qiyi* 回民起義 (*Righteous Uprisings of the Hui People*) (Shanghai: Shenzhou Guoguang, 1953).
111. Jonathan Lipman, "'A Fierce and Brutal People': On Islam and Muslims in Qing Law," in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, eds. Pamela Crossley, Donald Sutton, and Helen Siu (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 83–110.
112. See Peter Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).
113. Jonathan Lipman, "Sufism in the Chinese Courts—Islam and Qing Law in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Islamic Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics*, eds. Frederick De Jong and Bernd Radtke (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1999), 553–575.
114. See Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China."

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115. See Kim Hodong, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–1877* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).
116. Ma Dexin played a role in the Panthay Rebellion, as it occurred during the later years of his life. His position in the movement will be examined within the context of his life more generally in Chapter 2.
117. The Qing military was also dealing with the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1864) in Southeast China. See Jonathan Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996).
118. For more information on events in Shaanxi, Gansu, and Qinghai, see Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 103–166.
119. R. Michael Feener, "New Networks and New Knowledge: Migrations, Communications, and the Refiguration of the Muslim Community in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam: Vol. 6, Muslims and Modernity: Culture and Society Since 1800,* ed. Robert Hefner (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 39–68.
120. See, for example, James Gelvin and Nile Green (eds.), *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2014); Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); and Francis Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print," *Modern Asian Studies*, 27, no. 1 (1993): 229–251.
121. James Gelvin and Nile Green, "Introduction," in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, 4.
122. See, for example, Azyumardi Azra, *The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2004).
123. Stephen F. Dale, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
124. For an overview of revivalist thinkers and movements, see Nikki Keddie, "The Revolt of Islam, 1700 to 1993: Comparative Considerations and Relations to Imperialism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 36, no. 3 (1994): 463–487; and John Voll, "Foundations for Renewal and Reform: Islamic: Movements in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito (New York and Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 509–549.
125. While there were thematic similarities across geographical boundaries, it is important to resist making a too broad generalization. Reform movements were locally situated in various global nodes of Muslim activity, used differing strategies for reformation, and came to different conclusions. See Ahmed Dallal, "The Origins and Objectives of Islamic Revivalist Thought, 1750–1850," *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 113 (1993): 341–360.

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126. Zachery Heern, *The Emergence of Modern Shi'ism: Islamic Reform in Iraq and Iran* (London: Oneworld, 2015).
127. The most detailed account is John Voll, *Islam, Continuity, and Change in the Modern World* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1994).
128. For an outline of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's life, thoughts, and influence, see David Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006); and Khaled Abou El Fadl, *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 45–74.
129. For some supporters of this perspective, see Rudolph Peters, "Ijtihad and Taqlid in Eigtheenth- and Nineteenth-Century Islam," *Die Welt des Islams,* 20 (1981): 131–145.
130. Cemil Aydin, "Globalizing the Intellectual History of the Idea of the 'Muslim World,'" in *Global Intellectual History,* ed. Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 159–186; idem, *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017); and Nile Green, "Spacetime and the Muslim Journey West: Industrial Communications in the Making of the 'Muslim World,'" *American Historical Review,* 118, no. 2 (2013): 401–429.

CHAPTER 2

1. Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller, "Ancient Myths and Modern Theories of Christian Origins," *Redescribing Christian Origins* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 10, quoting Jonathan Z. Smith, "In Comparison a Magic Dwells," in Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 34.
2. Asad's understanding of tradition is influenced by Alasdair MacIntyre's definition: "an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflict: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least key parts of those fundamental agreements, and those internal, interpretative debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreements come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted." Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 12.
3. Talal Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam* (Washington, DC: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1986), 14.
4. John Bowen challenges Asad's notion of discursive tradition because it is too restrictive. Asad claims that an Islamic discursive tradition "includes and relates to the founding texts of the Qur'an and Hadith" (Asad, *Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,* 14), but Bowen contends that we must "modify Asad's defintion to

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include, as part of the discursive tradition, linkages drawn to such other foundations of Islamic knowledge as oral traditions of prophetic history and systems of cosmological speculation." John Bowen, *Muslims Through Discourse: Religion and Ritual in Gayo Society* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 10.

5. Martin Nguyen, *Sufi Master and Qur'an Scholar: Abū 'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī and the Laṭā'if al-ishārāt* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17.
6. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 381.
7. Jonathan Z. Smith, "Sacred Persistence: Toward a Redescription of Canon," in Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 44.
8. Tony K. Stewart, *The Final Word: The Caitanya Caritāmṛta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010), 191.
9. Anne Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 12.
10. Benite's primary source is Zhao Can's *Genealogy of the Transmission and Lineage of Classical Learning* (1677). Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Chinese Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).
11. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 62–71.
12. Wang Jianping, "The Opposition of a Leading Akhund to Shi'a and Sufi Shaykhs in Mid-Nineteenth- Century China," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, 12 (2014): 72.
13. Jacqueline Armijo, "Muslim Education in China: Chinese Madrasas and Linkages to Islamic Schools Abroad," in *The Madrasa in Asia: Political Activism and Transnational Linkages,* ed. Farish A. Noor, Yoginder Sikand, and Martin van Bruinessen (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 173.
14. Blackburn, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice*, 13.
15. See Françoise Aubin, "Tasawwuf (in Chinese Islam)," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd Ed., Vol. 10 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2000), 337–339.
16. For an English translation and an explanation of this text's importance throughout the Islamic world, see Hamid Algar, *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return* (Delmar, NY: Caravan Books), 1982.
17. For an analysis of Zhang Zhong's translations, see Leopold Eisenlohr, *Buddho-Islamic Discourse in Ashige and Wang Daiyu* (Master's thesis, University of Chicago, 2013).
18. Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 33.
19. For an English translation of Liu Zhi's *Zhenjing Zhaowei,* see Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 113–210.

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20. The full title of the poem is *Celestial Lights in Praise of the Best of Creation* (*al-Kawākib ad-Durrīya fī Madḥ Khayr al-Barīya*).
21. The best assessment has been completed in Donald Daniel Leslie and M. Wassel, "Arabic and Persian Sources Used by Liu Chih," *Central Asiatic Journal,* 26 (1982):78–104.
22. Wang relates, "Someone asked their senior Rābi'a (*labi'an* 喇必安) saying, 'Do you take pleasure in the Lord?' She said, 'That is correct.' 'Do you hate the Devil?' She said 'No!' 'Why is this?' She said, 'I only have one heart, how could I always possess two?'" Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 59.
23. In *Memorial of the Friends of God,* the story goes, "Out of love of the compassionate, I have no occasion for hatred toward Satan. I saw the Prophet in a dream. He said, 'Rābi'a, do you love me?' I said, 'O Prophet of God, who is there that doesn't love you? But love of the Real has so pervaded me that there is no place in my heart for love or hatred of another.'" Michael Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'raj, Poetic and Theological Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 163. See also Paul Losensky, *Farid ad-Din 'Attār's Memorial of God's Friends: Lives and Sayings of Sufis* (New York: Paulist Press, 2009), 106.
24. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 57–58; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 104, 114.
25. Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar Najm al-Dīn al-Nasafī was one of the greatest Sunnī and Ḥanafī jurists and theologians belonging to the school of al-Māturīdī (d. 944). For a discussion of this text, see Muhammad Naguib al-Attas', *The Oldest Known Malay Manuscript: A 16th-Century Malay Translation of the 'Aqā'id of Al-Nasafī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya), 1988.
26. Anthony Garnaut, "Chinese Muslim Literature," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 3rd Ed. (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J. Brill), 2013.
27. For more on Arabic and Persian texts used in Sino-Muslim education, see Pang Shiqian 龐士謙, *Zhongguo Huijiao Siyuan Jiaoyu Zhi Yan'ge Ji Keben* 中國回教寺院教育之沿革及課本 (A History of Madrasa Education in China and Its Textbooks) (1937), reprinted in Bai Shouyi, *Zhongguo Yisilan Shi Cungao* 中國伊斯蘭史存稿 (*Manuscripts of the History of Islam in China*) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia People's Press, 1982), 366–374.
28. There are several Chinese biographies of Wang Daiyu, but they are all based on his own autobiographical account presented at the beginning of his first book, *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching*. Wang Daiyu, "Zixu (Author's Preface)," in *Zhengjiao zhenquan, Qingzhen daxue, Xizhen zhengda* 正教真詮, 請真大學, 希真正答 (*True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching, Great Learning of Islam, Orthodox Responses on the Rare Truth*), ed. Yu Zhengui 余振貴 (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1987), 16–17.
29. Lee, "Islamic Values in Confucian Terms." Wang's birthdate is uncertain. Murata puts it around 1590, while Benite posits 1570. Modern Chinese scholars presume that it could have been between 1573 and late as 1619. Murata, *Chinese*

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Gleams, 19; Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Chinese Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 134.

30. This also could be translated as "Elder of the Muslims," but it seems to be a combination of *qingzhen* 情真 (Islam) and *huihui* 回回 (Muslim). This also evokes the image of the *shaikh* or *pir*, meaning "old man," which was employed to refer to a teacher, especially a Sufi master. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 134; Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 19.
31. Wang, "Zixu," 16; Joseph Ford, "Some Chinese Muslims of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Asian Affairs,* 5 no. 2 (1974): 145.
32. Technical knowledge of the heavens was important to the imperial government because it allowed the emperor to organize economic, political, and religious rituals, which symbolically affirmed his role as the "Son of Heaven" (*tianzi* 天子). The Directorate of Astronomy was the bureau responsible for these calculations and was dominated by Muslims during the Yuan and the early Ming dynasties, when it was taken over by Jesuit missionaries. For further discussion, see Benjamin A. Elman, *On their Own Terms: Science in China, 1550–1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 61–106.
33. Wang, "Zixu," 16.
34. The imperial government was moved to Beijing by the emperor Yongle 永樂 (ruled 1402–1424) in 1414–1415, and the city was officially made the capital in 1421.
35. These influences and linguistic sources are reflected in Wang's writings, which highlighted his familiarity with various topics derived from multiple Islam sciences. However, we do not have cited sources or certificates (*ijāzah*) that verify his training. This was the norm rather than the exception within Chinese Islamic educational practices.
36. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 135.
37. Wang, "Zixu," 16; quoted in Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 20.
38. Ibid., 16.
39. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 3; quoted in Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 21.
40. Wang, "Zixu," 16; quoted in Ford, "Some Chinese Muslims," 146.
41. This title was one of several that local authorities nominated individuals to fill in official positions. Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985), 333.
42. *Zhuangyuan* 狀元 is a title given to a top scorer on the palace examination that was adopted by Muslim intellectuals; several teachers were referred to by this term. Zhang Shaoshan 張少山 was his given name, but he was also referred to as *Zhuangyuan Baba* 狀元爸爸 (Prominent Elder). Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 50–56.
43. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 21.
44. Lee, "Islamic Values in Confucian Terms," 83.

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45. This story seems to originate much later; it was first found in the anonymous work *Daiyu Wang Gong Tan Dao* 岱輿王公談道 (*The Way of Discussion of Master Wang Daiyu*), published as an appendix to the 1927 edition of the *Huihui Yuanlai* 回回原來 (*Origins of the Muslims*). It is most certainly hagiographical and meant to be polemic in nature. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 21 plus notes; and Isaac Mason, "Notes on Chinese Mohammedan Literature," *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 56 (1925): 194, n. 165.
46. Wang, "Zixu," 16; quoted in Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 76.
47. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 136.
48. Wang, "Zixu," 17; quoted in Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 136.
49. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 135.
50. Ibid., 136.
51. Ibid., 136–137.
52. Ibid., 136.
53. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 77.
54. Sachiko Murata, "Sufi Texts in Chinese," in *The Heritage of Sufism: Late Classical Sufism (1501–1750)*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn and David Morgan (Oxford, UK: Oneworld, 1999), 380.
55. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 79.
56. Murata provides a brief summary of each chapter. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 43–60.
57. *True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching* included an *Addendum* (*Shengyu* 剩語), which presented Wang's debate with a Buddhist monk who converts to Islam. Murata notes that the foremost Japanese scholar on Islam in China, Tazaka Kodo, questioned its authenticity because this interaction was inconsistent with the rest of Wang's work. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 21–22.
58. Wang's authorship of this text has been contested due to its shift in literary style and polemic content, but it has been traditionally attributed to him. There is no preface that indicates Wang as the writer, but a note does state that the "Elder of Islam" (i.e., Wang Daiyu), commented on the text. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 78–79.
59. The Song Dynasty scholar Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) codified the Confucian canon and made the *Great Learning* paramount in Confucian scholasticism, designating it one of the Four Books.
60. For a discussion and an English translation of the *Qingzhen Daxue*, see Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 69–112.
61. Sachiko Murata, William C. Chittick, and Tu Weiming, *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 4–5.
62. Yuan Guozuo 袁國做 (b. 1717), Yuan Ruqi's grandson, played an important role in editing and republishing Liu Zhi's writings in the 1770s. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 56–57.
63. The precise curriculum of his early education is not recorded.

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64. Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*, 5–10.
65. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 151–152.
66. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 145–146; and Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*, 10.
67. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 152–153.
68. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 147; Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*, 5–10.
69. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 146.
70. Sachiko Murata even suggests possibly translating the title of the *Tianfang Xingli* as *Islamic Neo-Confucianism*. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 25.
71. Diagrams showing the relationship between the various elements of the cosmos are not uncommon in Islamic texts, and Liu's are very reminiscent of those found in Ibn al-'Arabī's work.
72. For a complete translation and discussion of the *Tianfang Xingli*, consult Murata, *Sage Learning*.
73. These texts have been catalogued in Donald Daniel Leslie and M. Wassel, "Arabic and Persian Sources Used by Liu Chih," *Central Asiatic Journal*, 26 (1982): 78–104.
74. For an English translation of Liu Zhi's *Zhenjing Zhaowei*, see Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 113–210.
75. The *Tianfang Dianli* is studied at length in Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*.
76. The *Tianfang Dianli* received critical comments despite being included in this collection. Frankel, *Rectifying God's Name*, 51–55.
77. The notion of translation in many of the *Han Kitab* texts was a flexible process. To acquire a wider audience and greater prestige, authors would often claim that their original compositions stemmed from an Arabic or Persian original. Françoise Aubin noted, "Sometimes such originals are imaginary; but even when these actually exist . . . the alleged translation implies a total rewriting and remodeling in order to translate the philosophical notions and concepts of Sufism into an acceptable Chinese mode of thought. From this activity, an original literature has resulted, one unknown to Islamic specialists for want of being studied by Sinologists." See Aubin, "Tasawwuf (in Chinese Islam)."
78. Benite, *Dao of Muhammad*, 151–153.
79. Murata, *Sage Learning*, 9.
80. The reference is to *Analects* 11.15, which reads: "The Master was heard to remark, 'What is Zilu doing in my school, playing the zither the way he does?' After this, the disciples began treating Zilu in a disrespectful manner. The Master reproved them, saying, 'Although Zilu has not yet entered the inner chamber, he has at least ascended to the reception hall.'" Edward Slingerland, *Confucius Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006), 116.
81. Murata, *Sage Learning*, 9.
82. Bai, *Huizu Renwu Zhi*, 1552.

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83. Ma Anli, "Xu 序 (Preface)," in Ma Dexin, *Sidian Yaohui* 四典要會 (*Essence of the Four Canons*), 1859, in Ma Jizu 馬繼祖, ed., *Ma Fuchu Yizhu Xuan* 馬復初遺著選 (*A Selection of Ma Fuchu's Posthumous Writings*) (Hong Kong: Guoji Huaren Chubanshe, 2003), 4–5.
84. Sino-Muslims still favored Persian sources in Yunnan.
85. Ding Rong 丁蓉, "Ma Dexin Chaojin Tuji Yanjiu 馬德新朝覲途記研究 (Research on Ma Dexin's *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*)," *Zhongshan daxue Yanjiushengxue Kan* 中山大學研究生學刊 (*National Sun Yat-sen University Graduate Student Journal*), 28 no. 3 (2008): 61, and Chang-Kuan Lin, "Three Eminent Chinese 'Ulama,'" *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs,* 11, no. 1 (1990): 100–117.
86. Bai, *Huizu Renwu Zhi* (*Records of Muslim Personalities*), Vol. 2 (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 2000), 1552.
87. Huang Dengwu 黄登武, and Ma Xiaoping 马小平, *Zhongguo Jingtang Jiaoyu yu Shanxue Ahong* 中国经堂教育与陕学阿訇 (*Chinese Scripture Hall Education and Shaanxi School Religious Leaders*) (Gansu Sheng Pingliang Xian Shi, China: Huang Dengwu, 2010), 24.
88. Ma Anli, "Preface," 14.
89. The term *lao baba* 老巴巴 is literally translated as "old father." It is intended as an honorific that connotes a revered social status as a respected elder.
90. Huang and Ma, *Zhongguo Jingtang Jiaoyu*, 27–28.
91. The conflict was called the Panthay Rebellion in Western accounts based on a Burmese word for Yunnan Muslims. This term was not known or used in China, though, where the movement was named the Du Wenxiu Uprising (*Du Wenxiu qiyi* 杜文秀起義), after its leader, Du Wenxiu 杜文秀 (1823–1872). For the history of this designation, see Lin Chang-Kuan, "The Etymological History of Panthay-Chinese Yunnanese Muslims," *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs,* 12 no. 2 (1991): 346–354. For a detailed history of the events leading up the rebellion and the successive years of the Islamic state, see David G. Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856-1873* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).
92. Bai, *Huizu Renwu Zhi*, 1556.
93. Ma Dexin refused the civil titles that the Qing offered him because he did not want to be associated with the dynastic government. Atwill, *Chinese Sultanate*, 108, 125.
94. Atwill, *Chinese Sultanate*, 101.
95. Ibid., 118.
96. Ibid., 154.
97. Ibid., 128–30.
98. Ibid., 188.

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99. In the Yunnan school of Scripture Hall education, Ma Dexin also used several of his own Chinese texts, *Arabian Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Erleibi Chunqiu* 爾勒壁春秋), *Beneficent Illustration of Ritual and Prayer* (*Lifa Qi'ai* 禮法啟愛), *Completing the Path of the Way* (*Daoxing Jiujing* 道行究竟), *Sources of the Islamic Calendar* (*Tianfang Liyuan* 天方曆源), *Harmonizing the Study of Principle* (*Lixue Zhezhong* 理學折衷), *Description of the World* (*Huanyu Shuyao* 寰宇述要). Huaizhong Yang and Yu Zhengui (eds.), *Yisilan Yu Zhongguo Wenhua* (*Islam and Chinese Culture*) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia People's Press, 1995), 413–414.
100. Ma Dexin, *Essence of the Four Canons*, 1859, in Ma Jizu 馬繼祖; ed., *Ma Fuchu Yizhu Xuan* 馬復初遺著選 (*A Selection of Ma Fuchu's Posthumous Writings*) (Hong Kong: Guoji Huaren Chubanshe, 2003), 3.
101. Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 6.
102. Ibid., 7.
103. Ibid., 6.
104. Ibid., 6.
105. Ibid.,18.
106. Ma is highlighting the necessity of the imagination (*khayāl*) for its capacity to understand the nature of God as both immanent (*tashbīh*) and transcendent (*tanzīh*). Illusory Being (*huanyou* 幻有), in this case, is everything that is not God's Essence (creation), and must be experienced through imagery or as an imaginal world (*not* imaginary). For more on this notion, see Henry Corbin, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn 'Arabī* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).
107. Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 6.
108. Joseph Adler, "Zhou Dunyi: The Metaphysics and Practice of Sagehood," in *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From Earliest Times to 1600*, ed. W. M. Theodore deBary and Irene Bloom (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 673.
109. Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 6.
110. Ibid., 6.
111. The hadith of Gabriel is one of the most famous sources of the Islamic tradition. In it, Gabriel questions Muhammad about submission (*islām*), faith (*imān*), and doing what is beautiful (*iḥsān*). When Muhammad provides Gabriel with satisfactory responses, he leaves. Afterward, Muhammad asks his companions if they knew who the questioner was and told them that it was the angel Gabriel, who "came to teach them their religion" (*'atākum yu'allimukum dīnakum*). Vincent J. Cornell, "Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge: The Relationship Between Faith and Practice in Islam" in *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. John Esposito (New York and Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 75–77.
112. Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 3.
113. Ibid., 3.
114. Ibid., 9.

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115. Ibid., 11.
116. Ibid., 13.
117. Ibid., 16.
118. Ibid.,14.
119. Ibid.,14.
120. Ibid., 3
121. For a discussion on the development of the conceptualization of "pillars" (*arkān*), see Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Arkān," in *Essays on Islamic Civilization Presented to Niyazi Berkes*, ed. Donald Little (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1976), 303–16, reprinted in idem, *On Understanding Islam: Selected Studies* (The Hague, Netherlands, and New York: Mouton, 1981), 162–174.
122. Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 26.
123. Ibid., 20.
124. Ibid., 22.
125. Ibid., 21.
126. Ibid., 22.
127. Ibid., 26.
128. Ibid., 20–21.
129. Ibid., 22.
130. Ibid., 84.
131. Ma Zhu, in a section of his *Compass of Islam*, also dealt with the issue of heterodox behavior in late seventeenth–early eighteenth century Yunnan. In the portion entitled *A Through Understanding of the Unorthodox Way* (*Zuodao Tongxiao* 左道通曉), Ma denounced a group of Qalandarīya Sufis who practiced antinomian behavior. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 81.
132. Ma dedicated an entire section of the *Sidian yaohui* to establishing what he deemed correct thought and practice, entitled *Examination and Explanation of Orthodoxy and Heresy* (*Zhengyi kaoshu* 正異考述). Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 72–94. For a comparison of Confucian and Islamic understandings of heterodoxy, see John B. Henderson. *The Construction of Orthodoxy and Heresy: Neo-Confucian, Islamic, Jewish, and Early Christian Patterns* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998).
133. Ma, *Sidian Yaohui*, 84.
134. Ibid., 84.

CHAPTER 3

1. "Seek knowledge even if in China, for verily, seeking knowledge is incumbent upon every Muslim." The hadith is generally considered weak (*ḍa'īf*). Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 1997), Vol. 9, 369.
2. The most comprehensive account of Muslim pilgrims in China is Tie Weiying 铁维英 and Li Xuezhong 李学忠, *Zhongguo Musilin Chaojin Jishi* 中國穆斯林

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朝覲紀實 (*History of Chinese Muslim Pilgrimage*). Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1994. An interesting overview can be found in Oliver Moore, "Hajj from China: Social Meanings and Material Culture," in *Hajj: Global Interactions Through Pilgrimage,* eds. Luitgard Mols and Marjo Buitelaar (Leiden, Netherlands: Sidestone Press, 2014), 113–135.

3. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).
4. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).
5. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* 117.
6. Henri Lefebvre, *Production of Space,* trans. Donald Nicolson-Smith (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991). Lefebvre offers a triadic vision of space: perceived space (*le perçu*), materially produced space of everyday life; conceived space (*le conçu*), discourses that make up the production and representation of space; and space experienced *(le vécu*), which serves as a "space of representations" in one's lived experience.
7. Kim Knott, *The Location of Religion: A Spatial Analysis* (London: Equinox, 2005).
8. Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 106.
9. Smith, *To Take Place,* 103.
10. Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," *Diacritics,* 16 (1986): 24.
11. Thomas Tweed subcategorizes the cosmos into geographies, or "terrestrial space"; cosmographies, "the structure of the entire universe"; cosmogonies, "representations of the origin of the universe"; and teleographies, the ultimate objects or aims of existence and the most distant and ultimate horizons of human life. Thomas Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), 113–116.
12. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling,* 69.
13. For a history of the term *nostalgia,* see Linda Hutcheon, "Irony, Nostalgia, and the Postmodern," *Methods for the Study of Literature as Cultural Memory, Studies in Comparative Literature,* 30 (2000): 189–207.
14. Dai Jinhua, "Imagined Nostalgia," trans. Judy T. H. Chen, *boundary 2: an international journal of literature and culture,* 24 no. 3 (1997): 148.
15. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'ān.*
16. Haleem, *Qur'ān.*
17. On the "pillars" (*arkān*) of Islam, see Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Arkān," in *Essays on Islamic Civilization Presented to Niyazi Berkes,* ed. Donald Little (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1976), 303–316, reprinted in Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *On Understanding Islam: Selected Studies* (The Hague and New York: Mouton, 1981), 162–174.
18. Muhammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī, *Sahīh al-Bukhārī,* ed. and tr. by Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān (Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 1997). Vol. 1, Book 2, Number 8, http://

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www.usc.edu/org/cmje/religious-texts/hadith/bukhari/002-sbt.php (retrieved May 1, 2017).

19. Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 1991), 118.
20. The most comprehensive overviews are Robert Bianchi, *Guests of God: Pilgrimage and Politics in the Islamic World* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008); F. E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Venetia Porter and Liana Saif, *The Hajj: Collected Essays* (London: British Museum, 2013); and Eric Tagliacozzo and Shawkat Toorawa (eds.), *The Hajj: Pilgrimage in Islam* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
21. Eric Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey: Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013).
22. Michael Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca: The Indian Experience, 1500–1800* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1996).
23. Suraya Farooqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517–1683* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994).
24. See, e.g., Eileen Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); and John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj: 1865–1956* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).
25. Joseph Fletcher (ed.) by Jonathan N. Lipman, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China," in *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia,* ed. Beatrice Manz (London: Variorum, 1995), 15.
26. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 66.
27. Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China," 16.
28. He also brought other items, such as a sword, a prayer carpet, and up to eighty volumes of books as a departing gift from Mawlānā Makdhūm. See Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 67.
29. It is clear that Ma stayed in Yemen, and there is some speculation that he was initiated by a teacher named al-Zayn. There is little information available to confirm who this person was, or their relationship. If al-Zayn died at his recorded date of 1725, Ma Mingxin would have been only six years old. It is possible that al-Zayn's son, Abd al-Khaliq (1705–1740), was the intervening character in this chain. Ma Mingxin's arrival in Yemen can then be placed sometime during al-Khaliq's lifetime. Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China," 28–29, including all relevant footnotes.
30. Ma Mingxin's initial allegiance (and, therefore, silent obedience) to his companion and senior school friend may have been the reason that he is thought to have arrived in China at such a late date.
31. For an introduction and complete translation, see J. V. G. Mills, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan: 'The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores (1433)* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1970). See also J. J. L. Duyvendak, *Ma Huan*

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Re-examined (Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgeversmaatschappij, 1933); Andrew D. W. Forbes, "Ma Huan," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd Ed., Vol. 15 (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill), 849–850; Paul Pelliot, "Les Grands Voyages Maritimes Chinois au Debut du XVe Siecle," *T'oung Pao* 30 (1933): 237–452; idem., "Notes Additionelles sur Tcheng Houo et sur ses Voyages," *T'oung Pao*, 31 (1935): 274–314; idem, "Encore a Propos des Voyages de Tchend Houo," *T'oung Pao*, 32 (1936): 210–222.

32. However, Duyvendak thought otherwise, arguing that *Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores* was "written in an almost colloquial style by an unlearned Mohammedan." Duyvendak, *Ma Huan Re-examined*, 9.
33. For example, Ma incorrectly situated the Zamzam well as being near the Prophet's tomb rather than being in Mecca. Duyvendak was suspicious of this and other statements, believing that Ma possibly never visited the Hijaz, rather constructing his account from stories he heard from travelers he met throughout the journey. Duyvendak, *Ma Huan Re-examined*, 73.
34. He may have been referring to the black stone at the corner of the Kab'ah (*al-ḥajar al-aswad*), but it is unlikely that he could confuse this for two lions. Mills, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 175.
35. Mills, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 177.
36. Mills, *Ying-Yai Sheng-Lan*, 173–174.
37. Fei Xin 費信 (b. 1388), also a Muslim, wrote a travelogue entitled *Description of the Starry Raft* (*Xincha Shenlan* 星槎勝覽) about his travels on Zheng He's third, fifth, and seventh journeys. This is thought to be largely based on Ma Huan's *Overall Survey*. Gong Zhen 鞏珍 also accompanied Zheng He on his travels and then wrote *Record of Countries in the Western Ocean* (*Xiyang Fanguo Zhi* 西洋番國誌). See Edward L. Dreyer, *Zheng He: China and the Oceans in the Early Ming Dynasty, 1405–1433* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2006); Pelliot, "Les Grands Voyages"; and W. W. Rockhill, "Notes on the Relations and Trade of China with the Eastern Archipelago and the Coast of the Indian Ocean During the Fourteenth Century," *T'oung Pao* 15: Part 1 (1914): 419–447; Part 2 (1914): 61–159, 236–271, 374–392, 435–467, 604–626.
38. For further discussion on the five constant virtues in the Confucian context, see Edward Slingerland, *Confucius Analects: With Selections from Traditional Commentaries* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2006); Philip J Ivanhoe, *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2000); Kwong-loi Shun, "Ren 仁 and Li 禮 in the Analects," in *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays*, ed. Bryan W. Van Norden (Oxford, UK, and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 53–72; Li Chenyang, "Li as Cultural Grammar: On the Relation Between Li and Ren in Confucius' Analects," *Philosophy East and West*, 57 no. 3 (2007): 311–329; Daniel K. Gardner, *Zhu Xi's Reading of the Analects: Canon, Commentary, and the Classical Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003); and John Makeham, *Transmitters and Creators: Chinese Commentators*

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and Commentaries on the Analects (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003).

39. *Nian* 念, can mean both "to remember, or meditate" and to "recite, or invoke aloud." Wang's employment of this term allows him to convey the dual sense of the *shahādah* as a vocal articulation of one's belief in God and His Prophet and the sense that the *shahādah* is repeated during every prayer, and theorectically should be a constant reminder of one's faith in God. This character was also used to render the Sanskrit term *smṛti*, meaning the attentiveness of Buddhist practice, which is usually translated as "mindfulness" in Chinese Buddhist texts.
40. Wang employed an interesting term here to evoke the notion of fasting. *Jie* 戒 means "to guard against." In the *Analects,* Confucius said, "There are three things which the superior man guards against. In youth, when the physical powers are not yet settled, he guards against lust. When he is strong and the physical powers are full of vigor, he guards against quarrelsomeness. When he is old, and the animal powers are decayed, he guards against covetousness" (16:7). This term is also used to denote a regulation in Buddhism. The five precepts (*wujie* 五戒) are the foundation of Buddhist lay practice undertaken by all followers, which are do not take life, do not steal, do not engage in sexual misconduct, do not lie, and do not take intoxicants.
41. Wang Daiyu, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan, Qingzhen Daxue, Xizhen Zhengda* 正教真詮,請真大學,希真正答 (*True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching, Great Learning of Islam, Orthodox Responses on the Rare Truth*), ed. Yu Zhengui 余振貴 (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1987), 82.
42. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 87.
43. For further discussion on the concept of a covenant, see Gerhard Bowering, "Covenant," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2001), 464–467; and Rosalind Gwynne, *Logic, Rhetoric, and Legal Reasoning in the Qur'an: God's Arguments* (London: Routledge, 2004), 1–24.
44. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 87.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. This final passage is reminiscent of the constant guidance given in the Qur'ān for humankind to reflect (3:190–191; 10:24; 30:21; 34:46; 35:28; 39:27–28; 39:42; 45:13), and the concern for those who do not reflect (7:184; 30:8). Ibid.
49. Some call this identification "communitas," following the work of Victor Turner. The idea is explored in a series of his works, most explicitly in "Pilgrimage and Communitas," *Studia Missionalia,* 23, 305–327.
50. Liu Zhi 劉智, *Tianfang Dianli* 天方典禮 (*Rituals of Islam*), in *Qingzhen Dadian* 清真大典, vol. 15 (*The Great Canon of Islam*) (Hefei, China: Huangshan Shushe, 2005), 63.

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51. For further discussion of this point, see Cynthia J. Brokaw, *The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit: Social Change and Moral Order in Late Imperial China* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991).
52. These ledgers were catalogs of moral actions, which were supposed to be filled in after daily self-examination. The earliest types of ledgers functioned in a religious context by Daoist priests marking positive and negative actions after self-reflection. These were adopted by Buddhists and closely related to the belief in supernatural retribution of good and evil. Later, *gongguo ge* promoted morality in political, social, and intellectual contexts and was practiced by many scholars and officials in tandem with neo-Confucian methods of self-cultivation.
53. Sachiko Murata, William C. Chittick, and Tu Weiming, *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 484.
54. Liu, *Tianfang Dianli,* 63.
55. Ibid., 84.
56. Ibid., 60.
57. Ibid., 104.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid., 104–105.
60. Ibid., 105.
61. Ibid., 84.
62. This is a paraphrase of *Qur'ān* 2:196: "Complete the pilgrimages, major and minor, for the sake of God. If you are prevented [from doing so], then [send] whatever offering for sacrifice you can afford, and do not shave your heads until the offering has reached the place of sacrifice. If any of you is ill, or has an ailment of the scalp, he should compensate by fasting, or feeding the poor, or offering sacrifice. When you are in safety, anyone wishing to take a break between the minor pilgrimage and the major one must make whatever offering he can afford. If he lacks the means, he should fast for three days during the pilgrimage, and seven days on his return, making ten days in all. This applies to those whose household is not near the Sacred Mosque. Always be mindful of God, and be aware that He is stern in His retribution." Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Qur'ān* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004).
63. Liu, *Tianfang Dianli,* 109.
64. Ibid., 109.
65. Ibid., 111.
66. Ibid., 109.
67. Muhammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Sahīh al-Bukhārī*, ed. and tr. by Muḥammad Muḥsin Khān (Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 1997). Vol. 1, Book 1, Number 1, http://www.usc.edu/org/cmje/religious-texts/hadith/bukhari/001-sbt.php (retrieved May 1, 2017). There is also an *ḥadīth qudsī* that was repeated often: "If My servant intends good deed, then I count it for him as a good deed, even if he does

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not carry it out. And if he does carry it out, then I count it for him as ten like unto it." This is included in Hammām b. Munabbih's *Ṣaḥīfah*, Muslim b. al-Hajjāj's *Sahīh Muslim*, al-Nawawī's *Arba'ūn*, Ibn 'Arabī's *Mishkāt al-anwār*, and al-Madanī's *al-Itḥāfāt al-sanīyah fī al-aḥādīth al-qudsīyah*. Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, *Divine Sayings: 101 Hadith Qudsi—The Mishkat Al-Anwar of Ibn 'Arabi*, trans., Stephen Hirtenstein and Martin Notcutt (Oxford, UK: Anqa Publishing, 2004), 47.

68. In a Buddhist context, *shoujie* 受戒 means to take the precepts and be initiated into monkhood.
69. Ma Dexin, *Mingde Jing* 明德經 (*Scripture of Bright Virtue*), in Ma Jizu 馬繼祖 (ed.), *Ma Fuchu Yizhu Xuan* 馬復初遺著選 (*A Selection of Ma Fuchu's Posthumous Writings*) (Hong Kong: Guoji Huaren Chubanshe, 2003), 484.
70. Ma, *Mingde Jing*, 484.
71. Ibid., 484.
72. Ibid., 483.
73. Ibid., 483.
74. Wood blocks of Ma Anli's translation were produced in the same year. Ding Rong 丁蓉, "Ma Dexin Chaojin Tuji Yanjiu 馬德新朝覲途記研究 (Research on Ma Dexin's *Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*)," *Zhongshan Daxue Yanjiushengxue Kan* 中山大學研究生學刊 (*National Sun Yat-sen University Graduate Student Journal*), 28 no. 3 (2008): 60.
75. On al-'Aydarūs, see Esther Peskes, "Der Heilige und die Dimensionen seiner Macht. Abu Bakr al-'Aydarus. (gest. 1509) und die Saiyid-Sufis von Hadramawt (The Saint and the Dimensions of His Power. Abu Bakr al-'Aydarus (d. 1509) and the Sayyid Sufis of Hadramawt)," *Quaderni Studia Arabica,* 13 (1995): 41–72.
76. Each corner of the Ka'bah faces one of the cardinal directions. The Black Stone is located in the eastern corner, while the northern, western, and southern corners are known as *Ruknu l-'Īrāqī* (Iraqi Corner), *Ruknu sh-Shāmī* (Levantine Corner), and *Ruknu l-Yamanī* (Yemeni Corner), respectively.
77. Ma Dexin, *Chaojin Tuji* 朝覲途記 (*Record of the Pilgrimage Journey*), in Ma Jizu (ed.), *Ma Fuchu Yizhu Xuan*, 350.
78. The three little buildings previously situated on the exterior of the circumambulation pathway (*maṭāf*) vanished in the modern period. Such buildings housed the religious leaders of the four main legal schools during the prayers. The largest building (*maḳām* or *muṣallā ḥanafī*) was northwest of the Ka'ba in front of the *Hijr*; the Ḥanbalī was to the southeast, and the Mālikī to the southwest, and the Shāfi'īs used the Zamzam well building. Their disappearance was not only to provide some open space, but also because the diversification of religious rulings has become of secondary importance to many Muslims. A. J. Wensinck, "Ka'ba," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1927), 584–592.
79. The entrances that he listed are the Gate of 'Alī (*erli* 爾里), the Gate of 'Abbās (*erboshi* 爾波士), the Gate of the Prophet (*nabī, naibingyi* 廼並倚), the Gate of

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Peace (*salām, seluemu* 色略母), the Gate of the Path (*darā, dulaibai* 堵賴白), the Gate of Increase (*ziyādat, yeyade* 野呀德), the Gate of the Pole (*quṭbī* 故推補 *gutuibu*), the Gate of Extension (*bāṣṭiyat, boxituiye* 波洗退葉), the Ancient Gate (*'atīqah, ertigai* 爾梯改), the Pilgrimage Gate (*'umrah, ermulei* 爾母勒), the Gate of Abraham (*Ibrāhīm, yibulaxin* 以補喇欣), the Farewell Gate (*widā', weidaer* 委大爾), the Gate of *ajyād* (*tuyade* 土呀德), the Gate of Refuge (*takīyah, taikengye* 泰硜葉), the Gate of Compassion (*rahmah, leiqiamai* 勒洽買), the Gate of Purity (*ṣafā, suibo* 隋博), the Gate of 'Um Hāni (*yunmuhe* 蘊母呵), and the Gate of the Dhow (*baghlah, baienlai* 白恩賴). Ma, *Chaojin Tuji*, 350.

80. Ma, *Chaojin Tuji*, 350.
81. Ibid., 351.
82. Fragner demonstrated this transition with the Persian context, and Matheson and Milner explores this theme in the Malay context. See Bert G. Fragner, *Persische Memoirenliteratur als Quelle zur neueren Geschichte Irans* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1979); and Virginia Matheson and A. C. Milner, *Perceptions of the Hajj: Five Malay Texts* (Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian, 1984).
83. Ma Anli, "Xu 序 (Preface)," in Ma Dexin, *Sidian Yaohui* 四典要會 (*Essence of the Four Canons*), 1859, in Ma Jizu, *Ma Fuchu Yizhu Xuan*, 14.
84. Ma Dexin, *Sidian Yaohui* 四典要會 (*Essence of the Four Canons*), 1859, in Ma Jizu, *Ma Fuchu Yizhu Xuan*, 83.
85. Dru Gladney, "Islam in China from the First World War," *The New Cambridge History of Islam Volume 5: The Islamic World in the Age of Western Dominance*, ed. Francis Robinson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 659–685.
86. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 186–199.
87. François Aubin, "Islam on the Wings of Nationalism: The Case of Muslim Intellectuals in Republican China," in *Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission and Communication*, eds. Stéphane Duoignon, Hisao Komatsu, and Yasushi Kosugi (London: Routledge, 2006), 241–271.
88. Ya'qub Wang Jingzhai, "Imperatives for Encouraging Islamic Culture," in *Modernist Islam, 1840–1940: A Sourcebook*, ed. Charles Kurzman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 368–375.
89. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 210.
90. For further context and analysis of twentieth century Sino-Muslims and the Middle East, see Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "Nine Years in Egypt: The Chinese at al-Azhar University," *Hagar, Studies in Culture, Polity, and Identities*, 8, no. 1 (2008): 105–128; John Chen, "The Chinese Azharites Between Umma and Third World, 1938–55," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and Middle East*, 34 no. 1 (2014): 24–51; Maris Gillette, "The 'Glorious Returns' of Chinese Pilgrims to Mecca," in *Living with Separation in China: Anthropological Accounts*, ed. Charles Stafford (London: Routledge, 2003), 130–156; Haiyun Ma, "Patriotic and Pious Muslim Intellectuals in Modern China: The Case of Ma Jian," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 23, no. 3 (2006): 54–70; and Mao Yufeng, "A

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Muslim Vision for the Chinese Nation–Chinese Pilgrimage Missions to Mecca During World War II," *Journal of Asian Studies* 70, no. 2 (2011): 373–395.

CHAPTER 4

1. Several authors have described the development and reception of Chinese Qur'ān translations in modern China. For example, Jin Yijiu, "The Qur'an in China," *Contributions to Asian Studies,* 17 (1982): 95–101; Raphael Israeli, "Translation as Exegesis: The Opening Sūra of the Qur'an in Chinese," in *Islam: Essays on Scripture, Thought, and Society: A Festschrift in Honour of Anthony H. Johns*, ed. Peter G. Riddell (Leiden, Netherlands, and New York: Brill, 1997), 81–103; Françoise Aubin, "Les Traductions du Coran en Chinois," *Etudes Orientales/ Dirasat Sharqiya,* 13–14 (1994): 81–88; Wing-tsit Chan, *Religious Trends in Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 195–198; Ivo Spira, *Chinese Translations of the Qur'an: A Close Reading of Selected Passages* (MA thesis: Oslo University, 2005); Samuel M. Zwemer, "Translations of the Koran," *The Moslem World* (1915): 244–261; Na Guochang 纳国昌, "*Gulanjing zai Zhongguo* 古兰经在中国 (The Qur'an in China)," *Zhongguo Musilin* 中国穆斯林 (*Chinese Muslims*), 3 (2004): 5–7; Zhao Guojun 赵国军, "*Gulanjing Zai Woguo Deliuchuan, Fanyi Jiqi Yanjiu* 古兰经在我国的流传、翻译及其研究 (The Spread, Translation, and Study of the Koran in China)," *Gansu Shehui Kexue* 甘肃社会科学 (*Gansu Social Sciences*), no. 3 (2004): 250–255.
2. For the most comprehensive history of the Qur'ān in China, see Lin Song 林松, *Gulanjing zai Zhongguo* 古兰经在中国 (*The Qur'an in China*) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 2007). For comprehensive overviews, see Michael Dillon, "Twentieth-Century Qur'an Translations in the Hui Muslim Community of China and Their Antecedents: A Social History," in *The Qur'an and Its Readers Worldwide: Contemporary Commentaries and Translations*, ed. Suha Taji-Farouki (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), 533–565; and Kristian Petersen, "Qura'nic Interpretation in China," *Oxford Islamic Studies Online* (retrieved July 16, 2016, from http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t343/e0154).
3. For more information on early Muslim archeological material, see Wu Wenliang 吳文良, *Quanzhou Zongjiao Shike* 泉州宗教石刻 (*Religious Inscriptions of Quanzhou*) (Beijing: Kexue Chubanshe, 2005); Chen Dasheng 陈达生, *Quanzhou Yisilanjiao Shike* 泉州伊斯兰教石刻 (*Islamic Inscriptions of Quanzhou*) (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1984); Richard Pearson, Li Min, and Li Guo, "Quanzhou Archaeology: A Brief Review," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology,* 6, no. 1 (2002): 23–58.
4. Anthony Garnaut, "The Stones of Zayton Speak," *China Heritage Newsletter,* no. 5, 2006; retrieved May 16, 2011, from http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/scholarship.php?searchterm=005_zayton.inc&issue=005.

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5. Jin Yijiu, "The Qur'an in China," 98; and Yang Xiaochun 杨晓春, "*Yuandai Wujian (Qingjing Siji) Xiangguan Wenti de Taolun* 元代吴鉴 (清净寺记) 相关问题的讨论 (Discussions on *Record of the Qingjing Mosque* Written by Wu Jian of the Yuan Dynasty)," *Beifang Minzu Daxue Xuebao* 北方民族大学学报 (*Journal of Northern Nationalities University*), 10, no. 5 (2010): 44–50.
6. Mozafar Bakhtvar, "China," in *World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts*, ed. Geoffrey Roper (London: Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1994), 81.
7. Jin, "The Qur'an in China," 98–101.
8. Another later example of this method was Ma Lianyuan's 馬聯元 *Interpretation of Qur'anic Verses* (*Haiting Chiayi* 孩聽解譯), published in 1900.
9. Successive translations were done through the 1990s, including Liu Jinbiao 劉錦標, *Kelanjing Hanyifuzhuan* 可蘭經漢譯付傳 (Beijing: Xinmin Chubanshe, 1943); Wang Jingzhai 王靜齋, *Gulanjing Yijie* 古蘭經譯解 (Shanghai: Zhongguo Huijiao Xiehui, 1946); and Yang Zhongming 楊仲明, *Gulanjing Dayi* 古蘭經大意 (Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Kexue Chubanshe, 1947). Also, Shi Zizhou 時子周 revised Wang Jingzhai's translation as *Gulanjing Gouyu Yijie* 古蘭經國語譯解 (Taiwan: Zhonghua Congshu Weiyuanhui, 1958); and other examples include Lin Song 林松, *Gulanjing Yunyi* 古蘭經韻譯 (Ningxia: Zhongguo Minzu Xueyuan Chubanshe, 1988); Tong Daozhong 仝道章, *Gulanjing* 古蘭經 (Nanjing: Yilin Chubanshe, 1989); and most recently, Shen Xiazhun 沈遐淮, *Qingzhen Xilu–Gulanjing Xinyi* 清真溪流 –古蘭經新譯 (Taibei: Xinwenfeng Chuban Youxian Gongsi, 1996). For an analysis of modern Chinese translations of the Qur'ān, see Spira, *Chinese Translations*, especially 18–22.
10. For the importance of Ma Jian and his translation, see Ma Haiyun, "Patriotic and Pious Muslim Intellectuals in Modern China: The Case of Ma Jian," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 23, no. 3 (2006): 54–70.
11. The concepts of God and Muhammad were most commonly translated as "True Lord" (*zhenzhu* 真主) or "True Lord" (*zhenzai* 真宰) and "Utmost Sage" (*zhisheng* 至聖). For a thorough discussion of the importance of representing Muhammad as a sage in the Chinese context, see Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Chinese Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 163–181.
12. For an examination of some of these debates and problems, see Mahmoud Ayoub, "Translating the Meanings of the Qur'an: Traditional Opinions and Modern Debates," *Afkar/Inquiry*, 3, no. 5 (1986): 34–39; Fazlur Rahman, "Translating the Qur'an," *Religion and Literature*, 20, no. 1 (1988): 23–30; and Abdel Moneim A. Hosni, "On Translating the Quran (An Introductory Essay)," *Journal of King Saud University*, 2, no. 2 (1990): 93–134.
13. Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004). See verses 26:192–96, 39:28, 41:3, 41:44, 42:7, 43:3, and 46:12.
14. This notion is underlined by the title of A. J. Arberry's English-language translation of the Qur'ān, titled *The Koran Interpreted: A Translation*.

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15. Raphael Israeli, "Translation as Exegesis: The Opening Sura of the Quran in Chinese," in *Islam: Essays on Scripture, Thought and Society—A Festschrift in Honour of Anthony H. Johns*, ed. Peter Riddell and Tony Street (Leiden, Netherlands, and New York: Brill, 1997), 84.
16. Similar debates have occurred in other non-Arabic-speaking communities. See, for example, Anthony H. Johns, "The Qur'an in the Malay World: Reflections on Abd al-Ra'uf of Singkel (1615–1693)," *Journal of Islamic Studies,* 9, no. 2 (1998): 120–145; Mofakhkhar Hussain Khan, "A History of Bengali Translations of the Holy Qur'an," *Muslim World,* 72 (1982): 129–136; Mofakhkhar Hussain Khan, "Translations of the Holy Qur'an in the African Languages," *Muslim World,* 77 (1987): 250–258; Consuelo López-Morillas, "The Genealogy of the Spanish Qur'an," *Journal of Islamic Studies,* 17 (2006): 255–294; Hassan Ma'ayergi, "Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Qur'an into Minority Languages: The Case of Africa," *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs,* 14 (1994): 156–180; Annemarie Schimmel, "Translations and Commentaries of the Qur'an in Sindhi Language," *Oriens,* 16 (1963): 224–243; M. Brett Wilson, *Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism: Print Culture and Modern Islam in Turkey* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Travis Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012).
17. The Qur'ān, unlike Christian or Jewish scriptures, was primarily an oral text, which may have played a role in its adaptability. The various aspects of the orality of the Qur'ān and its relation to "scriptures" was explored most thoroughly by William Graham. This topic was initiated in William Graham, "Qur'ān as Spoken Word: An Islamic Contribution to the Understanding of Scripture," in *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*, ed. Richard C. Martin (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 23–40, 206–215; and came to fruition in idem., *Beyond the Written Word: Oral Aspects of Scripture in the History of Religion* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
18. Jin, "The Qur'an in China," 99.
19. For example, Buddhism was the first foreign religion to enter China and transfer its intellectual tradition into the Chinese cultural setting. Buddhist scriptures in China began to be translated in 148 by An Shigao 安世高 (d. 168), and this tradition flourished in the works of Kumārajīva/Jiumoluoshen 鳩摩羅什 (344–413). The Chinese translation of the Buddhist corpus was referred to as "All the Scriptures" (*Yiqie Jing* 一切經) as early as the fourth century, indicating that there were numerous *jing* that formed a canon of literature. In the Buddhist context, *jing* were sūtras, but also a number of other types of texts, and, therefore, they reflected the Confucian notion of a text containing the records of ancient sages rather than being limited in a scriptural sense. For further discussion of Buddhist transmission to and translation in China, see Erik Zürcher, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early*

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Medieval China (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2007); Erik Zürcher, "A New Look at the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Texts," in *From Benares to Beijing: Essays on Buddhism and Chinese Religion*, ed. Gregory Schopen and Koichi Shinohara (Oakville, Canada: Mosaic Press, 1991), 277–300; and Jan Nattier, *A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations: Texts from the Eastern Han and Three Kingdoms Periods* (Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2008).

20. Muslim authors would have been conscious of the close similarity between "the scripture says" (*jingyue* 經曰) and earlier texts that used "the master said" (*ziyue* 子曰), referring to Confucius. However, we should not assume a calculated intention to liken the Qur'ān to Confucius, since *yue* 曰 was commonly used to introduce quotations from both individuals and texts throughout premodern Chinese writings.
21. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan, Qingzhen Daxue, Xizhen Zhengda* 正教真詮, 請真大學, 希真正答 (*True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching, Great Learning of Islam, Orthodox Responses on the Rare Truth*), ed. Yu Zhengui 余振貴 (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1987), 58.
22. This hadith was found very early on, in the work of Ibn Sīnā (980–1037), but became popular through Ibn al-'Arabī's writings. According to Ibn al-'Arabī, this hadith "is sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) on the basis of unveiling but not established (*thābit*) by way of transmission (*naql*)"; i.e., it was not found in the traditional collections. William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabī's Metaphysics Imagination* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 131, 250–252; and Kiki Kennedy-Day, *Books of Definition in Islamic Philosophy: The Limits of Words* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 149. Also see Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 105–106 and 223, n. 38.
23. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 105–106 and 223, n. 38.
24. Ibid., 91 and 221, n19.
25. Ibid., 57.
26. Ibid., 59.
27. Referenced by Aḥmad b. Shu'ayb al-Nasā'ī (d. 915) in his *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*. See Ibid., 217, n. 31.
28. Ibid., 60 and 217, n. 34.
29. Hamid Algar, *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return* (Delmar, NY: Caravan Books, 1982), 93.
30. The *Mirṣād* was translated as *The Essentials of the Return to Truth* (*Guizhen Yaodao Yiyi* 歸真要道譯義) by Wu Zixian 伍子先 in 1651. This text was so popular that several people created their own translations, with different titles, to use in the scripture hall system. However, all references in later Chinese Islamic texts

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employ Wu's title, *Guizhen Yaodao*, to designate this book. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, 127, n20.

31. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 86 and 221, n8.
32. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
33. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 58.
34. Wang, *Zhengjiao zhenquan*, 102.
35. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 106 and 223, n. 41.
36. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
37. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 56.
38. Being attentive to the linguistics nuance of these similar phrases, I have chosen to render the Arabic myself for these translations. Throughout the remainder of the chapter, I will cite specific translation when quoted; all others are my own.
39. These differences could also be attributed to the collator, Wu Liancheng 伍連城, who compiled Wang's sayings in the *Orthodox Responses*. If we trust the accuracy of his compilation of these dictums to any degree, then we must examine them with some scrutiny.
40. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 45–46.
41. See *Analects*, 3.19 and 5.19.
42. Ultimately, Confucius introduced *zhong* as the crux of his teaching. See *Analects* 4.15: "The Master said, "Zengzi! All that I teach (*dao* 道) is unified by one guiding principle." Zengzi answered, "Yes." After the Master left, the other disciples asked, "What did he mean by that?" Zengzi said, "All of what the Master teaches amounts to nothing more than loyalty (*zhong* 忠), tempered by sympathetic understanding (*shu* 恕)." Edward Gilman Slingerland, "*Kongzi* (*Confucius*): The Analects," in *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan W. Van Norden (Seven Bridges Press, 2001), 11.
43. Henry Rosemont Jr. and Roger T. Ames, *The Chinese Classic of Family Reverence: A Philosophical Translation of the Xiaojing* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 105.
44. *Mengzi* 3A4; Bryan W. Van Norden, "*Mengzi* (*Mencius*)," in *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 128.
45. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 46.
46. For a discussion of *adab* in Islamic mysticism, see Gerhard Böwering, "The *Adab* Literature of Classical Sufism: Anṣārī's Code of Conduct," in *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*, ed. Barbara D. Metcalf (Berkeley: University of Berkeley Press, 1984), 61–71; Francesco Gabrieli, "Adab," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1960), 175–176; Ira Lapidus, "Knowledge, Virtue, and Action: The Classical Muslim Conception of Adab and the Nature of Religious Fulfillment in Islam," in *Moral Conduct and Authority*, 38–45; and Erik S. Ohlander, "Adab, in Ṣūfism," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd ed. (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 2009), 40–43.

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47. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 107–108, 223, n. 45.
48. Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
49. Jin, "The Qur'an in China," 99.
50. The Qur'ān is the first source listed in Liu Zhi's bibliographies for both *Tianfang Xingli* and *Tianfang Dianli*. See Donald Daniel Leslie and M. Wassel, "Arabic and Persian Sources Used by Liu Chih," *Central Asiatic Journal*, 26 (1982): 78–104.
51. Murata, *The Sage Learning*, 436, 438–439, n. 6.
52. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Caner E. Dagli, Maria Massi Dakake, Joseph E. B. Lumbard, and Mohammed Rustom, *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary* (New York: HarperOne, 2015).
53. Murata, *Sage Learning*, 436. Liu also uses this imagery in the prolegomenon of the *Metaphysics of Islam* entitled the *Root Scripture* (*benjing* 本經). See Murata, *The Sage Learning*, 132–143.
54. Murata, *Sage Learning*, 134.
55. Ibid., 431.
56. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
57. Murata, *Sage Learning*, 431.
58. Liu Zhi 劉智, *Tianfang Dianli* 天方典禮 (*Rituals of Islam*), in *Qingzhen Dadian* 清真大典 (*The Great Canon of Islam*), Vol. 15 (Hefei, China: Huangshan Shushe, 2005), 171.
59. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
60. Liu, *Tianfang Dianli*, 115.
61. Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*.
62. Liu, *Tianfang Dianli*, 198.
63. Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*.
64. For a discussion of the nature of Sino-Islamic translation, see Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 31–35.
65. Ibid., 150.
66. Liu also omitted Qur'ānic verses 2:138, 33:4, 50:15, 55:29, and 57:3 from his translation.
67. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
68. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 137.
69. Ibid., 163.
70. Nasr et al., *The Study Quran*.
71. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 199.
72. Aubin, "Les Traductions du Coran en Chinois," 81; and Jin, "The Qur'an in China," 98.
73. Jin, "The Qur'an in China," 100.
74. Ma repeated this technique when translating the title of Chapter 3, "The Cow" (*al-Baqara*), rendering it as *Baigelai* 白格賴.

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75. Ma Dexin 馬德新, *Baoming Zhenjing Zhjie* 寶命真經直解 (*A Direct Explanation of Treasured Mandate of the True Scripture*), in *Qingzhen Dadian* 清真大典 (*The Great Canon of Islam*), vol. 7 (Hefei, China: Huangshan Shushe, 2005), 26.
76. Victor Mair, *Wandering on the Way: Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Bantam Books, 1994), 13.
77. The honorific *zun* was used in numerous ways to refer to Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and scriptures. The word appears over 100 times in the classic Western resource on Chinese Buddhist linguistics, William Edward Soothill and Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms: With Sanskrit and English Equivalents and a Sanskrit-Pali Index* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1937).
78. D. C. Lau, *Mencius: A Bilingual Edition* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2003) 159–161.
79. Ma, *Baoming Zhenjing*, 26. The Arabic edition of the Qur'ān is rendered: "As for those who disbelieve, it makes no difference whether you warn them or not: they will not believe. God has sealed their hearts and their ears, and their eyes are covered. They will have great torment" (2:6–7). Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
80. See also Qur'ān 45:23 and 57:16.
81. Ma, *Baoming Zhenjing*, 26. The Arabic edition of the Qur'ān is rendered: "They are like people who [labour to] kindle a fire: when it lights up everything around them, God takes away all their light, leaving them in utter darkness, unable to see—deaf, dumb, and blind: they will never return. Or [like people who, under] a cloudburst from the sky, with its darkness, thunder, and lightning, put their fingers into their ears to keep out the thunderclaps for fear of death—God surrounds the disbelievers. The lightning almost snatches away their sight: whenever it flashes on them, they walk on, and when darkness falls around them, they stand still. If God so willed, He could take away their hearing and sight: God has power over everything" (2:17–20). Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
82. See, for example, Qur'ān 47: 25: "Those who turn on their heels after being shown guidance are duped and tempted by Satan." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
83. See, for example, Qur'ān 2:155 and 47:31.
84. See, for example, Qur'ān 2:286: "God does not burden any soul with more than it can bear: each gains whatever good it has done, and suffers its bad." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
85. See, for example, Qur'ān 8:46: "Be steadfast: God is with the steadfast." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
86. The phrase *xinshi* 信士 was originally used in the Buddhist context for the Sanskrit and Pali words *upāsaka/upāsikā* (masculine/feminine), which means a lay devotee who had undertaken certain vows but did not become a monk or nun. In the Islamic context, it was used to designate *al-mu'minūn*, the believers. This notion was reiterated in Ma Jian's translation of Chapter 23, "The Believers" (*al-mu'minūn*), which he rendered as *xinshi* 信士.

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87. *Gong* 功, or meritorious acts, were explored in Chapter 3 of this book.
88. Ma, *Baoming Zhenjing*, 30. The Arabic edition of the Qur'ān is rendered: "You who believe, seek help through steadfastness and prayer, for God is with the steadfast" (2:153). Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
89. Ma, *Baoming Zhenjing*, 27. The Arabic edition of the Qur'ān is rendered: "Seek help with steadfastness and prayer" (2:45). Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
90. See, for example, Qur'ān 11:11: "Not so those who are patient and do good deeds: they will have forgiveness and a great reward." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
91. The word *dīn* appears more than ninety times in the Qur'ān. Haddad says ninety-four times, while Abu-Hamdiyyah suggests that it was ninety-one times. See Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, "The Conception of the Term *Dīn* in the Qur'ān," *Muslim World*, 64 (1974): 114; and Mohammad Abu-Hamdiyyah, *The Qur'an—An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2000), 31.
92. See Qur'ān 3:19, "Truly, the religion (*al-dīn*), in God's eyes, is submission (*islām*)."
93. The words *dīn* and *dayn* are written the same way in Arabic.
94. See Qur'ān 7:29: "Devote your religion entirely to Him," Qur'ān 39:3: "True devotion is due to God alone," and Qur'ān 5:3: "Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed My blessing upon you, and chosen as your religion submission (*islām*) [total devotion to God]." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
95. See Qur'ān 30:30: "So [Prophet] as a man of pure faith, stand firm and true in your devotion to the religion. This is the natural disposition God instilled in mankind—there is no altering God's creation—and this is the right religion, though most people do not realize it." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
96. See Qur'ān 42:13: "In matters of faith, He has laid down for you [people] the same commandment that He gave Noah, which We have revealed to you [Muhammad] and which We enjoined on Abraham and Moses and Jesus: 'Uphold the faith and do not divide into factions within it'—what you [Prophet] call upon the idolaters to do is hard for them; God chooses whoever He pleases for Himself and guides towards Himself those who turn to Him." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
97. See Qur'ān 48:28: "It was He who sent His Messenger, with guidance and the religion of Truth, for him to show that it is above all [false] religion." See also Qur'ān 9:33 and 61:9. Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
98. See Qur'ān 22:78: "Strive hard for God as is His due: He has chosen you and placed no hardship in your religion, the faith of your forefather Abraham."Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
99. See Qur'ān 1:4: "Master of the Day of Judgement (*yawm al-dīn*)." Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
100. For an extended discussion of the term *dīn*, see Abu-Hamdiyyah, *The Qur'an*, 31–35; Louis Gardet, "Dīn," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 2 (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1965), 293–296; Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the*

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Qur'an: Semantics of the Qur'anic Weltanschaung (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2002), 239–253; Sachiko Murata and William C. Chittick, *Vision of Islam* (St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 1994), xxvii–xxxii; and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: Mentor Books, 1964), 90–94, 99–100, and 287–290.

101. Ma, *Baoming Zhenjing*, 33. The Arabic edition of the Qur'ān is rendered: "There is no compulsion in religion: true guidance has become distinct from error, so whoever rejects false gods and believes in God has grasped the firmest handhold, one that will never break. God is all hearing and all knowing" (2:256). Abdel Haleem, *Qur'an*.
102. Robert Eno, "Cook Ding's Dao and the Limits of Philosophy," in *Essays on Skepticism, Relativism, and Ethics in the Zhuangzi*, ed. Paul Kjellberg and Philip J. Ivanhoe (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 129–130 and 145, n. 9–10.
103. Yang Qingzhong, "On the *Dao* in the *Commentary of the Book of Change*," *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, 4 (2006): 572–593.
104. Leo K. C. Cheung, "The Unification of *Dao* and *Ren* in the *Analects*," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 31, no. 3 (2004): 313–327; and Bryan W. Van Norden, "The *Dao* of Kongzi," *Asian Philosophy: An International Journal of the Philosophical Traditions of the East*, 12, no. 3 (2002): 157–71. In Japanese, it was also traditionally used to signify a way, art, or tradition, as in *Shintō* (神道), the way of the gods, *Aikidō* (合気道), the way of harmonious spirit, *Jūdō* (柔道), the gentle way, and *Kendō* (剣道), the way of the sword
105. Review passage 4.15 from *Analects* in note 39.
106. Slingerland, "*Kongzi* (*Confucius*): The Analects," 20.
107. That is, the *dao* of Confucius, Mozi, or Yao and Shun (See *Mengzi* 3A4, 3A5, 3B9). See Franklin Perkins, "Following Nature with Mengzi or Zhuangzi," *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 45, no. 3 (2005): 327–340.
108. See *Mengzi* 6B11: "In dealing with water, Yu followed the *dao* of water. Hence he emptied the water into the four seas." Lau, *Mencius*, 281.
109. See *Mengzi* 7B24: "The sage in relation to the Way of Heaven." Van Norden, "*Mengzi* (*Mencius*)," 151.
110. *Mengzi* 3A3: "The Odes say 'In the daytime they go for grass, At night they make it into ropes. They hasten to repair the roof; then they begin sowing the crops.' This is the *dao* of the common people." Lau, *Mencius*, 105; and *Mengzi* 3A4: "It is the way of people that if they are full of food, have warm clothes, and live in comfort, but are without instruction, then they come close to being animals." Van Norden, "*Mengzi* (*Mencius*)," 128.
111. See *Daodejing*, 1: "A Way that can be followed is not a constant Way. A name that can be named is not a constant name. Nameless, it is the beginning of Heaven and earth; Named, it is the mother of the myriad creatures." Philip J. Ivanhoe, "*Laozi* ("*The Daodejing*")," in *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 159. See also *Daodejing*, 25, 32, 37 and 41.

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112. See *Daodejing*, 14: "Looked for but not seen, its name is 'minute.' Listened for but not heard, its name is 'rarified.' Grabbed for but not gotten, its name is 'subtle.' These three cannot be perfectly explained, and so are confused and regarded as one. Its top is not clear or bright, its bottom is not obscure or dark. Trailing off without end, it cannot be named. It returns to its home, back before there were things. This is called the formless form, the image of no thing. This is called the confused and indistinct. Greet it and you will not see its head; Follow it and you will not see its tail." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 165.
113. See *Daodejing*, 4: "The Way is like an empty vessel; No use could ever fill it up." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 161.
114. See *Daodejing*, 21: "As for the Way, it is vague and elusive." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 169.
115. See *Daodejing*, 25: "The Way models itself on what is natural." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 171.
116. See *Daodejing*, 4: "It (*dao*) seems to be the ancestor of the myriad creatures." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 161.
117. See *Daodejing*, 14: "Its top is not clear or bright, Its bottom is not obscure or dark. Trailing off without end, it cannot be named. It returns to its home, back before there were things.32 This is called the formless form, the image of no thing.33 This is called the confused and indistinct. Greet it and you will not see its head; Follow it and you will not see its tail." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 165.
118. See *Daodejing*, 25: "One can regard it (*dao*) as the mother of Heaven and earth." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 171.
119. See *Daodejing*, 1: "Nameless, it is the beginning of Heaven and Earth." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 159. See also *Daodejing*, 25.
120. See *Daodejing*, 34: "The myriad creatures rely upon it for life, and it turns none of them away. When its work is done it claims no merit. It clothes and nourishes the myriad creatures, but does not lord it over them." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 176. See also *Daodejing*, 51.
121. See *Daodejing*, 42: "The Way produces the One. The One produces two. Two produces three. Three produces the myriad creatures." Ivanhoe, "*Laozi*," 180.
122. For an extended discussion on the term *dao*, see Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 12–15; Cheng Chung-Ying, "Dao (Tao): The Way," in *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy*, ed. Antonio S. Cua (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 202–205; Robert G. Henrick, "The *Dao* and the Field: Exploring an Analogy," in *Teaching the Daode Jing*, ed. Gary D. DeAngelis and Warren G. Frisina (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 31–47; Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Experience: An Anthology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 11–32; Isabelle Robinet, "The Diverse Interpretations of the Laozi," in *Religious and Philosophical Aspects of the Laozi*, ed. Mark Csikszentmihalyi and Philip J. Ivanhoe (Albany: State University of NY Press, 1999), 127–159; and Kristofer Schipper, *The Taoist Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press,

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1993), 3–5. For the various interpretations of the *dao* in religious Daoism, see Russell Kirkland, "Dao," in *The Encyclopedia Of Taoism*, vol. 1, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (London: Routledge, 2008), 304–309; and Livia Kohn, *God of the Dao: Lord Lao in History and Myth* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1998).

123. Ma rendered the phrase "Day of Judgement (*yawm al-dīn*)," from Qur'ān 1:4, as "controller of the true world (*gangwei zhenshi* 綱維真世)." In this case, he did not use the term *dao* because the passage does not reflect the broader conception of *dīn* as a path, tradition, or religion.
124. Ma, *Baoming Zhenjing*, 31.
125. Ibid., 35.
126. Ibid., 29.
127. Keith Massey, "Mysterious Letters," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān*, vol. III: J–O, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 2005), 472.
128. These letters have been discussed throughout the ages, most notably by Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (838–923), Fakhr al-dīn al-Rāzī (1149–1210), Ibn Kathīr (1301–1373), and Jalāl al-dīn al-Suyūtī (c.1445–1505). For a further discussion of the *al-ḥurūf al-muqaṭṭa'āt*, see James A. Bellamy, "The Mysterious Letters of the Koran: Old Abbreviations of the Basmalah," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 93, no. 3, (1973): 267–285; and Keith Massey, "A New Investigation into the "Mystery Letters" of the Qur'an," *Arabica*, 43, no. 3 (1996): 497–501.
129. For a discussion on the use of *Allāh* in English and the associated problems of using it in English parlance, see Murata and Chittick, *Vision of Islam*, 45–47.
130. See, for example, *Analects* passages 1.3, 1.6, 4.7, 4.2, 4.3, 6.20, 6.21, 9.28, 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.22, 13.19, 13.27, 14.5, 14.30, 15.9, 17.6, 17.17, and 19.6. For a further discussion of the relationship between action and benevolence, see Li Chenyang, "Li as Cultural Grammar: On the Relation Between *Li* and *Ren* in Confucius' Analects," *Philosophy East and West*, 57, no. 3 (2007): 311–329; and Philip J. Ivanhoe, "Reweaving the 'One Thread' of the Analects," *Philosophy East and West*, 40, no. 1 (1990): 17–33.
131. Daniel Gardner, *Zhu Xi's Reading of the Analects-Canon, Commentary, and the Classical Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 53.
132. Wing-tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 523.

CHAPTER 5

1. Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); 58; Wang Daiyu 王岱輿, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan, Qingzhen Daxue, Xizhen Zhengda* 正教真詮, 請真大學,

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希真正答 (*True Explanation of the Orthodox Teaching, Great Learning of Islam, Orthodox Responses on the Rare Truth*), ed. Yu Zhengui 余振貴 (Yinchuan, China: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1987), 24, 40.

2. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 27.
3. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 62; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 27.
4. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 34.
5. Ibid., 70.
6. Ibid., 59. This story is found in the *Memorial of the Friends of God* (*Tadhkirat al-'Awliyā'*), by Farīd al-Dīn 'Attār (d. c.1230). It goes, "Out of love of the compassionate, I have no occasion for hatred toward Satan. I saw the Prophet in a dream. He said, 'Rābi'a, do you love me?' I said, 'O Prophet of God, who is there that doesn't love you? But love of the Real has so pervaded me that there is no place in my heart for love or hatred of another.'" See Michael Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur'an, Mi'raj, Poetic and Theological Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 163; and Paul Losensky, *Farid ad-Din 'Attār's Memorial of God's Friends: Lives and Sayings of Sufis* (New York: Paulist Press, 2009), 106.
7. For more on Rābi'a, see Margaret Smith, *Muslim Women Mystics: The Life and Work of Rabi'a and Other Women Mystics in Islam* (Oxford, UK: One World, 1994); Rkia Elaroui Cornell, *Early Sufi Women: Dhikr an-Niswa al-Muta'abbidāt aṣ-Ṣūfiyyāt* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 1999); and Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism*, 151–170.
8. Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 123. The original narrative reads, "It is related that one day Rabi'a had gone up on a mountain. Wild goats and gazelles gathered around, gazing upon her. Suddenly Hasan Basri appeared. All the animals shied away. When Hasan saw that he was perplexed and said, 'Rabi'a, why do they shy away from me when when they were so intimate with you?' Rabi'a said, 'What did you eat today?' 'Soup.' 'You ate their lard. How would they not shy away from you?'" Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism*, 160; and Losensky, *Farid ad-Din 'Attār's Memorial of God's Friends*, 103.
9. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 58; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 114.
10. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 57; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 104.
11. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 97; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 239.
12. See Reynold Nicholson and Georges Anawati, "*Ittiḥād*" *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd Ed., Vol. IV (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1978), 282–283.
13. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 98; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 239.
14. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 99; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 240.
15. The principles of faith according to the Hadith of Gabriel. For more on this point, see chapter 2.
16. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 65; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan* 36.
17. Murata, *Chinese Gleams*, 66; and Wang, *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, 36.
18. Liu Zhi 劉智, *Tianfang Dianli* 天方典禮 (*Rituals of Islam*), in *Qingzhen Dadian* 清真大典, vol. 15, *The Great Canon of Islam* (Hefei, China: Huangshan Shushe, 2005), 57.

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19. Liu, *Tianfang Dianli*, 104.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 61.
22. Ibid., 65.
23. Ibid., 117.
24. Ibid., 108.
25. For more on traditional Muslim explications of the role of prophets, see Brannon Wheeler, *Prophets in the Quran: An Introduction to the Quran and Muslim Exegesis* (London and New York: Continuum International Publications, 2002).
26. Liu, *Tianfang Dianli*, 177.
27. Ibid., 61.
28. Ibid., 62.
29. Ibid., 93.
30. Ibid., 92.
31. Ibid., 93.
32. Ibid., 104.
33. Ibid., 111.
34. Ibid., 114.
35. Ibid., 64.
36. Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 99.
37. For a translation of the *Root Scripture,* see Sachiko Murata, William C. Chittick, and Tu Weiming, *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 102–157.
38. For a concise and detailed introduction to the science of letters, see Annemarie Schimmel, "Letter Symbolism in Sufi Literature," in *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 411–425. For a more detailed history focusing on Ibn al-Arabī's contribution, see Denis Gril, "The Science of Letters," in *Ibn al-'Arabi, The Meccan Revelations, Volume Two*, ed. Michel Chodkiewicz, trans. Cyrille Chodkiewicz and Denis Gril (New York: Pir Press, 2002) 105–219.
39. Matthew Melvin-Koushki, "The Occult Challenge to Messianism and Philosophy in Early Timurid Iran: Ibn Turka's Lettrism as a New Metaphysics," in *Unity in Diversity: Mysticism, Messianism, and the Construction of Religious Authority in Islam*, ed. Orkhan Mir-Kasimov (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2014), 250.
40. Melvin-Koushki, "The Occult Challenge to Messianism and Philosophy in Early Timurid Iran" 250–253; and Matthew Melvin-Koushki, *The Quest for a Universal Science: The Occult Philosophy of Ṣā'in al-Dīn Turka Isfahānī (1369–1432) and Intellectual Millenarianism in Early Timurid Iran* (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2012), 167–283.
41. Gerhard Böwering, "Sulamī's Treatise on the Science of the Letters (*'ilm al-ḥurūf*)," in *In the Shadow of Arabic: The Centrality of Language to Arabic Culture: Studies*

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Presented to Ramzi Baalbaki on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday, ed. Bilal Orfali (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2011), 342–343.

42. Liu Zhi 劉智, *Tianfang Zimu Jieyi* 天方字母解義 (*Explanation of the Islamic Alphabet*) (Zhenjiang: Qingzhensi Cangban 清眞寺藏板, 1879), 4. Note that both sides of one page are listed as the same number, so while there is 48 pages, the pagination only goes up to 24.
43. Ibid.
44. Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 1021) also produced a letter-by-letter commentary. See Böwering, "Sulamī's Treatise," 356–365, 375–393.
45. We find this in Mansūr al-Ḥallāj's *Kitāb al-Ṭawāsīn*. See Louis Massignon, *La passion de Hussayn Ibn Mansûr an-Hallâj* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 118.
46. See Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj's *Kitāb al-Luma' fi'l-Taṣawwuf*, cited in Böwering, "Sulamī's Treatise," 352.
47. Liu, *Tianfang Zimu Jieyi*, 9.
48. Ibid., 9.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., 10.
51. Ibid., 22–23.
52. Francis Robinson, "Perso-Islamic Culture in India From the Seventeenth to the Early Twentieth," in *Turko-Persia in Historical Perspective*, ed. Robert L. Canfield (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 104–131; and Francis Robinson, "Strategies of Authority in Muslim South Asia in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Modern Asian Studies*, 47, no. 1 (2013): 1–21.
53. *Description of the World* was first published in Chinese in 1862, and later in Arabic in 1868. According to Isaac Mason's catalogue, the text is also titled *Description of the Islamic World* (*Tianfang Huanyu Shuyao* 天方寰宇述要). See Isaac Mason, "Notes on Chinese Mohammedan Literature," *Journal of the North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 56 (1925): 207.
54. *Al-Sunbula*, which literally means "the ear of corn," was a named used for the constellation Virgo (*al-'Adhrā'*), as it was the brightest star. See J. Ruska, "Al-Sunbula," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1913–1934), 553.
55. Ma Dexin 馬德新), *Huanyu Shuyao* 寰宇述要 (*Description of the World*) (Arabic volume, n.p., 1868), 2–3.
56. Ibid., 2.
57. For an introduction to the history of Islamic sciences in China, see Kōdō Tasaka, "An Aspect of Islam Culture Introduced into China," *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Tōyō Bunko* 16 (1957): 75–160.
58. Ma, *Huanyu Shuyao* (1868): 1.
59. Ma Dexin 馬德新, *Huanyu Shuyao* 寰宇述要 (*Description of the World*) (Chinese volume, n.p., 1862), 4–5.
60. It seems likely that many of these texts are no longer in existence. I was unable to locate copies of these texts for my research.

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61. This sample is from Ma Dexin 馬德新, *Tianfang Liyuan* 天方曆源 (*Sources of the Islamic Calendar*) in *Qingzhen Dadian* 清真大典 (*The Great Canon of Islam*) vol. 21 (Hefei, China: Huangshan shushe, 2005), 880.
62. This and the following three epithets are some of the "Most Beautiful Names (*al-ʾasmāʾ al-ḥusnā*) of God. There is a hadith that explains, "God has ninety-nine names, one hundred minus one, and whoever memorizes them will enter paradise." For an overview, see Jon Armajani, "Names of God," in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, ed. Juan Campo (New York: Facts on File Publications, 2008), 515–517. For a brief explanation of the name "the Most High (*al-ʿAlī*)," see Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti, *The Name and the Named: The Divine Attributes of God* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2000), 102–103. This name is derived from Qur'ānic passages, such as 4:34, 31:30, 42:4, and 42:51.
63. *al-Jalīl* (Qur'ān 55:27), Halveti, *The Name and the Named*, 109–10.
64. *al-Karīm* (Qur'ān 27:40, 82:6), Halveti, *The Name and the Named*, 110–112.
65. *al-Walī* (Qur'ān 4:45, 7:196, 42:28, 45:19), Halveti, *The Name and the Named*, 134–35.
66. Ma Dexin 馬德新, *Lixue Zhezhong* 理學折衷 (*Harmonizing the Study of Principle*) (n.p., 1867), 1.
67. For a classical discussion on the *al-ʾasmāʾ al-ḥusnā*, see David Burrell and Nazih Daher, *Al-Ghazali: The Ninety- Nine Beautiful Names of God* (Cambridge, UK: Islamic Texts Society, 1992).
68. See, for example, Qur'ān 91:1–8: "By the sun in its morning brightness and by the moon as it follows it, by the day as it displays the sun's glory and by the night as it conceals it, by the sky and how He built it and by the earth and how He spread it, by the soul and how He formed it and inspired it [to know] its own rebellion and piety!"
69. Ma Dexin 馬德新, *Benjing Wuzhang Yijie* 本經五章譯解 (*Translation of the Five Chapters of the Root Scripture*) (n.p.,1867), 1.
70. Ibid.
71. Ma, *Lixue Zhezhong*, 3.
72. Ibid., 2.
73. Ibid., 3
74. Ibid., 2–3.
75. Ibid., 5.
76. The full meaning of *al-ḥaqq* is not expressed completely through English translations, where the term is usually rendered as "the Real," "the Truth," or "the Right," whereas *al-ḥaqq* also embodies the notion of giving each existent entity its duty. This idea becomes clearer when understood in relation to a term from the same Arabic root—realization (*taḥqīq*). The act of *taḥqīq* requires that each thing is given their rightful due, thus making it true or real as a complete entity.
77. Ma, *Lixue Zhezhong*, 7.
78. Murata et al., *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi*, 15, 630.

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79. As we saw with many of Ma Dexin's texts, it was common to title any work used by the Sino-Muslims in Chinese. Often, an Arabic title was also given, but it was not invariable. Ma Lianyuan followed this procedure when he named his writings.
80. Lin Chang-Kuan, "Three Eminent Chinese 'Ulama' of Yunnan," *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs,* 11, no. 1 (1990): 111.
81. A complete translation and contemporary edited edition of the Arabic text is available in Murata et al., *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi*, 102–157.
82. The full title of the poem is *Celestial Lights in Praise of the Best of Creation* (*al-Kawākib ad-Durrīya fī Madḥ Khayr al-Barīya*). For a translation and analysis, see Suzanne Pickney Stetkevych, *The Mantle Odes: Arabic Praise Poems to the Prophet Muhammad* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 70–150.
83. Stetkevych, *The Mantle Odes*, 70–71, and notes.

EPILOGUE

1. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Chinese Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 206.

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