

Research Article

A History of Chinese Scholarship: Cantered on Chinese Islam Religion Studies

Alimtohte Shiho*

Center for Northeast Asian Studies, Tohoku University, Sendai, Japan

Abstract

Research on about the Islamic religious doctrine and theology an extremely important role in Islamic studies. After the introduction of Islam to China, it gradually evolved into its own unique sectarian system, known as the "three major sects" and the "four menhuan". The research in the fields of doctrine and theology gradually progressed after the reform and opening up, and its research methods and many other limitations were not fully developed. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been new changes in the research in this field, not only a number of new achievements have emerged, but also a relatively systematic disciplinary system has been formed. Furthermore, Jingtang Jiaoyu (religious education) as an important component of Islamic religious education in China, the initiation of scripture education was carried out by Hudengzhou, in Shaanxi during the Ming Dynasty. This education has gone through the early development of the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China, as well as before and after the Xinhai Revolution, and has a history of over 400 years. Jingtang Jiaoyu (religious education) is constantly improving at different stages of development, adapting to the trend of the times. However, since the 20th century, it has basically not been improved or developed, especially in the northwest region, where medieval conditions have been preserved and it is difficult to be accepted by the mainstream education system. In this paper, the research history of Islamic teaching in China by the Chinese academic community is taken as the research object, and a detailed introduction is given to the evolution of this research field.

Keywords

Chinese Scholarship, Chines Islam, Religion Studies, History

1. Introduction

Research on about the Islamic religious doctrine and theology an extremely important role in Islamic studies. After the introduction of Islam to China, it gradually evolved into its own unique sectarian system, known as the "three major sects" and the "four menhuan". The so-called "three major sects" refer to the Gedimu, Ihwani, and Siddhartha. The "Four Great Eunuchs" or "Four Great Sufi Schools" include Hufuye, Gadlinye, Zhehe Renye, and Kuburen Ye. The re-

search in the fields of sects and officials only gradually progressed after the reform and opening up, and its research methods and many other limitations were not fully developed. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been new changes in the research in this field, not only a number of new achievements have emerged, but also a relatively systematic disciplinary system has been formed. Regarding the important component of Islamic education in China's Muslim

*Corresponding author: Alimu.tuoheti.b3@tohoku.ac.jp (Alimtohte Shiho)

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religious education system, its initiator was Hu Dengzhou, a Shaanxi Mosque Ahon in the Ming Dynasty. He takes apprentices at home to give lectures and advocates learning classics. Starting from his second disciple, the church moved from a private home to the mosque and recruited disciples to teach scriptures within the temple. The teaching of scriptures is mainly referred to as scripture education. The purpose is to cultivate religious teachers and imams for mosques in various regions, and to impart religious knowledge to Muslims. This education has gone through early development, the late Qing Dynasty and early Republic of China, before and after the Xinhai Revolution, and has a history of over 400 years. Classroom education has been constantly improving and adapting to the trend of the times in different stages of development. However, since the 20th century, it has basically not been improved or developed, especially in the northwest region, which retains the medieval conditions and is difficult to be accepted by the mainstream education system. This article takes the research history of Chinese Islamic jurisprudence, including Jingtangjiaoyu (Mosque education), as the research object for a more systematic study.

2. Menhuan and Sects

In China, the study of sects and menhuan in Islamic teaching occupies an extremely important position. After the introduction of Islam to China, China's Islam gradually evolved into its own unique sectarian system known as the "Three Major Sects" and "Four Great Menhuan." The so-called "Three Major Sects" include Gettymus, Ihwani, and Siddhartha. The "Four Great Menhuan" or "Four Great Sufi Schools" include Hufuye, Gadlinye, Zheheye, and Kubuye. Research in the field of sects and menhuan did not progress until after China's reform and opening, and its research methods and other aspects were not fully developed. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been numerous developments in this field of research; not only has there been an increase in publications, but a relatively systematic disciplinary system has also been formed. The most representative publications of the pre-21st century period are the following two books by Ma Tong:

Ma Tong, *A Brief History of Chinese Islamic Sect Menhuan System*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1983.

Ma Tong, *Tracing the Origin of Chinese Islamic Sect Menhuan*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1986.

The first part of *A Brief History of Chinese Islamic Sect Menhuan System* provides an overview of the history of Islam, while the second part comprehensively records the various systems and major historical events of the three major Islamic sects and the four major menhuan. The contents of the book are derived from a variety of sources, including oral traditions and interviews, family histories, and local chronicles of some sect and gate menhuan leaders. The appendix of this book includes an overview table of sects and menhuan, and the lineage of Islamic sects and eunuchs in China. The

author explores the close relationship between Islam and certain minority ethnic groups in China, discusses the development and influence of the various forms of Islam in China, and provides a detailed introduction to the development of Islam in China and its eunuch system.

In *Tracing the Origin of Chinese Islamic Sect Menhuan*, the content is divided into: Su Fei, Yi Chan, and Menhuan; Heda Yetong Rashi and Ma Shouzhen; Huazhe Abudu Dong Laxi and Qi, Ma, and Xian Sanmen; Ma Mingxin and Abdul Al Harig Azezi Al Misjjeji; Ma Lingming and the Babu faction; Xidaotang and Baidaotang; Wahhabiya and Ihwani. There are also chapters on Islamic historical sites along the southeast coast and Gongbei in the northwest region. This book explores the historical origins of the Islamic denominations in China, specifically of the Sufis, Hedaye Tongrashi, and Huazhe Abdul Dongrashi factions, and their relationship with the menhuan.

These two books are comprehensive, systematic, and scientific in their knowledge and exploration, and provide readers with a robust understanding of the emergence, development, and social role of Chinese Islamic sects and menhuan. Together they have laid a solid foundation for the study of Chinese Islamic sects and received high praise from Ma Tong's academic peers. For historical reasons, there are almost no records of this aspect of Chinese Islamic history, and there were no monographs introducing the Islamic sects and menhuan in China until Ma Tong's volumes. Their publication was undoubtedly a breakthrough in the study of Islam in China. Famous historian Bai Shouyi commented that Ma Tong's books, "after years of hard work and collection of relevant rich materials, has opened up a new field in the history of Islam and the Hui ethnic group in China." Ma Tong's work is the most academically valuable masterpiece in China's thirty years of reform and opening.

Another scholar with outstanding research in sectarian studies is Mian Weilin.

Mian Weilin, *Summary of Ningxia Islamic Sects*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1981.

Mian Weilin, *Introduction to the Islamic Religious System of the Hui People in China*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1997.

Summary of Ningxia Islamic Sects is an introduction to the five sects and menhuan of Islam in Ningxia based on the author's investigation in the late 1950s. Due to its brevity and limited circulation, it has not received much attention. The content of this book was later incorporated into the edited volume *Introduction to the Islamic Religious System of the Chinese Hui Ethnic Group*, edited by Mian Weilin. The book covers topics as varied as the Five Merits of Destiny, festival celebrations, family and life etiquette, marriage system, funeral system, dietary system, the organizational structure of mosques, religious leadership system, temple system, Jingtang Jiaoyu, the introduction of Sufism, Sufi doctrine, and Sufi ritual. There are chapters on the inheritance of Sufi religious positions and traditions, Sufi clerical

power and economic structure, the Ihwani Reformation Movement, the Ihwani Reformation Proposition, Selefiya, the Western Daoist Muslim Family, the Hui Islamic Cultural Movement, and the development and characteristics of contemporary Hui Islam. The author comprehensively discusses the historical evolution of the Islamic religious system of the Hui ethnic group, including faith and merit, social and family life, organization and education, Sufism, the Hui Islamic Reformation Movement, and contemporary Hui Islam, all of which are involved in scientific analysis and research. From this book, one can see that trends in Hui Islam shift in different eras as it strives to adapt to the social environment.

After Mian Weilin's publications, a batch of papers and monographs appeared in which significant progress was made in the collection and organization of literature. The research field continued to expand and attracted the attention of the international academic community. Important papers on individual eunuchs and historical events include:

Yang Huaizhong, "On the Uprising of Zheheye Muslims in the 18th Century"

Chen Huisheng, "On the Struggle and Influence between the Baishan School and the Heishan School in the Qing Dynasty"

Ma Chen, "Ma Yuanzhang and the Revival Activities of the Zhehelinye Sect"

Ma Fuhai, "The Beginning and End of Lin Yemen's Official Yang Men in Ga"

Feng Jinyuan, "On the Issues of the Menhuan Sect"

The above batch of papers are all published in *Collected Papers of the Islamic Academic Conference of the Five Northwest Provinces* previously discussed. Among the officials of various sects, there has been a fruitful collection of materials and research on Xidaotang. Xidaotang is one of the three major sects of Islam in China and is known as the Han School in academia due to its emphasis on the localization of Islamic transmission methods. The following papers were the first to introduce this field:

Guan Lianji, "Overview of the History of Xidaotang," *World Religious Studies*, Issue 3, 1982.

Zhu Gang, "A Review of the Belief in Chinese Islamic Xidaotang," *Journal of Qinghai University for Nationalities*, Issue 4, 1982.

In this regard, there are also some thesis studies, such as Li Kuan's "Other's Vision and Self Elaboration – A History of Islamic Research on Xidaotang." In this paper, the research group was divided into two categories: Xidaotang people and non-Xidaotang people. The subjects jointly wrote the history of Xidaotang, and this study compares their research. Their perspectives on the Xidaotang people complement each other; while there are similarities and inconsistencies, overall, their works are positive affirmations and elaborations of Xidaotang and its spirit. It is this exchange and interaction between the "self" and the "other" that promotes the development of Xidaotang and enriches its research history. [1]

In 1987, *Historical Materials Collection of Xidaotang* was

jointly edited by the Institute of Ethnic Studies of Qinghai University for Nationalities and the Institute of Northwest Ethnic Studies of Northwest University for Nationalities. To this day, it is the only book that discusses Xidaotang specifically. It is a compilation of sixteen materials and articles related to the study of Xidaotang from the Ming Dynasty to the 1980s, making it a mandatory and valuable reference book for studying Xidaotang. More recently, a book titled *Appreciation of Ma Qixi's Poetry Union* by Zhonghua Publishing House reflects new viewpoints in the academic community. [2]

In May 1994 and July 1995, two groups of scholars were invited to conduct academic research at Xidaotang for nearly half a month each. This was unparalleled in the history of Islamic research in China, and the success of the investigation has been well published and influential to this day. Related papers include:

Zhang Shihai, "The History and Current Situation of the Hui Ethnic Group in Lintan," *Gansu Ethnic Studies*, Issue 3, 1993.

Lu Jinxian and Lu Juxian, "Chinese Islamic Xidaotang" *Arab World*, Issue 2, 1994.

Gan Minyan, "Investigation of the History and Current Situation of the Islamic Xidaotang in Gansu Province – Focusing on How Islam Adapts to Social Development" *Northwest Ethnic Studies*, Issue 21, 1994.

Ma Deliang and Yu Qian, "Analysis of the Influence of Liu Zhi's Thought on Xidaotang" *World Religious Studies*, Issue 1, 1995.

Jin Yijiu, "The Influence of Liu Zhi's Thought on Chinese Muslims" *Gansu Ethnic Studies*, Issue 3–4, 1996.

Ding Hong, "Xidaotang Model - Social Practice of a Religious Faction and Reflections on It" *Journal of Central University for Nationalities*, Issue 5, 1996.

Ma Ping, "The 'Pueblo' of the Hui People in China—A Study of the Xidaotang Nailaitidafangzi, Lintan, Gannan" *Hui Studies*, Issue 2, 1997.

Ma Ping, "The Group Study of the 'Qiusouma' of the Hui People in Larenguan, Gannan Tibetan Area," *Collection of Islamic Culture*, China Social Sciences Press, 2001.

The authors of "Chinese Islamic Xidaotang" (Lu Jinxian and Lu Junxian) were national religious workers who worked in the Gannan ethnic area for more than twenty years and wrote this paper based on surveys, interviews, and data collection. They argue that Xidaotang has unique insights and measures in various aspects such as Chinese socialist culture, education, and economic construction. This research is worthy of attention by philosophers, religious experts, and sociologists alike. [3]

The article "Investigation of the History and Current Situation of the Islamic Xidaotang in Gansu Province – Focusing on How Islam Adapts to Social Development" by Gan Minyan focuses on the objective laws of religious development in history and the continuous changes in religion in relation to social change. [4]

Ma Deliang's and Yu Qian's "Analysis of the Influence of Liu Zhi's Thought on Xidaotang" demonstrates how Islam has spread, rooted, blossomed, and borne fruit in the land of China, going through a long historical process and a difficult path of development, and finally integrating with traditional Chinese culture. Islamic educators in the Ming and Qing dynasties interpreted classic Islamic works in Chinese and expounded the basic spirit of Islam. The study also discusses issues that have had an impact on fields such as the study of Xidaotang. [5]

In "Xidaotang Model – Social Practice of a Religious Faction and Reflections on It," Ding Hong presents Xidaotang as a Chinese Islamic sect that emerged in Lintan, Gansu, during the Guangxu period of the Qing Dynasty. Its members are mainly Hui, including Salar, Dongxiang, and some Han and Tibetan who have converted to Islam. There are tens of thousands of followers throughout provinces such as Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, and Xinjiang. As a religious sect, Xidaotang formed a unique pattern during its establishment and development, and is the only Islamic sect in China that has not been directly influenced by a foreign Islamic school of thought. The founder of Xidaotang, Ma Qixi, firmly believed in Islam and was also a scholar. [6]

In "The 'Pueblo' of the Hui People in China—A Study of the Xidaotang Nailaitidafangzi, Lintan, Gannan," Ma Ping argues that there were large houses used for collective life in Xidaotang's history. Through this folk heritage, we can see the unique cultural charm and influence of Xidaotang as an Islamic community in maintaining group interests in specific organizational forms under specific historical conditions. [7]

The above papers have analyzed and studied the early history of Xidaotang, whether it was a sect or menhuan. When it comes to Xidaotang, Gao Zhanfu's achievements are relatively concentrated:

Gao Zhanfu, "The Influence of Liu Zhi's Religious Thoughts on the Xidaotang Sect," *Ningxia Social Sciences*, 1990, Issue 2.

Gao Zhanfu, "The Religious Thought of Liu Zhi and Its Impact on the Economic Development of Xidaotang," *Northwest Ethnic Studies*, 1993, Issue 1.

Gao Zhanfu, "Investigation and Research on the 'Big Family Organization' of Xidaotang," *Gansu Ethnic Studies*, 1999, Issue 2.

At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, the Chinese Islamic sect Xidaotang appeared at the foot of Xifeng Mountain in the old city of Lintan, Gansu. It has received great attention from various sectors of society since its formation, which is not uncommon in the history of Chinese Islam. Xidaotang has attracted widespread attention among the numerous sects of Islam in China for two main reasons: first, its main religious ideas come from the teachings of Liu Zhi, a scholar native to Nanjing, and did not develop under foreign influence like other sects. Commenting on the relationship between Liu Zhizong's religious ideology and the origin of Xidaotang, Ma Mingren's economic activi-

ties in revitalizing Xidaotang, and the history and current situation of Xidaotang, Gao Zhanfu's research also involves sociology.

Ma Fuchun, the eldest son of Ma Mingren, the third bishop of Xidaotang, and the current bishop of Xidaotang, Min Shengguang, have also written:

Ma Fuchun, "The Impact of Mr. Liu Jieliang's Religious Translation on the Future Islamic Sects," *Arab World*, 1983, Issue 1.

Min Shengguang, "Liu Zhi's Thought and Xidaotang," *Hui Studies*, 1991, Issue 4.

Min Shengguang, "The Impact of the Uma System in Islam on the Xidaotang," *World Religious Studies*, 1995, Issue 1.

In the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, Chinese Islamic educators such as Wang Daiyu, Ma Zhu, and Ma Dexin devoted their lives to the translation of Islamic teachings. With their proficiency in multiple languages, including Chinese, Arabic, and Persian, and their tireless research and verification, they wrote books such as *Zhengjiao Zhenquan*, *Qingzhen Daxue*, *Qingzhen Zhinan*, and *Dahua Zonggui*. Ma Qixi, Ma Mingren, Min Zhidao, and others were influenced by scholars such as Liu Zhi to establish or inherit the Xidaotang. These papers examine the historical activities of Xidaotang from an academic perspective. [8] Ma Fuchun's paper provides comments on the religious translations of senior scholars such as Liu Jieliang, while Min Shengguang's article explores the relationship between Islamic ideology and the development of Xidaotang.

Papers that trace the origin of Xiben menhuan to the Yichan sect in Xinjiang and reveal the orthodox origins of the Adufi sect include:

Wang Shouli, "Research on Xinjiang Yichan School," *Research on Xinjiang Social Sciences*, 1983, Issue 3.

Chen Guoguang, "A Study of the 25th Hui Dynasty to the Central Plains: On the Dissemination of Xinjiang Islamic Mysticism in the Mainland," *World Religion Research*, 1985, Issue 1.

Chen Guoguang, "Ishakye in the History of Islam in Xinjiang –Also on the Source of the Chinese Philosopher Ninye Menhuan," *World Religious Studies*, 1987, Issue 1.

Chen Guoguang, "The Central Asian Nahe Xi Ban Di Order and the Northwest Gate Officials in Xinjiang, China," *World Religious Studies*, 1988, Issue 1.

Zhou Xiefan, "The Sufi Order of Islam and the Chinese Imperial Household," *World Religious Studies*, 1991, Issue 4.

Wang Huaide, "The Evolution of the Sufi School and the Characteristics of the Formation of the Menhuan System," in *Collection of Materials from the Islamic Academic Seminar (Xi'an Conference) in the Five Northwest Provinces (Regions)*, ed. Historical Literature Department of Gansu Provincial Library, 1983.

Wang Huaide, "A Brief Discussion on the Formation and Characteristics of the Yichan School," in *Jin Yijiu, Selected Books on Contemporary Chinese Religious Studies*:

Islamic Volume, Ethnic Publishing House, January 2008.
Pan Zhiping, *Rise and Fall of Central Asia and Xinjiang Hezhou*, China Social Sciences Press, June 1991.

Liu Zhengyin, "The Activities and Political Background of Islamic Sects in the Western Regions before the Rise of the Hezuo Family," *World Religious Studies*, 1991, Issue 4.

There are also papers that combine the study of the Sufi order with the study of Sufism, thus merging with the study of world Islam. Due to the recognition that the menhuan was a branch of the Sufi order in the northwest of China, the difference between the menhuan and the sect is unclear. Gedimu, also known as "Lao Jiao" or "Zun Gu Pai" in China, refers to the Chinese Muslim community that maintains the tradition formed after the entry of Islam into China and is different from the menhuan and sects that emerged after the late Ming and early Qing dynasties.

Feng Zenglie, "Eight Discussions on the 'Ge Di Mu'," *Journal of Northwest University for Nationalities*, 1984, Issue 1.

Feng Jinyuan, "Preliminary Exploration of the Islamic Jiaofang System in China," *World Religious Studies*, 1984, Issue 1.

Li Xinghua, "Preliminary Exploration of the History of Gedimu," *Gansu Ethnic Studies*, 1985, Issue 1 and 2.

In "Preliminary Exploration of the Islamic Jiaofang System in China," Feng Jinyuan begins with the fact that Islam has been in China for over a thousand years since the early Tang Dynasty. The religious organizational systems introduced over the centuries not only have the characteristics of Islam, but preserve the beliefs, systems, and traditional customs of Islam. They also have many Chinese characteristics and played an important role in the formation and development of the Chinese Hui ethnic group. Studying these systems is one of the more important aspects of studying Islam in China. [9]

Ihwani, also known as the "Xinxing Sect" or "Zun Jing Sect" in China, refers to a new denomination that emerged in the late 19th century, with the call of "teaching based on scriptures" and "respecting scriptures to reform customs." Related papers include:

Ma Kexun, "Ma Wanfu, an Advocate of the Islamic Ihwani Faction in China"

Ma Zhanbiao, "On Ma Wanfu and His Yihuani Sect"

Liu Dewen, "The Relationship between Islam in China and the Wahhabism"

In "Ma Wanfu, an Advocate of the Islamic Ihwani Faction in China," Ma Kexun shares that Ma Wanfu was named Nuhai (1853–1934). Ma Wanfu may be regarded as a famous scholar and activist of Islam in modern China who played an important role in advocating for the Ihwani faction and the "Reformation" of Islam, and had a significant influence among Muslims both domestically and internationally. However, there is no systematic written record of his life and deeds. In the paper, Ma Kexun organizes and records what can be known about Ma Wanfu (Orchard) through surveys and interviews with his relatives and Ihwani insiders. [10]

3. Jingtang Jiaoyu (Mosque Education)

Hu Dengzhou, a Shaanxi scholar in the Ming Dynasty, founded the Chinese Muslim religious education system. At first, he taught out of his home and advocated for studying the classics. Beginning with his second disciple, he moved from a private home to the mosque and recruited more disciples to learn scriptures. The purpose was to cultivate monks and imams for mosques in various regions and to impart religious knowledge to Muslims. This education has a history of over 400 years and continues to this day. Over the centuries, scriptural education constantly improved and adapted to the times; however, few updates have been made since the 20th century, especially in the northwest region, which retains the status of the Middle Ages. Thus, scripture education has difficulty finding acceptance compared to the mainstream education system.

In academic research, scholars who do and do not identify as Muslim study the issue of Muslim religious education to varying degrees, but there are few publications on scripture education. The most representative work comes from Ma Jian:

(Syria) K. A. Totah, *History of Muslim Education*, trans. Ma Jian, Commercial Press, 1946.

This book is divided into chapters that discuss the development of Islamic education, including schools, teachers, students, curriculum, teaching methods and school etiquette, Arabic educational masterpieces, Arab women and education, Arab educational philosophy, and Arab contributions to education. [11]

There are also several articles regarding Islamic education in China, such as Wang Jingzhai's "Review of Chinese Islamic Jingtangjiaoyu," Long Shiqian's "The Evolution and Topics of Chinese Islamic Monastery Education," and Hilarentin's papers such as "A Study of Jingtang Language." Like research in other fields, there were no significant research achievements during the Cultural Revolution, and it was not until the 1980s that papers were published:

Feng Zenglie, "Islamic Jingtang Education in Shaanxi During the Ming and Qing Dynasties," *Journal of Ningxia University*, 1981, Issue 1–2.

In Feng Zenglie's paper, the origin and rise of Jingtang jiaoyu are elucidated, and the relationship between the organization of mosques and the structure of Jingtang jiaoyu is discussed. It also provides a clear introduction to the courses taught in Jingtang jiaoyu education, Jingtangyu language, and the Jingtang script "Xiaoer Jing," plus the historical context of important figures such as Hu Dengzhou and his disciples. The article comprehensively explores the Islamic education system in China.

One of the greatest research achievements of the 1980s was the publication of the Confucian genealogy covering the Kangxi period of the Qing Dynasty compiled by Hui Muslim scholar Zhao Can:

(Qing Dynasty) Zhao Can, *Genealogy of Classics De-*

partment, People's Publishing House, Qinghai, July 1989.

The aim of Zhao Can's work is to provide a record of the famous Islamic scripture masters of the Hui and Salar ethnic groups in China during the Ming and early Qing dynasties, as well as their academic relationships and social activities. The manuscript was completed during the Kangxi period of the Qing Dynasty (1662 to 1722), and only four manuscripts were circulated. In 1987, Yang Yongchang and Ma Jizu jointly completed the sorting, annotation, and punctuation of the manuscript. The main text records the genealogy of twenty-seven famous scripture masters, including Mr. Hu Lao, Mr. Feng Haier, Hai Wenxuan, She Yunshan, Huangfu Jing, and others. The preface encourages the study of Islamic teachings and precepts, and there are two chapters devoted to She Yunshan's methods of gathering disciples and teaching scriptures. All the teachers listed in the volume were religious scholars who were considered by the public as excellent in both character and learning. [12] This volume is an important work that studies the development of scripture education, as well as the thoughts of scripture teachers and scholars.

The sixth National Hui History Seminar held in Jinan in 1990 focused on the history of Hui education, and the conference papers were edited and published under the name of the Shandong Provincial People's Committee:

Collected Works on the History of Chinese Hui Education, Shandong University Press, 1991.

Many of these articles involve scripture education. In addition, periodicals such as Chinese Muslims have published introductions and research articles on Jingtang jiaoyu and famous scripture teachers.

Wang Yongliang, "The Emergence and Early Forms of Hui Scriptural Education," Chinese Muslims, 1993.

There have also been relevant publications in the 21st century, such as:

Zhang Xueqiang, History of Northwest Hui Education, Gansu Education Press, 2002.

Yang Wenjong, "Women's Education: The Expansion of Jingtangjiaoyu and the Shift of the Center of Gravity in Cultural Communication," Hui Studies, Issue 1, 2002.

Wang Fuping, "Hai Sifu's Contribution to Chinese Jingtangjiaoyu" Hui Studies, Issue 4, 2007.

Zhang Xueqiang's book History of Northwest Hui Education promotes the development of ethnic education and Hui ethnic studies, but more importantly, supports Hui ethnic education in the Northwest region through historical research. [13] The content is divided into chapters and sections covering: Northwest Hui and Northwest Hui Education; The education of the ancestors of the Northwest Hui ethnic group during the Tang, Song, and Yuan dynasties; Menhuan education of the Northwest Hui ethnic group during the Ming and Qing dynasties; The teachings and rituals of Islamic Sufi menhuan in Ganning and Qinghai during the Qing Dynasty; The development of education for the Northwest Hui ethnic group during the Republic of China period (1912–1949); Hui education in the Shaanxi Gansu Ningxia Border Region; and

factors that affect the historical development of education for the Hui ethnic group in northwest China. It also includes chapters on developing education for the Hui ethnic group in the northwest and suggestions for future study.

In Yang Wenjong's paper, "Women's Education: The Expansion of Jingtang jiaoyu and the Shift of the Center of Gravity in Cultural Communication," documents the rise and development of women's schools as an extension of traditional canon education in urban Muslim communities in the northwest region, which became a remarkable cultural phenomenon. Yang Wenjong traces the history of female mosque students, analyzing their context in urban areas of northwest China. [14]

In Wang Fuping's 2007 paper, "Hai Sifu's Contribution to Chinese Jingtangjiaoyu," he examines the life of Hai Sifu (1832–1920), a famous Hui Muslim scripture writer and translator of the late Qing and early Republic of China periods who transcribed, annotated, and translated many Islamic scriptures throughout his life and devoted himself to the cause of Islamic education in China. The year 2007 marked the 88th anniversary of Hai Sifu's death, and this article commemorates his life by providing an overview of Mr. Hai Sifu's contributions to Islamic scripture education in China. [15]

Also in 2007, the Seminar on Chinese Jingtang Jiaoyu was held in Lanzhou. Attendees gave papers and speeches focused on the development, problems, solutions, and future directions of Chinese Jingtang jiaoyu, featuring titles (by unidentified authors) such as:

"Creation and Cultural Revitalization: Historical Enlightenment from the Local Growth of Islam in China"

"Centennial Development of Jingtangjiaoyu"

"Current Situation and Reflection on Jingtangjiaoyu"

"Future Development Direction of Jingtangjiaoyu"

"New Theory, New Perspective, and New Realm of Jingtangjiaoyu Development" [16]

also,

Ding Shiren, Chinese Islamic Jingtangjiaoyu (Mosque Education), Gansu People's Publishing House, 2013.

Ding Shiren's Chinese Islamic Jingtangjiaoyu (Mosque Education) is divided into three volumes. The first volume is a theoretical volume with more than thirty scholarly articles discussing Jingtang jiaoyu. The second volume is dedicated to context and sorts out the historical trajectory, academic schools, regions, and major events of in the development of Jingtang jiaoyu. The final volume is a biographical volume that features the life stories of renowned Islamic masters who have devoted themselves to the education of Jingtang in various mosques over the centuries, cultivating people, morality, and heart, preaching, imparting knowledge, and enlightening wisdom, all without seeking fame or fortune. They gained knowledge and benefit from teaching and were well known among the people. This work enables to reader to cherish the memory of our predecessors, see examples for future generations, achieve sustainable performance, and inherit Jingtang jiaoyu. [17]

In recent years, Xiaojing (i.e., Xiaojing)—the practice of writing Chinese in Arabic script—has gradually attracted scholars' attention. Chinese Muslims refer to Arabic and Persian as "Xiaohua Jingdian" and widely adopt both languages in Islamic Jingtang jiaoyu in China. Since around 2000, Liu Yingsheng from Nanjing University has organized a research group on the topic of Xiaojing that has gone to the northwest multiple times to collect relevant literature. The following publications are representative of their work:

Liu Yingsheng, "Several Issues on the 'Xiaojing' script commonly used among some Muslim ethnic groups in China" *Hui Studies*, Issue 4, 2001.

Han Zhongyi, "Research on the Relationship between Xiaojing Scriptures and Islamic Issues," *World Religious Studies*, Issue 3, 2005.

Han Zhongyi, "A Preliminary Study on the Related Issues of Xiaojing Literature and Linguistics," *Northwest Ethnic Studies*, Issue 1, 2007.

Han Zhongyi and Zhu Liang, "Investigation on the Printing and Publication of Chinese Muslim Classics Literature - Taking the Xiaojing 'Kaidani' as an Example," *Journal of Northern University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, Issue 4, 2012.

Hu Long, "'Xiaojing' 《Zhengda Guangming》 and Pu'er Ma Imam," *Hui Studies*, Issue 3, 2006.

Hu Long, "Also Talking about 'Xiaojing' and Opening the Yidane," *Hui Studies*, Issue 1, 2007.

In Liu Yingsheng's, "Several Issues on the 'Xiaojing' script commonly used among some Muslim ethnic groups in China," he discusses the name, meaning, and usage of Xiaojing characters, and the academic significance of collecting Xiaojing reading materials and carrying out Xiaojing research in Hui and Islamic studies. As part of his research, the author collected Xiaojing reading materials in Gansu, Xiaojing works recorded in literature, and various glossaries and reference works. [18]

In "Research on the Relationship between Xiaojing Scriptures and Islamic Issues," Han Zhongyi gives the Xiaojing, which are Arabic alphabetic characters used by Hui and other nationalities. The documents written with the Xiaojing have rich contents that are important to the study of Islam in China, as explained in this article. [19]

In the discussion "A Preliminary Study on the Related Issues of Xiaojing Literature and Linguistics," Han Zhongyi proposes that studying the issues related to Xiaojing literature and linguistics can provide meaningful insight into the many difficulties encountered in previous studies on "Jingtang vocabulary" (i.e., small scripture vocabulary) and its grammar, syntax, and so on, which provided a lot of reference tools for further research. The article builds on previous research in an attempt to gain more insight. [20]

In the article "Investigation on the Printing and Publication of Chinese Muslim Classics Literature - Taking the Xiaojing 'Kaidani' as an Example," Han Zhongyi and Zhu Liang make the case that there are certain channels for Chinese Muslims to

inherit basic Islamic knowledge, but scholars have not paid enough attention to this issue in their research. The authors illustrate the methods of folk knowledge dissemination in China by taking a version of the Chinese Islamic scripture (Kaidani) as an example and explores the publication, translation, version changes, and proofreading of folk print texts in Confucian literature. [21]

In the article "Also Talking about 'Xiaojing' and Opening the Yidane," Hu Long focuses on issues that have arisen in recent years among scholars studying Islam and the Xiaojing and Kaidani, which have been widely circulated in the Muslim community in northwest China. Based on the principles of seeking truth from facts, evidence-based statements, and reason in historical research, this article clarifies some of the issues involved in the original Tashkent version of "Elimination of the Sutra" by investigating its author, writing time, printing location, content, translation, and version, as well as its relationship with the Xiaojing—the Pinyin script created by Hui Muslims. [22]

In terms of "doctrinology" in the fields of religion and philosophy, scholars argue that doctrinal research only began in the 20th century. During this period, discussions could only be conducted within the framework of religion and philosophy. Since the beginning of 2000, there have been new changes in doctrinal research, namely the study of humanities and social science theories and methods, and a number of new achievements have been made. In terms of research on "Islamic law", since the reform and development, it has been influenced by traditional Islamic jurists and modern Western Islamic law researchers, and has gradually formed a contemporary Chinese Islamic law research system with its own style. New research results are also expected to emerge.

4. Conclusion

Islamic doctrine has always been valued by Chinese Muslims and has been the main content of church education and Chinese translations since the Ming and Qing dynasties. The study of Islamic doctrine in contemporary China gradually resumed in the 1980s, and its research methods were limited to the framework of "philosophical research.". Since 2000, there have been new changes in the study of Islamic doctrine, with not only a number of new achievements, but also a gradual recognition of the religious characteristics of Islamic doctrine, which is no longer limited to the scope of philosophical research. Some of these studies reflect the unique purpose and care of religious doctrine research. Other traditional Islam, as well as modern humanities and social sciences, pose significant challenges to contemporary Islamic doctrine and its research, but these challenges contain opportunities for both to transcend and transform themselves. Islamic jurisprudence is also an important component of Islamic education. The study of Islamic law in contemporary China has gone through three periods of creation, reconstruction, and development since 1949, forming a disciplinary system mainly

characterized by emphasizing Chinese characteristics and practical dimensions. Currently, it is facing a methodological transformation on how to use Islamic law research to transform into a modern discipline. Influenced by traditional Islamic jurists and modern Western Islamic law researchers, this field has formed two major academic traditions, namely the "traditionalist" and "academic" schools.

Author Contributions

Alimtohte Shiho is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Biography

Alimtohte Shiho, is a Uyghur scholar and an Assistant Professor at Tohoku University, Japan. In 2020 he was a visiting researcher at the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford. He is the author of *History of Islamic Studies in Japan—Volume on China*, Shumpusha Publishing (2018), and *History of Islamic Studies in China*, Akashi Publishing (2019). *Criticism and reconstruction of Chinese Confucianism by Japanese Confucianism*, Akashi Publishing (2020). etc.