

Research on the Relationship Between Islam and Chinese Culture

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Since China's reform and development, under the influence of the global religious and cultural boom, it has also focused on studying Islamic culture and related fields, resulting in many important representative works. The main characteristic of writing books in this area is to use popular knowledge materials that are suitable for various sectors of society. There are also works exploring the historical evolution of Islamic culture in China, which involve the relationship between Islamic culture and traditional Chinese culture. Before the 1980s, there were no significant achievements in publishing papers. However, since the 1990s, there has been a noticeable increase in papers related to Islamic culture and related fields, with new advances in research areas and methods. There are both articles that explore the attributes and characteristics of Islamic culture from the perspectives of world history and culture, as well as many articles that explore various specific aspects of Islamic culture from the perspective of specific topics. In this article, the author collects academic achievements in the study of Islamic culture in China and introduces them to the academic community, letting them know about China's research on world Islamic culture.

Keywords: China, Islamic world, Islamic Culture, Research, Relationship

In the history of Chinese civilization, religious culture not only played a role in the spiritual life of believers but also had an impact on the spiritual and cultural life of society. Since China's reform and development, under the influence of the global religious and cultural boom, Chinese scholars have paid attention to the study of Islamic culture and related fields, and many important representative works have appeared. These include the following:

- The Islamic Research Office of the World Religion Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, *Aspects of Islamic Culture*, Qilu Press, 1991.
- Nazhong Zhu Kai, *Tradition and Blending: Arab Culture*, People's Publishing House, 1993.
- Qin Huibin (editor), *Series of World Civilizations: Islamic Civilization*, China Social Sciences Press, 1999.
- Ma Mingliang, *New Comments on Islamic Culture*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1999.
- Ma Mingliang, *Collection of Frontier Studies on Islamic Culture*, China Social Sciences Press, 2006.

The book *Aspects of Islamic Culture* was edited by important scholars from the Islamic Research Office of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, including Wang Junrong, Feng Jinyuan, Wu Yungui, Sha Qiuzhen, Li Xinghua, Jin Yijiu, Zhou Xiefan, and Qin Huibin. Like most religions, Islam has extremely close connections with people's social life, and the relationship between Islam and social politics is unavoidable. This book offers a brief introduction to issues related to Islam and current international political life, as well as modern social

trends and movements within Islam. In terms of geography, this book focuses on South and Central Asia with a significant amount of content on China, including the origin of Islam in China, famous scholars of Islam, famous mosques, the relationship between Islam and traditional Chinese culture, the official, Taoist, and sectarian aspects of Islam in China, and the contributions of Islam to China's technology, culture, and other fields. This book is divided into four major topics: the history of Islam, Islamic culture, Islamic science, and the contributions of Islam to society (The Islamic Research Office of the World Religion Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1991).

Tradition and Blending: Arab Culture, co-authored by Nazhong and Zhu Kai, elaborates on the Arab culture of the Abbasid dynasty centered around Baghdad, explaining its historical conditions, the reasons for its formation, important aspects of its culture, and its impact on the Eastern and Western worlds. Domestic and foreign writings on Arab culture often overlook important aspects, such as economic development, social life, and international cultural exchange. The book discusses these issues and a wide variety of others, with sections dedicated to pre-Islamic Arabia, Islamism, the Enlightenment period of Arab culture, the heyday of Arab culture, national system, economic development, social life and social relations, the Hundred Year Translation Movement, doctrine and culture, literature and art, historians and geographers, sects and philosophy, natural sciences, and the relationship between medieval China and Arabia (Nazhong & Zhu, 1993).

Qin Huibin's *Series of World Civilizations: Islamic Civilization* draws from the latest publications of scholars in China and abroad to put forth a comprehensive exploration of Islamic civilization. With an interest in both theory and religious practice, the author discusses the rise of Islamic civilization, the spread and development of Islam, Islam after the dissolution of the traditional caliphate system, modern Islamic civilization, and Islamic politics, economy, society, feminism, literature, art, education, and science. It also includes chapters on the contributions of Islamic civilization to world civilization (Qin, 1999).

Ma Mingliang's *New Comments on Islamic Culture* comprehensively applies the theories of culturology, religious studies, sociology, and philosophy to set Islamic culture against the broad background of human culture. The result is a unique perspective, novel method, and distinct academic style. It addresses many aspects of Islamic culture, such as religion, ethics, law, politics, economics, science, technology, ecology, marriage and family, sex, education, clothing, food, housing, transportation, festivals, entertainment, funeral culture, mosque culture, and human needs (Ma, 2006a).

Ma Mingliang's *Collection of Frontier Studies on Islamic Culture* is a collection of papers that focuses on cutting-edge achievements in the field of Chinese Islamic studies in the first few years of the 21st century. Most of the papers have been published in public venues and scattered in various Chinese academic journals. Contributors to this volume mainly come from Northwest University for Nationalities, but there are also papers from scholars at other domestic universities and research institutes such as Beijing and Shanghai. This collection of essays is a valuable contribution to the academic study of religion because it promotes the field, makes theoretical contributions, and expands the boundaries of scholarship, while also displaying religion's role in promoting social harmony.

There is also a growing body of publications on the historical evolution of Islamic culture in China, that is, the relationship between Islamic culture and Chinese traditional culture. For example:

- Ye Haya Linsong, *Hui History and Islamic Culture*, China Today Press, 1992.
- Yang Huaizhong and Yu Zhengui (co-authored), *Islam and Chinese Culture*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1995.

- Qin Huibin, *Islam and Traditional Culture in China*, China Social Sciences Press, 1995.
- Ma Tong, *Muslim Culture on the Silk Road*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 2000.
- Ding Jun, *A Survey of Islamic Culture*, Gansu Ethnic Publishing House, 2002.
- Ma Mingliang, *The Exchange Course and Prospects of Islamic Civilization and Chinese Civilization*, China Social Sciences Press, 2006.

In *Islam and Chinese Culture*, Yang Huaizhong and Yu Zhengui propose that the Hui nationality was a sophisticated culture from its very beginning. It introduced Islamic culture into China and continues to be its carrier, but on the winding and bumpy historical path, it gradually fell from the height of culture. During the Xiantong period in the late Qing Dynasty, the Hui uprising failed, and the agricultural and economic foundations of the Hui ethnic groups in the southwest and northwest were severely damaged. Economic poverty accelerated the decline of culture, and the unique knowledge of the Hui, such as astronomy and medicine, was neglected. Islamic religious leaders who were proficient in Arabic and could write elegantly were rare, such as those who wrote poems to Ma in the early Qing Dynasty's "Halal Guide". This historical downturn is explained by the relationship between Islamic culture and Chinese culture at that time. To give a few examples of topics covered, Islam and Chinese culture covers the economic and cultural exchanges between the Arab empires, on one hand, and the Tang and Song Dynasties, on the other; the Mongolian army's westward expedition and the Hui people's eastward arrival; the four climaxes of Islamic culture in Chinese history; the impact of Islamic astronomy and medicine; Chinese Islamic scripture education and translation activities, including the translation of the Quran; and the defining characteristics of Chinese Islamic culture (Yang & Yu, 1995).

In his book *Islam and Traditional Culture in China*, Qin Huibin argues that "Islam" does not refer specifically to religion but is endowed with multiple layers of meaning. It simultaneously refers to a social system, lifestyle, cultural form, and even the characteristics of the times, permeating all fields of Muslim life as the "Islamic spirit". This Islamic spirit relates to important aspects of the tradition's origins in Arabia, such as nomadism, desert, and commerce. Under the guidance of this spirit, various Chinese ethnic groups that believe in Islam have created brilliant Islamic civilizations that take into account the unique heritage of Chinese Islam and its relationship to traditional culture. With full and accurate materials and fluent language, this book systematically introduces Islam's influence on Chinese culture and the process of its integration into China in the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing Dynasties, and vividly represents the spirit of Islamic culture and Chinese culture (Qin, 1995).

Ma Tong's book *Muslim Culture on the Silk Road* documents Muslim culture along the ancient trade route connecting East Asia, West Asia, and the Mediterranean, which played an indelible role in world trade history. Ma Tong describes the two main roads of the Silk Road, the commercial and cultural exchanges between sea and land routes, and the various aspects of Muslim culture involved, such as Muslim commerce, coins, sects, and Sufism schools. This book provides a detailed record of the widespread influence of Muslim culture on ethnic minorities along the route, including Tajik Muslims in Tashkurgan, Kazakh Muslims in the Altyn Mountains, Kirgiz Muslims in Kizilsu, the Dongxiang, Bao'an, and Salar Muslims in the Hehuang Region, Uyghur Muslims in the north and south Tianshan Mountains, the Uzbek and Tatar Muslims on the Silk Road, and the Donggan Muslims of the Kyrgyz grasslands. In summary, the author provides a detailed introduction to the profound impact of Muslim culture on the architecture, culture, education, and communities of the Silk Road. The content is comprehensive, the analysis is thorough, and it is of great academic value (Ma, 2000).

Ding Jun's *A Survey of Islamic Culture* is precisely that. After the introduction, it focuses on the Quran, hadith, doctrines and dogmatics, teaching methods and pedagogy, and the relationship between Islamic, Chinese, and world cultures.

Ma Mingliang's *The Exchange Course and Prospects of Islamic Civilization and Chinese Civilization* focuses on the historical trajectory and practical trends of Islamic civilization in China, and the process and prospects of communication between Islamic and Chinese civilizations. Both Islamic civilization and Chinese civilization are vast and profound, with long histories, rich ideologies, meaningful cultural heritage, and long-lasting vitality. Over the past 1,300 years of historical development, the two have established a foundation of mutual exchange. In the wake of globalization, both are increasingly showing their unique charm and facing similar challenges. Only by interacting, exchanging, and learning from each other can they benefit from and complement each other's strengths, achieve common prosperity, and contribute to multiculturalism and the development of human civilization in the context of globalization. This book explores the history of the multifaceted relationship between Islam and China before turning to issues of globalization and three "areas of dialogue" identified by the book's authors: ecological environment issues, world peace, and global ethical issues (Ma, 2006b).

Among the many publications on Islamic culture, there are also important book series from Baiwen publications that deserve our attention. For example:

- Chen Guangyuan et al., *Questions on the Quran*, published by Today's China Publishing House, 1994.
- Feng Jinyuan et al., *Questions on Islam*, published by Today's China Publishing House, 1992.
- Liu Yihong and Qi Qianjin, *Questions on Islamic Art*, published by Today's China Publishing House in 1992.
- Wu Yungui, *Questions on Islamic Classics*, published by Today's China Publishing House in 1992.
- Ma Mingliang (edited), *Islamic Culture Series*, published by Today's China Publishing House in 1992.
- Wu Yungui, Zhou Xiefan, and Qin Huibin (editor), *Islamic Culture Series*.

Questions on the Quran is divided into three major sections: history, culture, and the Quran. The "History" section was composed by Feng Jinyuan and Sha Qiuzhen; "Culture" was written by Feng Jinyuan and Tie Guoxi; and "Quran" was compiled by Chen Guangyuan, Feng Jinyuan, and Tie Guoxi (Chen, Feng, Sha, & Tie, 1994).

Wu Yungui, Zhou Xiefan, and Qin Huibin edited *Islamic Culture Series* (12 volumes). It includes: Islamic Philosophy, Islamic Sects, the Dharma of God—Islamic Shariah, Sufi Mysticism of Islam, Islamic Literature, Islamic Doctrine, the Language of God: An Introduction to the Quran, Islam and Traditional Culture in China, the Awakening of the Muslim Nation—Modern Islamic Movement, the Prophet of Islam: Muhammad, and Islamic Education and Science. This set of books provides a comprehensive and systematic introduction to the Quran, Islamic law, Sufism, various schools of Islamic philosophy, and the literary and artistic achievements of Muslims. It provides a concise and complete introduction to the life of the great prophet and politician Muhammad, categorizes major sects, and briefly introduces the development of Islamic education and science. It also introduces the representative dogmatic schools and their belief systems in various periods in Arab countries, and vividly represents the spirit of Islamic culture and Chinese culture (Wu, Zhou, & Qin, n.d.).

The following is a brief introduction to the content of the *Islamic Culture Series*, a small series of 12 books edited by Wu Yungui, Zhou Xiefan and Qin Huibin:

- Jin Yijiu, *Islamic Sufi Mysticism*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1995.

This book is the first popular book in China that systematically discusses Sufism. A brief introduction was given to the origins, historical evolution, development trends, basic doctrines, dogmatic propositions, organizational forms of religious organizations, internal cultivation methods, important representatives and their works of Sufism.

- Wang Huaide, *Islamic Sects*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

Based on detailed historical materials and scientific classification, this book introduces the historical evolution, religious beliefs, organizational methods, customs, and practical influences of various major denominations, including Sunni, Shia, Hawalighis, Sufi, Sufi, Wahhabi, and others.

- Sha Zongping, *Islamic Philosophy*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1995.

Using accurate information, this book introduces the origins, main philosophical ideas, representative figures and their works, and historical influences of various schools of Islamic philosophy from a historical perspective. It has important reference value for understanding Islamic cosmology and epistemology.

- Zhou Xiefan, *The Language of Allah*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

This comprehensive and systematic introduction to the classic “Explanation of Everything, Guide to Believers” is presented in terms of Muhammad and Revelation, the historical differences in the writing, arrangement, style, and text of the Quran, the evolution of the name of Revelation, annotation, translation, and research.

- Zhou Xiefan, *The Prophet of Islam: Muhammad*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1998.

It provides a concise and complete introduction to the life of this great prophet and politician. Muhammad, in the name of the Messenger of Allah, taught a scripture to be recited, leading Arabs from tribes to nations and nations, and spreading Islam to various parts of the world. His words and actions still affect the lives of billions of Muslims to this day.

- Xiao Xian, *The Return of Tradition: Contemporary Islamic Revival Movement*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

This is the first systematic exposition of the origin, nature, manifestation, development momentum, and trend of the contemporary Islamic revival movement, using detailed information and vivid language. Since the Islamic Revolution in Iran in the late 1980s, the Islamic Revival Movement has surged and flourished, sweeping the entire Muslim world, becoming one of the international events that attracted the attention of all mankind, and arousing wide attention from the political, press, academic, and religious circles.

- Qin Huibin, *Islam and Traditional Culture in China*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

With full and accurate materials and fluent language, this book systematically introduces the process of Islam’s integration into China in the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties, its influence on itself and on Chinese culture, and vividly represents the spirit of Islamic culture and Chinese culture.

- Wu Yungui, *The Awakening of the Muslim Nation: The Modern Islamic Movement*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

Taking the colonial expansion of modern Western countries as the historical background, this book briefly introduces the heroic struggles of the world’s Muslim nations to revive their beliefs and strive for national independence, including the purification of faith movement, jihad movement, the new prophet movement, the Islamic movement, and the Islamic modernism movement: The Wahhabi Movement (Wahhabi people, basic reform propositions, process and influence of the movement); Jihad Movement (Indian Jihad Movement, Indonesian Milan Badelj Movement, West African Jihad Movement); The Senucid Movement (the rise of New

Sufism and an overview of the Senucid Movement); The Mahdi Movement in Sudan (the historical background of the movement, the rise of the Mahdi Movement); The Babu Movement in Iran (the rise of the Sheikh School, the beginning and end of the Babu Movement); The Ahmadiya Movement (Ahmed himself, religious ideas, and influence); Pan Islamic Movement (social history background, Ottoman Sudan and Pan Islamic Movement, Afghani and Pan Islamic Movement); Islamic Modernism Movement (Ahmad Khan and Aligal Movement, Afghani and Islamic modernism, Abdul and Salafiya Movement, Iqbal and Islamic modernism); and other chapters.

- Wu Yungui, *Islamic Doctrine*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

It is the first book in China to systematically discuss Islamic theology. It takes historical development as a clue, and briefly introduces the representative religious schools and their belief systems in various periods of Arab countries. The text is simple, clear, and full of freshness.

- Wu Yungui, *The Dharma of Allah: Islamic Law*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1994.

In concise language, this article introduces the origin of Islamic law, the content of legal provisions such as civil law, commercial law, criminal law, marriage and family, and inheritance, as well as the legal theoretical viewpoints of different sects and schools, as well as the trend and content of modern legal reform.

- Yuan Wenqi, *Islamic Literature*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 1995.

This book briefly introduces the literary and artistic achievements of Muslims in Arab, Persian, Indian, Türkiye, and other countries or regions with rich materials and vivid and fluent language, including artistic treasures such as novels, poems and essays, as well as the literary and artistic thoughts, traumatic styles of representative writers and their influence on later generations.

Islamic Education and Science (Wu Yungui, Zhou Xiefan, Qin Huibin (editor), China Social Sciences Press, 1994). This book briefly introduces the grand development of Islamic education and science in vivid language, which has important reference value for comprehensive understanding of Islamic culture. In history, Islam has created a developed religious education system centered on temple education. Muslim people of all ethnic groups have made great contributions in mathematics, medicine, astronomy, physics, geography, biology, and other fields (Wu, Zhou, & Qin, 1994).

The content of these volumes is comprehensive and systematic, with novel discussions that make them valuable assets to researchers in their respective areas.

The distinct characteristics of Islamic architecture and residential culture have always attracted the attention of scholars. Representative works in this field should be promoted:

- Ma Ping and Lai Cunli, *Chinese Muslim Residential Culture*, Ningxia People's Publishing House, 1995.
- Liu Zhiping, *Chinese Islamic Architecture*, Xinjiang People's Publishing House, 1985.
- Wesen, Abduriyim, *Islamic Architecture Art*, Xinjiang People's Publishing House, 1989.

Ma Ping and Lai Cunli's *Chinese Muslim Residential Culture* examines the dwellings of 10 different Muslim ethnic groups in China, and then explores the natural environment, social background, cultural characteristics, and religious regulations of Islam that arise from these special dwellings. Starting with residential buildings, we delve into the elements of their construction, layout, and decoration. After extensive and meticulous investigation by the authors, they present a cultural model of Chinese Muslim dwellings, completing their novel research assignment, and contributing to many other topics as well. Specifically, they discuss the ethnic types of Chinese Muslim dwellings, the relationship between Chinese Muslim dwellings, geographical climate, and natural environment, the economic and social background of Chinese Muslim residential culture, the taboos and rituals

of ethnic, religious, and folk life in Chinese Muslim dwellings, and the structural types, materials, and construction of Chinese Muslim dwellings, including their spatial layout, colors, patterns, and decorative arts (Ma & Lai, 1995).

Liu Zhiping's *Chinese Islamic Architecture* is divided into two parts: architectural examples and a comprehensive review of architectural practices. It includes chapters on the architecture of mosques, scripture halls, Daotang, tombs, general layouts, and various architectural systems and practices. Due to religious needs, the mosque is generally composed of a chapel (prayer hall), a wake-up building (Baiké building), a bathroom, a dean's office, a school, a gate, and other buildings. The worship hall must be built along the east-west axis so that believers can face Mecca to the west during worship. The decoration inside the temple does not use animal themes but geometric shapes, plant patterns, and Arabic calligraphy. Islamic architecture in the Xinjiang region uses the traditional structure of wooden columns, dense beams, flat roofs, adobe arches, and dome roofs, but also draws on certain techniques from Central Asia to create a regional ethnic style with a free and flexible layout, rich decoration, and color. In the Central Asia mosque, the Awakening Tower is the name of the minaret, a tower-shaped building known in Persian as a Bangke Tower. Its function is to call people to worship, and it has become a unique symbol of Islam (Liu, 1985).

Since the 1990s, the number of papers related to Islamic culture has increased significantly, and new progress has been made in research fields and methods. Not only are there articles that discuss the attributes and characteristics of Islamic culture from the perspective of world history and culture, but there are also many others that discuss specific aspects of Islamic culture:

- Lu Peiyong, "Islamic Culture and Its Relationship With Civilization", *The Arab World*, 1989, Issue 1.
- Liu Jinghua, "Revival and Transcendence of Islamic Traditional Values", *West Asia and Africa*, 1989, Issue 4.
- Ma Qicheng, "On the Attribute of Islamic Culture in China", *Journal of the Central Institute for Nationalities*, 1992, Issue 6.
- Ge Zhi, "Islam and Traditional Chinese Culture", *Exploration and Contention*, Issue 3, 1992.
- Wu Yungui, "The Generality and Individuality of Islamic Culture", *World Religious Culture*, Spring 1996, Issue 5.
- Ma Ping, "On the Ethnic Emotions and Rationality of the Hui Ethnic Group", *Hui Studies*, Issue 3, 2000.

The exact meaning of "culture" in "Islamic Culture and Its Relationship with Civilization" is quite difficult to grasp. According to relevant dictionaries, this word can be divided into broad and narrow senses, representing many different meanings. From a cultural perspective, there are over 160 definitions of "culture" as a scientific term. Therefore, the concept of culture discussed in this article can only be based on a general definition that is recognized by most Chinese and foreign scholars. Sir Edward B. Tylor (1832-1917), the founder of British cultural anthropology, briefly defined culture as "the sum of the entire way of life". This article analyzes Islam from the perspectives of cultural studies and civilization studies (Lu, 1989).

In the article "Revival and Transcendence of Islamic Traditional Values", Islam is a special religion with multifaceted characteristics. Islam, as a religion and a culture, has its own philosophy, ideology, way of life, social behavior, moral and ethical norms, and legal system. For many centuries, it has experienced both the glory of a prosperous era and the humiliation of a declining era. However, to this day, Islamic traditional values continue to experience revival and transcendence as an ideology (Liu, 1989).

In the article "On the Attributes of Islamic Culture in China", Ma Qicheng centers on the fact that Islam has been passed down for a long time in Chinese history and, through mutual influence and integration with China's

long-standing cultural traditions, has developed into a version of Islam with Chinese characteristics. As a cultural phenomenon accumulated in history, Chinese Islam encompasses a wide range of contents, including belief systems, social consciousness, moral norms, values, folk customs, language, writing, and scientific and cultural achievements. Taking a comprehensive view of the basic characteristics of Chinese Islamic culture, we can say that there are four attributes, namely, the attributes of culture, religion, folk custom, and lifestyle, in addition to its blending with the national community (Ma, 1992).

In the article “Islam and Traditional Chinese Culture”, Ge Zhi argues that when discussing the development, evolution, and coverage of traditional Chinese culture, people often characterize it as the integration of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, while neglecting the integration of Islam after its introduction in the early Tang Dynasty. The influence of Islamic culture in the composition of traditional Chinese culture is also discussed and must be taken seriously when considering China’s precious cultural heritage (Ge, 1992).

In the article “The Generality and Individuality of Islamic Culture”, Wu Yungui presents the perspective that religious belief systems are always based on a certain cultural way. Without a foundation in a specific culture, religious belief is like water without a source or a tree without roots. Therefore, the study of religious culture attaches particular importance to the position and role of religion in human culture, as well as the relationship between religious culture and secular culture. Wu Yungui’s study of Islam in this regard displays both the commonness and individuality of Islamic culture (Wu, 1996).

In the article “On the Ethnic Emotions and Rationality of the Hui Ethnic Group”, Ma Ping discusses the emotional and rational characteristics of the Hui ethnic group based on a deep analysis of ethnic emotions and rationality. Ma Ping argues that the ethnic emotions of the Hui should be further linked to the common ethnic emotions of the Chinese nation, and modern rationality and scientific elements should be included to enhance the ethnic rationality of the Hui ethnic group and continuously improve their quality of life (Ma, 2000).

These are quite distinctive articles. It is a dazzling array, involving a variety of fields such as diet, marriage, clothing, ethics, literature, philosophy, and cultural psychology. Papers in the area of Islamic culture cover almost all of its aspects, at least at an introductory level, which is of great significance for people wanting to re-examine it from different perspectives. Looking at trends in future development, although the religious culture craze will certainly encourage some scholars to continue to engage in the study of Islamic culture, I am afraid that research in this area will remain incomplete for some time.

Research in Fields Such as Dialogue Among Civilizations

Samuel P. Huntington (1927-2008) was a famous contemporary American international political theorist known for his article “The Clash of Civilizations?” published in *Foreign Affairs* magazine in 1993, which he then developed into an influential book, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Reconstruction of World Order* (1996). The book was translated into 39 languages, causing many reactions worldwide. However, the 9/11 Incident forced people to revisit four of Huntington’s key ideas: First, the root causes of international conflicts in the future world will be mainly cultural, not ideological or economic. The main conflicts in global politics will take place between countries and groups of different civilizations. These conflicts will dominate global politics, and the (geopolitical) fracture zone between civilizations will become the future front line. Second, the clash of civilizations is the greatest threat to future world peace, and a world order based on civility is the most reliable guarantee to avoid world war. Therefore, crossing boundaries between different civilizations is very important, and respecting and recognizing each other’s boundaries is equally important. Third, for the first time in history, multipolar and

multicultural global politics have emerged. Countries with different cultures are more likely to have distant and indifferent relationships with each other or even highly hostile relationships, while differing civilizations are more likely to have competitive coexistence, as seen in the Cold War. Huntington also stated that racial conflicts will also be widespread due to this political environment. Fourth, by “clash of civilizations” Huntington mainly refers to the seven major civilizations currently in the world.

Huntington’s viewpoint was surprising and unacceptable to many Chinese people, as well as international experts: According to Huntington, the main source of future instability and the possibility of war come from the revival of Islam and the rise of East Asian society, especially China. The relationship between the West and these challenging civilizations may be extremely difficult, with the relationship to the United States being the most dangerous. Some scholars criticize Huntington’s viewpoint, arguing that “civilization conflict” was by no means the mainstream idea of cultural development in the world today. Huntington’s cultural understanding is one-sided, standing on a narrow political standpoint that reflects the unhealthy mentality of a minority within North American society after the end of the Cold War. Although the theory of “clash of civilizations” has had a considerable impact on political thought and is still developing, its influence will become increasingly weak in the future because of its questionable rationale. Now, we are faced with the 21st century, which calls for increased dialogue between different ethnic groups and civilization systems both regionally and across the globe.

Under the influence of academic research trends such those prompted by Huntington’s work, research on dialogue between Chinese Islamic civilization and other civilizations has been fruitful. Multiple academic conferences have been held in China, including the “International Symposium on Dialogue Between Civilizations”, which focused mainly on Hui Confucianism, and the international symposium “Life and Death: Hui Buddha Dialogue” held in Beijing. At the same time, there have been publications on the mutual influence of and integration between Islamic and Chinese civilizations, especially as it pertains to Confucianism, such as:

- Liu Yihong, *Dialogue Between Hui Confucianism: The Classic of Heaven and the Way of Confucius and Mencius*, Religious Culture Press, 2006.
- Ma Mingliang, *The Exchange Course and Prospects of Islamic Civilization and Chinese Civilization*, China Social Sciences Press, 2006.

In the book *Dialogue Between Hui Confucianism: The Classic of Heaven and the Way of Confucius and Mencius*, Liu Yihong explains that the so-called “Hui Confucianism Dialogue” refers to Chinese Muslims who speak Chinese and use the concepts of Confucianism and the Dao as the basis for understanding Islam while at the same time distinguishing between Islamic ideas from Arab countries and the traditional philosophical theories of China. This ideological activity of highlighting their differences while affirming their commonalities lasted for over a thousand years and ultimately determined the shape of Chinese Islamic philosophy. This book provides many historical examples of this phenomenon woven together to present a coherent narrative of the Hui Confucianism dialogue (Liu, 2006).

In *The Exchange Course and Prospects of Islamic Civilization and Chinese Civilization*, Ma Mingliang begins with the basic observation that both Islamic civilization and Chinese civilization have rich ideological systems, profound cultural heritage, and long-lasting vitality. Over the past 1,300 years of historical development, the two have established a foundation of mutual exchange. In the wake of globalization, both are increasingly showing their unique charm and facing similar challenges. Only by interacting, exchanging, and learning from each other can they benefit from and complement each other’s strengths, achieve common prosperity, and contribute to multiculturalism and the development of human civilization in the context of globalization. This

book explores the history of the multifaceted relationship between Islam and China before turning to issues of globalization and three “areas of dialogue” identified by the book’s authors: ecological environment issues, world peace, and global ethical issues (Ma, 2006b).

The dialogue between Islamic civilization and other civilizations, as well as the dialogue between Islam and other religions, has become a trend in recent years. As we know, both cultural conflicts and religious dialogues are rooted in a fundamental background, namely the flourishing of religious pluralism in the 20th century. Therefore, it is undeniable that a closely related issue is the study of religious pluralism.

- Editor in Chief Jin Yijiu and Vice Editor in Chief Wu Yungui, *Contemporary Religion and Extremism*, China Social Sciences Press, 2008.

- Ding Ke Jia, “Reconstruction, Dialogue, Cultural Enlightenment—Historical Types and Ideal Pursuits of Chinese Muslim Intellectuals”, *Hui Studies*, 2000, Issue 3.

According to the overarching narrative of the edited volume *Contemporary Religion and Extremism*, edited by Jin Yijiu and Wu Yungui, the relationship between contemporary religion and politics is extremely close. An important trend in the development of religion in contemporary society is the evolution toward non-religion, that is, the transformation of religion. Due to extreme belief and fanatical behavior, especially the politicization and organization of religions, contemporary religions inevitably degenerate into religious extremism. This book theoretically analyzes the relationship between religion and religious extremism based on many examples and social phenomena. On the one hand, religious extremism maintains a certain connection with its religion of origin, and it is “religious” extremism; on the other hand, it is fundamentally different from the religion it originates from, hence the term “extremism”. This book helps readers gain an overall understanding of the development and spread of religious extremism worldwide, as well as the trends of Islamic extremist forces in various countries and its impact on the individuals who live there. It also discusses the trends of contemporary religion, how religion transforms into religious extremism, and the impact these issues have had on Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Judaism, and Shintoism (Jin & Wu, 2008).

Ding Ke Jia’s “Reconstruction, Dialogue, Cultural Enlightenment—The Historical Types and Ideal Pursuits of Chinese Muslim Intellectuals” proposes that generations of Hui Muslim intellectuals have made unremitting efforts and significant contributions to the development of Chinese Hui culture. From the founder, inheritors, and Chinese translators of scripture education to the active representatives of Hui Muslim intellectuals in the modern New Culture Movement, all reflect a distinct sense of the times and richness of Hui culture from which we can see the historical trajectory of its development (Ding, 2000).

Throughout the literature on dialogue among civilizations, new viewpoints have been proposed to address related issues, and there have been theoretical innovations in certain areas. For example, most researchers adhere to the perspective of “differentiated treatment” and oppose conflating international terrorism with universal religions. Thus, they make clear distinctions between Islamic religious extremism and Islam, radical religious organizations, and international or regional terrorist organizations.

Conclusion

In the history of Chinese civilization, religious culture, as an important component of traditional Chinese culture, not only plays a role in the spiritual life of believers, but also has an impact on the spiritual and cultural life of society. Since China’s reform and development, under the influence of the global religious and cultural boom, it has also focused on studying Islamic culture and related fields. Samuel Huntington (1927.4.18-

2008.12.24) put forward the far-reaching “The Conflict of Civilizations”, which was unacceptable to many countrymen experts and scholars, and some also put forward the “Dialogue of Civilizations” theory. Under the impact of academic research trends such as “Clash of Civilizations” and “Dialogue of Civilizations”, research on the dialogue between Chinese Islamic civilization and other civilizations has also achieved certain results. The main characteristic of writing books in this area is to use popular knowledge materials that are suitable for various sectors of society. There are also works exploring the historical evolution of Islamic culture in China, which involve the relationship between Islamic culture and traditional Chinese culture. Before the 1980s, there were no significant achievements in publishing papers. However, since the 1990s, there has been a noticeable increase in papers related to Islamic culture and related fields, with new advances in research areas and methods. There are both articles that explore the attributes and characteristics of Islamic culture from the perspectives of world history and culture, as well as many articles that explore various specific aspects of Islamic culture from the perspective of specific topics.

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