THE LOGIC OF SUCCESSION IN THE CASE OF CHINESE MUSLIMS DURING THE QING PERIOD

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During the Qing period, most of the Muslims living in Eastern China did not belong to any of the Sufi orders. However, they were deeply acquainted with Sufi doctrines. They considered the supreme state of Sufism, the unification with God, or the experiential recognition of the oneness of God as the ultimate mode of the true faith.

According to the general principle of Sufism, one must be under the guidance of a proper shaykh to attain such a state. Najm al-Din Dā'ī Rāzī’s Mirṣād al-'Ibad, one of the most popular Sufi classics among Muslims in Eastern China, also emphasizes this point. It defined the shaykh as the person who obtains a license (ijāza) from his master—who is also qualified as a shaykh—to guide others. This appears to convey that one of the reasons why the Sufis created the silsila or the genealogy of master-disciple transmission—starting from the prophet Muhammad—was that they needed to prove themselves to be proper shaykhs who were guided by other proper shaykhs; this, in turn, gave them proof that they had attained true perfection as Sufis.

However, Jingxuejichuanpu (Genealogy of the Succession and Transmission of Classical Learning), a genealogy of master-disciple transmission among Muslim scholars in Eastern China, written by Zhao Can under the supervision of his master She Qiling, is cause for some amount of embarrassment. Taking some factors into consideration, it would be reasonable to assume that She Qiling edited this genealogy to prove that he was a legitimate Sufi or shaykh who was connected to the line of genealogy of proper shaykhs. However, it traced the genealogy of Chinese Muslim scholars including She Qiling only up to a man named Hu Dengzhou; the genealogy ends here and does not mention the prophet Muhammad as being their intellectual ancestor. This book makes one want to deny the orthodoxy of Chinese Muslim scholars, including She, listed in the genealogy.

The following matter also appears to prevent Jingxuejichuanpu from showing the legitimacy of She Qiling as a Sufi or shaykh. This work does

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not aim to provide information on the genealogical ties between Sufi masters and disciples, both of whom were trained by ritual practices to attain perfection. As the title indicates, this book merely shows that all those who were listed in the genealogy were heirs to legitimate learning through a legitimate line of succession.

Why did She and Zhao make such an imperfect genealogy? We can indicated two points as the factors explaining the manner in which the “Genealogy of Succession and Transmittance of Learning,” originating from Hu Dengzhuo, could become a silsila to prove the legitimacy of She Qiling as a Sufi or shaykh, at least for She himself.

The first point was that Muslim intellectuals in Eastern China recognized the acquisition of knowledge as indispensable for perfection as a Sufi. In this context, the legitimacy of learning proved one’s legitimacy as a Sufi or shaykh.

The other point was that the intellectuals considered that one could inherit legitimate teachings even without transmission from generation to generation. Therefore, for them, Hu Dengzhuo was an appropriate founder of the genealogy or a legitimate shaykh because he secured the legitimacy of learning without the help of any legitimate shaykh who was connected to the silsila descending from Muhammad.

Keywords: Eastern China, Sufism, shaykh, silsila, Jingxueixichuanpu (genealogy of the succession and transmission of classical learning)

Introduction

During the Qing period, most of the Muslims living in Eastern China did not belong to any of the Sufi orders. However, their scholarships and education owed a great deal to Persian Sufi classics, and therefore, they were deeply acquainted with Sufi doctrines. They considered the supreme state of Sufism, the unification with God, or the experiential recognition of the oneness of God as the ultimate mode of the true faith [Jin 1983: 103; Aubin 1990: 501-502].

According to the general principle of Sufism, one must be under the guidance of a proper shaykh to attain such a state. Najm al-Dīn Dāya Rāzī’s Mirṣād al-‘Ībād is one of the most popular Sufi classics among Muslims in Eastern China. This work also emphasizes the above point [MI: 226-235]. It defined the shaykh as the person who obtains a license (ijāza) from his master—who is also qualified as a shaykh—to guide others. Mirṣād al-‘Ībād states that “God’s appointment of the shaykh or the permission (ijāza) of the master shaykh
in which God's appointment is embodied, assigns him to the rank of shaykh and permits him to hatch the eggs of disciples or murid." [MI: 244]5 This appears to convey that one of the reasons why the Sufis created the silsila or the genealogy of master-disciple transmission—starting from the prophet Muhammad—was that they needed to prove themselves to be proper shaykhs who were guided by other proper shaykhs; this, in turn, gave them proof that they had attained true perfection as Sufis.

However, Jingxuexichuanpu 經學系傳譜 (Genealogy of the Succession and Transmission of Classical Learning)6 is cause for some amount of embarrassment. Jingxuexichuanpu is a genealogy of master-disciple transmission among Muslim scholars in Eastern China. It was written by Zhao Can 趙燦 under the supervision of his master She Qiling 舍起靈 (d. 1703), and must have been completed sometime after She's death in the early eighteenth century. This work is embarrassing because it traced the genealogy of Chinese Muslim scholars only up to a man named Hu Dengzhou 胡登洲; the genealogy ends here and does not mention the prophet Muhammad as being their intellectual ancestor. This book makes one want to deny the orthodoxy of Chinese Muslim scholars listed in the genealogy.

Why did She and Zhao make such an imperfect genealogy? Since the Muslims in Eastern China did not belong to any Sufi order, it was difficult for them to link themselves to an established silsila of those orders. However, like other Sufis, it was possible for them to incorporate the prophet Muhammad into their genealogy in some way or the other. Nevertheless, they did not adopt this manipulation of genealogy. Behind this, there appears to have been the logic of succession, which dispensed them from such manipulation. It is this logic that I wish to examine in this paper.

I

Before proceeding to the main issue of this paper, it is necessary to clarify some characteristics that are peculiar to Sufism in Eastern China during the Qing period.

Chinese Muslims can generally be considered to be descendants of foreign Muslims from various parts of Asia, including West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. During the Eurasian unification under the Mongol Empire from the early thirteenth century to the mid-fourteenth century, many foreign Muslims migrated to and settled in China. However, after the collapse of the Mongol reign in China, and particularly after the middle of the Ming period
(the mid-fifteenth century), the number of foreign Muslims migrating to China gradually decreased. Thus, their descendants were alienated from their motherland, and as a result, had to maintain their communities by themselves. They married indigenous women, adopted indigenous children, and over generations, were gradually indigenized and assimilated with the native people, both physically and culturally.

However, the Chinese people still consider most of these migrants as “others” because the migrants have maintained their own religious faiths and customs. According to Chinese historical sources, the migrants were known as Hanhui 漢回 during the Qing period. The word “han” means “Chinese-like” and “hui” means “Muslim.” The term Hanhui was adopted in order to distinguish these migrants from Chanhui 續回 or Turkish speaking Muslims of Eastern Turkistan.

By the mid-sixteenth century, Chinese Muslims had almost entirely lost the original knowledge of their religious faith as well as their ability to communicate in their mother-tongue. It was at this time that a legendary Chinese Muslim scholar appeared on the scene—Hu Dengzhou (according to his epitaph [Yu and Lei 2001: 512-514], he died in 1597). He began to revive Islam in the Shanxi 陝西 province. Hu Dengzhou and other Chinese Muslim intellectuals who inherited his teachings established a system of education to spread the basic knowledge of Islam among the Chinese Muslims and train learned scholars in the Islamic sciences. This system, generally referred to as Jingtangjiaoyu 經堂教育 (the mosque education), took hold in most parts of China during the early Qing period (the late seventeenth century). The exception was Chinese Turkistan, which was newly incorporated into China by the conquest of the Qing Empire in the mid-eighteenth century.

Jingtangjiaoyu usually took the following form: 7

Chinese Muslims generally formed their communities around mosques and invited a teacher, known as kaixue-ahong 開學阿訇, to establish a school at the mosque. This invited teacher gave lessons not only to the members of the community, but also to his followers, who had accompanied him from his earlier days and those who heard of his fame and came to study under his instruction [Kuroiwa 2004: n. 22]. Some disciples were trained to become future kaixue-ahongs in the final stage of their curriculum. Among these were a few who accompanied the teacher when he moved from one community to another and also others who visited other teachers until they had completed their learning of Islamic knowledge.

Muslim students at those mosque schools learned Islamic sciences such as
Arabic and Persian grammar (*nahw*), rhetoric (*bayan*), logic (*manṭiq*), theology (*kalām*), and jurisprudence (*fiqh*); further, with the permission of their teachers, they proceeded to study the Sufi doctrines, known as *Xinglixue* 性理學, through Persian classics on Sufism. Learning Sufism was ranked as the final stage of the curriculum to which only highly advanced students were allowed to proceed. A dispute between She Qiling and his fellow disciple Ma Yunqing 马允卿, recorded in *Gangzhi* 岡志, shows the then status of Sufism [GZ: 165-174]. According to *Gangzhi*, Ma criticized She for his lecture on the Sufi classic *Mogesede* 默格塞德 (this is probably ‘Aziz Nasafi’s *Maqṣad-i Aqšā*). Ma stated that *Mogesede* was a book of heterodoxy which their mutual master, Chang Zhimei 常志美 (d. 1670) had forbidden him to read. She argued that although Ma learned Islamic jurisprudence to some extent, his learning was still not sufficient to be allowed to read *Mogesede*. From this, it can be said that the *kaixue-ahong* evaluated the achievement of his pupils and selected the books that the students should read under his supervision. This is similar to what Sufi shaykhs do for their *murīds*: judge their progress and provide them with the relevant training required. However, while historical sources such as biographies of *kaixue-ahongs* in *Jingxuexichuanpu* emphasize how eagerly the *kaixue-ahongs* were engaged in the study and teaching of classical studies, these sources do not provide any evidence of coaching in any of the Sufi practices like *dhikr* and seclusion. The *kaixue-ahongs* appear to have valued the acquisition of knowledge over training in the practices.

In the mid-seventeenth century, Chinese Muslim scholars and *kaixue-ahongs* began translating Persian classics and compiling Islamic works in Chinese. Among these works were compilations of Chinese translations of Arabic or Persian Islamic texts; others were complete translations of specific classics. Since the original texts included Persian works on Sufism—such as Najm al-Dīn Dāya Rāzī’s *Mirsād al-‘Ibād*, ‘Aziz Nasafi’s *Maqṣad-i Aqšā*, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī’s *Lawā‘īḥ* and Ashī‘a *al-Lama‘ār*—it was natural that Chinese Islamic literature contained flavors of Sufism. However, if we consider that Islamic literature in Chinese, generated amidst the academic atmosphere of *Jingtangjiaoyu*, represents the intellectual mood of the *kaixue-ahongs* and other Chinese Muslim scholars, it can be said that they had a preference toward the acquisition of knowledge over practical training.

*Zhengongfawei* 真功發徵, a book presumed to be published by Yuhaozhou 余浩洲 of Suzhou 蘇州 between 1793 and 1795 [Nakanishi 2002: n. 38], is a good example. This book provides some explanations about *maqāmāt*. 

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A traveler who passes along a mystical path moves toward a trench of animal soul, crosses the corps of devils, passes the rank of angel, and then reaches the stage of man. If he hopes to disclose his pure nature, he must have the training of the thirty stages. Then, with the guidance of the spirit of Muhammad, connected with the Lord, he can at last reach the ultimate stage in which he is connected with the true Lord. There, he stands at the stage of the perfect man who encompasses all stages. Only when he keeps the thirty manners, he can reach the ultimate stage. This stage cannot be reached if, in the least, one is not equipped [ZGFW: 332].

In accordance with this description, the author lists the thirty manners that are demanded at "thirty milestones" or thirty maqāmāts, with commentaries for each manner [ZG: 332-334]. Ten of these manners are also listed in Najm al-Dīn Dāyā Rāzī's Mīrṣād al-ʾĪbād as the "twenty attributes," which the murīd must possess to keep the company of his shaykh in fitting manner and to attain perfect wayfaring on the path, when he has attached himself to the presence of his sheikh and done away with all obstacles and attachments” [MI: 257]. The twenty manners are as follows: the third stage is 'ilm (knowledge); fourth, tauba (repentance); fifth, 'aqīda (faith); sixth, ʿidq (honesty); seventh, taqwī (awe of God); eighth, tajrīd (solitude); ninth, zuhd (abstinence); tenth, ʿadhl (generosity); seventeenth, murūwa (manliness); eighteenth, ḫusn-i khulq (goodness in nature); nineteenth, ʿabar (patience); twentieth, ‘adab (courtesy); twenty-first, mujāhada (discipline); twenty-second, shujāʿa (braveness); twenty-third, malāma (openness to criticism); twenty-fourth, aiyārī (daring to thrust into the mythical path); twenty-sixth, tafwīḍ (reliance on God); twenty-seventh, taslīm (obedience to the shaykh); twenty-eighth, aql (reason); and twenty-ninth, niyāz (longing). The remaining ten are included in "Deeds of People of Ṭariqa" and "Deeds and Signs of People of Ṭariqa"; in each of these, Maqṣad-i Aqṣā enumerated ten. The first is ṭalab-i Khudāy (pursuit of God); second, ṭalab-i dānā (pursuit of a sage); eleventh, 'uzla (seclusion); twelfth, kam Khwurdan (eating little); thirteenth, kam guftan (reticence); fourteenth, kam khtuftan (sleeping little); fifteenth, suḥl (reconciliation); sixteenth, shafaqa (compassion); twenty-fifth, qanā'а (satisfaction); and thirtyeth, tamkīn (solidness).

Since Mīrṣād al-ʾĪbād is the only literature on Sufism that is mentioned in Zhengongfawei [ZGFW: 328], it is clear that the twenty attributes of Mīrṣād al-ʾĪbād were the source of twenty of the thirty manners mentioned in
Zhengongfawei. However, it is important to note that Zhengongfawei and Mirṣād al-'Ibād give remarkably different explanations of the stage of ‘ilm.

Mirṣād al-'Ibād refers to ‘ilm as the twelfth of the twenty attributes and explains it as follows:

The twelfth attribute is ‘ilm. One must acquire a degree of knowledge that will enable him to satisfy the religious duties imposed upon him, such as prayer, fasting, and other pillars of faith. Further, one should not strive for knowledge in excess of this, because he would then cease from proceeding along the Way [if he does so]. If one is at the stage of completion of his Way, he does not have to avoid [knowledge]. If he is about to assume mentorship or if he has already reached the rank of master, knowledge of the Qur’an and the Sunna will be useful rather than harmful [MI: 260].

In Zhengongfawei, ‘ilm is explained as follows:

The third manner is ‘ilm (erling 爾令). It means that one must learn the regulations of Sunna. There is no exception for this. If he does, he can observe all orders and prohibitions. After that, he can proceed to learn the knowledge required for recognizing himself and the Lord, and purifying his mind and his soul. Following these steps, one can, in the end, proceed along the Way of Truth [ZGFW: 332].

While Mirṣād al-'Ibād limits the range of knowledge to be acquired and recommends the avoidance of excessive learning, Zhengongfawei states that knowledge on Sunna and Sufism is both indispensable and recommendable. This implies that the author of Zhengongfawei considered the acquisition of knowledge to be significant for perfection as a Sufi.

Mirṣād al-'Ibād and Zhengongfawei also have notable differences with regard to explanations on ḥusn-i khulq (goodness in nature). Mirṣād al-'Ibād states that one should be patient with and display modesty toward others in the former part of the explanation. It then lists various precautions for the samā‘ in the latter part. Based on this description, Zhengongfawei summarizes the former half but makes no mention of the latter. This also suggests that its author was indifferent to religious practices like samā‘.

As suggested by these examples, Sufism had certain influences on Muslim intellectuals in Eastern China during the Qing period. However, it did not
encourage them to engage in ritual practices; rather, it made them to consider the acquisition of knowledge as the most important presupposition for perfection as a Sufi.

II

*Jingxuexichuanpu* has the following composition:

*Jingxuexichuanpu* begins with some prefaces, following which, it presents a genealogical tree called "General View of Succession and Transmission." This is a genealogy that depicts the master-disciple transmission of major *kaixue-ahongs* in Eastern China who appeared on the scene from the end of the Ming dynasty to the beginning of the Qing dynasty. The tree begins with Hu Dengzhou, passes through several generations, and ends with the generation of Zhao Can, author of *Jingxuexichuanpu*. The genealogical tree is followed by some explanatory notes and the biographies of twenty-five selected *kaixue-ahongs*. In *Jingxuexichuanpu*, only those twenty-five are honored with a special title *xiansheng* 先生, distinguished from the others who are mentioned along with a title *shi* 師 (both *xiansheng* and *shi* means "teacher"). At the beginning of each biography, there is a more detailed list of the direct disciples of each *kaixue-ahong*. This includes the names of some of the disciples who are not mentioned in the genealogical tree. In some cases, the biography of the master is followed by those of his famous disciples. These biographies are followed by three supplementary sections. The first one consists of descriptions about a *kaixue-ahong* living in Bozhen 泊鎮, Caojihui 曹繼輝, his disciples and other *kaixue-ahongs* in Bozhen. Caojihui was a disciple of She Qiling, the editorial supervisor of *Jingxuexichuanpu*. The second section provides information on patrons of *kaixue-ahongs*. The third section discusses some corrupt scholars. Finally, *Jingxuexichuanpu* contains some brief writings of Zhao Can.

She Qiling, the editorial supervisor of *Jingxuexichuanpu*, is one of the names included among the twenty-five selected *xianshengs*. She wrote under the pseudonym "Ragged Idiot (Ponachi 破衲癡)", which is immediately reminiscent of a typical image of the Sufis. He was also an enthusiastic scholar of Sufi literature and translated Persian works into Chinese [Jin 1994: 69; JXXCP: 80-81]. Among his translated works are Najm al-Din Dāya Rāzi’s *Mirtād al-‘Ibad*, ‘Aziz Nasafi’s *Maqṣad-i Aqṣā*, and Abdurrahmān Jāmi’s *Ashitfa al-Lama‘āt*. Taking these factors into consideration, it would be reasonable to assume that She Qiling edited *Jingxuexichuanpu* to prove that he was a legitimate Sufi or shaykh who was connected to the line of genealogy of
proper shaykhs.\textsuperscript{15}

\textit{Jingxuexichuanpu} does not aim to provide information on the genealogical ties between Sufi masters and disciples, both of whom were trained by ritual practices to attain perfection. As the title “Genealogy of Succession and Transmission of Classical Learning” indicates, this book merely shows that all those who were listed in the genealogy were heirs to legitimate learning through a legitimate line of succession. However, it is necessary to note that Muslims in Eastern China during the Qing period evaluated the acquisition of knowledge as an indispensable condition for perfection as a Sufi. In this context, the legitimacy of learning proved one’s legitimacy as a Sufi or shaykh, and in this sense, the Genealogy of Succession and Transmission of Classical Learning served as persuasive material to show that She Qiling was a Sufi or shaykh in the legitimate sense of the term.

If this is the case, another question arises. If \textit{Jingxuexichuanpu} was expected to prove the legitimacy of intellectuals listed in the genealogy, why did the genealogy start with Hu Dengzhou and not Prophet Muhammad? Hu Dengzhou does not appear to be an appropriate founder of the genealogy because he was not connected to the line of masters and disciples descending from Muhammad. According to the general principle of succession in Sufism, Hu Dengzhou was not a legitimate shaykh, and therefore, neither was She Qiling.

However She Qiling did not consider this to be true. Consider the following excerpt from \textit{Jingxuexichuanpu}.

Later, Master [Ma] Minglong [馬明龍] got angry when he learned that Master [Chang] Yunhua [常雲華] insisted that he understood even the deepest core of that text by his own efforts. He said, “Who does he think he is? Nobody can understand without help.” I suppose the fact was that one of the two xianshengs was guided by his master and the other interpreted the text [without help]. It was merely a matter of degree to which they demonstrated their capability. (Original note: A way is not made unless somebody creates it. If somebody goes [where there is no way], a way is created. Then, the way may be widened and leveled so that a carriage can pass through.) [JXXCP: 42-43]

Prior to the above episode, \textit{Jingxuexichuanpu} narrates the story in which Ma Minglong (d. 1678) read the text called \textit{Mirṣād} (presumably Najm al-Din
Dāya Rāzi’s *Mīrṣād al-ʿibād* under the guidance of a Sufi of unknown foreign origin, Jilialoli (presumably Jilāni) [JXXCP: 42]; also, Chang Yunhua (or Chang Zhimei) read the same text, *Mīrṣād*, for himself, declining Jilialoli’s offer to supply a guidebook for the text, provided that Chang agreed to become his disciple [JXXCP: 54-55]. Ma was angered with Chang at this point. It is probably because he thought that Chang had deviated from the doctrine of the necessity of a shaykh in Sufism. It is evident that Ma believed that the guidance of a shaykh was indispensable for understanding text correctly. On the other hand, Zhao Can, author of *Jingxue xichuanpu*, put forth a counterargument to Ma’s anger. The two sentences following “I suppose” (in the excerpt above) stated his opinion on the matter. This must also have been the opinion of She Qiling, who was Zhao Can’s teacher, the editorial supervisor of *Jingxue xichuanpu*, and a disciple of Chang. We can paraphrase their opinion as follows: As Chang demonstrated his capability to understand text correctly without support, Ma also would have been able to do so if he had wished. In other words, for Chang and She, the doctrine of the necessity of a shaykh in Sufism was not necessarily absolute. Therefore, it did not prevent them from thinking that Hu Dengzhou could secured the legitimacy of learning even without the help of any legitimate master shaykh who was connected to the *silsila* descending from Muhammad. It is probable that Hu was a legitimate shaykh for Zhao and She.

Other Muslim intellectuals in Eastern China seemed to share this idea. Wangdaiyu’s (d. ca.1657) book, *Zhengjiaozhenquan* 正教真诠, contains another example. What is meant by the right way of learning is not only following what predecessors did and did not do or maintaining the records they left behind. It is essentially learning to reach proper enlightenment through one’s own self, and it is also learning to grasp the universal principle through the careful observation of all things in the universe. Therefore, the sage is not anxious about the lack of texts and teachers. For him, everything in the universe is his teacher and textbook [ZJZC: 104].

From this excerpt, we can also recognize the idea that legitimacy of learning can be maintained without the teaching of shaykhs.

Muslim intellectuals in Eastern China considered that Hu Dengzhou was a legitimate successor, in some sense, to the learning of Muhammad. The epitaph
of Hu Dengzhou [Yu and Lei 2001: 512-514] records the following. Hu Dengzhou's tomb was raised in the Xianyang 咸陽 prefecture of Shanxi province, and is now lost.

I have heard that the universal truth (dao 道) has no fixed form but is always revealed when the saint founds his teachings. Those teachings involve some specific norms that are clarified by sages and transmitted to their successors. Through this succession, the universal truth shared by the heaven and human beings is eternally demonstrated and never forgotten by people. If we consider this carefully, we can observe the following fact. Adam, ancestor of all human beings, was born in Mecca (xiyutianfangguo 西域天方國) and started the genealogy of learning. Later, just as water flows from its source to far distances, saints like Seth, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Moses, David, and Jesus transmitted teachings without breaks. When Jesus left the world, its order declined at once, but Prophet Muhammad appeared with the tide of the times and restored it [...]. And who expected that the rise and fall of teachings would be repeated later? When saints and four caliphs passed away, evil teachings flourished and true ones disappeared. Fortunately, Abū Ḥanīfa appeared, revived teachings, and transmitted the genealogy [...]. Later, those teachings were introduced to China. In this country in the Far East, the number of sacred writings and those who studied them were insufficient. Proper interpretations of texts were not known and people did not have the means to diffuse them. However, destiny rotated and things were repeated. In the first year of Jiaqing 嘉靖, our respected teacher, Great Master Hu, appeared. His personal name was Dengzhou, alias Mingpu 明普, and his family had been living in the area along the Wei River 渭濱. He studied Confucianism when he was young and was then taught our teachings by Master Gao 高, who was from the same province as Master Hu. When he was taught their outline, he suddenly attained a perfect understanding of the meanings of the sacred writings and the logic about the heavenly mandate and the human nature. He felt indignation about the then situation of learning in China and decided that it was his duty to show the right way to others. The master devoted everything he had to teaching those who visited him carrying their own books with them from far away. He took pleasure in
teaching them. Teachings about the universal truth, which were hidden for hundreds of years since Abū Ḥanīfa, were revived by our respected Great Master, who became the legitimate heir of the genealogy of teachings. After this, some members of the Feng 馮 family and Hai 海 family were provided an outline of the teachings, which they taught to others. Thus, our teachings have become prosperous in China.

What is interesting is that the epitaph shows both the continuity and discontinuity between Hu Dengzhou and Muhammad. According to the theory of Sufism, the legitimacy of Hu’s learning was ruined because his teachings were not transmitted from those of Muhammad from generation to generation. However, the writers of the epitaph were proud that this fact proved Hu’s extraordinary ability to revive the legitimate teachings of Muhammad. They pointed out that Muhammad himself was a reviver of the tradition after the discontinuation of the genealogy, and they admired Hu by likening him to the Prophet. To them, the tradition of learning that originated with Adam became a groundwater that welled up as a new spring named Muhammad. This spring became the source of a new stream. Similarly, Hu Dengzhou was considered to be a newer spring connected with the stream through a groundwater; this implies that Hu could become the source of yet another stream.¹⁸

Conclusion

In the above argument, two points were indicated as the factors explaining the manner in which the “Genealogy of Succession and Transmittance of Learning,” originating from Hu Dengzhou, could become a silsila to prove the legitimacy of She Qiing as a Sufi or shaykh, at least for She himself. The first point was that Muslim intellectuals in Eastern China recognized the acquisition of knowledge as indispensable for perfection as a Sufi. The other point was that the intellectuals considered that one could inherit legitimate teachings even without transmission from generation to generation.

At this point, it should be noted that the Chinese Muslims were under a peculiar situation, which resulted in the emphasis on knowledge rather than practice and the denial of the absolute priority and necessity of the shaykhs. The peculiar situation was that they could hardly practice spiritual trainings under the guidance of shaykhs because they did not belong to any Sufi order.

However, it is also possible to consider this point in reverse. This implies
that such a situation was invited by the Muslim intellectuals’ emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and their acceptance of the genealogy of Hu Dengzhou as a legitimate transmission of learning. *Jingxueyixinpu* contains a description to convey this type of idea as the opinion of the author or the editorial supervisor.

Though Jiliaoli preferred having disciples, we must admit to his contributions because he brought legitimate teachings to our country. We have had many guests coming from the West since the beginning of the Qing dynasty, most of which were humble ones who depended on us for food and lodging and spent an idle life. Jiliaoli brought us esoterica of Sufism. An *ahong* (original note: title to the distinguished persons) of Yemen (original note: name of the river) with the talent and education provide us with the norms of jurisprudence and correct our understanding of religious laws (original note: many intellectuals became his disciples, and his favor spread far and wide in this country. He was so wise that he returned to his country the moment he foresaw that a turbaned evil man would spread false teachings in the capital.) Ebudulezhilili (original note: a person from Bukhara) came carrying sacred writings with him, made copies of these, and spread the teachings of the founders of four law schools. Gexin showed an example of asceticism, integrity, and avoidance of greed, which encouraged scholars of our way of learning. There are a few others who made contributions; however, details pertaining to them are unknown. The remaining foreigners were merely interested in increasing the number of clients, cheated thoughtless people, and swindled money and wealth out of them. We know neither from where they came nor what kind of faith they had, but their words and deeds enraged us. Fortunately, we are living under the reign of the sagacious emperor, who recently expelled this lot and prohibited you to go abroad so that any trouble would not occur in the future. Thanks to him, people of our way could enjoy the greatest happiness [JXXCP: 56].

This quoted passage expresses disgust toward visitors from the West. At the same time, the reader gets a sense of the author’s pride in the legitimacy of Sufi learning. It is this mentality on the part of the Muslim intellectuals in Eastern China that can be identified as a probable reason for the prevention of the spread
of Sufi orders in their communities.

Notes

1 This paper is based on a previous article in Japanese [Nakanishi 2002], to which I added some new historical records as materials and modified its composition along the lines of a newer theme. I would like to thank Professor Masayuki Akahori for his helping me in writing this paper in English.

2 In this paper, so-called Eastern China is, roughly, the region that includes the Shanxi province along its western boundary, separating it from Northwestern China which consists of provinces such as Gansu, Ningxia, and Qinghai. In Northwestern China, the Sufi orders known as Menhuan 門宦, linked to the Naqshbandiya-Khufiyya, Naqshbandiya-Jahriyya, Qadiriyya, or Kubrawiya have been organized since the late seventeenth century; this was undertaken by the Chinese Muslim shaykhs who were murids of the foreign shaykhs (such as the famous Naqshbandi-Khufi Khwaja Afaq, who died in 1694, and the unknown Qadiri Abdullah from Baghdad, who died in 1689 in China). In this area, most of the Chinese Muslims belonged to these Sufi orders. Thus, religious elites were engaged in spiritual training under the guidance of their shaykhs; moreover, the masses revered their shaykhs, followed their orders, and paid homage at the tombs of their predecessors. Refer to [Ma 1995; Ma 2000] for Menhuan.

3 There are some exceptions. For instance, Ma Mingxin 馬明心 or the first murshid of Jahriyya-Menhuan had disciples from Yunnan and Shandong [Zhang 1993: 128; Ma 2000: 94].

4 Refer to [Leslie and Wassel 1982; Leslie, Yang, and Ahmed 2001] for the Arabic and Persian literature that was read among the Muslims in Eastern China during the Qing period.

5 I referred to [Algar 1982] in translating Mīrzād al-‘Ībād.

6 Refer to [Yang 1988] for further information about this literature.


8 Refer to [Liu and Liu 1992] for this literature.

9 See, for example, [Jin 1983; Aubin 1990; Murata 2000] for the influence of Sufism in Chinese Islamic literatures.

10 Thirty manners were expressed in Arabic or Persian terms transliterated phonetically into Chinese. Though [Aubin 1990] attempted to restore their original terms, this study did not identify the source of thirty manners and contained several errors in the restoration.


13 “Deeds and Signs of People of Ḥaqīqa” are as follows [MA: 216]: 1. ʾan ast ki ba-khuday rashida bāshad wa khuday rā shanākhta būd wa ba’d az shanākh-i khuday tamāmat-i jawāhir-i asḥā’ rā ka-mā hiya dānastā wa dida būd; 2. ṣulḥ; 3. shaفسa kardān; 4. tawāfū‘; 5. riḍa wa taslim wa azādī wa farāgha; 6. tavakkul wa ṣabr wa ṭaḥāmmul; 7. bi-tam‘i‘; 8. qanā‘a wa farāgha; 9. ʿazār nā rasāndan wa rāḥa rasāndan; 10. tamkin.

14 Jingxuechuanpu contains a description of its reason for including a record on Caojihui as an appendix [JXXCP: 95]. It states that She Qiling expected his disciple Caojihui to make a new resolve when Cao knew that he was not included as one of the twenty-five xianshengs. He came up to She’s expectations and became a great kaixue-ahong. Satisfied with that achievement, the name Caojihui was added in the second proof of Jingxuechuanpu.
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In the preface, She Qiling wrote that the formal purpose of publishing Jingxuexichuanpu was to keep alive among people the memory of the contributions of kaixue-ahongs [JXXCP: 3-4].

This does not mean that they disregarded the necessity. In the instructions for disciples quoted by Zhao Can in one of the prefaces of Jingxuexichuanpu, She Qiling wrote, “One can never [achieve his purpose such as the recognition of the Lord] unless appropriate interpretations of every word and every phrase are transmitted from his master’s mouth to his heart” [JXXCP: 16].

Refer to [Yu and Yang 1993: 69-71] for this literature.

She Qiling seems to have been of the same opinion. In the preface of Jingxuexichuanpu, he wrote, “The universal truth (dao) has neither presence nor absence as the existence in the world, but it has continuity and discontinuity as the essence that dwells in human minds.” Following that sentence, She seems to have said that God sent Muhammad to the Western regions to prevent the discontinuity of the universal truth, and also sent Hudengzhou to lead the people back to the right way [JXXCP: 2]. Although this phrase does contain some ambiguity, it is obvious that She Qiling recognized the similar continuity and discontinuity of both Muhammad and Hudengzhou.

This may be ‘Abd al-Jalil.

This may be Qasim.

Bibliography

Abbreviations


JXXCP: Zhao Can, Jingxuexichuanpu, Qingzhendadian, vol. 20, 1-105.


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