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Shaykh 'Ālam: the Emperor of Early Sixteenth-Century China

Toh Hoong Teik

1. The First Chinese Emperor Converted to Islam?

In the second section of the first part of his *La route de la soie*, the late Iranian scholar, Aly Mazahéri, translates and annotates a Persian text entitled *Khitay-Nāmeḥ* (A Treatise on China). This text was written by a Bukhara merchant, Ali-Akbèr Khitayi, who was sent by a Samarkand prince on a tributary trade mission to China some time around 1500. His knowledge of and experience in China won him a special nickname, Khitayi, meaning "the Chinese," or "the traveller to China". Probably composed in Tabriz and completed in Constantinople in 1516, the *Khitay-Nāmeḥ* provides an interesting account through an Iranian looking-glass on legislature, financial system, economic products, religions, prostitutes, Tibetan travellers etc. in sixteen-century China. Khitayi, who later resided in Constantinople, makes a striking statement in his book that he learned from several traders returned from Beijing that the Zhengde 正德 emperor (Wuzong 武宗, Zhu Houzhao 朱厚照, r. 1506~21) of the Ming Dynasty in China had converted to Islam, thus becoming "le premier empereur chinois à avoir embrassé la vraie Foi" (Mazahéri 160). Mazahéri writes:

[... ..] *Là-bas des marchands-ambassadeurs, arrivant de Pékin, lui racontèrent par le détail comment l'empereur Ch'eng-Te venait de se convertir à l'Islam entre les main du mufti de Pékin, un certain Yu Sha'ban, à la suite d'un rêve, où il aurait vu le Prophète lui administrer le "baptême du cœur". Or Khitayi qui, sans hésiter un seul instant, admet la nouvelle, ajoute qu'il a vu de ses propres yeux cet empereur, à la cour de Pékin, du temps où ce dernier n'était encore qu'héritier présomptif.* (Mazahéri 88)

Au début du XV^e s. le Daiming Khan Jindi (Chêng Tê: 1505~1522) se convertira à l'Islam, grâce à Abd us-Samad Bokhari et Yu Sha'ban, en prenant le nom de Muhammad [... ..]. (Mazahéri 189)

This paper aims to supplement, in this connection, a few Chinese historical sources to Mazahéri's work.

2. Wuzong's Main Interests During His Reign (1506~1521)

Wuzong was an emperor who persistently pursued his personal interests at the expense of the function of his government and the welfare of his people.

Wuzong, besides maintaining an interest in reading, was capable of composing melodies¹. In 1507, he built a courtyard named Baofang 豹房 (The Leopard's Chamber) which might be an allusion to the proverb *bāoyin* 豹隱 implying retirement. Male and female singers and dancers were recruited thereto. He stayed in the Baofang most of the time, leading a dissolute life. State politics worsened under the control of the powerful eunuch, Liu Jin 劉瑾, forming one of the episodes of the notorious "eunuchocracy" in the political history of Ming China. Wuzong soon began to learn Tibetan² and, very likely, some Persian in the process of his practice of foreign mysticism and secret rites. He built Buddhist temples in the palace, dressed himself as a Tibetan lama, performed *dhāraṇī* and *mudrā*³, and enjoyed carrying out shaving and initiation rites for palace maids who wished to become Buddhist nuns. In July 1510, he decreed that a golden seal, together with the royal injunction, be conferred upon a certain Daqing Fawang 大慶法王, or the Religious King (Tib. Chos-rgyal, Skt. Dharmarāja) of Grand Prosperity. This turned out to be Wuzong himself!⁴ He was fond of hunting and dressing as if he were a great warrior. He hated life in the court and thus started travelling in 1518. He decreed that a certain Zongdu Junwu Weiwu Dajiangjun 總督軍務威武大將軍 (the Supreme Commander of Military Affairs, the Mighty Grand General), Zhu Shou 朱壽, should muster armies to attack his enemies. He further ordered that Zhu Shou should be enfeoffed as a reward for his military contributions with the title of Zhenguo Gong 鎮國公 (Duke of the State Defense) and, later, Taishi 太師 (Grand Preceptor), and a prescribed annual salary⁵. This Zhu Shou was, again, the selfsame Wuzong. Wuzong's imperial tour, or "southward patrol" (*nanxun* 南巡), though it became a romantic subject of later vernacular literature, was a disaster for his ministers—many of those who

counselled against the emperor's wishes had been flogged to death—and for his people, for he was interested, above all else, in pretty women. Many prostitutes and other women—including wives and daughters of government officials—were taken by force during his tour⁶. In 1519, in the province of Jiangxi, the Prince of Ning 寧王, Chenhao 宸濠, declared war against the central government. As expected, Wuzong's misconduct was listed in Chenhao's declaration of war⁷. Wuzong, having decreed that the Mighty Grand General be charged to wipe out the revolt, continued to enjoy his trip. The rebellion was soon pacified by the military forces led by the charismatic scholar-official, Wang Yangming 王陽明 (1472~1528), who is best known as a great Neo-Confucianist and one of the outstanding thinkers in East Asian history. Frequenting the house of the Da Xueshi 大學士 (Grand Secretary), Yang Yiqing 楊一清, Wuzong showed his interests in Yang's collection of voluminous reference books on dynastic institutions such as the *Wenxian Tongkao* 文獻通考 (Comprehensive Reference on Institutions) and *Cefu Yuangui* 冊府元龜 (Repository for Principal Reference). He honored Yang by composing several poems for him and polishing those composed by Yang. Arriving at the house of another Da Xueshi, Jin Gui 靳貴, only to find himself attending the latter's funeral, the emperor, mournfully, ordered the Tibetan lamas attending him to perform a ritual for Jin⁸. Wuzong returned to Beijing in January 1521, dressed as a triumphant warrior, with captives of the Chenhao rebellion. While performing a sacrificial ceremony as urged by his Confucian counsellors, Wuzong suddenly vomitted blood and collapsed. In April 1521, probably due to his indulgence in sex and liquor, Wuzong died in the Baofang at the age of 30, leaving no progeny. His imperial title, Wuzong (Wu="The Valiant"), was designated to him posthumously to commemorate his "militant quality". His cousin succeeded the throne and was later known as Shizong 世宗. Women were released from the Baofang and Tibetan lamas were dismissed from the court. The Confucian ministers soon found themselves faced with an emperor who was a fervent patron, this time, of Taoism.

With the above historical outline⁹ in mind, we should now turn to examine some Chinese sources, in chronological order, which deal directly with Wuzong's affinity for Islam, or perhaps more precisely, for Persian Sufism.

3. Wuzong's Fondness for Muslim Women (1508)

There is, in MSL 63: 814, an entry on the day of *xinmao* 辛卯 of the 12th month in the 2nd year of Zhengde (January 24, 1508) which reads:

The Vice-Commissioner-in-Chief of the Imperial Bodyguard, Yu Yong, resigned from office and was granted the privilege that his son might inherit [his post as] Vice-Commissioner. Yu Yong was a Semu man who excelled in occultism and secret play, [so he] gained [Wuzong's] favor in the Baofang [and the emperor's] attendants all avoided him out of awe. [Yu Yong] also addressed [Wuzong saying] that Huihui women, being fair and gay, greatly outmatch [in beauty those in] China [so that] His Majesty lusted over them. The then Commander-in-Chief, Chang Zuo, was also a Semu man. Yu Yong issued an unauthorized order demanding twelve Hui women from Chang Zuo's household who were good at the Xiyu ("Western Regions", a geographical concept which encompasses Central Asia and may stretch as far as the Middle East) dance to be presented [to Wuzong]. [He] also persuaded [Wuzong] to summon female family members of marquises (*hou*) and earls (*bo*) who were Semu natives to the palace to be trained [in dancing]. He was [therefore] hated within and without the court. Later, His Majesty wished to summon Yu Yong's daughter. Yu Yong used the daughter of his white Muslim (Huizi) neighbor act as a substitute under his daughter's name and presented [her to Wuzong]. Fearing that the affair would be exposed, he applied for resignation. 錦衣衛都指揮同知于永致仕，特許其子承襲指揮同知。永色目人，善陰道秘戲，得幸于豹房，左右皆畏避之。又言回回女皙潤瑳粲，大勝中國，上悅之。時都督昌佐亦色目人，永矯旨索佐家回女善西域舞者十二人以進，又諷請召侯伯故色目籍家婦人入內教之，內外切齒。後上欲召永女入，永以鄰人白回子女充名以入。懼事覺，乃求致仕。

In GQ 2906, an entry of the same date reads:

[... ..] Yu Yong led [Wuzong] exclusively to licentiousness. His Majesty, though having practiced his techniques, was unable to "drive" women lastingly, hence it ended with [the emperor] regretting that he had a cousin instead of a son as heir. 永專導淫，上雖習其術，不能恆御女，致有宗祧之恨。

The term Semu can refer to a Uyghur, a Persian, or an Arab, whereas Huihui 回回 or Huizi 回子 refers to Muslims in general. In the Chinese-Persian lexicon of the Huihuiguan 回回館 (the Translation Bureau of the Huihui Language), the term Huihui corresponds to the Persian *Musulman* مسلمان (HY 483: *Musulima'en* 母蘇里馬恩), that is, Muslim. In volume one of the Ming story-collection, *Chuke Pai'an Jingqi* 初刻拍案驚奇 (Slapping the Table in Amazement, First Printing Series), a wealthy Persian (Bosihu 波斯胡) merchant with the surname Ma 瑪 (Muhammad?) in Fujian is styled Huihui¹⁰. In the novel *Linlanxiang* 林蘭香 (Fragrant Ladies), the term Huihui is used in the sense of "visiting merchants that sell precious goods 販寶貨的客人,"¹¹ which certainly often refers to Persian traders in Southeast China who traveled there via Southeast Asia. However, in Yu Yong's case, even if we are to take Huihui as Persian, it is still difficult to determine which ethnic group the term Bai Huizi, "the White Muslim", actually refers to. After the disintegration of the Mongol Yuan empire, there were Mongols and Semu people who remained in China. The number of them who occupied important posts in the Ming government should not be underestimated¹². By adopting Chinese names, like Yu Yong, they concealed their ethnic identities from later historians. Yu Yong's Chinese surname "Yu", however, might be taken from that of Yusuf. It is very probable that this Yu Yong is the *mufiti* Yu Sha'ban mentioned in the Persian text translated by Mazahéri. This, however, requires further investigation.

Wuzong, being himself a satyr, might have been impressed by the promise of the *Qur'an* that men who believe in Allah will be waited on in Paradise by houris (amorous pretty maidens). Yu Yong's actions may be interpreted as an attempt to convert the Chinese emperor to Islam. To Confucian officers, he was no doubt a wicked man who enticed their gifted emperor to debauchery. Soon after Wuzong's death, it was decreed on July 25, 1521 that some eight Huihui women headed by a certain Ni'ergan 你兒干¹³ be sent back to Ganzhou 甘州 (MSL 70: 143). Six days later, Yu Yong was beheaded in front of the Beijing public and his family assets were confiscated (MSL 70: 152)¹⁴.

As to why Khitayi lauded so enthusiastically the beauty of Chinese women (Mazahéri 153: "le plus beau teint, des joues couleur d'abricot, des yeux noirs en amande, une taille de cyprès, des membres d'argent, infiniment de grâce, une voix douce

et de la répartition.”) while Yu Yong tried to convince the Chinese emperor that Huihui (Persian?) women were far more charming than their Chinese counterparts, I shall venture no explanation here.

4. Wuzong as a Shaykh (1515)

Soon after Wuzong's death in early 1521, the Empress Dowager, urged by major Confucian counsellors, abrogated many of Wuzong's "projects". Among them, we find one recorded in MSL 69: 3688 which is worth noting here:

[Previously] the Defender-Eunuch of Gansu, Wang Xin, by His Majesty's edict, recruited those who knew Chinese [as well as being] able to write [either] Persian (Huihui), Mongolian (Dazi, "Tatar") [or] Tibetan (Xifan) [and] were below the age of 15, respectively 20 person each, to be presented [to Wuzong]. [Now, they] too, are to be dismissed [and] given to owners (i.e., to find owners through distribution or sale). 甘肅鎮守太監王欣, 奉上旨, 購通漢語, 能書回回達子西番, 年十五以下者, 各二十人, 以進. 亦罷遣給主.


This entry in the Ming official records informs us of Wuzong's interest in seeking younger companions who knew the Persian, Mongolian and Tibetan scripts—three main foreign scripts documented in the Ming translation bureau, Siyi Guan 四夷館. One learns from Ming vernacular literature such as the *Jinpingmei* that boys were sold to serve as singers or actors to officers and merchants who, besides being womanizers, were pederasts. In Wuzong's case, of course, the official records remain silent.

In GQ 3077, the entry on the day of *dingyou* 丁酉 of the 2nd month in the 10th year of Zhengde (February 22, 1515) reads:

[... ..] His Majesty was then fond of exotica. He learned the Hu language and named himself Hubilie. He practiced [taking] Huihui food and named himself Shaji'aolan. He practiced the religion of the Western monks and named himself Lingzhanbandan. 時上好異, 習胡語, 自名忽必列, 習回回食, 自名沙吉敖爛, 習西僧教, 自名領占班丹.

The Hu language refers to Mongolian as it is obvious that Hubilie was a transcription of the name of the founder of the Yuan Dynasty, Qubilai (r. 1260~94), or of *qubil* in the Mongolian word *qubilyan* ("the Incarnation", Sanskrit. *avatār*). The Mongol Yuan dynasty was officially known in Ming China as Huyuan 胡元. One might be tempted to suggest a historical link between this use of the Hu and the Tibetan Hor especially when one recalls the Tibetan "Chen po Hor gyi rgyal khams" or "Hor gyi rgyal khams chen po" (the Great Mongol Empire or the Great Empire of the Mongols). The Western monks (*xiseng*), in the Yuan and Ming period, always refer to Tibetan monks. Lingzhanbandan can be restored to the Tibetan Rin-chen dpal-ldan ("the Glorious Gem"). Huang Jingfang 黃景昉 also recorded this in GW 83:

[... ...] The emperor once learned Mongolian (Dada, "Tatar") and named himself Hubili. He practiced [taking] Huihui food and named himself Shaji'aolan. He practiced Tibetan Lamaism and named himself the Dharmarāja of Great Jewels (Dabao Fawang), Lingzhanbanzai (sic). [This is something] extremely strange. 帝嘗習韃靼言, 自名曰忽必例, 習回回食, 自名曰沙吉敖爛, 習西番喇嘛教, 自名曰大寶法王領占班再 (sic! *丹, being confused with 丹, the variant of 再. The reading that punctuates before 再 is erroneous). 詭怪極.

Dabao Fawang is the title that was first granted to 'Phags-pa (1235~80) by Kubilai Khan (Qubilai Qayan). Huang had confused it with Wuzong's title, Daqing Fawang (See note 4 below). Taking Muslim (Huihui) food means taking *halal* or "lawful" food, that is, food that is prepared in accordance with Islamic law. For the Chinese, this always implies abstaining from pork. According to Satō 360, Haneda proposed to him that Shaji'aolan was a transcription of the Turkic Shah-i oylan, meaning "youthful king" (Jap. 少年王). Satō offers no further explanation on why *ao-* was chosen to represent the *oɣ* sound. In the sixteenth-century Chinese-Mongolian lexicon, the *Beilu Yiyu* 北虜譯語, the Mongolian *jalayu* ("youthful") is transcribed as *zhalaowu* 扎老兀 (DTBJ 71) and *yalayun* ("goose") as *galaowen* 噶老文 (DTBJ 75). In both cases, the *-ao-* of the Chinese transcription does not represent the Mongolian *-aɣ-* but rather *-ayu-*. It seems to me that *aolan* transcribes the Persian *'ālam*  where *ao-* (ngaw. Cf. Dragunov 790) is to

imitate the Persian/Arabic 'al- sound. We can observe from HY that *shah-i* is consistently transcribed as *shaxi* 沙希 as, for example, in *shahi madar* شاهى مادر (HY 551: 沙希馬得兒, "the king's mother" 聖母) and in *shahi ilhām* شاهى الهام (HY 552: 沙希阿勒哈密, "imperial revelation" 聖諭). If what is given here is *Shahei'aolan* 沙黑敖爛 (Cf. HY 551: *shah-zada* شاه زاد 沙黑咱得, "prince, heir-apparent" 太子), then this may be the famous Persian title, Shah 'Ālam, for an Islamic king. However both Tan Qian and Huang Jingfang were unanimous in giving *Shaji'aolan*. In HY 488, the Persian *shagird* شاگرد ("disciple, student", given in Chinese as 徒) is transcribed as *shaji'erde* 沙吉兒得, showing that 吉 serves to transcribe a guttural. Looking for a phonetically close and semantically meaningful Persian word, I would suggest *Shaykh* شيخ . It is most likely that Wuzong's Persian title is longer, such as "Shaykh 'Ālam al-", but was truncated in Chinese transcription. If what I suggest is correct, then we can conclude that Wuzong had become, or wished to become, both a Sufi master called Shaykh 'Ālam and a Tibetan lama called Rin-chen dpal-ldan! Based on this alone, Wuzong should be remembered by religious historians as one who, at age 24 and as early as in the first half of the sixteenth century, saw the compatibility of Persian Sufism and Tibetan Tantrism.

5. Wuzong Proclaims the Superiority of Islam (1519)

It seems that no Chinese record written from a pure Confucian viewpoint tells us how Wuzong viewed Islam. There is one Muslim record, written in Chinese, that, as one might expect, proudly relates how Wuzong revered Islam. This is in the *Zhengjiao Zhenquan* 正教真詮 (Genuine Hermeneutics of the Right Teaching)¹⁵ written by an important Muslim-Confucian thinker, Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 (circa 1580~1660), whose ancestor was brought from the Middle East to serve at the astronomical observatory in Nanjing. To cite this record in full:

Emperor Wuzong, while commenting on various teachings, told the officers who attended him: "Confucianism, though it can be applied to the founding of secular

institutions, is insufficient for thorough knowledge of mysticism. Buddhism and Taoism seem to [offer] thorough knowledge of mysticism, yet they are unable to [serve the purpose of] returning one's soul to nature. So, the Tao of each of [those] various teachings grasps [but] a slanting view. Only the Pure and True teaching of recognizing the Lord (i.e., Islam) is profoundly founded on right reasonings. That is why [Islam is able to] lay down [its] teaching for a myriad eras, as everlasting as Heaven and Earth." The poem composed by His Majesty reads: "There is one single teaching that is profound while various [other] teachings are misleading./ The profundity and subtlety within it, few seem to know./ Buddhahood is what can be obtained by men through practice, and men have the makings of Buddhas./ If [thou] do not revere the True Lord (i.e., Allah), [thou shalt] revere whom?" —Recounted and impressed on the 12th day of the 10th month in the 14th year of Zhengde (November 3, 1519) by His Majesty's servant, Chen Dace, who is of the eighth generation of the Duke of Mian [and] from the Chief Military Commission of the Rear Army, Beijing. 武宗皇帝評論諸教，謂侍臣曰：“儒者之學，雖可以開物成務，而不足以窮神知化；佛老之學，似類窮神知化，而不能復命皈真。然諸教之道，皆各執一偏，惟清真認主之教，深原於正理，此所以垂教萬世，與天壤久也。”御製詩云：“一教玄玄諸教迷，其中奧妙少人知。佛是人修人是佛，不尊真主卻尊誰？”—正德十四年十月十二日沔國公八世孫北京後軍都督府臣陳大策述梓。

Chen Dace was the great-great-grandson of Chen You 陳友. Chen You was enfeoffed posthumously as the Duke of Mian due to his military merit in the expeditions against the Miao 苗 people (1457). He was of Xiyu (Central Asian/Persian/Arab) extraction. His ancestors had settled in Quanjiao near Nanjing (MS 4488: 其先西域人，家全椒) and had adopted a very common Chinese surname, Chen¹⁶. This Chen lineage seems to have remained a Muslim family in view of the fact that Chen Dace recorded and circulated—probably with Wuzong's permission—this unusual information on Wuzong's affinity for Islam. Chen Dace obviously belonged to Wuzong's Islamic ambience. The mere fact that many of the militarily excellent personages in Ming China were Huihui might account for Wuzong's being attracted to Islam. This is a very important subject for discussion which, unfortunately, must be postponed to another occasion. Suffice it to mention one oft-quoted example here: the renowned Admiral Zhenghe 鄭和 (1371~1435) was a Huihui

from Yunnan. Wuzong, of course, had always fancied himself as a great emperor of military glory.

6. Wuzong Prohibits the Butchering of Hogs (1519~20)

Wuzong's enthusiasm for Islamic styles soon turned out to affect, though provisionally, the everyday life of the Chinese people. During his tarry in Yangzhou, a locale famous for its comely courtesans, the following order, as recorded in the *Yehuo Bian* 野獲編 (Collection of Unofficial Findings)¹⁷, was issued:

The vice-minister of the Board of War, Wang, [herein] conveys a copy of the notice from His Excellency, the Supreme Commander of Military Affairs, the Mighty Grand General, the Regional Commander, the Grand Preceptor and the Duke of the State Defense of the Chief Military Commission of the Rear Army, Zhu, the plenipotentiary: "It has come to my attention that raising and butchering hogs are assuredly common practices. However [the hog] is my zodiac sign and is a homonym of my family name (Zhu). In addition, taking pork causes ulcerous illness which is very inconvenient. For these reasons, local [government and public] are advised that—except for cattle and sheep remaining unforbidden—effective immediately, raising, selling and butchering hogs are prohibited. Should anyone deliberately go against [this regulation], that person as well as his wives and children will be banished to remote borders for perpetual military servitude." 兵部左侍郎王抄奉欽差總督軍務威武大將軍總兵官後軍都督府太師鎮國公朱鈞帖: 照得養豕宰豬固尋常通事, 但當本命, 又姓字異音同, 況食之隨生瘡疾, 深為未便. 為此, 省諭地方: 除牛羊等不禁外, 即將豕牲不許喂養及易賣宰殺, 如若故違, 本犯并當房家小, 發極邊, 永遠充軍.

The Zongdu Junwu Weiwu Dajiangjun Zongbingguan Houjun Dudufu Taishi Zhenguogong was none other than Wuzong himself. The issue of this order was somewhat playful and might have been something very amusing to the emperor. Yet due to the severe punishment it threatened, this prohibition of raising and butchering hogs was only to force the people to exterminate all of the hogs they raised overnight. Again, in the *Yehuo Bian*:

In the year of *jimao* (1519) during the reign of Zhengde, Wuzong patrolled south (*nanxun*) and prohibited the butchering of hogs. The people [were compelled to] have [hogs] that they had reared, regardless of their being big or small (i.e., their maturity), all butchered, salted and preserved. Coming to the Spring Sacrifice in the year of *gengchen* (1520) [when] Confucian temples should have used hogs as sacrifices, the school of Yizhen County eventually substituted sheep for hogs. 正德己卯，武宗南巡，禁宰豬，則民間將所畜無大小，俱殺以醃藏。至庚辰春祀，孔廟當用豕牲，儀真縣學竟以羊代矣。¹⁸

This triumph of Islam over Confucianism was temporary. The entry on the day of *jiawu* 甲午 of the 3rd month in the 15th year of Zhengde (March 24, 1520) in the Ming official records reads (MSL 69: 3541):

Initially, the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (Taichangsi) proposed: "[As] there is a recent ban on hog-raising, there is no way to offer [hogs] in sacrifice. [We] petition to reduce the usual prescription [of offerings]: Where cattle, hogs and sheep were [usually] used [as sacrifices], [we petition to] use only cattle and sheep; where hogs and sheep were [usually] used, [we petition to] use one sheep." [This proposal was] passed down to the Board of Rites (Libu) for a careful study [and the latter] had yet to report [to the emperor]. It happened to be the Qingming Festival [and the Taichangsi] again requested [advice] on what ought to be used [as sacrifices]. The comments from inside (i.e., from the emperor) say: "[With regard to] offerings at the imperial mausoleum, there is a fixed system of rites. How can it be reformed arbitrarily? The Board of Rites [should] discuss it without delay." [The Board of Rites] thus reported: "Hogs are what must be used (i.e., offered) in sacrificial ceremonies. Now the commoners dare not keep hogs and there is no way to buy [hogs], so [the Taichangsi] was forced to make such a proposal. It is appropriate to bid [the Taichangsi] look extensively for [hogs], regardless of their being big or small, to serve [this] urgent need. Meanwhile, [we] entreat [Your Majesty] to send down an edict to immediately loosen the restriction [to the effect that] only where the imperial carriage passes by (i.e., in the presense of the emperor) should the restriction be somewhat observed." The comments from inside were: "Use hogs as usual."

初，太常寺奏：“近有豢豕之禁，無以供祀。請減常例：用牛豕羊者，止用牛羊，用豕羊者，止用特羊。”下禮部看詳，未覆奏。會清明節，復請所用，內批謂：“陵寢祭牲，已有定制，豈可擅更？禮部其亟議之。”乃言：“豕為祀典必用之物，今以民間不敢

畜豕，無從收買，故爲此不得已之說，宜仍令廣求，無拘大小，以供急用。且乞降旨，即弛其禁，惟聖駕所過，稍爲迴避。”內批：“仍用豕。”

Evidently, when it came to being in conflict with the ancestral worship of the royal family, Wuzong, without any admonition coming from his Confucian counsellors, succumbed to the Confucian tradition.

Wuzong certainly had a Muslim entourage travelling with him and they might have had something to do with the ban on hogs and pork¹⁹ in the places he visited. Since Hami 哈密 (Qomul) fell under the control of Turfan, the Ming government was unsuccessful in settling the military conflicts there. The Chief Military Commissioner (Dudu 都督) of Hami, Saiyid Husain (Xieyi Huxian 寫亦虎仙)²⁰, was accused of being a traitor. According to SYZZL 12: 6a, Saiyid Husain, as he was about to be executed, bribed Wuzong's intimate retainer, Qian Ning 錢寧. As a result, Saiyid Husain was vindicated and was placed, together with his son, Mahmud (Maheimu 馬黑木) and his niece's husband (姪婿), Mir Muhammad (Mi'er Maheima 米兒馬黑麻)²¹, in the Huitong Guan 會同館, the reception hall of foreigners. They then "enticed" Wuzong to frequent the Huitong Guan for a purpose that, strangely enough, was not stated. In 1519, Saiyid Husain and Mir Muhammad were granted the royal surname, Zhu, and joined Wuzong's southward trip. SYGK II, 5b gives a somewhat similar account. It is noteworthy that the MSL's records of June 1519 only mention the arrest of Saiyid Husain (3398) and Wuzong's nocturnal visits to places such as "the vegetable gardens of the hall of foreigners 夷館菜園" (3404) in such a fashion as if they were totally unrelated matters. The records in GQ are similar to MSL but "yi guan 夷館" is given as "Siyi Guan 四夷館", the translation bureau (3181)²². The clue to the fact that seems to have been deliberately concealed here is to be found in HMXXL 6: 12b and SYK 3: 3a where it is stated that Saiyid Husain sought the emperor's favor by introducing "secret techniques 秘術". DTBJ 274 states that Saiyid Husain was of Huihui ethnicity 回回族 in contradistinction to Weiwu'er 畏兀兒, that is, Uyghur. This implies that Saiyid Husain was not a Uyghur and therefore might have been a Persian or an Arab. As for Qian Ning, according to JSJW 331, he was bought from Yunnan by the eunuch Qian Neng 錢能

when the latter was Defender-Eunuch there. We do not know his original name. It is possible that Qian Ning was from a Huihui family in Yunnan. Another favorite retainer of Wuzong was the Vice-Commissioner-in-Chief of the Imperial Bodyguard (Jinyiwei zhihui tongzhi 錦衣衛指揮同知), Zhu De 朱德. According to MSL 64: 1488~89, he was at first a domestic servant of Eunuch Pei 裴太監. Due to his capability of making Xiyu cuisine 西域食餌, he gained Wuzong's favor and was granted the royal surname, Zhu. His ethnicity remains unknown.

7. Concluding Remarks

We have seen that it is attested in both Chinese and Persian sources that Wuzong was interested in Islam. Nevertheless, Chinese sources intimate that Wuzong's enthusiasm for Islam as well as for Lamaism was closely related to his pursuit of exoticism and eroticism. This is reminiscent of the patronage of Lamaism by Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 (r. 1464~87), whose death was attributed to taking stimulants presented by Tibetan monks²³. The interaction between Persians and Tibetans in the Ming court definitely forms an interesting topic of study on which, unfortunately, Chinese sources remain silent.

NOTES

¹ GQ 3215: 帝多才藝, 能自度曲, 被歌聲.

² MSL 64: 1397: 上佛經梵語無不通曉. Here, "Fanyu 梵語" refers to Tibetan rather than to Sanskrit.

³ *Xiyuan Wenjian Lu* 西園聞見錄 (Zhongguo Wenxian Zhenben Congshu, 1996), p. 1944: 十數年間, 武宗或胡帽, 或紫衣, 或持咒, 或結印, 往往傳播民間.

⁴ MSL 64: 1407: 命鑄大慶法王西天覺道圓明自在大定慧佛金印, 兼給誥命. 大慶法王, 蓋上所自命也. 及鑄印成, 定爲天字第一號云. This record is attested in HMJL 28, the author of which was then in charge of this matter (時予爲儀部郎中, 專印事). H. Richardson had published in 1958 Wuzong's bilingual letter of invitation to Mi-bskyod rDo-rje (1507~54), the eighth Rgyal-dbang Karma-pa. In that letter which Richardson retrieved from the mTshur-phu monastery, where the Chinese has 大慶法王領占班丹, the Tibetan has "Ta'i-hwa-wang Rin-chen dPal-ldan" (JRAS 1958, p.6). The Chinese 慶 can be read either as a synonym of 喜 ("happiness") or that of 吉 ("prosperity"; 慶 and 吉 can even be pronounced the same in Japanese as *yoshi*). In the former case, 大慶 corresponds to the Tibetan bDe-chen (Skt. Mahāsukha). However, given the fact that 慶 is omitted in the Tibetan transcription, it seems that 慶 serves to embrace the meaning of the Tibetan dPal and should be read in the second sense. I should point out that 大慶, though it seems to correspond to the Tibetan dPal-chen (Skt. Mahāśrī), was in fact one of the titles of reign that had been assumed by the Xixia 西夏 kingdom (1032~1227) of Tanguts. So was Zhengde 正德 ("Right Virtue")! This is indeed a fact that seems to have escaped the awareness of Wuzong's Confucian ministerial board as well as many later historians. I therefore conclude that Wuzong had also been interested in Tangutan history.

⁵ Wuzong, having proclaimed for himself the title of Zongdu (Supreme Commander), even ordered that the seal for the Supreme Commander of Canal Transport be replaced by one bearing the title of Tidu (Superintendent) instead of Zongdu (MSL69: 3473: 改鑄總督漕運關防爲提督漕運, 時上以總督自居故也.) The fact that the Taishi is not a military title prompted Pelliot 1960 (Ch 2, n.4) to suggest that the well-known military title in Mongolian, Taisi, as well as the Taiji, were derived from the Chinese Taizi 太子 rather than Taishi. It should be noted, however, that a number of Jiedushi 節度使 (Military Commissioners) during the Tang-Song period were granted the title of Taishi or Taizi Taishi 太子太師 (Grand Preceptor of the Crown Prince). For instance, Gao Pian 高駢, whose military activities in Vietnam are famous, was granted the title of Taishi (*Jiu Tangshu*, Zhonghua Shuju, 1975, p. 724) and Hou Zhang 侯章 the title of Taizi

Taishi (*Songshi*, Zhonghua Shuju, 1977, p. 7). I am of the opinion that both Taisi and Taiji are derived from one common Chinese source (I owe this, obviously, to Pelliot's insightful observation), not that of Taizi, but of Taizi Taishi. Wuzong apparently viewed Taishi as an honorific title for someone with military merits (Cf. MSL 69: 3406 where Mu Kun 沐崑 was granted the title of Taishi posthumously in June 1519 for his military contributions.). It also seems that Wuzong had in mind the Mongolian Taisi. The memory of the man called Esen-Taisi (Yexian Taishi 也先太師) of the Oirat Mongols (Wala 瓦剌) who captured Emperor Yingzong 英宗 and attacked Beijing in 1449 was, to be sure, still fresh among the Chinese people in the early sixteenth century.

⁶ Flogging was a very common punishment in the Mongol Yuan period. It is said that when Sangge 桑哥 (Samgha) was the Prime Minister of Kubilai Khan, he was very harsh in imposing this on officials of the Six Ministries 六曹官. Due to the plight of Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254~1322), the celebrated artist and the royal descendant of the Song dynasty, who happened to be late reporting for duty and was almost flogged (*chi* 笞) by the magistrate (duanshiguan 斷事官; Mongol. *jaryuci*), the imposing of this punishment was later limited to officials of lower ranks. See Zhao's biography in the *Zhao Mengfu Ji* 趙孟頫集, Zhejiang Guji Chubanshe, 1986, p.269. The Tibetan *dbyugs pa...rgyob* in Śrībutibhadra's *rGya-Bod yig-tshang* (Sichuan: 1985, p. 296) corresponds to the Chinese *chi* 笞. For the account of Sangge in the *rGya-Bod yig-tshang*, see Luciano Petech, "Sang-ko, A Tibetan Statesman in Yuan China", *Acta Orientalia Hungarica*, XXXIV(1~3), 193~208 (1930). Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (r. 1368~99), the founder of the Ming Dynasty, had developed this into the "flogging in the court" (*tingzhang* 廷杖), which is far more ruthless than what Sangge had put into practice. In the Ming period, this, quite often, was no less than a death penalty when "the insulted and the injured" could not stand the physical torture and died before the flogging was fully carried out.

Students of Chinese history should already be familiar with those accounts of Wuzong's relationship with courtesans which are to be found in the major historical sources of the Ming period. Here, I shall only mention one unofficial record, Ding

Yuanjian's 丁元薦 *Xishan Riji* 西山日記 (second volume 卷下, the edition of the *Hanfenlou Miji* 涵芬樓秘笈), wherein it is vividly narrated how some aged prostitutes could not forget the fright of being, in their youth, carried off by Wuzong to Beijing.

⁷ HMJL 27~8.

⁸ MSL 69: 3598.

⁹ For details, see the section on Wuzong in MSL and GQ, and Mao Qiling's 毛奇齡 (1623~1716) *Ming Wuzong Waiji* 明武宗外紀, Shanghai Shudian, 1982.

¹⁰ The same story is also found in Zhou Yuanwei's 周元暉 *Jinglin Xuji* 涇林續記 under the title "The cunning merchants in Fujian and Canton 閩廣奸商", Congshu Jicheng Chubian edition, p. 27.

¹¹ Chapter 50: 小回回買來, 老回回自當定價. Shenyang: Chunfeng Wenyi Chubanshe, 1985. The *Linlanxiang* is a hitherto much neglected novel which is, text-historically speaking, a nexus between the two much celebrated novels, *Jinpingmei* 金瓶梅 and *Honglou Meng* 紅樓夢. The author of this paper carried out a detailed textual analysis demonstrating their relationship in an unpublished book (in Chinese) in 1997. Suffice it to mention here that I judge that this is a novel written in the early seventeenth century or earlier, and therefore I take this example as reflecting the use of the term Huihui during the Ming period.

¹² Zhang Hongxiang's 張鴻翔 *Mingdai Ge Minzu Renshi Rushi Zhongyuan Kao* 明代各民族人士入仕中原考 (Officials from Various Non-Han Ethnic Groups in Ming China) contains 981 entries of names of non-Han officials in Ming government. This record of names was prepared by Zhang in the 1930s under the guidance of Chen Yuan 陳垣, the author of *Yuan Xiyuren Huahua Kao* 元西域人華化考 (Translated into English by Chien Hsing-hai and L. Carrington Goodrich as *Western and Central Asians in China*

under the Mongols : their transformation into Chinese.), and was published posthumously in 1999 by Zhongyang Minzu Daxue Chubanshe. The value of this book lies in the fact that it draws sources from the rare books of the former Beiping Library, for instance, the directories of the Ming Imperial Bodyguard (*jinyiwei xuanbu* 錦衣衛選簿). Since this is a record of names borne by more than one individual (*tongming lu* 同名錄), it does not include Muslim figures such as Yu Yong, Ma Ang, Chen You and Zhu De that are discussed in this paper.

¹³ Ni'ergan (Nilhan?) was probably a Uyghur. Another of Wuzong's favorite Semu ladies was Maji 馬姬. The word *ji* 姬 means either "concubine" or "foreign mistress" (as in *huji* 胡姬, "Persian mistress"). This Lady Ma was the younger sister of Ma Ang 馬昂, Assistant Commissioner of the Rear Army (後府都督僉事). Having married Commander (指揮) Bi Chun 畢春 and become pregnant, she was presented by his brother to Wuzong. She was good at horseback riding and archery, and was able to play Hu music and speak Mongolian (*Ming Wuzong Waiji*, p. 16: 善騎射, 解胡樂, 能道達語.). See also GQ 3102.

¹⁴ See also the juridicial reports in MSL 70: 36 and HJL 2239.

¹⁵ Edition of the Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1987, p. 12.

¹⁶ Serruys 1961: 71 suggests that Chen You was an Oirat Mongol.

¹⁷ Shen Defu 沈德符, *Yehuo Bian*, reproduced in the series of the Siku Jinhushu Congkan 四庫禁燬書叢刊, Beijing Chubanshe, 1997, p. 31.

¹⁸ Cf. MSL 69: 3515 which records that Wuzong arrived in Yizhen on the day of *yimao* 乙卯 (sic! **jimao* 己卯) of the 12th month in the 14th year of Zhengde (January 9, 1520). According to this entry, farmers were forced to "throw all [of the hogs they had raised] into the water 悉投諸水".

¹⁹ Yu Zhengxie 俞正燮 (1775~1840), in his *Guisi Cungao* 癸巳存稿 (Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1957, p.243), suggests that the theory, as found in Chinese medical texts such as *Qianjin Fang* 千金方 and *Shiji* 食忌, that taking pork causes infertility also accounts for Wuzong's ban on pork.

²⁰ See also Pelliot 1948.

²¹ According to MSL 71: 315, after Wuzong's death, Saiyid Husain, together with his son, Mir Muhammad 米兒馬黑麻, his son-in-law, Khoja Mahmud 火者馬黑木, and his niece's husband, Mir Muhammad 米兒馬黑麻, were all executed on December 26, 1521. The name of Saiyid Husain's son was recorded inconsistently in Chinese.

²² The term "yiguan" occurs in Xu Wei's 徐渭 (1521~1593) *Songs of Yanjing* 燕京歌. See his *Qingteng Shuwu Wenji* 青藤書屋文集, 11: 4b, Haishan Xianguan Congshu edition. Xu mentions horse keeping in this poem. Since the Huitong Guan was also responsible for horse keeping whereas the Siyi Guan was a college for training interpreters, it is clear that "yiguan" refers to the former and should not be read as an abbreviation of the latter.

²³ MSL 51: 28: 術誤金丹.

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