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Standardisation in Manuscripts written in Sino-Arabic Scripts and *xiaojing*

Abstract: Standardisation processes concerning orthography, handwriting and page layout can be observed in manuscripts written in Sino-Arabic scripts that may or may not include transliterated Chinese-language texts (*xiaojing*).[1] Besides identifying some of these processes, it is the objective of the present paper to explore the *xiaojing* phenomenon with regard to name and script, earliest evidence as well as its function as a system of writing Chinese. The material used for this investigation are trilingual manuscripts written in Arabic, Persian and Chinese mostly produced in Northwest China in the context of Naqshbandiyya-based Sufism and higher education at the *madrasa*s. Accordingly, the texts inscribed in the manuscripts relate mainly to Islamic mysticism and dogma, to prayer and philology. In the presentation of this material, different page-layout formats and configurations of languages will be looked at and the conventions that have been followed in writing *xiaojing* will also be taken into consideration.

1 Introduction

In this paper, an attempt has been made to identify some standardisation processes concerning orthography, handwriting and page layout in manuscripts written in Sino-Arabic scripts (*khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī*), which include *xiaojing*, i.e. Chinese texts transliterated in the Arabic script. An effort has been made to grasp the *xiaojing* phenomenon by looking at its name, the script used for it, the earliest evidence of its use and by studying its function as a system of transcribing Chinese[2] while also pointing out its inherent deficiencies. The multilingual manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Chinese used as material for this investigation were mostly produced in Northwest China in the cultural environments of the Naqshbandī Sufi and *madrasa* education. The material includes some of the most important Islamic texts which continue to be studied by Chinese Muslims, such as the mys-

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1 Sino-Arabic scripts in this paper are defined as styles of Arabic writing which show a Chinese influence, irrespective of the language, be it Arabic, Persian or Chinese, while *xiaojing* signifies (dialect forms of) the Chinese language written in the Arabic script.

2 It will be shown that the Arabic writing system allows to record the spoken Chinese language in a way that the Chinese characters cannot.

tical *Kitāb al-Jahrī*, *Manāqib* and *Ashiʿʿat-i Lamaʿāt*, and additionally some grammars, catechisms, glossaries and prayer books. In this presentation of textual material, different page-layout formats and configurations of languages will be identified.

Besides covering these points, the *xiaojing* conventions generally observed by scribes will be outlined and exemplified. These include the following, among others: the choice of a small, unpretentious script (mostly); full (or nearly full) vocalisation; graph features serving as adaptations to the Chinese sound system, such as doubling of vowel signs within the *rasm* (consonantal skeleton) of a word; the letters *kāf* and *ṣād* with three dots above them; *fatḥa* added 'superfluously' to a consonant followed by *alif*; hybrid forms including Chinese characters (occasionally); *jīm* written in the initial form even when it occurs in isolation; and the lack of distinction made between the consonantal sounds x- (as in Chinese *xi*) and s- (as in *si*), although the sounds q- (as in *quan*) and j- (as in *jiang*) are distinguished. The *xiaojing* writing system also accurately represents final nasal consonants in accordance with dialectal differences, such as -n/-ŋ variation. In Mandarin variety spoken in Linxia (Lanyin 兰银 Mandarin, the dialect retaining some linguistic traits of Middle Chinese (MC) and which features prominently in the manuscripts discussed in this chapter) the final nasal is realised as [-n] and this sound is written as <n> in Arabic script. This differs from the *xiaojing* used for writing the dialects exhibiting the final velar nasal [-ŋ], which is represented by the letter *kāf* with three dots above.[3]

The Latin-script transliterations of the *xiaojing* transcriptions given in this chapter follow the pinyin system used in the People's Republic of China to transliterate Chinese, despite the fact that pinyin is a rather artificial system and far from ideal for recording the variety of the spoken languages. As the *xiaojing* texts are transliterations of Chinese dialects rather than of Mandarin (Putonghua), the pinyin transliterations can only be considered as approximations to the actual pronunciation.

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3 The authors of the Chinese Wikipedia article '小儿经' (*xiaoer jing*) (Wikipedia '小儿经' *xiaoer jing* 2019) specify that *xiaojing* not only transliterates the language spoken in the Northwest (Lanyin) but also that of the Central Plain and of the Northeast. According to the charts in the same Wikipedia article, velarised /ŋ/ is represented by final *kāf* ڴ written with three dots above and by initial consonant with *sukūn* above it + vowel, e.g. ٿ يَ ڴ (= *yang* 羊, 'sheep'), ڴ وَ (= *wang* 忘, 'to forget'), يُو ڴ (= *yong* 用, 'use'); however, these combinations of letters have not been seen in the manuscripts studied, nor are they included in the Xining *xiaojing* syllabary (see below). It will be demonstrated (e.g. section 4.4.1.), that even the structure of the Chinese language transcribed in the manuscripts shows dialectal influence.

1.1 The name *'xiaojing'*

The name of the Arabic transliterations of Chinese language is used in a small number of variations. *Xiaojing* 小經 (lit. smaller canonical writings) is generally understood to refer to children because it was used in teaching young children Islamic texts in Chinese before they studied the Arabic language.[4] Corresponding to this understanding, the designation *xiaoer jing* 小兒經, meaning 'children's canonical writings' has also been used, and the name *xiaojing* may therefore also be considered an abbreviation of this designation. This didactic use of *xiaojing* is apparent in a small number of Chinese catechisms written in the Arabic script said to have been composed specifically for Muslim children, for instance those authored by Ma Tianmin 馬天民 in the middle of the 20th century, as discussed in section 4.3. However, Arabic transliterations of Chinese were not only employed in primary schools (*xiaoxue* 小學), which were financed by the Muslim communities (*jiaofang* 教坊)[5] and therefore enjoyed independence from the state, but they were also used widely in *jingtang jiaoyu* 經堂教育, or *madrasa* education, in Northwest China. This institution emerged in the middle of the 16th c. in Shaanxi province, from where it moved to southern Ningxia.[6]

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4 Cf. Bakhtiyar (1994, vol. 4, 71).

5 Cf. Stöcker-Parnian 2002, 154.

6 More specifically, to the Tongxin 同心 area of Ningxia; cf. Zhou (2008, 47-48), who mentions the name of Hu Dengzhou 胡登洲 (d. in 1597) from Shaanxi province, the founder of *jingtang jiaoyu* (also Yang 1996, 79).

Fig. 1: The provinces Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, and Shaanxi.

Feng Zenglie 馮增烈 (2007, 618) has proposed an alternative explanation of the name *xiaojing* 小經, however. He explains the designation in relation to the complementary term *dajing* 大經: the 'larger *jing*' are the Islamic scriptures in the Arabic and Persian languages, whereas the 'smaller *jing*' (*xiao jing*) are those written in Chinese language, but in Arabic script. Besides this, Feng mentions the variant designation *xiaojing* 消經 (with nearly identical pronunciation [different tone of the first word], but written in different characters), which he explains as denoting the 'digesting of [Islamic] canonical literature' (*xiaohua jingwen* 消化經文).[7]

[7] The authors of the article '小儿经' (*xiaoerjing*) (Wikipedia '小儿经' *xiaoer jing* 2019) claim, while referring to an internet publication as their source (footnote 2: 回族的语言和文字*Huizu de yuyan he wenzi*, published 2005 on the site '宁夏 旅游网' Ningxia lüyou wang, a tourism page), that in the Northwest the name variant *xiaoerjin* 小兒锦 is generally used, abbreviated as *xiaojin* 小锦, while in the Central plain and the Northeast the preferred form is *xiaoerjing* 小兒經.

1.2 The alphabet and scripts

The *xiaojing* writing system is based on the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet, to which *xiaojing* adds some letter forms derived from Persian, such as *pa*, *čim* and *žay*, and a few relatively unfamiliar graphs such as *ṣād* with three dots above it (as used for the initial c-, as in *can* (Mandarin *cang*) 倉, 'storage').[8] The three dots above the Arabic letter *kāf* (to represent the phoneme j-, as in *jiu* 酒, 'wine' in the standard language [not identical with the one transliterated in the *xiaojing* texts])[9] are an adaptation to the Chinese sound system, whilst the doublings of *ḍamma* (nunation), *fatḥa* and *kasra*, which were added to the consonantal letters in the middle or final position, is a characteristic feature of *xiaojing*.[10] These orthographic features, with variations, are standard usage throughout the *xiaojing* manuscripts consulted. Although they are not written in one particular calligraphic style, the letters are mostly written in a very small script. Arabic texts such as the Qur'an, *Takhmīs al-Burda* (*Mukhammas*) and *Madāʾiḥ*, which are often accompanied by *xiaojing* glosses in the manuscripts, are written in the bold 'hieratical'[11] *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* style in many cases, which is understood to show the influence of Chinese calligraphy. The presence of a sacred text seems to function as a trigger, fostering a standard in handwriting which may or may not include *xiaojing*.

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8 The letter *ṣād* with three dots is also used in the writings of the Tatars of Lithuania and Poland (as pointed out by Alessandro Gori); for this letter in Belorussian, Lithuanian and Polish Tatar manuscripts see Miškinene 2015, 66; a relevant image can be found in Sobieroj 2010, plate 3 (with three dots beneath [!] *ṣād*).

9 *Kāf* with three dots above was used for /ŋ/ in Ottoman Turkish, for /g/ in North African Arabic and Berber, for /g, ŋ, ng/ in Wolof, and in other sub-Saharan writing traditions as well (as indicated by the editors of this volume).

10 A useful set of charts of *xiaojing* letters and compounds accompanied by their Chinese character homologues in Hanzi (小經字母和拼音 ثْيَوْ كِ زِ مُو خُوَ پِ ى) is included in the Xining edition of ʿ*Aqīdat al-islām* / *Xinyang wenda* (no date), pp. 77–79. A list of the phonetic values of 36 consonants in the initial position and 73 syllables ending with a vowel can be found in the Wikipedia article '小儿经' (Wikipedia '小儿经' *xiaoer jing* 2019).

11 I have designated it this way because the classical Ṣīnī style was mainly employed to represent writings considered sacred by Northwest Chinese Muslims.

1.3 The significance of *xiaojing* as a system of transliteration

In his volume dedicated to the subject of Islamic education among the Hui, designated as a 'national minority' in China,[12] Zhou Chuanbin 周傳斌 highlights the unique role played by *xiaojing* as a system of phonetic transliteration of the Chinese language in use in the pre-modern era and as a direct (chronological) precursor of the Latin script.[13] However, as Zhou points out (2008, 60–61), outside China, in the former Soviet Union, the Cyrillic script has been used to transliterate Chinese in a version developed on the basis of *xiaojing*.[14] The Chinese in question are the so-called Donggan, Muslims from the provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu who were deported beyond the borders of the Qing Empire to Central Asia – Yang (1996, 71–72) adds that the destination was Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. The deportees, referred to in the Russian Czarist empire as 'Dungan' but belonging to the same stock as the Hui in China, initially used *xiaojing* to transcribe their native language, but in the first half of the 20th century they were made to adopt the Cyrillic alphabet after having gone through a phase of using the Latin script.[15]

1.4 The earliest evidence of *xiaojing*

Zhou (2008, 57) mentions a stone monument erected in Xixiang 習巷 Mosque at Xi'an University as the earliest evidence of the usage of *xiaojing*. This monument bears an Arabic text on the construction of the building, including Chinese per-

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12 Zhou (2008, 59) includes some pictures illustrating the usage of *xiaojing*, including a modern Arabic transcription of *Zhonghua renmin gonghe guo*, 'The People's Republic of China'; Zhou (2008, 79) offers a picture of *xiaojing* marginalia in a manuscript of the Arabic grammar *Zaowu misubaha* 遭五米素巴哈 [*Ḍaw' al-miṣbāḥ*].
13 Already in the late 16th century the Jesuits had developed a system of transliteration that has left traces in modern pinyin (for the wider context see e.g. Mungello 1989). An in-depth study of *xiaojing* transliterations carried out with the help of linguists while especially taking into account the unusual graph features may help to reconstruct the Chinese language spoken at the time under scrutiny. A comparative study of the *xiaojing* writing system and the Dunggan material from the former Soviet Union is also a desideratum.
14 It should be added that the Dongxiang ethnic group, who live in the Linxia region of Gansu province, also used a variant of *xiaojing* (cf. Yibulaxin 易卜拉欣 2007, 138) called Dongxiang wen 东乡文, 'writing of the Dongxiang' or Huihui wen 回回文, see (Wikipedia '小儿经' *xiaoer jing* 2019).
15 For the context see e.g. Dyer 1967.

sonal names and biographical notes written in the Arabic script in 1339–40.[16] However, *xiaojing* was only used more widely after the emergence of the *madrasa* system at the end of the Ming era (1368–1644). Feng (2007, 618b) mentions two manuscripts produced after the rise of the *madrasas* as the oldest evidence of the usage of *xiaojing* in Islamic writings which are designated as *jingji* 經籍) by Feng; one of these is an 18th-century copy of the Persian Sufi manual *Mirṣād al-ʿibād* written by the Kubrawī mystic Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 654/1256; Okuyan 1988ff., vol. 32, 496–497); this includes Chinese glosses written in Arabic.[17] The manuscript was taken to France in 1909 and given to the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris as part of the exploits of the famous expedition to Gansu led by Henri d'Ollone (d. 1945). It was then described (albeit rather briefly) by Emile Blochet (1909, 290 [no. 8]).[18]

1.5 The shortcomings of *xiaojing*

One major shortcoming of this transliteration system was pointed out by Zhou (2008, 60), who says that a unified system of writing *xiaojing* has never existed; instead of adopting one standard, every Chinese dialect written in the Arabic script has been transcribed according to its own system, which means that certain conventions existed at the dialect level.[19] However, generally speaking, a lack of

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16 A dating most likely referring to the manuscript rather than to the text. Zhou also fails to indicate whether or not the transcription of these names shows any characteristics specific to *xiaojing*. Bakhtiyar (1994, 4, 77; with an illustration) mentions the earliest evidence of *xiaojing* which he saw in a manuscript, namely a copy of Rashīd al-Dīn Faḍl Allāh's (d. 1318) work on medicine, *Ṭibb-i ahl-i Khitā*, apparently dated 1313 CE, i.e. during the author's lifetime (!).

17 In view of its importance as a foundational text for the Kubrawiyya Sufi order, the *Mirṣād* was translated into Chinese: 'Wu Zunqi 伍遵契 began translating it in 1672 and completed it six years later. He entitled it 歸真要道釋義 *Guizhen yaodao shiyi* 'Explanation of the Main Path of Returning to God', or *Guizhen yaodao* 歸真要道 'The Main Path of Returning to God', etc.' (Ma 1999, 34).

18 Feng (2007, 618b) confuses 'F. (sic!) Blochet' with Henri d'Ollone by making an explorer out of the cataloguer while also failing to mention d'Ollone's name. The *xiaojing* marginalia in this manuscript are also mentioned in Bausani (1968, 875).

19 *Xiaojing* transcriptions seem to have mainly been used in manuscript production in the Northwest (but see fn. 3). This impression is based on the perusal of some Arabic manuscripts that originated in the southerly province of Yunnan in which there are no traces of *xiaojing*. One example is a facsimile manuscript of the *Muttasiq al-naḥw*, which is an introduction to Arabic grammar written by Ma Fuchu 馬復初 (Na 2007, 330–331), i.e. Ma Dexin 馬德新 Yūsuf (d. 1874), printed in 1375/1955–56 and sold as a reprint from 1405 [= 1984-5] in Kunming (Chinese title on the front cover: *Jianming ayuxue* 簡明阿語學). The 102-page Arabic manuscript with a 12-page glossary is accompanied by extensive glosses mainly written in the margins, but not a single one is in *xiaojing*. The first page of the manuscript includes biographical notes on the author in

standardisation in its orthography is apparent. Feng (2007, 618b) and Yang (1996, 82–84) both highlight a lack of standardisation as well, which they trace back to the influence of dialects and the tendency of the authors of *xiaojing* (para-) texts to act independently of one another. Another reason is the different sound systems of Chinese and Arabic: the intonation and tone patterns of Chinese, i.e. the multiple tones (in the modern standard language four, in certain dialects more, in others less), are not represented graphically in the Arabic transcriptions, which often leads to confusion and mistakes. Besides that, no distinction was made in transcribing words consisting of one or two syllables respectively, such as *jiu* 'wine' and *ji you* 'chicken oil' (which probably sounded more or less the same; the examples are taken from Yang 1996, 84).

2 *Xiaojing* in *Kitāb al-Jahrī*

Ma Xuezhi 馬學智 Muḥammad Manṣūr, one of the authors of the sacred biography of the Naqshbandī (Jahrī) reformer of Guanchuan 關川 in Gansu, Ma Mingxin 馬明心 Wiqāyatullāh (d. 1781; Ma 2007, 345; Forbes 1960–2004, 5, 851a), says in the preface of his Arabic-language *Kitāb al-Jahrī* (Manṣūr 1933, 15)[20] that he is going to use *xiaojing* at certain points in the text, for which he gives the following reason: 'Most of the words of our shaykhs are in the Chinese language. Expressing them in Arabic is difficult, so some sayings are in Chinese, as it has been feared that the [meaning of the] original saying may be altered by the Arabic expression'.[21]

The *xiaojing* transcriptions scattered in the facsimile Arabic manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Jahrī* (429 pages of 15 lines written by at least two hands in *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* scripts) may be divided into personal names, toponyms, poetical verses, dialogues, proverbs, glosses and compounds.

Arabic, while the glossary has translations of well over a thousand words (*mufradāt*) occurring in the text, which are written in Chinese characters.

20 The *K. al-Jahrī* on the history of eight generations of masters of the Jahriyya branch of the Naqshbandiyya order was authored by Ma Xuezhi 馬學智 Manṣūr (d. 1923) and was published in 1933 as a facsimile manuscript written in a *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* script by Ibrāhīm, Manṣūr's servant (a partial Chinese translation was published in 1997). The text starts with the vita of the 'Pathfounder', Ma Mingxin, and ends with that of Ma Zhenwu 馬震武, who died in 1960 (cf. Sobieroj 2016a, 140).

21 The passage is translated in the *Daotong shizhuan* (Manṣūr 1997, Introduction, 10): '[...] in order to maintain the original meaning of the Mawlā's [i.e. Mingxin's] words (*baochi yuanhua*), I have used a *xiaoerjin* 小兒錦 (!) transcription [in] many places and hope that the reader will understand [...]'.

2.1 Personal names

Laojun 老君, which literally means 'old man', designates the deified Laozi. It occurs in a question uttered reproachfully by Ma Mingxin ('Why, then, are there people [in my ritual circle] who still believe that the "Old Man" is God' [*man iʿtaqada al-Lao-jun ilāhan*]) and was directed at an erstwhile Taoist monk who had converted to the Islam of the Jahriyya. The name *laojun* written with the Arabic definite article has three dots above the letter *kāf* and nunation above the final *yāʾ*: اللوکِّیٌ .

The letter *kāf* representing 'Jie' in the name of the famous 18th-century mystic Liu Jielian 劉介廉[22] (Manṣūr 1933, 40) is likewise written with three dots above the horizontal line.

The names of the (eras of the) Qing emperors Qianlong 乾隆 and Kangxi 康熙, which are mentioned in *Kitāb al-Jahrī* (Manṣūr 1933, 69) to specify the year of the 'martyrdom' (*shahādatuhū*), i.e. death, and birth of Mingxin respectively, are also transcribed in the Arabic script, viz. as للسّلطان الكِيْنْلُنْ and للسّلطان الكانسي. Only the first name, *al-Sulṭān al-Kianlun* (= *al-Qianlong*), is provided with vowel signs; the second one was left void of any vocalisation. The lack of vocalisation in the writing of al-Kansi is indicative of the absence of standardisation – unless it has been omitted because the *matres lectionis* make the *rasm* unambiguous.[23] To sum up, then, there seems to have been a tendency to standardise the transcription of names by prefixing the Arabic article *al-* to Chinese names.

2.2 Toponyms

In accordance with *xiaojing* conventions, topographical names are usually provided with full vocalisation in the Arabic text (e.g. in Manṣūr 1933, 32, *al-Lianhuachen* اللِیَنْخُواجِن 蓮花城; *chen* is used instead of *cheng* 'town' for standard /ŋ/). However, in the second occurrence of the place name four lines below that, the vocalisation is dispensed with, perhaps because of having been considered redundant. On p. 32, the names of the town of *Fuqiang* 伏羌 and the mountain called *Liujiapo* 劉家破 are also stated in the Arabic script, the latter name with full vocalisation.

In the toponym *Qin'an xian* 秦安縣, written as الكِنْغَنْسِیَن (Mansūr 1933, 37), the non-phonemic initial consonant sound of *an* 安 is irregularly rendered by *ghayn*

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22 I.e. the mystical philosopher Liu Zhi 劉智 of Nanjing (d. 1745; Luo 2007, 321–322), the 'Ibn ʿArabī of China'.

23 In contrast, the name of the chieftain of the village of Didianzi, Ma Laoye 馬老爺, is only provided in the Arabic translation: *al-Amīr al-Farasī* (Manṣūr 1933, 76, penultimate line).

as opposed to ʿayn. (This is the so called 'empty initial', or 'zero onset', which have a range of variation such as [ʔ], [ɣ], [ŋ] and [ɦ], Duanmu 2007).

The name of the river called *Miaoer he* 廟兒河 المِيَوْعَخُو is transcribed with full vocalisation, including the word *he* for 'river', with *ḍamma* above the letter *khāʾ* and *fatḥa* above the letter *waw*. The name of the *Gaoshan* 高山or 'High Hill' mountain mentioned three lines above, in contrast, is given in the Arabic translation, viz. *al-Jabal al-ʿālī* (Manṣūr 1933, 45).

The toponym *Guanmenkou* 関門口 (Manṣūr 1933, 46), to which the definite article is added, has been transcribed with vocalisation. The vocalisation of *men* 門 'gate' with *ḍamma* مُن and *kou* 口 'mouth'/'entrance' with *kasra* beneath the letter *kāf* كِو is also noteworthy.

In the place name *Puer zhuang* 普爾莊 (Manṣūr 1933, 46), consistently, the final [-ŋ]sound of *zhuang* has not been reproduced in the Arabic script either. Conspicuously, the syllable *er* has merely been transcribed by the letter ʿayn with the *fatḥa* vowel sign.

Only rarely has a place name been left without any vocalisation at all. In one such instance, the unvocalised *xiaojing* is explained in an Arabic translation: on p. 76, the location called *Didianzi* 底店子, which was populated by people who honoured Mingxin, but hated his successor, the Shaykh of Pingliang, is transcribed as ديدينز, but the name is preceded by an Arabic translation and note, viz. *ribāṭ al-qaʿr, wa-huwa bi-lisān al-ṣīn Didianzi* 'hospice of the depression, which is called D. in Chinese'. It appears that toponyms are regularly provided with vocalisations in the manuscript, while less often a place name is given in an Arabic translation.

2.3 Chinese poetry

The lines of a *duilian* 对聯 or 'antithetical couplet of parallel sentences'[24] which Ma Mingxin recited extemporaneously in reply to a request by some dignitaries at the governor's court in Xi'an, are transcribed in the Arabic script. As for the features of the script , the *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* used for transcribing the *duilian* has been

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24 The couplet quoted by Mingxin is designated as poetry both in *Kitāb al-Jahrī* and the Chinese translation: The daozu 道祖, 'Pathfounder', was asked to compose poetry (*inshād al-shiʿr, zuo shou shi* 作首詩) by his detractors and he accepted the challenge: 'You want me to compose verses, while you cannot compose the first line (*shang lian* 上聯). Well, in that case I will compose the first and you do the second line' (*dui xia lian* 对下聯 ; Manṣūr 1997, 14-15; Manṣūr 1933, 28). The *duilian* includes rhyme words, viz. 'Shaanxi' 陝西 and 'ma ti' 馬蹄 ('horses' hoofs').

provided with full vowel signs, and in accordance with the traditional techniques of writing poetry in Arabic and Persian manuscripts, the endings of the verses have been marked by clusters of dots. The script of the *xiaojing* does not differ from that of its textual environment apart from its vocalisation.

As an inclusion of the material in the manuscript of Zhanye's 邅爺 *Manāqib* (e.g. p. 21) shows (for the text see below [p. 191]), it has been standard procedure to transcribe the poetical verses composed and recited by the masters of the Jahri-yya in *xiaojing* rather than translating them into Arabic.[25] The verses are made to stand out by using full vocalisation, and verse markers have been inserted between the hemistichs and at the end of the lines as well.

2.4 Dialogues

A second example of a *xiaojing* passage integrated within the main text of the *Kitāb al-Jahrī* can be found in the second chapter, which is dedicated to the life of Wiqāyatullāh's successor, the 'Pingliang taiye' 平涼太爺 (*Ḥaḍrat Maulānā al-Aʿẓam al-Pinliānfūwī*; i.e. shaykh of Pingliang prefecture), also known as Mu Xianzhang 穆憲章 (cf. Ma 1999 [1985], 93). A somewhat obscure dialogue conducted between the Sufi Shaykh and the Taoist abbot (*sayyid al-ruhbān* 'lord of the monks') of the nearby monastery on Mount Kongtong[26] is given in the ori-ginal Chinese wording without a translation.[27] The dialogue included in the nar-rative seems to constitute an exercise in *mufākhara*, in which two disputants try to outwit one another. The four (unrhymed) lines of *xiaojing* stand out against their textual environment because of the vowel signs and the circles added as

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25 The recitations – again following the conventions of Arabic and Persian manuscript culture – are regularly introduced by the formula *fa-anshada [shiʿran bi-lughat al-Ṣīn]*, 'he recited (a poem in Chinese)' (e.g. *Manāqib*, p. 71; also pp. 211, 212, 216, 226 and 264).

26 The greatest scenic attraction of the Pingliang area is the Taoist monastery on the summit of Kongtongshan 崆峒山 (Mount Kongtong) which is also known as *Jiu gong ba tai shier yuan* 九宮 八台十二院, 'Nine palaces, eight terraces, twelve courtyards'.

27 'One day [...], the Pingliang Taiye went to the famous Mt Kongtong west of the city to gather some medicinal herbs. Once he had climbed up to the summit of the mountain, he encountered the head of the monks there, who was called Chen Banxian 陈半仙, the "half-immortal Chen" [a bad pun or mockery, FS]. When the latter saw the Pingliang Taiye, he said: "You are wearing a dress of coarse material (ء بُـ توْ *tubu yi* 土布衣) [...]". The Taiye said: "I can move the pillar which borders on the sky ([...] تيّ بَا شوْ غَـ *wo shou ban tian bian zhu* 我手搬天边柱) with my hand while my foot is on the ground" (د دَوْ نَـ كيْوَ ء *yi jiao tan dao di* 一脚探到底). The monk could not think of anything to respond to that. The Taiye picked the herbs [he wanted], went back down the moun-tain and returned' (Manṣūr 1997, 79; Manṣūr 1933, 91).

'verse markers'. The traditional standards of Arabic poetry quotation have been followed by using these devices, although the four lines in themselves do not constitute poetry (Fig. 2).
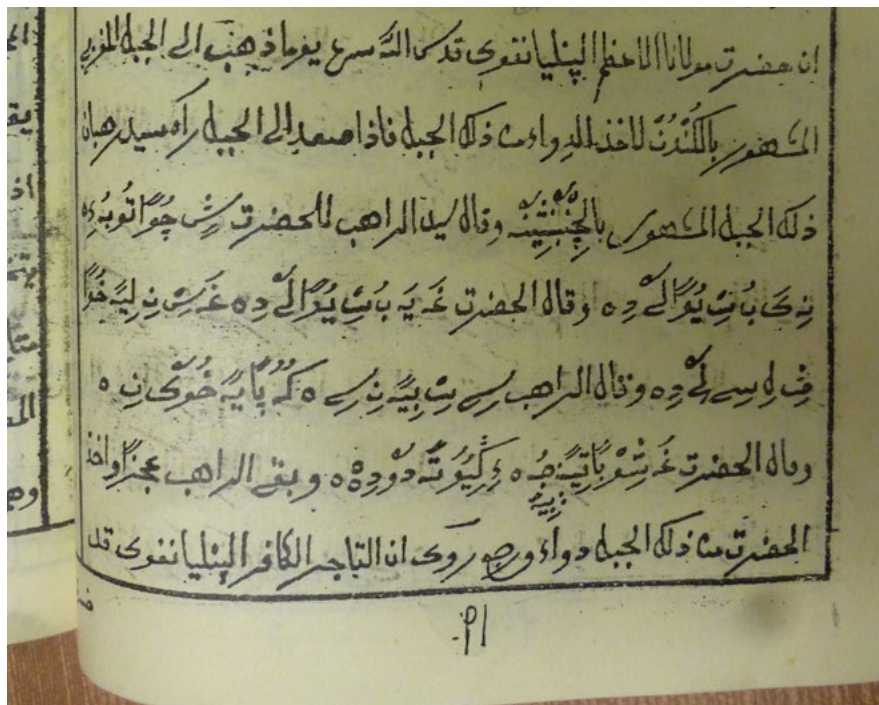

Fig. 2: *Kitāb al-Jahrī* (a dialogue between the Taoist prior and the Shaykh).

2.5 Proverbs

Proverbs, too, have been left devoid of any Arabic translation in *Kitāb al-Jahrī*; they are provided in *xiaojing*, obviously resulting from the author's apprehension that the meanings of the idiomatic expressions would not be adequately conveyed by a translation.

The two parts of the proverb, constituting a *chengyu* (成語) of four words,[28] in Manṣūr 1933, 113 (Manṣūr 1997, 101), which is written in Arabic script with vocali-

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28 The idiomatic phrase is uttered, in the third chapter on the life of the master Chuanchang

sation in the manuscript, are separated by a verse marker in the form of a circle. There is an overline at the beginning, the middle and the end of the proverb. The placing of three dots above the letter ص in the word *cang* 倉 (the last word of the phrase) is a regular feature. However, *cang* is written with the homophone character 滄 rather than 倉 in the *Daotong shizhuan*. The consonant x- in *xiu* 修 'to build' is represented by *sīn* as in other cases too.

The description above serves to show that proverbs and words exchanged in dialogues have been treated in the same way as poetry in terms of their graphic representation.

2.6 Glosses (interlinear and marginal)

Besides the *xiaojing* included in the main textual body of the *Kitāb al-Jahrī*, numerous glosses mostly written in Chinese characters have been added to the manuscript. These were written down around 2008 by a user who at that time was a student and a novice of Honglefu 鴻樂府 Convent and he owned the manuscript. There are also a few cases of Chinese words in *xiaojing* transliteration between the lines and occasionally in the margins as well.

An example of an interlinear gloss can be found in Manṣūr (1933, 37, l. 4 from below) where the phrase *māta min dhālik majnūnan*, 'he died as a result of this, as a madman', has been explained by the expression *tiba* 提拔 'promoted by rank',[29] written underneath the line; the letter *tāʾ* has been provided with *kasra*, and the letters *bāʾ-alif* have been written with *fatḥa*.

On p. 29, the uncommon word *qaswara* apparently denoting a lion is explained beneath the line by the Chinese term *shizi* 獅子 written in Arabic script: ش ذ.

A lexical gloss has been added in the outer margin on p. 78: قُوافْ. This entry transcribes Chinese *guafu* 寡婦 as the Arabic word *armala*, i.e. 'widow'. It seems that the scribe initially wrote قُافْ and only added the letter *waw* between *qāf* and

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Taiye 船廠太爺 (Manṣūr 1939, 105-133), by the ʿĀlim (ṣaghīr) sulṭānī, 'little kingly scholar', called Xiaoshan Wangye (小山王爺) in the Chinese translation (Manṣūr 1997, 101). The ʿĀlim sulṭānī criticised the Sufi master whom he charged of insincerity, by uttering a proverb which is replete with historical connotations (*qāla bi-lisān al-ṣīn*, 'he said in the Chinese language'; Manṣūr 1933, 113): Mingxiu zhandao / andu chencang 明修棧道 暗渡陳倉, مِ سِيُو جَا دَوْ * غَ دُو چِه ضَان [building a covered way along a precipice openly – secretly taking the old path to Chencang] (Manṣūr 1933,113; Manṣūr 1997, 101). Peiqi Yan of Munich University (LMU) has kindly guided me to the literary source of this proverb (cf. Cai and Sun 蔡 2008, 545).

29 In Sufism, the *majnūn*, turned mad through passionate love of God, is considered seized by divine attraction (*jadhba*), hence 'promoted'.

alif afterwards or else he superscribed the letter *waw* so it would be interpreted as the vowel sign *ḍamma*.

The expressions *ibtilāʾan wa-ˈkhtibāran* 'trials and tests' encountered on p. 66, l. 6 are accompanied by two words in *xiaojing* transcription written beneath the base line, the first of which is illegible. The second word transcribed with full vocalisation is clear enough, however, and can be deciphered as كَوْياً or *kaoyan* 考驗 'test, testing'.

As we have seen, a few marginal and interlinear lexical glosses in *xiaojing* transcription have been added to the manuscript of *Kitāb al-Jahrī* and they reflect practices of annotation typical in the Arabic manuscript culture in their layout and functionality.

2.7 Hybrid compounds

There are also some examples of a mixture of the two, Chinese characters and Chinese in Arabic transcription. An example of this phenomenon may be found in *Kitāb al-Jahrī*, p. 54, line 5 from below, where the Arabic word for 'nose', *khayshūmī*, is explained underneath the line by the hybrid expression 子بِ, i.e. the letter *bāʾ* with the vowel sign *kasra* followed by the character *zi* to render the Chinese word *bizi* 鼻子 for 'nose'. The reason for this strange combination of Arabic and Chinese may be the difficulty the student had in finding an Arabic letter or compound to adequately represent the Chinese syllable *zi* (he may also have had trouble remembering the Chinese character for 'nose' or found it cumbersome to write the numerous strokes it consists of). The Chinese word for 'parrot' (*yingwu* 鸚鵡)[30] on p. 56 is given in an analogous format, i.e. the first word of the compound is written in Arabic letters (*hamza* with two *kasra*'s). A further example is the expression *maocao* (the translation [p. 62] correctly has *caomao* 草帽), or 'straw hat', (*qalansuwwat al-ḥashīsh*) written as a hybrid form (草مَوْ) between the lines of p. 74. The expression serves as a means of describing the shape of a fragrant flower which grew on the roof of the mosque in Pingliang and symbolised the Pingliang Taiye as the head of the order. The hybrid marginal gloss on p. 78 consists of a combination of أُو (= *lü* 綠 'green') and the character 翠 (*cui*) to render the Arabic word *zakhārif* 'splendour, decoration' (the meaning of the compound *cuilü* 翠綠 is 'emerald green').

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[30] The *Kitāb al-Jahrī* uses the Persian word *ṭūṭī* instead of Arabic *babbaghāʾ*.

3 *Manāqib-i Awliyā* 'The virtues of saints'

Another literary version of the sacred history of the Jahriyya Menhuan is the *Manāqib* (*M.-i Awliyā*), and it seems to show a higher proportion of *xiaojing* writing than does the *Kitāb al-Jahrī*. The Arabic text in question was composed by Zhanye 氈爺 ʿAbd al-Aḥad in the twentieth year of the Republic of China (= 1931). The manuscript published as a facsimile of a *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscript with a total of 361 pages was copied by Ma Lugou 馬麓溝 Ṣadīqullāh of Xiji in Ningxia province at the order of his shaykh. There is a colophon (p. 361) including the name of the scribe (*min yad* 'by [the] hand [of]' etc.), Ṣadīqullāh ibn Qamar, but neither a date is stated nor the place of publication of the facsimile. The *Manāqib*, which is composed of five chapters, was designed to serve as a supplement to the *Rashaḥāt* 'percolations' by ʿAbd al-Qādir. In contrast to the latter work, which only provides biographical information on Ma Mingxin and the Pingliang Taiye, Zhanye added the lives of three more successors of the Pathfounder, namely Chuanchang Taiye 船廠太爺 Quṭb ul-ʿālam (p. 82ff.), Siyueba Taiye 四月八太爺 (p. 112ff.) and Shisan Taiye 十三太爺 (p. 194ff.).[31] The Arabic work was translated into Chinese by Ma Siren 馬思仁 and the Chinese version entitled *Mannageibu* was published in Zhongwei, Ningxia province, in 2012.

Not only are there numerous explanatory glosses between the lines (e.g. the unfamiliar Arabic toponym *yamm al-timsāḥ al-aswad*, 'Sea of the Black Crocodile', a literal, albeit slightly inaccurate translation of the name of the province of *Heilongjiang*, 'Black Dragon River', which has been transcribed above the line as خِ لْ گِيَانْ (p. 83). There are also some *xiaojing* glosses written in the margins (pp. 194 and 291; a few other glosses are in Chinese characters, e.g. on p. 250).

There is a relatively high number of Chinese poems written in the Arabic script in all five chapters (pp. 71, 206, 207, 211, 212, 216, 226, 241 and 264–265).[32] Some lexical glosses in *xiaojing* between the lines of poetry quotations have been written obliquely above the words that are explained (e.g. on p. 28 where Ma Mingxin quotes verses of the *Mukhammas* while exhorting his disciples to be assiduous in their spiritual practices).

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31 Another somewhat shorter text on the history of the Jahriyya entitled *Rashf* has also been added on pages 362–395. This was written in year 8 of the Republic (= 1919), apparently by the same scribe.

32 Zhanye's text also includes some poems in Persian (on pp. 279, 346, 349 and 351) and Arabic (pp. 166–167).
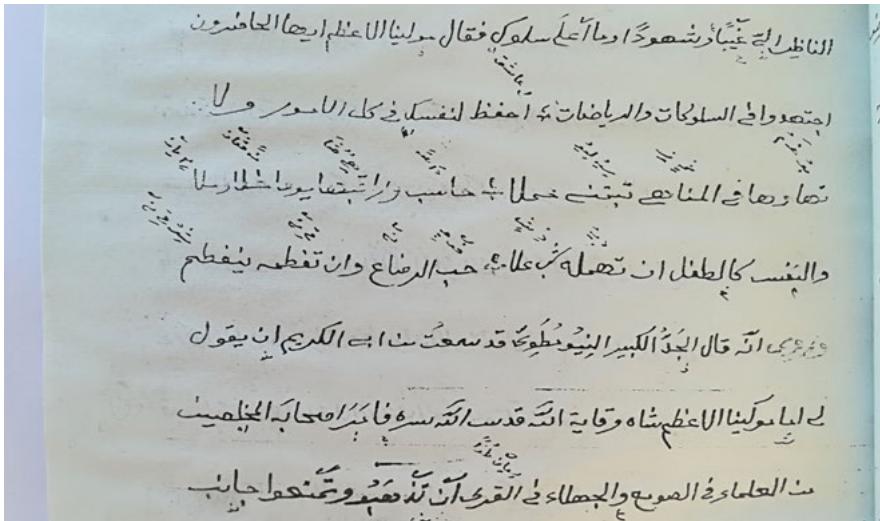
Fig. 3: Oblique annotations, Zhan Ye's *Manāqib al-Jahriyya*, p. 28.

The layout of the poems is a little inconsistent. On one hand, some of the poems are written with spaces between the Chinese verses, which are treated like hemistichs of Arabic poetry, and they are separated by graphical elements as well (e.g. on pp. 71 and 211). Other poetical quotations, on the other hand, are written continuously with a raised inverted comma serving as a verse marker (as on pp. 226 and 264–265).

Besides this, there are a few mysterious Chinese prose words uttered by the shaykhs of the Jahriyya and transcribed in the Arabic script, which answer questions such as 'how will the Islamic religion be fulfilled?' (literally 'sealed'; p. 170f.). As an answer, some Chinese nouns are quoted in juxtaposition and the number of words is mentioned. On p. 171 (= Ma 2012, 73), for instance, Shaykh Quṭb ul-ʿālam answers the above question as follows: 'When [the meanings of] five Chinese characters are fully manifested (*tammat*), Islam will return to its origin, namely دَو وُ سِ لُ بان (*dao, wu* [?], *sin, lun, ban*; 道務曽 [!, i.e. 僧]龍幇)'; the transliterated Chinese words are identified, in a parallel transmission of the same text, through use of Chinese characters in the translation (Ma 2012, 50 = *Manāqib*, p. 119), but unfortunately an explanation of the relevance of these terms is not provided in the respective passages (the five nouns may be translated literally as 'way', 'duty', 'monk', 'dragon' and 'assistance').

Another relevant 'transmission' (the passages are introduced by *ruwiya*, 'it has been transmitted') is *Manāqib* on p. 95 (= Ma 2012, 41): 'When nine Chinese characters are realised, Jahrī Islam will spread' (*idhā taḥaqqaqa tisʿat aḥruf al-ṣīniyya yantashiru l-islām al-jahrī*).

4 *Xiaojing* in other Sino-Arabic manuscripts

4.1 *Ashiʿʿat-i Lamaʿāt*

Another *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscript with content that is distinctively Sufi in nature also includes glosses in *xiaojing* and was published in facsimile (no place, no date; the Chinese preface is dated 1987). It is an Arabic translation of a Persian commentary on the famous Persian mystical tract entitled *Kitāb al-Lamaʿāt* 'Book of [divine] flares' by Fakhr ul-Dīn ʿIraqī (d. 686/1287 or later). In Northwest China, the *Lamaʿāt* has traditionally been studied together with a specific derivative text called the *Ashiʿʿat-i Lamaʿāt* 'Gleams from the flares' by Nūr ul-Dīn Jāmī (d. 898/1492),[33] and notwithstanding the fact that the (bilingual) title on the book cover is 'Kitāb al-Lamaʿāt bi-lisān ʿarabī 'Book of [divine] flares in the Arabic language' – *Guangdian xueli* 光電學理', the text is none other than that of Jāmī's commentary, albeit in an Arabic translation. The copying of the text was completed on 2 Dhū al-Ḥijja 1410 (26 June 1990), as indicated on p. 255. Besides the Arabic translation, the manuscript also contains the poetical lines of ʿIraqī (or Jāmī) in the Persian text, which are overlined. Wide spaces have been left between the lines on a number of pages, which were meant to be filled with glosses of Chinese characters usually accompanied by *xiaojing* transcriptions.[34] In a few exceptional cases, as on pp. 65, 73, 102 and 106, characters have been added in the margins along with *xiaojing*. The broad margins have largely been filled with explanatory glosses in Arabic written obliquely against the frame of the text panel, mostly starting with *qīl*, 'it was said', *qawluhū*, 'his word' or *wa-l-murād*, 'this means'.

The poems (which are often quatrains) are quoted within the prose text in the original Persian language, followed by an Arabic translation.[35] They are also accompanied by Chinese translations written in Chinese characters and *xiaojing*. As for the format, two lines of characters and two lines of *xiaojing* are fitted in the wide space between two lines of the main text. For instance, on p. 48 (Fig. 4) line

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33 Jāmī's commentary was translated under the title of *Zhaoyuan mijue* 昭元秘訣 by Po Nachi 破衲痴 (She Qiling 舍起靈), who died in 1710; cf. Ma 1999 [1985], 31; Luo 2007a, 500. We still need to find out whether or not the Chinese translations added to the Persian poems scattered throughout the text are those of the *Zhaoyuan mijue*. Zhou (2008, 78) includes a picture of the title page of the translation by She Qiling.

34 E.g. on pp. 7, 8, 9, 43–45, 46 (no Chinese characters), 48, 49, 60–62, 69, 70, 107–113 and 119.

35 At the beginning of the text (p. 9), the Arabic translation is denoted as *taʿrīb* in a gloss written above the line.

1 is a Persian verse[36] and line 2 is a Chinese translation of the last line on the previous page (= the first verse of the Persian Rubāʿī) written in characters. This line is followed by line 3 which is a *xiaojing* transcription, followed by line 4 written in characters, providing translation for (Persian) line 1. Line 4 is followed by line 5, which again is in *xiaojing*. The first line on p. 48 is this:

خواهم که بخوانمش بصد نام   اما او برتر از آن است که کنجد در نام

'I would like to call him by a hundred names. He is too sublime to fit into a name, though'.

Lines 4 and 5, which are awkward Chinese translations of the above verses, run as follows:

وْ كِّيَك تِيَا خَوْ چِه ظّ تِيُوَ   وُ نَا ثِيُوَا قَوْ بُو كَه تِيُو

[37]求可不高玄那無　闕尊稱號千將欲

'I shall praise the honoured one in a thousand names / there is nothing as high and mysterious (as him) who is not to be found (by any human means)'.

The Arabic translation is in line 7:

تمنّيتُ أن أسمّيه بألف اسم   لكّنه أعلى ممّا وسع في اسم

Thus, the structure of such complex translational technic is as follows: Persian is translated into Chinese, Chinese is transliterated in *xiaojing* which is followed by translation into Arabic.

However, not all the translations of Persian verses are consistently represented in this way: on p. 46 a quatrain quoted is followed by two lines of *xiaojing* translation, but a character version is missing.

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36 This corresponds to p. 53 of the *Lamaʿāt* edition by Hadi Rastegar Moqaddm Govhari (thus transcribed on the English title page), Qum: Bustān-e Ketāb Publishers, 1390/2011.
37 The Chinese characters written from right to left may be transliterated in pinyin as follows: *yu jiang qian hao cheng zun que / wu na xuan gao bu ke qiu*, corresponding to the tentative reading of the *xiaojing* line: *wo jian qian hao chen zun que (?) / wu na xuan gao bu ke qiu*.

Besides that, *xiaojing* glosses are included between the lines, explaining Arabic expressions, as on p. 46 where the central expression *lamaʿān* in the phrase *wa-bāna lamaʿānu kamālihī*, 'the glow of His perfection has appeared', is explained as ثِّيَان كِّيَان قُوَان *xian jian guan* = *xian dian guang* 顯電光. As for the orthography, it is worth noting that the phoneme x- (as in *xian* 顯) has been transcribed as ث and d- (in *dian*) as ڟ.
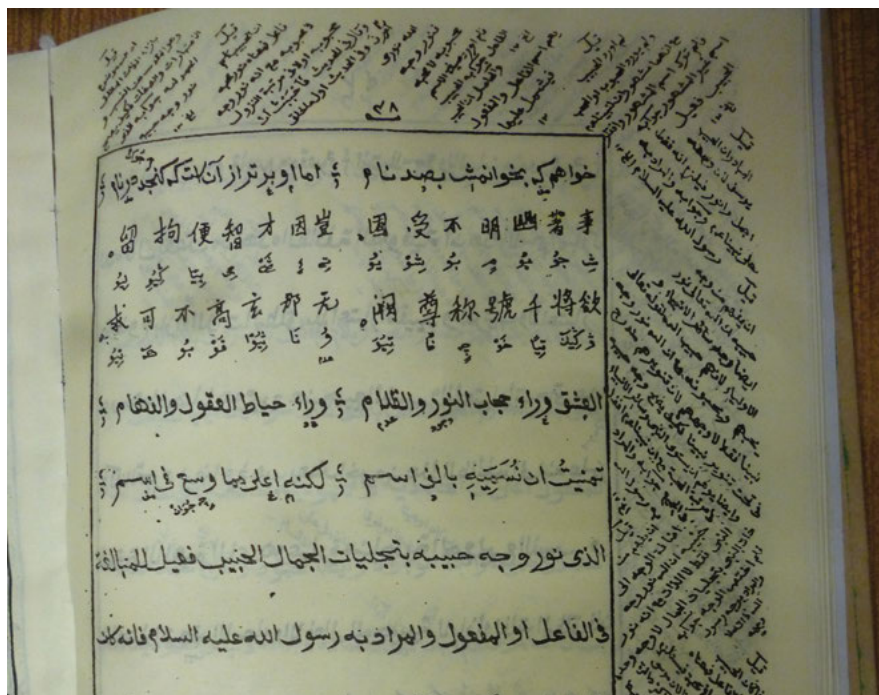

Fig. 4: The *Kitāb al-Lamaʿāt* (divine flares), facsimile manuscript, no date, no publisher's information.

4.2 *Xiaojing* glosses between the lines and in the margins: a Persian grammar

Chinese glosses written in the Arabic script have also been written in the margins and between the lines of the main text in a facsimile manuscript of the Persian grammar entitled *Minhāj* 米乃哈知, which was published recently (there is no indication of the date and place, though) and sold in a Muslim bookshop in Ping-

liang in 2014.[38] The Persian work is one of the *madrasa* books used in Northwest China and listed by Ma (1999 [1985], 29): 'The author of the *Hawā-i minhāj* is the Chinese Muslim scholar Chang Zhimei 常志美. The book has been written in Persian and gives a summary of Persian grammar. It was designed to help students in mastering the Persian language'.

The incipit of the facsimile manuscript written in a distinctive *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* style[39] goes بدان الهمك الله تعالى كه سخنهاء بارسي بر سه كون است, i.e. 'Know – may God inspire you – that Persian words are of three types'). There are just 12 lines to each page. The booklet contains a total of 66 pages altogether and includes a colophon which mentions the name of the scribe and date of completion. According to this, it was copied in Rajab 1070 (هزار و هفتادم) (= March–April 1660) by Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥakīm al-Zīnamī (?) al-Shandunī al-Ṣīnī, الزينمي الشندوني الصيني, i.e. a scribe originating from Jinan in Shandong province. Beneath the place name, 'al-Zaynamī', the explanatory word 'Zinan-fu' has been written in a minuscule script with a vocalisation which is standard for *xiaojing*, i.e. doubling of vowel signs within the *rasm* of a word – in this case, doubled *fatḥa* above *nūn*, namely زِنَافُ (Zinan-fu = 'Jinan prefecture).

The glosses in this manuscript are mostly in Persian, but sometimes in Arabic and occasionally in Chinese, which is written in the same style of the Arabic script as the glosses in the two other languages. As a rule, the explanations have been added *above* the word that is explained, as in the first sentence on p. 1 where it says that Persian words are of three types, namely nouns, verbs and adjectives (*ism*, *fiʿl* and *ḥarf*). Two examples are given for each type. The category of the verb is exemplified by *zad wa gasht*, 'he hit and turned away', the first example being translated by Chinese دَا (= *da* 打 'to hit'). As elsewhere (a mark of orthographic standardisation), *fatḥa* has been added to the letter *dāl*, although it is followed by *alif* and is therefore unnecessary phonetically. A *xiaojing* gloss written beneath the line can be seen on p. 54: in the overlined phrase توانم كه ترا از ناداني رها كنم 'I can free you from your ignorance', the noun *nādānī*, 'ignorance', is explained as بُ جِـ دَوْ *bu zhi dao*, '[I] don't know' (or: 'not knowing' which is equal to 'ignorance'). It may be noted that in this transcription, the letter *jīm*, although occurring in isolation, is written in the initial and not the final form, which is contrary to the conventions of the Arabic script, but standard in *xiaojing* orthography.

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38 The book cover only contains the four characters (*Mi nai ha zhi*), which transcribe the Arabic/Persian title.

39 The tapering ends of the letters *waw* and *rāʾ* are conspicuous here. Besides this, no distinction has been made between the other consonants (*bāʾ*, *kāf* etc.) and their equivalents in ʿAjamī.
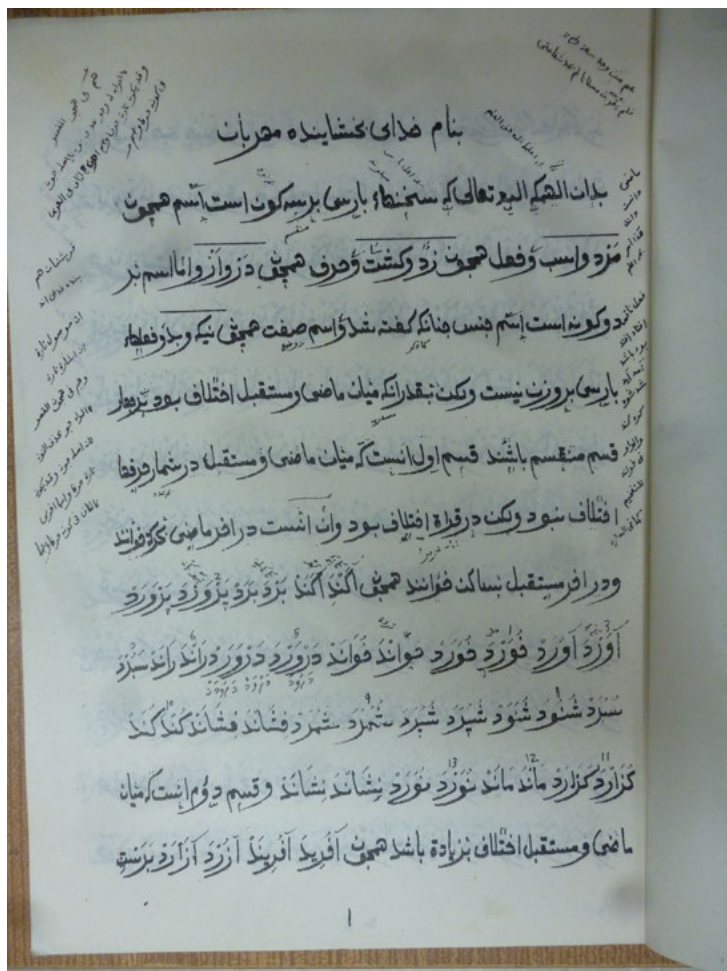
Fig. 5: The *Minhāj* (a manual on Persian grammar), facsimile manuscript, no date, no publisher's information.

4.3 Independent *xiaojing* texts: Ma Tianmin's catechisms

4.3.1 The catechism *Taḥāwur al-kalām fī masāʾil al-ṣalāt wa-l-ṣiyām*

There are also manuscripts where *xiaojing* does not appear in the form of glosses in the margins or elsewhere, but where it figures in its own right. This is the case with some texts written by the 20th-century author Ma Tianmin 馬天民 Ibn

Maʿṣūm ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, as in the *Taḥāwur al-kalām fī masāʾil al-ṣalāt wa-l-ṣi-yām*, a catechism on issues of ritual prayer and fasting.[40] In the facsimile manuscript published in 1406 (= 1985–6) in Baozi Mosque 堡子清真寺 in Linxia 臨夏 – the title on both covers of the booklet is only in Chinese and runs *Yisilanjiao libai fengzhai wenda* 伊斯蘭教禮拜封齋問答, 'Questions and Answers on Islamic Prayer and Fasting' – six lines of Arabic text are accompanied by ten lines of a corresponding Chinese text written in the Arabic script covering about two thirds of each page. Rather than constituting a literal translation of the Arabic text, the *xiaojing* [41] text is an independent version of Ma's catechism, which is made up of questions and answers. Unlike the Arabic text, the *xiaojing* text is written in a slightly larger script with vocalisation and punctuation marks (commas, colons and full stops), which bears witness to the recent (20th-century) date of the copy. The recurrent expressions *wun* وُ and *da* دَ, i.e. *wen* 問, *da* 答 'question/answer', have been put in brackets.

Starting at the opposite end of the booklet (pp. 2–22), there is a Chinese version of the text printed (in stark contrast to the manuscript character of the Arabic/*xiaojing* text!) in Chinese characters, which can be used as a key to understanding the *xiaojing* text. The Chinese translation written in characters was made in 1993 by one Ma Xiqing 馬希慶 in or near Baozi Mosque (p. 22).

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40 Another work – an Islamic catechism entitled *Taḥāwur al-kalām fī ʿaqāʾid al-islām*, 'On the articles of Islamic belief', which was written in 1952 – was composed in the same format (and published in Linxia as a facsimile manuscript: Baozi Mosque, Shawwāl 2004 [reprint]). I have included a short discussion of the text in Sobieroj 2016b, 61–62. The introduction to the catechism states on p. 3 that the author has also written various other works: (i) only in Arabic (five Chinese [!] titles are listed), (ii) in Arabic accompanied by a *xiaojing* translation (the catechism and two more Chinese titles) as well as (iii) some Chinese texts written exclusively in an Arabic transcription (five titles). The author's *Tuḥfat al-ṭullāb fī maʿrifat al-ṣiyagh wa-l-iʿrāb* on grammar seems to represent the type of works written in Arabic without *xiaojing*. This impression emerges from the study of the reprint of a 41-page booklet first published in 1376/1956 in Hanjiasi Mosque in Linxia ('[…] printed again after completion of a Chinese trans.' [p. 1]; Baozi Mosque 1410/1990). The grammar designated on the title page, *Qawāʾid al-nahw - alaboyu jianming yufa jingtang yu* 阿拉伯語簡明語法經堂語, 'Succinct Arabic Grammar (*madrasa* language)', was designed to be used by beginners after mastering morphology (*ʿilm al-ṣarf*) at the *madrasa al-thanawiyya al-ʿarabiyya* (p. 1 or second title page) and it includes the printed Arabic text with Chinese translations printed in characters on the same line. This seems to have become the standard format of modern editions of Arabic grammar texts such as the *Kāfiya*, published in 2005 in Zhoupo 周坡 Eastern Mosque in Taiʾan City 泰安市, Shandong, for the use of *madrasa* students (*manlia jing jianben* 滿倆經簡本).

41 The term '*xiaojing*' is used in the Chinese preface of the *Taḥāwur al-kalām fī ʿaqāʾid al-islām* and is probably also referred to in the Arabic introduction, viz., حررها الحقير بثْيَوْكِنْ (a minuscule letter *ṭāʾ* ط is placed above *kāf* ك of ثْيَوْكِنْ – a very uncommon orthographical addition).

The section on ablution, headed *ābdast – xiaodin* (= *xiao jìng* 小淨 'minor ablution'), includes the following *xiaojing* passage: (وُ) ثيو دِ دِ فرض شٍي شما ، دُوَ شو An . (دا) سٍي كيأً : سٍي نيأً ، سٍي ليان شو ، دَو ليان جو ، مو طِو دِ سٍي فّ جـ ءِ ، سٍي ليان كيو ، دو الخ attempt to transcribe the Chinese passage above using a system of transcription that closely depends on Pinyin but also takes account of the added vowel signs yields the following: (*Wun*) *xiaodin di fard shi shima, duwa shao?* (*Da*) *si jian: si nian (!), si lian shou, dao lian zhou, mu tou di si fun zhi i, si lian jiou, dao lian huai gu* 'Q: What duties are involved in the minor ablution? How many are there? A: There are four duties: to wash your face, to wash both your hands up to the elbow, to wipe one of the four sides of your head [and] to wash both of your feet up to the ankles' (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: The catechism of Ma Tianmin *Taḥāwur al-kalām fī ʿaqāʾid al-islām* (On the articles of Islamic belief).

In the above section, the author does not explicitly say how to pronounce the letter *ḍād* in the Arabic noun *farḍ*, 'duty'. In the Hanzi translation, *farḍ* is rendered by three characters with the phonetic value *folezuo* 佛勒作, which may be interpreted in that the noun is pronounced closer to the Persian pronunciation than to the Arabic. Mandarin *lian* for 'face' is transcribed as *nian*. Mandarin

jing for 'ablution' is rendered as *din* دِ. No distinction is made in the transcription between the consonants x- and s- in *xi*, 'wash', and *si*, 'four', both of which are rendered by the letter *sīn* – in standard Chinese, the two sounds are clearly distinguished in terms of their pronunciation. The consonant j- in *jian*, 'condition', for instance, is transcribed by the letter ك with three dots above it and one *kasra* beneath it. The letter x- in *xiaodin* (= *xiaojing*, 'minor ablution') is rendered as ثِ with *kasra*, while j- in *jian* is rendered as *kāf* with three dots, which seems to be inconsistent; in *jing* in the expression *xiaojing* (= *xiaodin*), the initial consonant is written as d-. Given that the initial /j/ in MC is a merger of Middle Chinese *kj/ gj and *dz/ts, it is plausible that this conservative dialect spoken in Linxia and represented in the manuscript has preserved some features of Middle Chinese.

The author of the credo must have spoken this dialect because he was active as a *madrasa* teacher in Linxia. According to the Chinese introduction of the booklet on the credo, the author was teaching children at Hanjiasi 韓家寺 Mosque in Linxia لينشيا, where he was known as 'Jingkou si shifu' 井口四師傅 ('the fourth master of a place called Jingkou'; الدنكوي).

4.3.2 Xining version of Ma Tianmin's catechism ('*Aqīda*)

Another version of Ma Tianmin's catechism paralleling the Linxia version[42] was published at Dongguan 東関 Mosque[43] in Xining 西寧, the capital of Qinghai province,[44] which borders on Gansu. The Xining version is entitled '*Aqīdat al-is-*

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42 Cf. n. 41.

43 The largest mosque in Xining and religious centre for at least 100,000 Muslims living in the town, it was founded in the Hongwu era (1328–98) of the Ming dynasty. The mosque was destroyed in reaction to an armed uprising by Hui and Salar Muslims led by the Jahrī Ahong Su Sishisan 蘇四十三 and others against the Qing in 1781. It was rebuilt later, however, and was closed temporarily during the 'Cultural Revolution', then re-opened in 1979 (cf. Wu 1995, 459–460).

44 The undated booklet, which I acquired in Xining around 2010, has a photograph of the *Dongguan qingzhen dasi xuanli ta* 東関清眞大寺宣禮塔, or 'Great Eastern Bar Mosque with its minaret' on the cover, which may be taken as an indication of the place of publication. The same mosque (and picture) also appears as the place of publication of an undated booklet on prayer (*al-Adʿiya al-lāzima wa-awrād al-ṣalāh / Changyong duwa libai nianci* 常用都哇禮拜念詞), which contains the printed Arabic text of the prayers, but – contrary to what one should expect in light of analogous works – without any *xiaojing*. A transliteration of the text is provided in Chinese characters printed beneath the Arabic words, but according to the phonetic value of the individual characters (= Chinese 'Ajami!) and without offering any clues as to the meaning. Occasionally an explanation in Arabic is provided in Chinese characters, explaining how and when to apply a prayer text, as on p. 23: 'a prayer to recite while washing the right foot' (*xi you jiao nian de duwa;*

lām Yisilan xinyang wenda 伊斯蘭信仰問答, 'Questions and Answers on Islamic Belief', and features a text in *xiaojing* transcription with simplified Chinese characters written between the lines in the same direction as the Arabic script. In contrast to the manuscript nature of the *risāla*, the Arabic is printed (!) in a bold script, whereas the Chinese characters have been added in smaller types (seemingly also printed), from which it follows that the reader's eye is immediately attracted to the Arabic text rather than the Chinese. Unlike the Linxia publication of Ma Tianmin's text, the Xining *ʿAqīda* neither includes the Arabic words of the catechism nor a Mandarin Chinese version printed as a separate text. Comparing the interlinear Chinese characters of the Xining version (XN) with the Chinese version in the Linxia publication (LX), it emerges that there are discrepancies in the words and even in the structure of the sentences. In the section on disbelief, *kufr* is defined as negating what is obligatory to believe in and to look down upon what is exalted by the law. Whereas the Chinese has the words *fouren bixu xinyang de* 否認必須信仰的, 'to negate what one must believe in', the interlinear text of XN (p. 55) and the *xiaojing* text of LX (p. 40) written on the lower part of the pages has *yinmei guixin ta biding de nage* 隱昧歸信它必定的那個 or يٍ مُو قو
سٍ تَا بِي دِ دِ نَقْ, the main differences being in terms of syntax, and the lexical variants *fouren/yinmei* (مُو of 隱昧, as indicated by the vowel sign, may have to be pronounced with a diphthong analogous to *gui* 歸); this results in two texts that appear to be almost completely different.

The above differences may be due to the effort made by the editors of the *ʿAqīda* to give Chinese character equivalents to the vernacular of Xining in the one publication, whereas the translation in the Linxia edition is Mandarin and does not give any equivalents of the *xiaojing* transliteration of the spoken language (of the Linxia region).

Then there are differences in the two publications relating to the orthography rather than to pronunciation. Here are some examples of the orthographical differences: *ta shi* 它是, i.e. 'it [*kufr*] is', written as تا شى in LX and تا ش in XN; *qingshi zai she-ri-er libian zunzhong* 輕視在舍日兒裏邊尊重, 'it is to belittle what is honoured in the law', is written as تٍ شِى ذَى شرع لِيِّا ظْ جهٌ in LX and قْ ش زَى شرع لِيِّا ظْ جٌ in XN; *nage* 那個, 'that one', is written نَفَه in LX and نَ قَ in XN; *zhenzhu* 真主, 'true lord', i.e. God, is written جِه جْ in LX and ج جُو in XN. The differences in spelling are indicative of a lack of shared standards (or of a discrepancy between the standard language and the dialect) despite the mutual geographical proximity of Xining and Linxia.

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the prayer text in characters runs: *anla hunmai sanbiti gaidaimanye* 安拉混麥 etc., i.e. *Allāhumma thabbit qadamayya* 'God, make my feet firm!').

4.4 *Xiaojing* translations following in the same line

4.4.1 *K. Fiqh Kaydānī* and two related texts

In a facsimile copy of the famous Arabic work on the Islamic ritual prayer composed by Luṭfallāh al-Kaydānī (lived *c.*750/1349; GAL, vol. 2: 253) and hence entitled *K. Fiqh Kaydānī* (pp. 43–108), the *xiaojing* translations are not added as glosses, but follow in the line immediately after the Arabic wording, which they translate into Chinese. The *xiaojing* is written in the same *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* style of the Arabic script as the words of the Arabic text, which is overlined as a rule, but it usually takes up 2–3 times the space of the Arabic expressions translated. The *xiaojing* is vocalised, and the individual sentences are mostly introduced by the expression *ta yao [shuo]de shi* or *ye shi*, 'he means to say (also)'.[45]

The text copied in 1316/1898 – the colophon on p. 108 says 'the translation of this book was completed in Rabīʿ II 1316/Aug.–Sept. 1898' – forms the second of three parts all written by the same hand and in the same format with Arabic and *xiaojing* following in the same line, and was published on 30 September 2008 (no place mentioned) as a booklet bearing a bilingual title on the cover page: *Kaydān Kitāb* and 小經開達尼 (*Xiaojing Kaidani*).

The third text in the collection (on pp. 109–132) is the well-known and much-copied tract – in the Ottoman lands – on the condition of the ritual prayer *Shurūṭ al-ṣalāh* (cf. Sobieroj 2010, no. 191, part 3), while the first text (pp. 2–42) is a less well-known anonymous text on dogma and ethics whose title is given in the preface as *Risāla tataʿallaqu bi-bayān al-iʿtiqad wa-l-akhlāq wa-l-afʿāl (ʿalā l-tartīb wa-l-ijmāl)* ('A tract relating to the exposition of the creed, ethics and works, arranged logically in a summarising way').

While a colophon has been added to the second text, the third one is followed by a list of contents written in Arabic and headed by the Chinese word *mulu* 目錄 for 'table of contents' and dated 30 September 2008 (again in characters).

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45 An attempt to transcribe the beginning of the *xiaojing* text yields the following: *ta yao de shi quan zan yu zhongshi weidu tiaoyang shiba tian yang khalq de naga zhu de* (他要的是全讚于眾世唯獨調養十八天養 etc.) [...] (الحمد لله رب العالمين تايودِ شِ ، كُواْ زّا ء ظْ شِ وِي دُو تِيَوْ يَانْ شِبَا تِيَّا يَانْ ، خَلقِ دِ). Whereas in two accessible Mandarin translations of the Qur'anic expression *al-ʿālamīn* (the worlds) occurring in Sura 1:2, for instance, *yuzhou* 宇宙 or *quan shijie* 全世界 is used, the *xiaojing* employs the Arabic noun *khalq* plus prefixed *shiba tian* 十八天, i.e. 'the one lord who nurtures' the eighteen heavens – the latter classification being common in Buddhism.

4.4.2 *Xiaojing* Qur'an translation

The format of *xiaojing* translations following immediately after a reference text in the same line as has been chosen in the above Chinese edition of the *Fiqh Kaydānī* has also been adopted for a full translation of the Qur'an.[46] A combination of printed Arabic texts and handwritten *xiaojing* translations that is reminiscent of an incunabulum is inscribed in the spaces between the individual Qur'anic verses initially left empty. This work was published on *ǧumʿa* (Friday), 23 August 2002 (no place mentioned). The Arabic text in the publication is a transcription of the readings of *Ḥafṣ ʿan ʿĀṣim*,[47] which corresponds to the *riwāya* of the official Cairo edition from 1924. The Qur'anic verses are overlined and separated from the translations by verse markers with inscribed Arabic numbers. The Chinese translations are written in a fully vocalised Arabic script which follows *xiaojing* conventions as described in the introductory section. The language of the translation is a Chinese vernacular, which emerges from the pronunciation of individual words as well as from the syntax. *Sūrat al-ikhlāṣ*, one of the shorter chapters at the end of the *muṣḥaf* (no. 113), will be looked at by way of example. The *xiaojing* transcription of the first and the last verses (v. 1, 3–4) runs as follows:

أَي جِـ شِـ آ نِ شُوَ آو نَا شِـ الله دُو ءِ دِ [...]، [48]

نَا مَوْ يُـ سِ ز ، ژِ مَوْ يُـ سِ نَا ، ؤُ ء قَ زْ شِـ ، ءِ و نَا جَ بُ شِـ ءِ بَا دِ

The unfamiliar orthography of what is pronounced as *shuo* 說 'say' in Mandarin is indicative of dialect,[49] as is *sin* for *sheng* 生 'beget' [children] (or for *xing* 性 'gender, sex'?). The negation transcribed as *maw you* in *xiaojing* in v. 3, finally, is a dialect variant of Mandarin *meiyou* 沒有.[50]

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46 A copy of this work was offered for sale in 2014 in a small mosque bookshop in the centre of Wuzhong City.

47 I.e. the readings of ʿĀṣim (d. 744) as transmitted by his student Ḥafṣ.

48 An attempt to transpose the above in pinyin yields the following: *ay zhi sheng a ni shuo ta shi Allah duyi de* 'Prophet, say: he is God, the one' *[...] ta mei you xing ren / ren mei you xing ta / wu yige ren shi / yin wei ta zhe bu shi yi ban de*.

49 On the dialects of Northwest China, see Yang 1996, 3.

50 With the aim of highlighting the specificities of the Chinese *madrasa* language (*jingtang yu* 經堂語) of Ningxia/Gansu, Ding Shiren 丁士仁 (Ding 2008, 48–53) contrasts a *jingtang yu* translation of the first five verses of Sūrat al-Baqara which he has transcribed in Chinese characters with a modern Chinese Qur'an translation (by Ma Jian 馬堅) of the verses in question (reproduced in Zhou 2008, 56–57).

4.5 Arabic-Chinese glossaries

Another type of Islamic manuscripts contains Arabic-Chinese glossaries into which *xiaojing* transcriptions have been incorporated. These were compiled to help readers understand a number of texts traditionally taught at the *madrasa*s.[51] The reference texts to which the glossaries refer that I was able to consult are (1) Saʿd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī (d. 791/1389; GAL, vol. 2: 278–280), *Mukhtaṣar al-maʿānī*, on rhetorics, and (2) 'Mullā ʿIṣām al-Dīn' [al-Isfarāʾinī; Sobieroj 2010: no. 185] (*Manlia zidian* 滿倆字典) – which, in fact, is Jāmī's *Sharḥ* – on the *Kāfiya* of Ibn al-Ḥājib on grammar. I found manuscripts of two different glossaries relating to Mullā ʿIṣām al-Dīn.

4.5.1 *Lughāt Mukhtaṣar al-maʿānī*

The beginning of the glossary entitled *Lughāt Mukhtaṣar al-maʿānī al-mutarjama bi-lisān al-ṣīnī* 伯亞尼字典 (*Boyani zidian*, 'Dictionary of the Bayān'), six lines of which are included in the copy, has been written on the second page in Chinese characters and *xiaojing* . The incipit runs: نحمدك يا من شرح صدورنا لتلخيص البيان, 'we praise you who have enabled us [lit. have widened our chest(s)/breast(s)] to summarise the explication'. The Arabic words of the incipit are written with blank spaces separating them, which are filled with translations (*women zanni huokai xiongtang zhaijian mingyan* 我們讚你辖开胸膛摘簡明言, 'we praise you for opening up [our] chest/breast so that we may select words of wisdom' etc.'). The *xiaojing* transcriptions with vocalisation, on the other hand, are written above the Arabic expressions, i.e. وَمٌ زَانِي خُوَ كَيْ ثِيُّ ثَان جَي كِّيّاً م ياً. The three parts, Arabic, characters and *xiaojing*, have all been written by one and the same hand. Nunation is added at the end of some words, as in *wamun* (= *women*, 'we') and in *thiun* (= *xiong*, 'breast/chest'; the consonant x- is transcribed by ثـ).

    The glossary itself starts on the second half of this page. It is divided into sections which follow the structure of the reference text and are headed by captions such as *muqaddima, ʿilm al-maʿānī*, and *aḥwāl al-isnād al-khabarī*. The format is four columns in which the individual lemmas are overlined and followed by Chinese translations in characters and *xiaojing* (the texts written in the two scripts are exactly the same). The first lemma, *al-Taftāzānī*, is explained in Arabic as [derived from] a place name (*ism mauḍiʿ*, without a transcription). The second is *al-faqīr*, 'the poor', followed by a Chinese translation in characters (written

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51 Zhou (2008, 58) includes a picture of a manuscript folio of an Arabic–*xiaojing* glossary.

from right to left: 求濟 *qiuji*) and *xiaojing*: كِيُو گَي. Thirdly, *al-ghanī*, 'the rich', 無求 濟 ءُ كِيُو گَي, etc. The lemmas are not arranged alphabetically, but according to the order of their occurrence in the text.
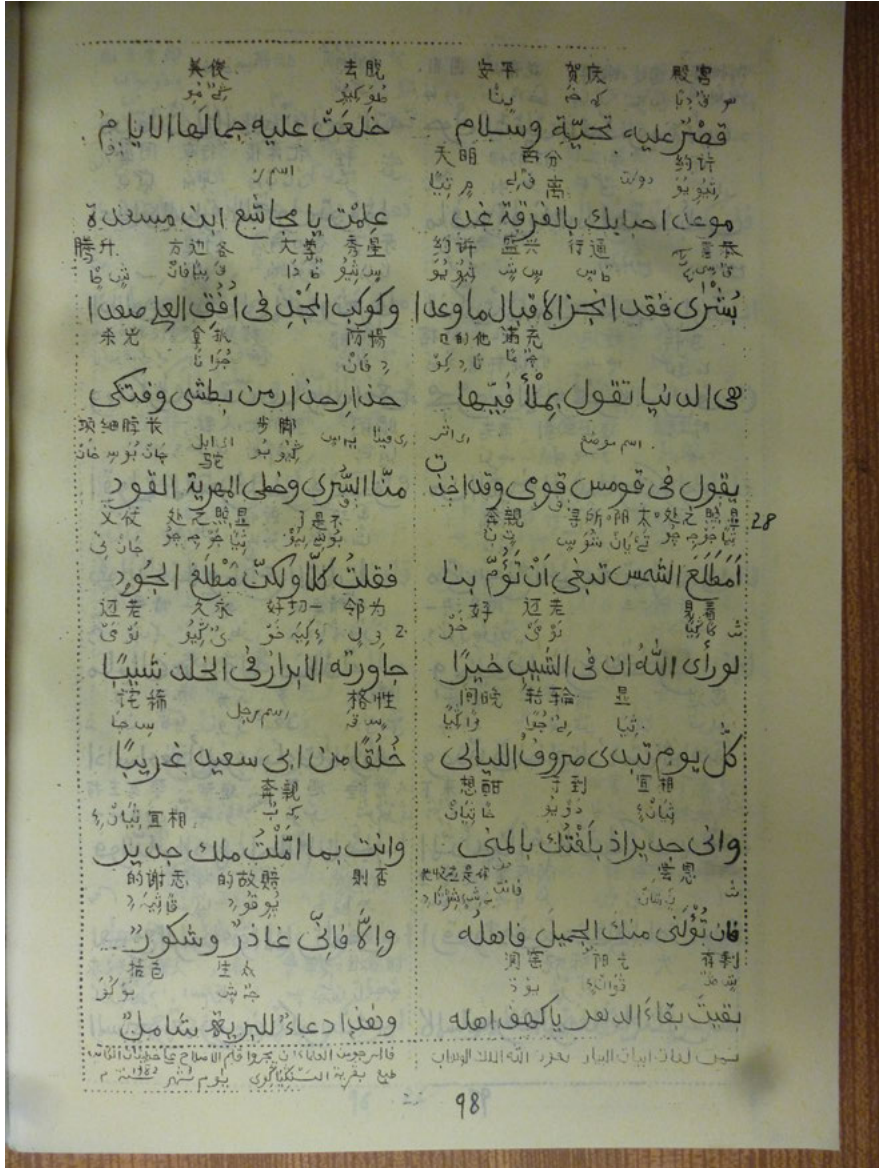

Fig. 7: The *Bayan zidian* (Dictionary of the Bayān).

The glossary ends on p. 70 with the date 28 March 1983 and adds a list of the poetic verses taken from a different manuscript, which are included in the *Bayān* with translations in characters and *xiaojing* written above the lines. The 26 pages of verses were published (*ṭubiʿa* [lit.: printed]) in 1982 at a place whose *xiaojing* transcription may be construed as the (topographically meaningful) name *Sanji-aqiao*, i.e. 'three-family bridge'. The last verse, only five words of which are represented in Chinese in the manuscript (marked by an asterisk here), runs: *baqīta* baqāʾa l-dahri* yā kahfa* ahlihī / wa-hādhā duʿāʾun li-l-bariyyati* shāmilun**, 'May you remain as long as the world/time remains, cave of his people / This is a prayer which encompasses the whole creation'. The five words translated as well as transcribed are 剩存 شٍ ظُّ , 光陰 قوانْ ءٍ , 匋洞 يو دُّ , 衆生 جهٌ شٍ and 包括 بَوُ كُوَ (Fig. 7).

Owing to the atomistic nature of the *xiaojing* glosses, which only explain individual words, the tendency to translate text into a Chinese dialect seems to have been checked here. This contrasts with the passage-wise dialectal *xiaojing* translation, as in the texts authored by Ma Tianmin, which were discussed in section 4.3.

4.5.2 *Lughāt Mullā ʿIṣām al-Dīn*

4.5.2.1 *Qaryat al-Sanjiaqiao* version

Like the format of the *Lughāt Mukhtaṣar al-maʿānī*, the version of the *Lughāt Mullā ʿIṣām al-Dīn*, which was published in facsimile form at the same place, i.e. *Qaryat al-Sanjiaqiao*, starts with an incipit of the text, only three lines of which are provided. The interspaces between the Arabic words are filled with Chinese characters, whose *xiaojing* transcriptions are written above (most of) the Arabic expressions, i.e. الحمد لوليه والصلوة على نبيه وعلى آله واصحابه المتادبين بادابه, 'Praise to Him who deserves it and prayers for His prophet and his (i.e. the latter's) family and companions who have trained themselves in his manners', 全讚唯獨應受他的主 [...] 一切隨同他的人 一切受學禮他的人 將他的一切禮儀者 , كِيوأ زأ وي دو ءٍ شو نَا دِ جو [...] ءِ كِيَه صُو طَّنَادِزٍ ءِ كِيَه شِوْ ثُيوَ لي نَى دِ زٍ كَّيانْ نَا دِ ءٍ كِيَه لي ئِي جه.

In contrast to the *Lughāt Mukhtaṣar*, the lemmas of this glossary are not arranged in columns, but are written from right to left in horizontal lines. The Arabic expressions are followed by translations in characters, above which *xiaojing* is written. The booklet consists of 26 unnumbered pages of 17 lines ending with a colophon, which states the date of copying (20.4.1402/10.6.1983) and place of publication. In the gap between the explicit and colophon, the compiler has inserted a request in Arabic asking the scholars (*al-ʿulamāʾ*; i.e. the competent readers) to correct any mistakes he may have made in writing and translating.

The system of transcription seems coherent internally, although it partly deviates from other authors' systems. The scribe conventionally differenti-

ates between the consonants q- (as in *quan* 全), which he transcribes as ك, and between j- (as in *jiang* 將, transcribed by ڭ); the [-ŋ] sound of Mandarin Chinese, consistently rendered by n (*jiang* = *jian* كيان); the consonant r- (as in *ren* 人), which is transcribed by *rā'* with three dots above it (ژ – a graph which corresponds to Persian *žay*); and the consonant x- (as in *xue* ثُيُو 學), which goes back to a h-sound and is rendered by the letter *thā'* (Fig. 8).
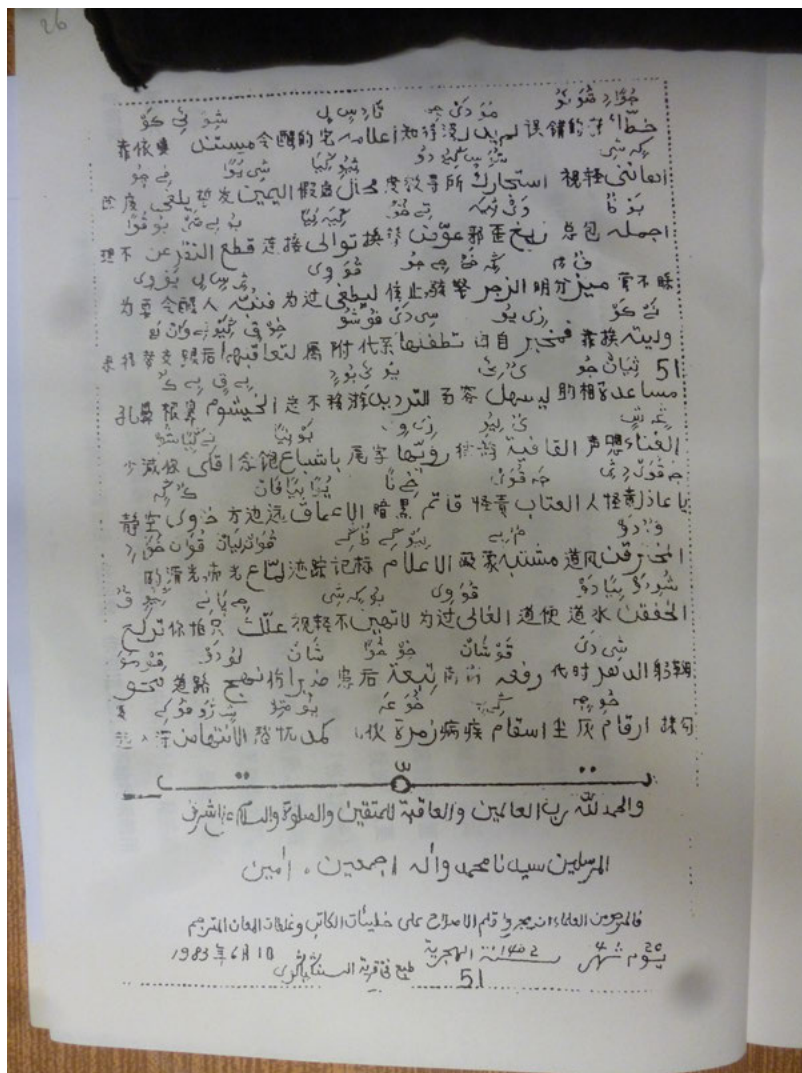

Fig. 8: The *Lughāt Mullā ʿIṣām al-Dīn* (A glossary on Islamic faith).

4.5.2.2 Kaifeng version

The second facsimile manuscript of the *Lughāt al-Mullā* (*Manlia zidian*) was published in 1356/1937–38, or the 26ᵗʰ year of the Republic of China جُنْهُوَا مِنْقُوَيْ 中華民 國 ('Chinese republic' with the phoneme h / kh in *hua* [China] 'irregularly' written as ـﻫ <h>, and final velar nasal [-ŋ] [in *zhong*], 'regularly' written as <n>) in the city of Kaifeng الكَيْفُنِي in Henan province under the auspices of Shams al-Din جِنْزِيَانِني Zhenjiang, and it was purchased in Pingliang in 2014.

   In this booklet, the lemmas are listed in two columns (mostly as two keywords with their translations, which have been fitted into one line in each column) and they are arranged in order of their occurrence in the glossary. The Arabic expressions written in a bold *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* style (fat feet, tapering upstrokes)[52] are followed by *xiaojing* without any characters (there are, exceptionally, a few characters written above the *xiaojing* words), but characters re-emerge in the Chinese-language colophon where the date of publication is stated as well as the name of the editor (*bianjizhe*), Wang Hongxiang from Zhenjiang 鎮江王洪祥.[53]

   The translation of the first lemma الحمد لوليه, 'praise to Him who deserves it', starts with the same words as in the *Sanjiaqiao* manuscript (plus the copula *shi* 是), which are transcribed differently, however, namely as follows: قَازَا شٍ و دُ ءِ الخ (in the *Sanjiaqiao* manuscript, it reads كِيواً زأ شٍ وي دو for Pinyin Mandarin: *quan zan shi wei du ying*). The difference could be attributed to the influence of the regional dialect of Henan where the text was published, although it is far from certain that there was any such influence. The text may have been transcribed in the Northwest and only been published in Kaifeng (as a reprint, *zai ban* 再版). If that were the case, it would be evidence of an extreme inconsistency in writing *xiaojing* and is therefore highly unlikely. However, there is also a chronological aspect that needs to be considered: the Kaifeng publication is half a century older than the modern Sanjiaqiao manuscript, which is also apparent in the usage of Persian words explaining some lemmas that are not found in the modern manuscript (e.g. *zamān*, 'time', for *yawm*, p. 77; *siyāh*, 'black', for *as-sawād*, *sebīd* (sic!), 'white', for *al-bayāḍ*, p. 78; and ʿ*eshq*, 'passionate love', for *al-hawā*, p. 70).

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52 For these characteristics see Sobieroj 2014, 103–106.

53 The last page opposite the explicit contains a pricelist for '[Islamic] canonical books' (*jingshu* 經書) which were available for sale at the Wenhua street mosque in Kaifeng. Apart from the present text, they include a glossary entitled *Lughāt al-Wiqāya* relating to *al-Wiqāya*, the textbook on Ḥanafī law.

4.6 *Munājāt*

Xiaojing is found in two places in a facsimile *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscript which mainly includes an assembly of Qur'anic verses designed to be used as prayers for Muslims in Gansu:[54] firstly, on the title page inscribed beneath the title *Munājāt*, i.e. 'prayers of intimate discourse', and secondly, in the colophon. The Chinese words written in the Arabic script inform the reader (albeit inaccurately) about the contents of the booklet, which spans 54 pages of five lines per page. The Chinese subtitle runs سَّا شِّي سَّا دُوَ آيت, i.e. 33 Qur'anic verses/passages (*duan* transcribes the character 段). The numbering of the *āyāt* is written in Persian (*seyyom āyat*, *čahārom āyat*, etc.) in a different script. This indicates that the Persian-language glosses in *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscripts serve a similar explanatory or text-structuring function to *xiaojing*. As a matter of fact, the number of Qur'anic verses included in the *Munājāt* far exceeds 33, hence the noun *duan* should be understood as denoting passages or even chapters – the first of which is Sūrat al-Fātiḥa – rather than verses.

The *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* style in which the Qur'anic verses have been written has a calligraphic quality and features 'fat feet and slender ankles', which are refinements usually found in copies of the sacred Islamic texts in China. The prayer beginning with *Allāhumma ´ ftaḥ lanā abwāb al-raḥma*, 'God, open to us the gates of mercy!', which follows Sura 114, i.e. the last of the Qur'an quotations, in contrast, is written in a different, unpretentious script which does not feature any of the above characteristics.

The colophon on the last page includes the name of the scribe, Maḥmūd ibn al-Khabīr ibn al-Shaykh al-Rasūl al-Watouwī. On p. 55, the main text borders on two rectangular panels which are each filled with one line of *xiaojing* written vertically from top to bottom in the same style as the Persian text dividers, and they contain a note on the person who is to recite the 33rd section.

5 Conclusion

The influence of Arabic manuscript culture has fostered processes of standardisation in *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscripts. This can be seen in the adoption of familiar page-

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54 The prayer booklet was sold in 2012, more or less illegally, in one of the small shops on the main road in Guanghe 廣河, a village and centre of Islamic culture in Gansu situated south of Lanzhou. Like many other publications, it lay hidden under some prayer scarves, carpets and other day-to-day objects used by Muslims.

layout formats by the Chinese Muslim scribes and artisans. Wide spaces have been left between the lines of the main text, which is also the case in Ottoman manuscripts where Turkish or Persian glosses have been added to explain certain Arabic expressions. And yet the division of the page into a section including an Arabic reference text and a (larger) section reserved for translation into a non-Arabic language, as is the case in Ma Tianmin's *xiaojing* catechisms, is a format hardly ever seen in manuscripts originating in the core Islamic countries.

Among the many different kinds of page layout and combinations of languages and scripts adopted in the *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscripts including *xiaojing* texts (or glosses), we can find five main types:

1. *xiaojing* in conjunction with translations in Chinese characters added between lines of Arabic poetry quotations (*Lamaʿāt*);
2. translations written obliquely as isolated glosses, up against selected expressions of a reference text (the grammar book called *Minhāj*);
3. *xiaojing* figuring on a par with an Arabic reference text by covering the larger part of the page (*Taḥāwur al-kalām)*;
4. substitution of Arabic text by *xiaojing*, which is accompanied by Chinese characters written between the lines that reproduce the *xiaojing* vernacular (*ʿAqīda*); and
5. a widely used format adopted in Qur'an translations (and other texts), which features Arabic followed by *xiaojing* translations in the same line.

Three different types can be noticed in Arabic-Chinese glossaries: *xiaojing* translations written above the word to be explained (similar to type 2) or inscribed in the line following the lemmas which are listed in two or more columns (similar to type 5), or *xiaojing* translations additionally accompanied by characters, which is what the scribe who penned a copy of the *Lughat Mukhtaṣar al-maʿānī* did.

On a micro-level, it has been observed that *xiaojing* poems included in the Arabic manuscripts imitate the classical models of Arabic poetry quotation in terms of their conventions: the Chinese poems are introduced by the conventional Arabic formula *anshada*, 'he recited', and the verses that are fully vocalised are separated by graphical elements such as circles inserted individually or in clusters (see above pp. 187 and 192).

Classical Arabic has influenced the Chinese vernacular inscribed in *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscripts directly (one example being the use of the word *khalq* in a *xiaojing* catechism where the translation written in characters offers a Chinese equivalent) and through mediation of Persian, which Hui Muslims consider their

ancestral language.[55] The contribution of the Persian writing system to Sino-Arabic manuscript culture can be seen in many ways: letters such as *čīm* and *žay* used in *xiaojing* to transcribe the Chinese consonant r- as in *ren* 人 ['man'] have been borrowed from the Persian alphabet. Persian literary works are studied at the *madrasa*s (although nowadays the influence of Persian is receding due to the increasing weight of the Arabic language) and they are quoted in the texts introduced in this study. The oldest of the group of texts narrating the hagiography of Ma Mingxin, the *Rashaḥāt*, was partly written in Persian. *Xiaojing* translations have not only been added to Arabic texts, but also to works in the Persian language such as the *Minhāj*. Persian insertions have even served to structure the text of some Sino-Arabic works (e.g. *Munājāt)* and, finally, Persian words have been used to explain Arabic lemmas in the manuscripts of the glossaries.

Traditional cultural practices like dictation of text by the *mudarris* during a lesson were followed by the Chinese *madrasa*s, but the amenability of *xiaojing* to misinterpretation (as shown in the funny story of *fiqh* related among Hui students about the confusion of wine and chicken oil due to shortcomings in the Arabic transcription of Chinese) may have impeded its full adoption. The hybrid forms of *xiaojing* graphemes and characters written in manuscripts by students (probably during lectures) also indicates that people found it awkward to write *xiaojing*. Chinese students were constantly confronted with having to make a choice between characters and *xiaojing*, and the aversion to writing characters because of religious reservations ascribed to earlier generations of Muslims had long been overcome, hence the presence of characters in the margins of *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* manuscripts and the ongoing publication of Chinese translations of Arabic texts.

As for the role of religion, specific sacred Islamic texts such as the Qur'an and the liturgical texts recited daily within the Jahriyya Sufi order have all played a role in the standardisation of the script adopted for literary transmission. Unlike works of *tafsīr* or biographies (even including Jahrī hagiography), these texts – *Mukhammas (Qaṣīdat al-Burda), Madāʾiḥ, Mawlid al-nabī* and *Munājāt* – have required the pious scribe to choose a calligraphically valuable, traditional *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī* style showing features which are mostly absent from copies of manuscripts from other genres.

In the liturgical texts just mentioned, standardisation in handwriting and choice of format has been achieved in mutual dependency. The texts have all been written in the bold, hieratical variant of *khaṭṭ-i ṣīnī*, mostly in a layout of five lines a page (the two-volume *Mawlid* edition has seven lines),[56] which, at least in

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55 The numerous borrowings from Arabic (and Persian) have been listed in various glossaries (e.g. Yang 1996, 87–122).

56 A manuscript of the *Kitāb al-Mawlid* on the celebration of the Prophet's birth, copied by

China, has also been the preferred format of the partial Qur'an texts (*juz'*) published in Yunnan province as wood or stone prints. However, the five-line format is also a natural choice because in the *Mukhammas* the text consists of units of five hemistichs. The liturgical texts are left clear of Chinese glosses despite the large empty spaces separating the lines, but publications of *Mukhammas* facsimiles with a Chinese translation printed or handwritten on opposite pages are very popular among Muslims in the region. Part of the traditional format of the *Mukhammas* is also the addition of a Persian poetical translation written in two-and-a-half lines at the bottom of each page. In a modern facsimile publication of the *Madā'iḥ* (Hong Kong 2005), however, a Chinese translation written in characters with a five-line stanza is provided at the bottom of each page.
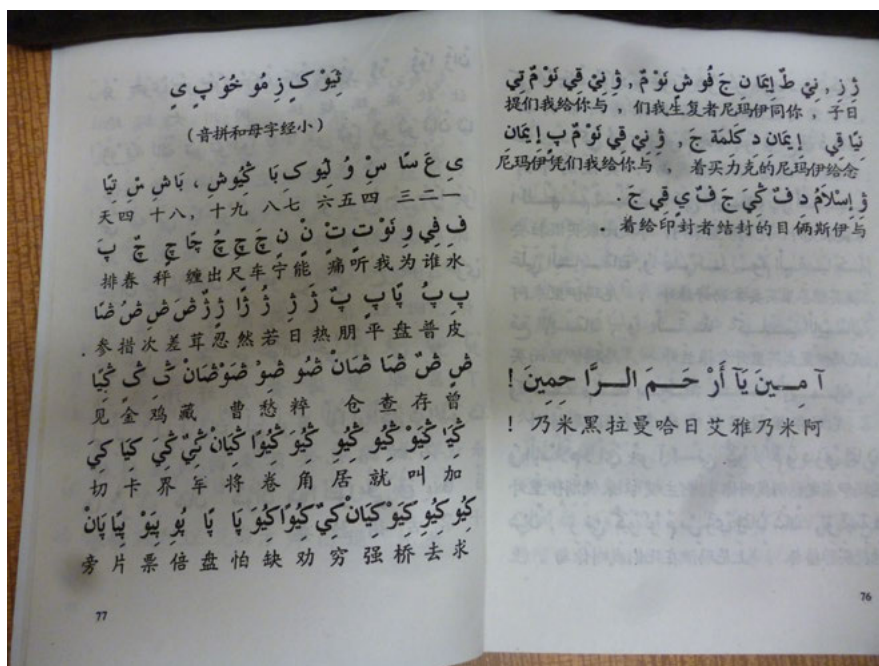

Fig. 9: A printed text of the *ʿAqīdat al-islām* which includes the transliteration tables.

the above-mentioned Maḥmūd ibn al-Khabīr and published in facsimile in 1999. It is stated on p. 127 of the *tiwen* 提文 ('treatise'?) part of the book that the *Kitāb al-Mawlid* was bequeathed by Aḥmad ʿAqīla al-Makkī [in Arabia] to the Sufi Abū al-Futūḥ Ma Laichi 馬來遲 (d. 1766), Ma Mingxin's colleague.

Attempts have been made to standardise the orthography of *xiaojing* texts and paratexts in manuscript production. A case in point is the *xiaojing* syllabary appended, with a didactic motive, to the Xining edition of Ma Tianmin's much-studied *ʿAqīda* (Fig. 9).

Processes of standardisation have been at work, as is indicated by the regular presence of vowel signs added to the transcriptions in the manuscripts consulted and by the doubling of *fatḥa*, *kasra* and *ḍamma* or the redundant *fatḥa*, all of which are characteristic features of *xiaojing*. The rule that the letter *jīm* is written in the initial form even when it occurs in isolation is generally observed.

Even so, there are still some major inconsistencies in the graphic representation of a number of Chinese sounds:[57]

a.   the representation of the initial non-phonemic consonant sound in words such as *an*, 'peace', or *er*, 'child', is inconsistent, for example (*ghayn* and *ʿayn* are used interchangeably; in the proverb 'building the covered way…' in *K. al-Jahrī*, p. 113, *an* is rendered by *ghayn* + doubled *fatḥa*);

b.   consonant x- (a fusion of the two MC initials s- and h-): in the above proverb, *xiu*, 'build', is written with *sīn* as سيو (as it may be traced back to an older s-); *sīn* also appears in *xi*, 'wash'; however, *sīn* has also been used to transcribe s- in (unvoiced) *si* , 'four'; in *xian*, 'appear', x- is transcribed by ث , the same as in *xiong*, 'breast'.

c.   Finally, in the toponym 'Linxia', x- has been written using the letter *shīn*. The j- consonant (again representing two MC initials) is usually written as *kāf* with three dots above it, كَ, but some aberrations have been observed as well: j- in *xiaojing* has been written with a minuscule letter *ṭāʾ* placed above *kāf*; conversely, *kāf* with three dots, vocalised with *kasra*, كِ , has also been used to represent d- in *dian*, 'lightning', and j- in *jing* (apparently pronounced as *din* in the Linxia dialect) has also been written as *dāl* (دِ).

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57 Many such inconsistences may be accounted for by the fact that *xiaojing* represents a dialect variant which retains features of MC.

Nowadays, Arabic text editions accompanied by *xiaojing* in any of the variations shown above compete with formats where translations in characters are printed in the same line as the Arabic wording, and the impression is that at least in printed publications Arabic followed by Chinese translations this will eventually become the standard. The fact that Arabic sacred text has occasionally been transcribed by Chinese characters used exclusively for their phonetic value indicates that even transliterations written in characters, considered more elegant by some, can prevail over *xiaojing* .[58]
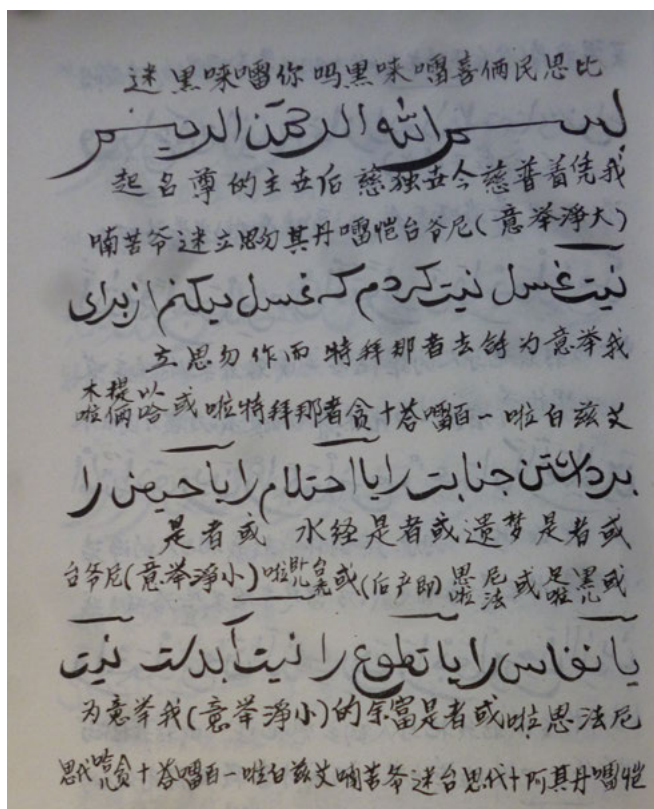

Fig. 10: The *Daʿawāt al-muslimīn* (a collection of prayers).

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58 One example is a collection of prayers entitled *Daʿawāt al-muslimīn*, published as a facsimile manuscript in 1982 by the Islamic Association of Beijing (Beijing shi yisilan jiao xiehui 北京市伊斯蘭教協會) (Fig. 10). The collection also includes a Chinese translation written beneath the line, from the left to the right (the phonetic transcription written above the line runs from right to left).

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