

PARAMEDIA

JURNAL KOMUNIKASI DAN INFORMASI KEAGAMAAN

**Otentisitas Mushaf Al-Qur'an Telaah atas Pemikiran John
Wansbrough)**

Edi Susanto

Misteri Alam Jin Perspektif Al-Qur'an

Aswadi

**Kepribadian Muslim Ideal Perspektif Al-Qur'an (Telaah Konsep
Hamka Tentang Kepribadian Muslim dalam Tafsir Al-Azhar)**

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**Fitrah Manusia dalam Al-Qur'an dan Pengembangannya Melalui
Life Skill Education**

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Multicultural Mission: Islamic Indigenization in Chinese Culture

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MULTICULTURAL MISSION: ISLAMIC INDIGENIZATION IN CHINESE CULTURE

Mochamad Ali¹

Abstract: Semangat inkulturasi teologis Islam *ala* Cina yang dikenal sebagai *Sinicized Islamic Terms* itu dirumuskan oleh para *Confucian-Moslems* sebagai tuntutan indigenisasi atas “ketegangan” latar sosio-politis dan teologis. Pola itu juga terproyeksi melalui sistem “translasi” dan “transliterasi” yang mengusung kosakata asing dan pemanfaatan diksi lokal dalam ranah episteme teks Quran *via* bahasa Arab. Teks Quran *per se* menguatkan strategi misi inkulturasi itu berlapis-lapis; (1) *Judeo-Christian Thought in Arabicized-Hebrew/ in Arabicized-Aramaic Culture*, (2) *Judeo-Christian Thought in Arabic Culture*, (3) *Islamic Thought in Arabic Culture* yang mengindikasikan korpus teologis dalam varian kultur yang melatarinya.

Keywords: *Indigenization, Contextualization, Confucian-Moslems, dan Sinicized Islamic Terms*

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Introduction

The first contact between Islam and China began in the era of Chaliph Utsman ibn Affan when he sent first arrival of diplomats to the Chinese King *Yong Hui* in 30 H/651 AD. The fact was also affirmed by Chinese historians, such as *Pai Shou Yi*, *Chen Yuen*, and *Liu Chih*. In Chinese historical manuscripts, especially in annals of *Tang* Dynasty (618-905 AD), the diplomatic contact of Arab in China was recorded accurately, and in it, they were known as *Ta-sheh*. *Chen Yuen*, in his historical work "A Brief Study of the Introduction of Islam to China" stated that in the second year of *Chen Yuen's* government (651 AD.), Arab diplomats have come into the palace of *Caesar Yong Hui*, in the capital city of *Changan* to protest the intervention of *Caesar* in helping the Persian-King *Yezdegird III* as the false political decision, because of his policy to join in war with the Persian soldiers against Islam. Of course, it raised a question, who was being the leader of Arab delegates to the Chinese King's palace?

According to *Liu Chih*, a historian of Chinese-Moslems in XVII century, in his work "*Chee-cha-sheehuzoo*" stated that the Companion of the Prophet, *Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqash* was being the leader of the *Caesar*. At that time, they were known as *Ta-sheh* in Chinese word, it is may be derived from Persian word, *Tashih*, an appellation to the Arabs by Persians, then it was adopted by Chinese people to call the white robed Arabs.² Also, according to Chinese archeologists, the rediscovery of the tomb of *Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqash* with the Chinese & Arabic relief of his gravestone in Sinkiang territory, is an early proof of the political contact between Islam and China. And Chinese-Arab relief itself, however, is an early evidence of Islamic contextualization or indigenization in Chinese culture.

The Early Islamic Literatures in China

One of Chinese historians, *Pai Shou Yi*, in his work "Outline of Islamic History in China" stated that *Tu Hua*, a general of *Kau Hsien Chee* soldiers, has already written the book, entitled "*Jing-hsing-chee*". In this work, many fundamental creeds of Islam, tradition, and Arab-Moslems culture has been narrated in detail. *Pai Shou Yi* also mentioned that *Tu Hua's* work was the early Chinese document about Islam and Arab-

² For futher reading, see Ibrahim Tien Ying Ma, *Perkembangan Islam di Tiongkok*, trans., Joesoef Sou'yb (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1979).

Moslems.³ Sachiko Murata, in *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light* (Albany, 2000) stated that in 1704 AD., Liu Chih wrote *T'ien-fang hsing-li* (Philosophy of Arabia). According to Murata, the term *T'ien-fang* literally means “the direction of heaven” which refers to Mecca/ Ka’bah. *Hsing-li* literally means “nature and principle”. The origin of term was related to *Hsing-li hsüeh* (the school of nature and principle), the concept of New-Confucianism. I think, this is the origin of that meaning in the Confucian episteme, so that Murata then concluded that *T'ien-fang hsing-li* could be translated as “the New Confucian-Islam” (Islamized Confucianism). Besides that, Liu Chih also wrote the other works; *T'ien-fang tien-li [tseyao-chieh]* (A Selection of the Important [Rules and Proprieties of Arabia]), written in 1710 AD., and Prophet’s Biography, written in 1137 H/1724 AD.⁴ In “*Islam in Traditional China*”, Donald Leslie also affirmed that the early Islamic work in Chinese language was *Cheng-chiao chen-ch’üan* (the Real Commentary on the True Teaching), written by Wang Tai-yü, a Chinese-Moslem who lived in XVII century. Besides the work, Wang Tai-yü (known as *Chen-hui Lao-jen* [an old man of the real Hui tribe]) have already written other *magnum opus* works; such as *Hsi-chen cheng-ta* (the True Answer of the Very Real), and *Ch’ing-chen ta-hsüeh* (the Great Learning of the Pure and Real). His three intimate disciples; Liang I-chün, Ho Han-ching, and Ma Chung-hsin have explained that Wang Tai-yü was an educated-man in three religious traditions, Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. Kuwata Rokuro also called Wang Tai-yü as a “Confucian-Moslem” and he then called Islam itself as *Hueijiao*.⁵ Of course, it raised the questions; first, why the Sinologists particularly called him as a Confucian-Moslem; second, why they called Islam as *Hueijiao*?

In China, all intellectual traditions – Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and others – were designated *chia* (pronounced *jia*, lit., “Schools of Thought”) and *chiao* (pronounced *jiao* in Mandarin), or *kauw* (in

³ *Ibid.*, 45-46.

⁴ Sachiko Murata, *Gemerlap Cahaya Sufi dari Cina*, trans., Ahmad Asnawi (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Sufi, 2003), 35-37.

⁵ Kuwata Rokuro and An Mutao, “Mingno Qingchu zhi huiru” (Confucian-Moslems in the Last Days of Ming Dynasty, and the Beginning of Qing Empirer), in *Zhongguo yisilanjiao shi cankao ziliao xuanbian* (the Reference Notes on Islamic History in China), edited by Li Xinghua and Feng Jinyuan (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanche, 1985), vol. I, 584-588.

Hokkian). Also terms *che-hsüeh* (philosophy), and *tsung-chiao* (religion) came into the Chinese vocabulary in the late nineteenth century; when they were introduced with translations of Western works – and then through the intermediary of Japanese translators. It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit vocabulary also lacked such technical terms as “philosophy” and “religion”, and relied on the term *dharma* to designate a tradition of religious teachings. I think the essence of terms *dharma* (in Sanskrit), or *chiao* (in Chinese), don’t relate to a concept of “teaching” only, but both refer to the *tsung-chiao* (the religious teaching). Therefore, in the episteme of New Confucians, *chiao* (*jiao*) / *kauw* then became a name of teaching by which it has often been referred to its origins. It was sometime related the proper name of the founder, or the names of place and tribe/ethnic group; such as *Laojiao*/ *Laokauw* to Taoism, *Kongjiao*/ *Khongkauw* to Confucianism, *Fojiao* to Buddhism, *Cidujiao* to Christianity, *Hueijiao*/ *Hueikauw* to Islam, and *Sanjiao* (in Mandarin) / *Samkauw* (in Hokkian) to Tri Dharma (the mixing teaching of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism). *Hueijiao* refers to the religion of Hwei ethnic group, namely Islam. In fact, *Hwei* is one of Chinese tribes who have already converted into Islam, and the majority of them were known as Moslems. The other Moslem Chinese ethnic groups are Uyghur, Kazakh, Tatar, Salar, Bao’an, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Dongxiang, and Tajik. But, only the proper name of *Hwei* ethnic group which has been used to identify the foreign religion of Arab in China. The problem is; did *Hui* begin as a pejorative appellation to earliest Islamized Chinese society, or has *Hwei* ethnic group become a diasporic society in China to “Islamize” Confucian Chinese society? There are different opinions on this subject. Thus, if a Confucian Chinese converted into Islam, so his religion will be called as *Hueijiao* although he himself was not coming from *Hwei* tribe, because Confucian Chinese ethnic groups generally called *Hwei*’s religion as *Hueijiao*.

Meanwhile, the term *Confucian-Moslem* (in contrast to the *New Confucians*) is a really problematic word. It perhaps because of his Confucian religious traditional heritage by which in his works, Wang Tai-yü always explained many aspects of Islamic theology, and its values in Confucian terms, and not in Arabic. However, Chinese languages, such as *Wenli*, Mandarin or others, have different writing systems and consist of the unique semantics and different spellings. Chinese languages are generally written in the Chinese characters. This unique writing system is sometimes called pictograms or ideograms because of their special system of

construction, and in linguistic study, each Chinese character consists of one or more elements. Those consisting of one element are generally pictographic characters, and a few are symbolic. Meanwhile, the other writing systems are always presented in scripts; such as Urdu, Uyghur, Mongolian, Persian, Armenian, Russian, Latin, Greek, Tibetan, Tamil, Devanagari, Gujarati, Malayalam, Thai, Malay, Georgian, Maldivian, Sinhalese, Oriya, Bengali, Burmese, Khmer, Lao, Gurmukhi, or Semitic scripts, so that the original idea of Islamic terms in Arabic words can be transformed into those languages through a process of “transliteration” without falling into “misconception”. But, Chinese-Moslems in China, like Wang Tai-yü, of course find many difficulties when transforming the Islamic terms into the Chinese languages through the process of “transliteration”, and not “translation.” Generally, only the foreign proper names can be adapted *via* transliteration (known as *Sinicized* proper names), such as *Ku-lai-se* (Quraysh), *Mu-han-muo* (Muhammad), *A-li* (Ali), *E-le-ha-san* (Al-Hasan) *E-le-hou-sai-ni* (Al-Huseini), *Hu-xin* (Husein), *Mu-xie* (Musa), *Wu-ma-er* (‘Umar), *Suo-fei-er* (Shafi’e), or *Shan-su-ding* (Syamsuddin). It means that whatever the majority of foreign ideas of Islamic terms which are adopted *via* the Arabic vocabularies and its semantics, can not be transliterated into Chinese. This is only done through the process of “translation” into the native vocabularies of Chinese or process of indigenization although in fact, Mandarin or other Chinese dialects have already been mixed or injected by multi-interpretations of multicolored ideas of the native Chinese spirituals which refers to the great traditions, such as Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, and at that time, the power behind the Chinese religious terms have created a multicolored hegemony in the mind-set of Chinese. Nevertheless, Wang Tai-yü, in this context, created a free market of ideas through a process of dialogue among Chinese spiritual terms to guide them understanding the Islamic terms although in many cases he quoted the Confucian terms and used them as a part of Confucian-Islam terms because of its dominant hegemony in the episteme of Chinese.

Allah and T’ien (Chen-chu): The Islamic Terms in Chinese Idioms

Concerning about “Sinicized-Arabic words”, how to make a parallelism or contextualization through “translation” on Islamic terms in Chinese episteme? There are many terms especially in the Confucian Classics which may refer to the notion of God. This fact alone has been the

source of many difficulties and misapprehensions, such as *Shen* (Spirit), *T'ien-chu* (Lord of Heaven) and *T'ai-chi* (the Ultimate). The two most important terms are *Shang-ti* (Lord on High), and *T'ien* (Heaven). Speaking etymologically, the word *Ti* (Lord), present in the earliest writings - on the so called "oracle bones" - had a cultic meaning, being associated with sacrifice. *Ti* was especially the God of the earliest Chinese dynasty in history; the *Shang*, traditionally dated as having begun around 1766 BC., although archeological evidence only goes back to about 1300 BC. *Ti* belonged to a religion in which ancestral cult held a predominant place, according to some, it represent a "divinization" of the ancestral spirit of the ruling family. The problem is; did *Ti* begin as a divinized ancestor, or was it rather the transformation of an earth-god, or rain-god, or even moon-god into a supreme deity, also regarded as a kind of divinized ancestral spirit? There are different opinions on this subject.⁶

According to Tazaka, there are many proper names of God to explain the concept of *Allah* in Chinese episteme. In the era of Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), Chinese-Moslems used the term *T'ien* (Heaven), and in the era of Sung dynasty (960-1279 AD), they used terms *Ti'ien* and *Buddha*. But, in the era of Ming dynasty (1368-1644 AD), when they began to wrote about Islam in Chinese, they used many terms to *Allah*, such as *Chen-chu* (Real Lord), *Chen-i* (Real One), *Chen-tsai* (Real Ruler), and *Chu* (Lord), and at the same time, Christian missionaries also used the similar term *T'ien-chu* to translate *Theos* (上帝, the Greek proper name of God).⁷ There are also many titles of Muhammad able to be found in the Islamic Chinese texts, such as in the works of Liu Chih or Wang Tai-yü which have been the object of study for Christian and Moslem missionaries, philologists, textual exegetes, and even archeologists. The most important terms are *sheng* (sage), *Chih-sheng* (the Utmost sage) to call Muhammad (cf. the term *payambar* literally means "prophet" in Persian word is actually the title of Zoroaster, *Payambar Zarathustra*, but for Persian-Moslems, the title *payambar* was then applied to Muhammad). If all prophets of Islam (in the Quran) were generally called as *Sheng-hsien* (sages and worthies), so also Taoists have already called their sages/ worthies as *Sheng-hsien*. Again, in

⁶ See Carl Hentze, *Mythes et Symboles Lunaires* (Antwerp, 1932). Cf. Bernhard Karlgren, 'Legends and Cults in Ancient China', *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, no.18 (1946), 199-365.

⁷ Sachiko Murata, *Gemerlap*, .25-26

Chinese terms, Muhammad was called as *Shou-p'u* (chief servant), or *Ch'in-ch'a* (ambassador). Actually, the terms have already been applied to Confucius in the earliest Confucian works. In Confucianism, terms *sheng* and *Chih-sheng* also have already been applied to call Khong fu-tzû Ku, the great prophet of Confucians. Chieh-kang, a philologist and also as a Chinese Confucian historian said that Confucius was regarded as a *chün-tzu* (gentlemen) in the Spring-Autumn Period (722-481 BC.), as a *sheng* (sage) in the Warring States Period (403-221 BC.), as a *chiao-chu* (pope) in the Western Han (206 BC.-9 AD.), and again as *sheng* in the Eastern Han (25-220 AD.). Today, he is to be regarded once more as a *chün-tzu*.⁸ Otherwise, the Chinese-Confucians of Indonesia called Khong fu-tzû (Confucius) as "Nabi Khongchu" (*Seng-jien Khongfu-tzû*; see *Lung Gi* 9:6), or "Nabi Besar Khongchu" (*Chih-seng Khongfu-tzû*; see *Bing Cu* 4b,1:5). In order to get a clear understanding, I quote three verses of the Confucian-Bible (*Su Si*) in Indonesian version to compare the idea of contextualization between the titles of Muhammad in Chinese and Confucius' titles in Indonesian (Indonesianized Arabic?); for examples:

Ada orang bertanya kepada Nabi Khongcu, "Mengapa Guru tidak memangku jabatan?" Nabi menjawab, "Di dalam Su King tertulis "Berbaktilah! Berbakti dan mengasihi saudara-saudara, ini sudah berarti membantu pemerintahan!" Mengapa harus memangku jabatan baru dinamai membantu pemerintahan?"(Su Si, Lung Gi [Sabda Suci] 2:21).⁹

Someone asked the Sage Confucius, saying, "Why do you not carry out government functions?" The Master answered, the Book of History, regarding filial piety, said that with only filial piety and brotherly friendship, those controlling government can be influenced. If doing so already amounts to carrying out government functions, why then must one be in government to carry out government functions?" (*Su Si, Lung Gi [Analects] 2:21*).¹⁰

⁸ See the chapter written by Ku Chieh-kang himself on the Confucius of the Spring-Autumn Period and the Confucius of the Han Dynasty. It is included in Ku Chieh-kang, ed., *Ku-shih pien* (Peking, 1930-31), vol. 2, 262.

⁹ *Su Si: Kitab Yang Empat. Kitab Suci Agama Khonghucu* (n.p: Majelis Tinggi Agama Khonghucu [Matakin] 1988), 110.

¹⁰ John B. Khu, et all. (ed.), *The Confucian Bible, Book 1. Analects* (Metro Manila: Granhill Corporation, 1991), 49.

Ada seorang berpangkat Thai-cai bertanya kepada Cu-khong, "Seorang Nabikah guru Tuan, emngapa begitu banyak kecakapannya." Cu-khong menjawab, "Memang Tuhan Yang Maha Esa telah mengutusNya sebagai Nabi. Maka banyaklah kecakapanNya. Ketika mendengar itu Nabi bersabda, "Tahukah pembesar itu akan diriKu? Pada waktu muda Aku banyak menderita, maka banyaklah Aku memperoleh kecakapan-kecakapan biasa. Haruskah seorang Kunci mempunyai banyak kecakapan? Tidak, ia tidak memerlukan banyak." (Su Si, Lung Gi [Sabda Suci] 9:6).¹¹

The chief administrator asked Zi Gong, saying, "Your Master is a sage, is he not? Why is he so versalite?" Zi Gong replied, "Because Heaven (T'ien) led him to become a sage, and also versalite." When the Master heard about this, he said, "Does the chief administrator know me? When young, my station in life was rather base; therefore I became versalite in mean affairs. Does a noble person require versality? No!" (Su Si, Lung Gi [Analects] 9:6).¹²

Cu-tiang bertanya kepada Nabi Khong-cu, "Bagaimanakah cara menjalankan pemerintahan sebaik-baiknya? Nabi Menjawab, "Junjunglah lima yang indah dan buanglah empat yang buruk, dengan cara ini akan dapat menjelaskan pemerintahan sebaik-baiknya." (Su Si, Lung Gi [Sabda Suci] 20:2).¹³

Zi Zhang asked to the Sage Confucius, "What is needed to enter government?" The Master answered, "Honor the five beatitudes, repudiate the four failings, and one can enter government." (Su Si, Lung Gi [Analects] 20:2).¹⁴

Other, in Islamic Chinese texts, the Holy Quran was generally called *Ching* (Classic/ Source), *T'ien-ching* (the Heavenly Classic), or *Shih-ming chen-ching* (the Real Classic of the True Mandate [cf. the Taoist-Bible, *Tao-tê-ching*]). The Hadithic Musnad was also called as *Ch'ing-chen chiao*. *Shalât* and *masjid* in Islamic Chinese texts were often called as *li-pai* (worship), *li-pai ssu* (the temple of worship) or *Ch'ing-chen ssu* (the temple of the pure and real), in contrast to the temple of Confucianism wherein

¹¹ Su Si: *Kitab Yang Empat*, 182

¹² John B. Khu, et all. (ed.), *The Confucian Bible*, 142

¹³ Su Si: *Kitab Yang Empat*, 337.

¹⁴ John B. Khu, et.all. (ed.), *The Confucian Bible*, 317

they called it as *Bun-bio* (in Hokkian) or *Wen-miao* (in Mandarin).¹⁵ Although the Confucian terms have already been used to explain the Islamic terms by the 'ulama of China, but the formula of Islamic semantics have been injected into them through the process of contextualization. This process, is then known as "indigenization", and the theological vocabularies of Chinese-Moslems *per se* can be called as the *Sinicized Islamic terms*. I think, it is really unique in the world of Islam. In order to get a clear description, I quote the Mandarin Quran, chapter *al-Ikhlās* 112:1-4. In this translation, the Arabic word of God, *Allah* is transformed in Mandarin as *Chen-chu*, *Chu*, and *Ti*.¹⁶

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ
 لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ
 وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ
 سورة الإخلاص ١٢: ١-٤

Feng-ce-ren ce-je-te Chen-chu ce-min.
Ni-suo : da-se Chen-chu, se-tuk ie-te Chu.
Chen-chu se-wang-wu suo-yang lai-te.
Da-mei-you sen-chan, ye-mei-you pei-sen-chan.
Mei-you-reng he-wu-ge ie-cho-da te-bi-Ti.
Ie-he-la-se (Chung Jen) 112: 1-4.

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most
 Merciful. Say: He is God.
 God, the Eternal, Absolute.
 He begetteth not, nor is He begotten.
 And there is none like unto Him.
Al-Ikhlās (The Purity of Faith)
 112:1-4.

The Islamic Tao in the Mandarin Quran

Nowadays, a contemporary Christian missionary of China, an ex-Taoist, Joseph A. Loya wrote a book, entitle "The Tao of Jesus" to guide

¹⁵ Sachiko Murata, *Gemerlap...*26-27

¹⁶ *Juz 'Amma: Tuntunan Bagi Saudara Baru* (Surabaya: Yayasan Haji Muhammad Cheng Hoo, 1997), 9-10.

the Chinese people and to give an understanding on a “meeting point” of Jesus’ teachings with the Taoism (Batam: Santo Press, 2002). Meanwhile, a Japanese Moslem, Sachiko Murata also has written a work, entitle “The Tao of Islam: A Sourcebook on Gender Relationship in Islamic Thought” (State University of New York Press, 1992) to guide the Chinese people in seeing the light of Tao in Islam, and to give an understanding about the relationship of principal idea between Islam & Taoism. The works of Joseph and Murata, in this context, are not only to rediscover the similar religious idea in the paradigm of *philosophia perennis* between Chinese-Bible (*Tao Tê Ching; Su Si*) and Quranic or Biblical divine words, but also to open a new horizon of the Chinese-Bible; Taoist-Bible and Confucian-Bible from within. The *Tao Tê Ching* (pronounced approximately *Dow Duh Jing*) text in Classical Chinese, in Poem 32 (English translation) is as follows;

The Way eternal has no name.
A block of wood untooled, though small,
May still excel the world.
And if the king and nobles could
Retain its potency for good,
Then everything would freely give
Allegiance to their rule.

The earth and sky would then conspire
To bring the sweet dew down;
And evenly it would be given
To folk without constraining power.

Creatures came to be with order’s birth,
And once they had appeared,
Came also knowledge of repose,
And with that was security.

In this world,
Compare those of the Way
To torrents that flow
Into river and sea.¹⁷

¹⁷ R.B. Blakney, *The Way of Life, Lao Tzu: A New Translation of the Tao Tê Ching* (New York: The New American Library, 1959), 85.

In the *Tao Tê Ching*, the essence of “Universal Word” or the source of creation (*Ban-buat ci-bo*) is presented as the *Tao*, by which in Islamic esotericism, like Frithjof Schuon’s thesis, it is known as “*Rûh Muhammadiyyah*” (lit., Spirit of Muhammad) or the “*Nur Muhammadiyyah*” (lit., the Light of Muhammad) which refers to the “Universal Intellect”. In the Sufism, however, the term is not referring to the physical body of Muhammad, but it refers to the ‘avatic’ nature of the Prophet. The very concept of the “*Spirit of Muhammad*” which is the *Logos* of physical body of Jesus, proves the authenticity of the hadiths of *Nur Muhammadiyyah*. Moreover, the essence of *Tao* in each religion is a proof of the common origin, and as the direct evidence of their common heritage. Again, each traditional form identifies its founder with the divine *Tao* and looks on the other mouth-pieces of Heaven, in so far as it takes them into consideration, as projections of this founder and as secondary manifestations of one *Tao*; in the case of Buddhists, Christ, and the Prophet can only be envisaged as Buddhas. Thus, how to understand about the essence of *Tao* in the Chinese spirituality? Lao-tzû said in his holy work *Tao Tê Ching*, chapter XXV (in Poem 1):

Sing-sian thian tee-sing.
Cik-he bok-he tok-liep ji-poe kay.
Ciou-hing ji-poe tay,
Kho-i wi-thian he-bo

(Something there is, whose veiled creation was,
 Before the earth or sky began to be;
 So befoe, so aloof and so alone,
 It changes not, nor fails, but touches all,
 Conceive it as the mother of the world).¹⁸

The *Tao*, literally means “a part”, “a road”, even better “a way” by which people travel, the way of nature and finally the *Way* of ultimate Reality which is related to the straight *Way* of whom the God has bestowed His Grace to peoples. To the Chinese mystics, it did not come only to refer to the way the whole world of nature operates but to signify the original undifferentiated source from which the universe is evolved, planned, and

¹⁸ *Tao Tik King: Kitab Kebatinan Lao Tzû*, trans., Tan Khoen Djwan (Kediri: Boekhandel Tan Khoen Swie, 1937), 138-140.

then created. It means that the original undifferentiated source is a master plan of God before the creation of universe itself. We may conclude then that the *Tao* as an undifferentiated source has a similar idea and more familiar parallel with the essence of *Tao* in Christian-Bible by which refers to the Hellenic term, the *Logos* (lit., “divine Word”). In order to get a real description between the *Tao* in the Chinese Gospel and the *Logos* in the Greek one, I quote the Gospel of John 1: 1-3 in both versions.

Tài chù yōu Tào,
Tào yù Shen tong zài,
Tào jiù shì Shen.
Zhe Tào tài chū yū Shen tong zài.
Wàn wù shì jì zhe tā zào de,
fán bei zào de,
mei yōu yì yang bú shì jì zhe tā zào de.
(The Chinese Gospel of John 1:1-3).¹⁹

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος,
καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν,
καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.
Πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγενετο,
καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγενετο
οὐδὲ ἐν ὁ γέγονεν.

(*En arche en ho Logos,
kai ho Logos en pros ton Theon,
kai Theos en ho logos.
Outos en en arche pros ton Theon.
Panta di autou egeneto,
kai choris autou egeneto
oude en ho gegonen*).
(the Greek Gospel of John 1:1-3).

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was Divine Existence.
He was in the beginning with God;

¹⁹ *The New Testament* (Beijing: The Gideons International, 1961), 260; cf. *Alkitab dalam Bahasa Indonesia dan Bahasa Cina Sehari-hari* (Jakarta: Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, 2002), 261.

All things were made through him,
and without him was not anything
made that was made.²⁰

That is the *Logos* existence, as such who speaks although for the Christians world, Jesus is truly identified with this one and universal *Tao*. And by *Tao*, the Divine Existence which refers to the *Logos*, all things came into the existence, then the *Logos* himself came down into the form of flesh, in the physical body of Jesus. Thus, in transforming the Hellenic-Christian term, the *Logos*, into the Chinese episteme, the Western missionaries, especially from Baptist denomination, translated it as the *Tao*. Here, I quote the Chinese Gospel of John 3;16 in Kinhwa colloquial, the *Logos* has actually been translated as *Tao*.

Ing-teh Jing jiang-ae shiae-ga-shông
Tao-s Geodoh-sang-geh Ng,
ioh-teh va-pah siang-sing-geh
nyin mia-diao long vông teh-djoh
yüin-nyun wor-ming.

(For God so loved the world
that He gave His only Son,
that whoever believes in him
should not perish but have eternal life).²¹

In Islam, as I said before, the Islamic *Tao* always refers to existence of *Nur Muhammad* (lit., “the Light of Muhammad”), as the “Divine Light”. Before the earth or sky began to be; he was, and at the same time, he was being the source of the creations (known as the “Universal Intellect”), or in the Taoism, he was called as the “Mother of the Universe”, because the universe *per se* has been born from her. In this context, the Islamic *Tao* which refers to the ‘avatic’ nature of the Prophet in the Quran has actually been affirmed, and his pre-existence is really before anything, including the creation of the prophets. It indicates that the “Light of Muhammad” is to

²⁰ Kurt Aland et.all. (ed.), *The Greek New Testament*, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: United Bible Society, 1988), 320

²¹ Horace Jenkins, *The Gospel of John* (Shanghai: American Baptist Missionary Union, 1866), cf. Eric M. North (ed.), *The Book*, 95

signify the original undifferentiated source from which the universe is evolved or planned by God himself. By a setting of metaphysical dialogue, the God has also took the covenant of all the prophets about the Divine Light of prophetic Muhammad (cf. the Quran, chapter al-Shaff 61: 7-9).

وإذ أخذ الله ميثق النبي لما آتيناكم من الكتب وحكمة ثم جاءكم رسول مصدق لما معكم لتؤمنن به ولتنصرنه قال ءأقررتم وأخذتم على ذالكم إصري قالوا أقررنا قال فاشهدوا وأنا معكم من الشاهدين (آل عمران ٨١٢)

Behold God took the covenant of the prophets, saying: "I give you a Book and Wisdom; then comes to you a Messenger, confirming what is with you: do ye believe in him and render him help." God said: "Do ye agree, and take this My Covenant as binding on you?" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses." (the Quran, chapter Ali 'Imran 3:81).²²

卷二八

AL-SHAFF 章节

第六 - 节

7 伊拉在：当玛尔彦之子，伊拉说：“以色列的子孙啊！我确实安拉差给你们使者，我证实在我之前，Torah 时约之者在卷中所陈述的预言，并传达在我之后的一位使者，名叫阿哈默德者¹⁴¹²将要求的喜讯。当他带着明证来到他们那里时，他们竟说：“这是明显的‘魔术’。”

وإذ قال يعيسى ابن مريم يا قوم إن ربنا آتيناكم الكتاب والحيمة والفرقان فمبشرا بآيات من ربكم
رسول الله إليكم فصحة فألبا بين يدي من
النور والفرقان فمبشرا بآيات من ربكم
نسمة أحمدنا فلما جاءهم بالبينات قالوا هذا
سحر قبيح

Source: M. Osman Chou Chung Sai, al-Qur'ān al-Karīm: The Holy Qur'an with Chinese Translation and Commentary (Sheephatch Lane, Tilford: Islam International Publications, 1990), p.1229.

FIGURE 01

The Quran, chapter al-Shaff 61: 7. The Arabic text with Chinese translation. Osman Chou Chung Sai's Version is the Chinese Quran in Mandarin (known as Putonghua), with Chianthitsi (official characters) and

²² Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran* (Kuala Lumpur: Saba Islamic Media, 2001), 83.

Hanyu Pinyin (*han-ü p'in-in*) spelling. This version was translated by Osman Chou himself, used as a medium to “Islamize” the Chinese *Tao* of Taoists and Confucians in China (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo). Therefore, the Chinese mystics might understand the Islamic *Tao* according to their religious tradition. This version also adopt many classical Chinese vocabularies, like stylistic features in *Tao Tê Ching* and *Su Si* (Confucian-Bible).

The pre-existence of Muhammad is not only represented as the *Nûr* (the Light), but also as the *Shirâth* (the Way), because he himself is the *Shirâth*, the Way to God (cf. al-Mu'minun 23;73, al-Shura 42:52). Also, in the Mandarin Quran, chapter 1: 6, the *Shirath* is translated as *Tao*. It indicates that in the mind-set of Chinese-Moslems, the essence of *Tao*, in the Taoist-Bible can be applied to the *Tao* of Islam which is related the pre-existence of Muhammad. The Islamic *Tao* (“the *Shirâth*”) in the Quran, however, is a main gate to explain the Islamic teachings to Chinese peoples as the fulfillment of *Tao Tê Ching* (Taoist-Bible) through the *T'ien Ching* (the Heavenly Classic), the Chinese name of the Quran. The identification of pre-existence of Muhammad as the “Divine Light” and the “*Shirâth*” (lit., “the *Way*”) as the *Tao* in the episteme of Chinese-Moslems are a form of “indigenization” or “contextualization” to globalize the main idea of the prophetic voices in Chinese Islamic expression in the paradigm of parallelism. In order to get a clear understanding *via* the method of parallelism, let me quote the Islamic *Tao* according to the Quran of chapter “*al-Fatihah*” (the Opening).²³

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
 إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ
 اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
 غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ
 وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ
 سورة الفاتحة ١-٧

²³ Juz 'Amma: Tuntunan, 1-3.

Feng-ce-ren ce-je-te Chen-chu ce-min
le-jie cang-sun, juen-kwei Chen-chu, juen-se cie-te Chu
Ce-ren ce-je-te Chu
Pao-ing-le te Chu
Wo-men ce-chon pai-ni, ce-jiu-ni you-cu
Jiu-ni yin Tao wo-men sang-ceng-lu
Ni-suo you-cu ce-te-lu
Pu-se-sou jien-nu ce-te-lu
Ye-pu-se mie-wu ce-te-lu
Fa-ti-hai (Gai Tuan) 1 :1-7

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds. Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek. Show us the straight Way (*Tao*). The Way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace, those whose (portion) is not wrath, and who go not astray.

Al-Fatihah (the Opening) 1:1-7.

In the Chinese Quran, especially on chapter *al-Fatihah* 1: 6, the term *S{irāth* is translated as the *Tao*. Like Chinese-Moslem peoples everywhere, Chinese-Moslems in Surabaya needed to transmit their knowledge of Islam to their own speech communities, especially in Mandarin. The problem is; why did they translate the Arabic Quran into Mandarin by using the classical Chinese characters, or why didn't they choose Hokkian dialect? As far as I knew, Mandarin (known as Putonghua), with the Hanyu Pinyin (*han-ü p'in-in*) spelling is an official *lingua franca* for overseas Chinese in the world, including in the metropolitan town of Surabaya, so that why they use it as a primordial identity which refers to the origin of their forefathers coming as *xin ke* (new arrivals). Psychologically, on one hand, the use of Mandarin among them, is also to memorize their origins as the *Tenglang* (*Tangren*) which refers to the "Men of Tang dynasty" although actually they are *Zhongguo Xuetong* (Chinese descendants). It perhaps that the forefathers of Chinese overseas in Indonesia generally, and in Surabaya especially had already come from China in the era of decline of Tang dynasty (905 AD.), or in the earliest period of Ming dynasty (1368-1644 AD), because in this era, the Chinese-Moslem scholars, like Wang Tai-yü for example, he began to write about Islam in Chinese by using many terms to *Allah*, such as *Chen-chu* (Real

Lord), *Chen-i* (Real One), *Chen-i* (Real One), *Chen-tsai* (Real Ruler), and *Chu* (Lord). Probably, the origins of overseas Chinese in Indonesia are also one of Wang Tai-yü's followers, or the descendants of them, or maybe their vision has the same platform like Wang Tai-yü's. We can tell it because their accents (speech) like him; for example, they also use terms *Chen-chu*, *Chu*, and *Ti* to translate *Allah*, the Arabic word of God in the Mandarin Quran (Juz 'Amma), see the book "Tuntunan Bagi Saudara Baru" (Surabaya, 1997), published by "Yayasan Haji Muhammad Cheng Hoo.

Mandarin itself has globally become the official spoken language (*lingua franca*) in China too. It means that Mandarin is used to unite different Chinese ethnical groups in the whole China. Therefore, although the majority of overseas Chinese in Surabaya are the speakers of Hokkian dialect, but in psycho-sociological context, it can not marginalize Mandarin to unite them. It means that Mandarin, however, is a solution to crystallize a common heritage between overseas Chinese (*Zongguo qiaomin* or *Huaqiao*) and genuine Chinese or among *Huaqiao* themselves. Again, why did the overseas Chinese of Surabaya who assembled at Muhammad Gheng Hoo Foundation, translate the *Shirāth* in the Arabic of Quran (the Arabic word?) as the *Tao*? Chinese-Moslems who assembled at the foundation, majority converted into Islam from Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity. They actually knew the essence of *Tao* according to each religious tradition in the episteme of Chinese, so that why they transform it into the Islamic *Tao*, "the Shirath" (the "Way" of Islam).

Conclusion

Multicultural mission is a holistic mission by which the Islamic revealed knowledge can be transformed into the other cultures. This mission, however, recommends the indigenous concept of Islam via linguistic strategy within the mind-set of the communities, with the use of cultural transformation, and without marginalizing the originality of the Islamic sacred text. Especially in the Chinese episteme, the indigenous concept of Islam, however, is a must. Indeed, among the Islamic missionaries, it is maybe, known as *crem condicio cinecu anon*.

Based on the method of strategic mission in the Chinese culture, there is a basic strategy to implement the sacred cultural communication of Islam by which the original idea of Islamic terms in Arabic words can be transformed into the Chinese language through the process of "translation" without falling into "misconception". In other words, the transformation of

Islamic revealed knowledge which refers to the Arabic can be implemented into the Chinese episteme through the process of “translation”, and not “transliteration”, although a number of foreign proper names generally can be adapted *via* transliteration. Therefore, we recognize them as the *Arabic thought in Chinese culture*, namely *Sinicized* proper names which refers to the *Sinicized Islamic terms*. It means that whatever the majority of foreign ideas of Islamic terms which are adopted *via* the Arabic vocabularies and its semantics, can not be transliterated into the Chinese. This is only done through the process of “translation” by the Confucian-Moslems into the native vocabularies of Chinese or process of contextualization or indigenization, although in fact, Mandarin or other Chinese dialects have already been mixed or injected by multi-interpretations of multicolored ideas of the native Chinese spirituals which refers to the great traditions, such as Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism.