

Cross-Cultural Dialogue between a Chinese Sage and Muslim Polymath
Chinese calendar in the *Īlkhānīd Zīj* as the embodiment of the astronomical dialogue

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Although it is well known that Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (1201–74)—a Muslim polymath—had a scientific acquaintance with a Chinese sage known as FUMNJI, little is known about the latter. This paper elucidates a phase of the cultural manifold in Mongol Eurasia through a close investigation into the elusive identity of the sage and the result of a dialogue between the two. A Japanese sinologist Miya Noriko has recently analyzed a newly discovered Chinese source, in which a Chinese figure, Fu Ye 傅野, is mentioned to have served as a court physician under Hülegü (1218–65). Miya has pointed out that Fu Ye could be identified with this Chinese sage. Ṭūsī incorporated a Chinese calendar into his *Īlkhānīd Zīj* under instruction by the sage. The mathematical structure of the Chinese calendar was “simplified” relative to that of the official astronomical systems by means of several calculative methods derived from an “unofficial” astronomical system. Whereas the rulers of the eastern domain of the Mongol empire intended to regulate the astronomical system (*li* 曆) as the “Son of Heaven,” the rulers of the western domain did not have such an intention and never introduced the official astronomical system in the East into the West. The incorporation of the Chinese calendar into the Islamicate *zīj* was neither for the purpose of regulating time nor legitimatizing the Mongol rule; rather, the calendar was only to enable the practice of the Chinese divination and conversion of the calendar into other calendars used in the region.