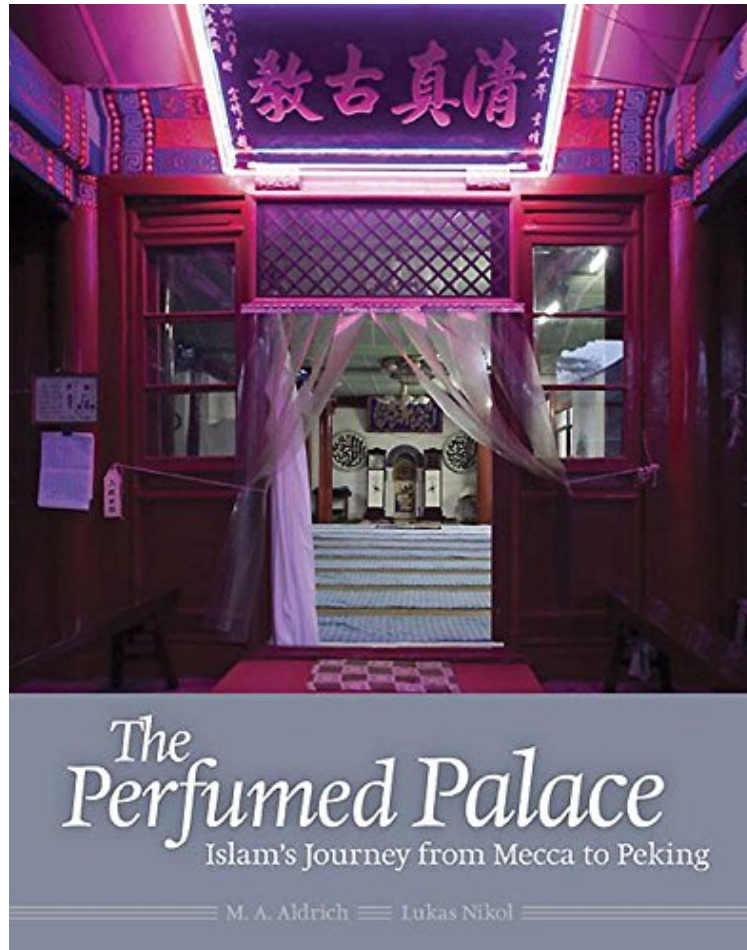


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The Perfumed Palace: Islam's Journey from Mecca to Peking

Lukas Nikol, M.A. Aldrich

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Lukas Nikol, M.A. Aldrich : The Perfumed Palace: Islam's Journey from Mecca to Peking before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Perfumed Palace: Islam's Journey from Mecca to Peking:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Very Interesting By Bonnie Neely The Perfumed Palace by M.A. Aldrich and Lukas Nikol (photographer) is a most unusual and interesting book about the history of Islam in China. The book is well written by a lawyer who has lived in China for nearly two decades. Nikol, the photographer/graphic designer, is a frequent traveler in the Far East and has illustrated another unauthorized photographic book about Korea. The Perfumed Palace traces the history of the way Islam religion integrated so well into China that it seems like a delicate perfume which just enhances a place but remains unobtrusive and blends in without calling attention to itself but becomes a part of the fabric of life around it. The Silk Road in ancient China made this a natural evolution of events. It is a very well written and interesting book

While it is not widely known, Islam first arrived in China in the 7th century CE and rapidly became an integral part of China's social fabric. By 996 CE, Muslims had established a presence in Beijing (which we call Peking because of its classical resonance), and so began a process of blending so far-reaching that today, casual observers of northern China, whether Chinese, Muslim or Western, might be completely unaware of their existence. Loosely themed around the Five Pillars of Islam, *The Perfumed Palace* explores the life and culture of the Muslims of China's capital city who, over the centuries, have developed such a harmonious synthesis of two great civilizations. Accompanying the text are more than 100 color photographs taken by photographer Lukas Nikol on visits to the Muslim Quarter in Peking and to the Muslim villages that dot the countryside in its outlying counties. The photographs encompass everything from daily life, festivals, markets, schools, mosque architecture and numerous other leitmotifs of the capital's Muslims. Several 1930s black-and-white photographs from the Harvard-Yenching Library add a further historical dimension to this visual depiction of Muslim Peking. The book is completed by specially commissioned reproductions of *sini* calligraphic scrolls, a form of Arabic calligraphy that incorporates Chinese-style brush strokes in a vertical format, like traditional Chinese writing. These breath-taking combinations of Arabic and Chinese calligraphy are an art form unknown outside China.

The Perfumed Palace by M.A. Aldrich and Lukas Nikol (photographer) is a most unusual and interesting book about the history of Islam in China. The book is well written by a lawyer who has lived in China for nearly two decades. Nikol, the photographer/graphic designer, is a frequent traveler in the Far East and has illustrated another unauthorized photographic book about Korea. *The Perfumed Palace* traces the history of the way Islam religion integrated so well into China that it seems like a delicate perfume which just enhances a place but remains unobtrusive and blends in without calling attention to itself but becomes a part of the fabric of life around it. The Silk Road in ancient China made this a natural evolution of events. It is a very well written and interesting book. -- Bonnie Neely, *Real Travel Adventures*, 2010/08 "This volume profiles the Muslim communities in and just outside Beijing, China, through text and photographs. The text, loosely organized around the five pillars of Islamic faith - the profession of faith, prayer, fasting, alms, and the pilgrimage to Mecca - provides a description of the historical development of this community and of their social and religious lives in China's capital city and is accompanied by some 60 color photographs of life in the Muslim quarter of Beijing and among Muslims in outlying counties." -- Book News, Inc., 2010/09