

Muslim Networks, Religious Economy, and Community Survival: The Financial Upkeep of Mosques in Late Imperial China

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Abstract

This paper seeks to show how geographically isolated yet historically and culturally significant southern mosques survived in late Imperial China. Long-distance donations to mosques in the Qing dynasty (1644–1911) in the forms of remittance payments, charitable donations, and real estate investments help to explain the continuous existence of Muslims in parts of southern China. Mosques in late imperial China could raise funds in a variety of ways, from Islamic teachers who went out on fundraising trips to scholars who emphasized the pivotal role of a particular mosque in the history of Chinese Islam, to Muslim officials who generously donated to mosques. This paper provides insight into how Islam survived in China throughout the imperial period, reveals the degree of interconnectivity between distant Muslim communities, and highlights the role that sacred geographies and circulatory networks played within the history of Islam in China.

Introduction

In approaching the question of how vibrant Muslim communities flourished for over a millennium in China, it becomes necessary to explore the financial patronage to Islamic sites in late Imperial China in relation to the collective memory of Chinese Muslims regarding the origins of Islam in China. Muslims in the Chinese cultural area had to depend on private markets and non-state capital to ensure the transmission of Islam across generational lines. At times, this meant seeking money from distant sources in order to guarantee the survival of small, yet historically significant, communities and landmarks existing on private land.

Until now, however, much academic work has attempted to orient readers to the cosmological geography of other religious communities by speaking of a Buddhist map of sacred geography in late Imperial China. This geographical designation of Buddhist cosmology came to include, by the seventeenth century, the Putuo Mountain in Zhejiang, Wutai Mountain in Shanxi, Jihua Mountain in Anhui, and Emei Mountain in Sichuan.¹ James Robson has also shown the importance of religious landscapes regarding the patronage and institutionalization of Daoism, in particular on the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue) of medieval China, on which Daoists and Buddhists mapped their own sacred terrains over the same area.² Less understood however are the Islamic maps and sacred geographies of traditional China—the eminent places possessing deep symbolism for China's continuous 1300-year-old Muslim population which connected them to the origins of their ancestors and the beginnings of the faith itself. China's Muslim communities were too large and too dispersed to facilitate the development of a singular cosmology, and thus it would be a mistake to postulate a unitary map of Islamic China in the

late imperial period. For instance, some Muslims living in the northwest during the Qing dynasty (1644 – 1911) received a direct influence from Sufi orders of Central Asian origins and some of these Muslims were said to have reached Mecca for the mandated *hajj* pilgrimage.³ Yet, these Muslims constructed their own patchwork of local shrines which provided pilgrimage circuits across Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai, and Xinjiang, many of which are still active today. Muslims in southwestern China maintained links with the northwestern communities over routes that shadowed the Tibetan plateau, and also profited greatly off the overland caravan trade with Southeast Asia. Many Muslim communities were interspersed throughout southeastern China, and their populations were smaller than their northwestern or southwestern counterparts.

As has been convincingly demonstrated by scholars such as Sachiko Murata and Dru Gladney, many Muslims living in the Chinese cultural area conceived of Islam in Confucian cosmological terms by the Ming dynasty (1368 – 1644)—Muhammad was a sage (*shengren*), mosques were “clear and true (or in the vernacular, *Islamic*) temples” (*qingzhensi*) and Mecca, Arabia, and all the Islamic lands were lumped together with minimal differentiation as *tianfang* (“Heavenly square” or “Heavenly direction”).⁴ Working within this complex system of Sino-Islamic cosmology and religious practices, how can we define a sacred geography of Chinese Muslims living in the Chinese cultural area? In order to answer this question, we must ascertain the financial underpinnings of the continued presence of mosques, Muslim cemeteries, and Islamic land holdings in regions outside the northwest and southwest throughout the late imperial period when the Muslim communities of these regions were scattered and more fragile than their northwestern or southwestern counterparts. Unraveling the funding of these mosques is necessary for understanding issues of historical memory regarding the origins of Chinese Islam, how Islam came to be incorporated into the local Chinese society as a local religion, and finally how it survived for centuries after its first arrival, which was often through the patronage of Muslim military officers and officials.

This study attempts to illuminate the complicated role of genealogy and transmission as sources of Muslim survival in China by looking at a partial Islamic map that comes into focus upon examining late imperial mosque donations. This map stretched from devout communities in Shaanxi to the small community of Fujian’s Quanzhou Muslim community. The historical trends of Sino-Muslims in late imperial China are clear: large Muslim communities in certain regions such as Jiangsu and Shandong were actively pursuing new conceptualizations of Islam in Neo-Confucian contexts.⁵ Yet the same dominant cultural forces associated with popular culture and Confucian education had also led to the gradual shrinking and potential assimilation of smaller Muslim communities in Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Quanzhou, Hangzhou, and other southern cities by the Qing dynasty.⁶ While these communities consistently had active Muslim communities for centuries, the stone inscriptions dating from the early to mid-Qing dynasty in Zhejiang, Guangzhou, Fujian, and Hubei make it clear that these smaller Muslim communities regularly received generous gifts from distant, more established Muslim communities to repair and restore mosques and upkeep old cemeteries.⁷ We can know this the fact that many of these inscriptions emphasize Islam’s beginnings in China in these mosques – a phenomenon only seen so commonly in the Chinese cultural area in Xi’an, where at least one mosque traces its origins to the Tang.⁸

This observation is directly applicable to the continued existence of practicing Muslim communities across China in spite of great pressures toward assimilation.⁹ It is possible that the solicitation of money and resources from distant and more affluent Muslim communities facilitated the development of educational networks in late imperial China.

These financial exchanges reveal that the Sino-Muslim exchange in Imperial China was not only confined to educational and scholarly networks but one where money was donated across vast territories in the Chinese cultural area. In short, the memory of the ancestors of Muslims arriving from the “western regions” connected disparate Muslim communities to the ancient mosques and graveyards of southern China—where, according to popular history and genealogical records, many Muslims entered China during the Tang and Song dynasties. Sino-Muslim financial networks in the eastern and southern provinces provide insight into the reasons behind Islam’s uninterrupted survival in China for over 1300 years. While an imagined lineage cannot be used to explain all long-distance mosque donations in the Chinese cultural area, it provided much impetus for the financial upkeep of old, southern mosques.

The following section provides an overview of Islamic financial institutions in late Imperial China. The third section gives an overview of the extant *shibei* (stone inscriptions) that constitute the fundamental source of the study. The fourth section is an in-depth analysis of several key donor inscriptions from mosques in southern China. Finally, I look to the adaptability of these financial endowments to trace the growth and spread of women’s mosques in late imperial China and the survival of many mosques across China into the twenty-first century.

An Overview of Islamic Financial Institutions in Late Imperial China

Many Islamic financial records from late imperial China today have survived, so they should be considered prior to examining the implications of mosque donations in southern China. Although the institution of *zakat* (religious tax of 2.5%) is mandated by the Qur’an,¹⁰ its application and precise meaning across the Islamic world in subsequent centuries varied greatly. While Islam has a set vocabulary for discussing charity and other fiscal matters, this vocabulary often coexisted alongside local vocabularies of charity, particularly in non-Muslim majority contexts. According to traditional Islamic jurisprudence, *zakat* was applicable to personal wealth, agricultural produce, raw minerals, and livestock. *Sadaqah* (“Voluntary Charity”) based primarily on *ahadith* (“Sayings of the Prophet”) included all types of voluntary charity ranging from financial donations to benevolent actions. *Waqf* in its most general sense, was taken to be an endowment or trust bound by Islamic law, most commonly setting aside a building or plot of land for Islamic religious or charitable activities, and was often tax exempt in Muslim-majority settings.¹¹ The concept of *waqf* as it appeared in the Muslim world was not completely dissimilar to local temple endowments in late imperial China.¹²

The financial structure of Islamic pious endowments in the Chinese cultural area exhibits much non-Islamic Chinese religious influence on the practices of religious financial management. As we will see in the following section, Chinese mosques in the southern provinces received both land and monetary donations and thus exhibited elements of both *si* (Buddhist) land donations and *miao* (Daoist) monetary gifts. Nevertheless, Muslims across China adopted the term *si* (temple) over *miao* for their mosques in a remarkably uniform fashion.¹³ Prior to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Chinese Muslims created and borrowed new words to describe concepts relating to the function of a *waqf*: *shantian* (“Charity fields”) were plots of land given to religious scholars (*ahong*) to grow food to sustain themselves and the mosque during their tenure as a religious leader.¹⁴ *Sichan* (“Temple property”) denoted funds set aside by a mosque for the reading of Qur’an upon a Muslim’s death. *Yishe* (“Charitable boarding”) was used to refer to the free meals or lodging giving to itinerant Muslim travelers. Finally, there was

the traditionally Confucian term of *yixue* (“Charitable school”), which was found in Muslim communities across China prior to the nineteenth century.¹⁵

Many of these terms attempted to approximate traditionally Islamic institutions, but were in fact borrowed from Confucian and Buddhist vocabularies dating back to the Ming dynasty or even earlier.¹⁶ In fact, the vocabulary for the financial assets of mosques was developed to maturation soon after Muslims arrived, and centuries before Muhammad would ever be referred to as the “Sage of the West”. One unpublished mosque inscription from Dali, Yunnan dating from 1383 shows this phenomenon unfolding just a century after large numbers of Muslims arrived in Yunnan with the Mongol conquest: the collective estates of the mosque, which were significant due to the imperial titles of several members of the community, are discussed under the title of *changzhu*, a Buddhist term for temple holdings originating from a cosmological term denoting permanence.¹⁷ Also of note in this remarkably early inscription is the fact that the mosque itself is simply referred to as temple (*si*), as the more formal term *qingzhensi* only developed centuries later. One potential reason for the early adoption of this Buddhist term for temple estates is that in the centuries before Muslims began writing philosophical treatises in Classical Chinese that demanded sophisticated Neo-Confucian vocabularies, Muslims had to own, sell, and trade in property and land.¹⁸ This economic term for *waqf* lasted in posterity as the eighteenth-century Yunnanese Islamic scholar Ma Zhu referred to mosque estates by the term *changzhu* in the tenth *juan* of his *Qingzhen Zhinan* (c. 1683).¹⁹ Finally, while there was not a single, set word for *waqf* in China prior to the twentieth century, there was a word for *zakat* (“Religious monetary charity”): *ke*, which is the term Liu Zhi uses in the fourth volume, seventh chapter of his celebrated *Tianfang Dianli* (1704).²⁰ This form of charity was noted by Marshall Broomhall, who in his 1910 study of Muslims in China writes that alms were collected for the poor across all communities at approximately the rate of 35 cents for every 14 silver taels.²¹ While not directly addressing the question of how widespread *zakat* collection was, Broomhall does note that as of the late Qing dynasty, many Christian missions reported that Muslim beggars were unknown in many parts of China.²² In spite of this, institutions financed by Muslims in late imperial China were not strictly Central Asian, Buddhist, Daoist, nor Confucian in origin or character, rather, they were built upon the customs and languages of several traditions with the aim of supporting Muslim life and ensuring Islamic survival in local minority settings.

Besides the fact that Muslims could not rely upon the state for consistent patronage of their mosques, which came to number several tens of thousands by the early twentieth century, why else were the economics of Chinese mosques so important for Muslims? Literature of the late imperial period can actually help us to illuminate some of the reasons. A common trope of late imperial novels is the wandering monk from a Buddhist monastery who begs for alms. In the novels *Sansui pingyaozhuan* (*The Three Sui Quash the Demons’ Revolt*) or *Shui huzhuan* (*The Water Margin*), Buddhist monks from Mount Wutai are pictured, often with ill or questionable intentions, as begging for alms or lodging, and while many in the public look at them with suspicion, there is usually a single person who, out of a desire to improve his karma or public image, helps the monk.²³ Muslims could not expect to rely upon the beneficence of strangers who were unaccustomed to their faith and customs. This led Islamic scholars, such as Ma Zhu, a *xiucai* degree holder of the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Yunnan, to delineate specific regulations for the hosting of long-distance Muslim travelers:

The mountain roads of Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, and Guangxi are steep and narrow and the cities and villages are very distant from each other. This region is not like the Central Plain, where the roosters in neighboring villages can hear each other's calls, where the density of human inhabitants is high, where boats and carts can be used to traverse the countryside, and where someone who sets out at the break of dawn can arrive at his destination by nightfall. But in these four provinces, the environment extremely harsh and the person who rushes through will truly suffer ... Therefore, when a [Muslim] visitor reaches us, the person on staff at the mosque will call out to the community, and those who are capable of hosting will not care about the number of travelers. The guest will have one meal with this family. The second day he will go to another family. If a family is not as wealthy as others, they will share the responsibilities: one will serve breakfast for the guests and the other will serve the dinner, so the guest will be fully hosted for each day. In the days of summer and fall when the weather is hot and the days are long, it is acceptable to have an additional family prepare the lunch. If the guests are very numerous, then each family will take one person, starting from the beginning. Therefore long distance travelers will not encounter difficulty, and furthermore, the local people will also receive financial compensation. The limit for long distance visiting guests is three days, because if other travelers were to come [while we hosted visitors for longer than three days], we might not be able to host them.²⁴

Ma Zhu's rules for hosting Muslim travelers from northern provinces begins with a famous line for describing the difficult roads leading to Yunnan that was also voiced in a 1694 imperial edict by the Kangxi Emperor.²⁵ We can see how sophisticated many of these rules could be as the writer meticulously takes into consideration seasonal, class, and economic nuances. Ma Zhu was not the only Muslim who drew up such rules in the late imperial period, and many mosques made similar, publically displayed rules for local needs. A mosque in Shaoyang, Hubei in 1823 crafted its own rules for decorum in the mosque's property:

One cannot talk loudly or swear in the prayer area.

One cannot drink alcohol or smoke inside the mosque building.

There are many eyes inside the mosque, so do not secretly write (on anything), and the penalty for doing so is commensurate with age.

When the mosque collects the public money and the public grain, no one is allowed to take any for their private use.

When a Muslim traveler comes from the outside, he will get one night stay and two meals; in addition, the mosque will pay the fee for travel.

During large or small religious festivals, every ox that is slaughtered—no one can sell (the community's) meat privately. It will be distributed (to those in need).

When the mosque collects grain that exceeds five *dou*, we have to move the excess grain to the storehouse. No one can take some for themselves during this process.²⁶

In short, mosques throughout China were locally addressing the demands of fiscal solvency while providing shelter and protection for their communities. Mosques were not simply praying areas, but could also act as granaries, inns, lending institutions, and storehouses.

Finally, mosques across China possessed a common feature that set them apart from Buddhist or Daoist temples and shrines: whereas Buddhist temples, except those

associated with famous pilgrimage mountains, usually had formal, proper names such as Guanyin Temple, Yongan (“Eternal Peace”) Temple, or Baiyun Temple (“White Cloud”; a Daoist Shrine in Beijing), mosques almost always were identified by place next to the general title of *qingzhensi* or *libaisi*. Hence, we have mosques such as “the Mosque at the West Gate of the City of Dali (Yunnan)”, “The Great North Mosque of Zhengzhou (Henan)”, “the Mosque on the Ox Street (Beijing)” and “The Mosque in Guanyuan town on Shanghe Street (Sichuan)”. Muslims needed to know where mosques were, and it was easier if they had names that spoke to their geographical location rather than possess locally specific names. There were three notable exceptions to this trend, occurring on the opposite sides of the empire at very different times.²⁷ In Xinjiang, as James Millward has pointed out, mosques built by the Sino-Muslim traveling merchants in the eighteenth century tended to take the place names of the merchants’ origin communities: the Lanzhou Mosque, the Suzhou Mosque, and the Shaanxi Great Mosque all stood in late imperial Urumqi as a testament to their roles as native-place type associations.²⁸ Sufi shrines in the northwest also took proper names (Langzhong’s Babasi). The third exception were the famous mosques in south China that were established prior to the Mongol Yuan dynasty (1279 – 1368) and were associated with the origins of Islam in China, such as the Huaisheng Mosque (“Mosque in Memory of the Prophet”) in Guangzhou, the Qilin (“Giraffe”) Mosque,²⁹ also called Shengyou (“Friend of the Sage”) Mosque in Quanzhou, and the Fenghuang (“Phoenix”) Mosque in Hangzhou. These mosques were so old and so eminent in the landscape of Chinese Islam, their association with a specific place did not have to be formally incorporated into their names, and we will investigate the finances of some of these mosques later in this study.

These approaches to Islamic financial institutions extend beyond China’s southeast: *gedimu* (Chinese transliteration of the Arabic term “qadīm”, meaning “ancient”) mosques of the northwest, whose names derived from their lack of adherence to a Sufi network, may have shared many of these characteristics as financial institutions.³⁰ She Jianming’s recent study on Muslim merchant networks in Inner Mongolia, formerly known as Suiyuan, mentions 10 mosques that received money for restoration work in the late Qing and Republican period from donors based outside of Suiyuan.³¹ Table 1 presents the donor record for the construction of some of the largest mosques in the region.

Table 1. Names and origins of donors for the construction of six mosques, 1833 – 1928.

Mosque name	Date reconstructed	Name of donor(s)	Origin of donor(s)
Baotou Great Mosque	1833	Wang Daxing, Bai Kede and others	Hebei, Shandong
Jining Great Mosque	1922	Lai Shemao, Qu Jiucheng, Chen Deshan, and others	Hebei, Shanxi, Beijing, Tianjin
Baotou Great Mosque	1923 – 1925	“Dehoutang” (Muslim-run business)	Hebei (Cangzhou)
Baotou Great North Mosque	1924	Li Fengzao, Su Jinbo, and others.	Ningxia
Shanba Mosque	1924	Yang Dengyun, Ma Qianlong, Ma Mengjiu	Shanba (Suiyuan), Hezhou (Gansu), Henan
Linhe North Mosque	1927 – 1928	Ma Ruiwu, Li Bozan, Zhang Chengshen, Ma Zhenqing	Ningxia, Gansu

In short, distant donors played a critical role in the financial upkeep of these mosques throughout China into the twentieth century. Mongolia is of particular interest since it seems to have been a rapidly developing space in the late imperial period where Muslims from the Grand Canal as well as from the northwest were directly interfacing through the establishment of mosques along this frontier territory. Similar long-distance philanthropic trends have been noted by scholars in Manchuria-based mosques during the Qing.³² In short, it would be a mistake to ascribe the phenomenon of long-distance donations to one region of China because Muslims across the empire seem to have participated in such fund raising efforts. More research must be done on this subject since the movement of capital across the provincial or county lines is probably speaking related to much deeper phenomena such as human migration, the circulation of goods, and long-distance trading networks which the state would have not easily recognized.

The purpose of addressing the nature of Sino-Islamic financial institutions and the upkeep of mosques is to lay the foundation for addressing the question of the maintenance of Islamic property in south China in late imperial China. Like the localized aspects of their financial institutions, the transaction of property in south China during the Qing reveal a clear line of patronage from local Muslim officials, cross-provincial donations between disparate Muslim communities, and remittance payments from Muslims working as officials or military officers in other parts of the empire.

Mosque Inscriptions: An Overview of the Sources

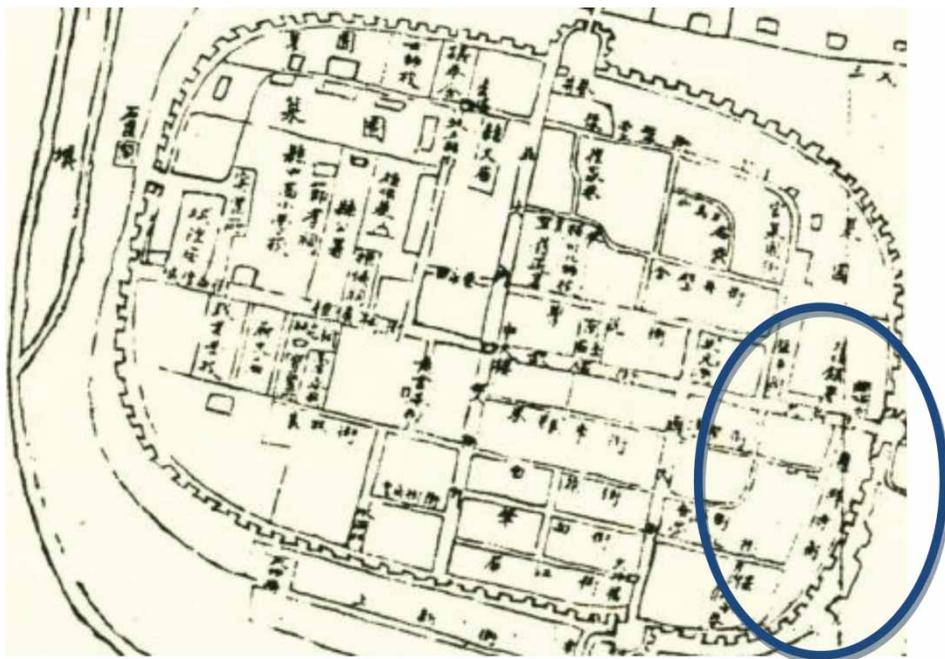
The primary sources for this section are mosque inscriptions, which are commonly found in old mosques in China. Mosque inscriptions vary widely in their content: some describe a mosque's history, others provide lists of donors or upkeep staff, others provide the names of *ahong* and teachers of the mosques, others record the names and biographies of famous personages buried at the mosque, while others list the pillars and tenets of the Islamic faith. In this way, the etching of stone inscriptions in mosques across China in the late imperial period is very similar to the etching of steles in Buddhist temples or native place associations in that it was a public, contractual statement of land ownership, and recognition of those who had generously contributed.

The inscriptions used in this study date from 1743 to 1871. The collection presented here was selected solely from southern mosques—mosques from Sichuan, Hubei, Guangxi, Guangzhou, and Zhejiang. Once again, this is not to imply that the trend of long-distance mosque donations was limited to these regions. But by focusing on southern regions, we are mainly looking at regions where Muslim populations were relatively dispersed and the need for long distance financial cooperation was great. Hence, long distance mosque donations in these regions were not simply essential for the mosque upkeep, but very possibly necessary for the long-term survival of the local community or an Islamic edifice marking the historical existence of a community. The monumental changes that Sino-Muslim communities underwent in the last years of the Qing dynasty and the early Republican Period—for instance, the rise of Muslim warlords in the early twentieth century or the rise of Muslim newspapers through print capitalism starting in the late Qing dynasty, in which Muslims came to publish mosque donations—make later examples outside of the limited range of this study. This paper thus focuses on examples dating from the period directly before the Qing subjugation of Xinjiang to the end of the great Muslim rebellions of the nineteenth century.

Local mosques faced very different socio-economic realities in late imperial China. A mosque in a highly populated Muslim area such as the Mamichang Village Mosque

(located today in a Hui Muslim autonomous county in Weishan, Yunnan) could generally rely on the largesse of the local Muslim community in order to maintain operations, though it also profited off long distance caravan trade. However, many mosques could not and did not rely on such local largesse. Long distance donations often meant donations coming from other Muslim communities outside the immediate county of the mosque in question. In general, the number of long distance donors exceeded the number of local donors. Even in situations when this was not the case, such as the restoration of Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque in 1743, the number of officials making remittance and goodwill payments is striking. Although a higher number of local donors for a mosque like Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque may imply that the institution was self-sufficient, the presence of long distance donors still reveal the high level of interconnectivity among eighteenth-century Muslim communities.

Furthermore, while this study focuses solely on mosque donations, readers should be aware that mosques employed other means in order to maintain financial solvency. For instance, in the early nineteenth century, the Shunqing Mosque of northern Sichuan, sent an *ahong* named Ma Youxian to raise 300 strings of copper cash on the road to Chengdu to purchase a property that could be rented as a source of income for the mosque. Mosques in this part of Sichuan were relatively well-known, and the writers of the *Langzhong Xianzhi* (*Gazetteer of Langzhong County*) capture the origins of the community in Langzhong, the seat of Baoning Prefecture, which neighbored Shunqing Prefecture (Map 1):



Map 1. Map of late imperial Langzhong (then the seat of Baoning Prefecture, Sichuan). Encircled is the *libasijie*—the Mosque Street. About 400 Muslim families lived in the Muslim quarter of the walled city. The community was in close communication with Ma Youxian's community in neighboring Shunqing.

Note: Xie, *Zhongguo difangzhi jicheng*, pp. 644, 687 – 688.

The teachings of the Hui people (Islam, Ch. Huijiao) came to the east starting in the Sui and Tang dynasties. It came along the southern seas until it reached Guangdong (where the Huaisheng Mosque is located). But it also came over the western regions to Gansu. It was actually the people from Hezhou (modern Linxia, southern Gansu) that started to come to Sichuan in the early Qing that brought this faith to Langzhong. At this time, at the start of the Kangxi reign, the Muslims built their mosque, which today is popularly called the “Old Temple” (*laosi*).³³

Ma Youxian was the *ahong* of this mosque and the most prominent representative of the local Muslim community. Chengdu is located approximately 320 kilometers away from Langzhong and Shunqing, but the regions were connected via a chain of Muslim communities that extended into the Tibetan highlands.³⁴ The community at the time was deeply concerned about their pedagogical resources and their ability to hire new, well-trained Arabic readers and teachers. The *ahong*, Ma Youxian, knew precisely where to go, and he eventually ventured outside the Sichuan province. He visited Mianyang, Pengxi, the greater Chongqing area, and communities around Chengdu. Ma Youxian made a windfall, collecting at one point 10 taels of silver from a high-ranking military officer, Hu Gaolin, in Yichang, Hubei province. Ma Youxian’s strategy however was clear: at every place he stopped, he would visit the local mosque. But from the list of people who donated, it is clear that the majority of them were from local Green Standard army garrisons around Sichuan. Since Muslims were known to be active in military affairs particularly in western regions at high rates of participation, Ma Youxian was able to collect donations from 12 active military and civilian officials. In addition, independent communities that Ma Youxian resided in during his travel made contributions, such as the mosque of Peng County, which made a contribution of 27,000 copper cash. The Shunqing Mosque, a mosque that had been on the verge of bankruptcy, had managed to make a fortune with tens of thousands of copper cash and several hundred taels of silver through the entrepreneurial activities of its religious leader. Eleven financial managers of the community were placed in charge of the accumulated capital, and the mosque was able to hire teachers to educate the next generation of Muslim children and purchase land to rent as an annual source of income.

Ma Youxian was not the only Muslim scholar traveling across China for fundraising efforts. Ma Chenggui, one of the celebrated *ahongs* of the Dapiyuan Mosque in Xi’an, Shaanxi, made a similar effort in the mid-eighteenth century:

Ma Chenggui, who in order to restore the Dapiyuan Mosque in Xi’an, set out to collect donations from other Muslim communities. He traveled to thirteen provinces and met Muslims all over, and was gone for more than ten years. When he reached the Tangjia Mosque in Chengdu (Sichuan), he encountered some bandits inside a local store and nearly lost his life! Thankfully there were other Muslims also from Xi’an in Chengdu at this time and he was able to escape. When Ma Chenggui engaged in commerce with people he sought fairness. He never asked for (money) more than he deserved. Ma Chenggui’s older brother, named Ma Zhongjie, was living at this time in Hohhot city (Mongolia), where he was making money trading. At that time, he had a surplus of more than 270 silver taels so he donated the money to the mosque! The good and righteous things this man did were numerous!³⁵

Further work is needed to determine how much the upkeep of these mosques played a role in the maintenance of local elites who derived income and prestige from managing mosques and their endowments. However it is certain that many of the mosques' *beiwen* inscriptions were erected by local officials and scholars; Qingzhou in Shandong produced three Muslim *jinsi* (highest degree holders) during the Ming dynasty, one of whom—Liu Zan—helped build Qingzhou's Dongguan mosque and wrote the inscription "Record of the Renovations to the Jinan Mosque" for it.³⁶ Sino-Muslims were different than Buddhists in that they could not simply beg for alms on the street as *Muslims*—their potential audience was much more limited and potential associations with heterodoxy by cautious officials, particularly in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, were never far away. Muslims had to know where to go and whom to ask—a trait that enabled them to allocate resources effectively over great distances at remarkable rates, especially since Muslim military officers or officials working for the state were often more than happy to contribute to dispersed communities. Muslim networks are some of the most unexplored yet critical forces behind the historical shaping of China's frontier regions and the empire itself, precisely because they operated in local free markets outside the purview of the state. The paradigm of the wandering, capital-accumulating Muslim teacher provides a window into how financial solvency was maintained by independent Muslim communities across the empire.

Islamic Patronage and Cross-Provincial Donations in Southern Chinese Muslim Communities

The focus of this section is in particular southern mosques that would have differed from the case studies mentioned above since they were much more isolated from other Muslim communities. This section is divided into three parts, the first is an analysis of an 1801 donation-inscription from a mosque in Yunnan representing the economic activity of a mosque in a county with a large Muslim population that was located near Dali on key caravan routes into Southeast Asia. The second section is an analysis of two mosque donation-inscriptions dating from the eighteenth century from Zhejiang and Hubei. Finally, the third section consists of a series of donation-inscriptions from Guangdong province in the nineteenth century. The inscriptions delineate the extent and nature of Muslim financial contributions to mosques during the last century of the Qing dynasty.

A. Mamichang Village Mosque (Yunnan), 1801

This inscription is helpful for gaining an insight into a traditional Sino-Muslim *waqf* structure of financial maintenance, and complements the histories of the wandering *ahongs* mentioned above. The title of the inscription invokes the previously mentioned term used in many Muslim communities for *waqf*, the Chinese term *changzhu*. Yunnan's Muslim community is traditionally dated to the Mongol Yuan dynasty, when Sayyid Ajjal Shams al-Din Omar, a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, was sent by Qubilai Khan to quell a rebellion in the restive south and settle Yunnan for the Mongol empire.³⁷ As David Atwill has shown, Du Wenxiu's Panthay Rebellion (1856 – 1873) was instigated by Han-Muslim tensions following decades of large-scale Han migration to the region.³⁸ This inscription dates before the rebellion and is from an area long associated with a large Muslim population—today the area of Weishan is an autonomous Hui Muslim county in Yunnan.

The inscription begins with a brief history of donations to Weishan’s Mamichang village’s mosque. After listing the necessity of voluntary giving in Islam, the inscription proceeds to list the donations received over the eighteenth century as the mosque was expanded:

Our mosque was built in 1379 with three major halls, one of which was called the hall for prayer. Until 1751, the size of our mosque was fine, but at that time, our clans had really grown in number, and we had to increase the size of our mosque ... Ma Qilong, the uncle of Ma Guangxian gave a portion of a field, the size of which was three mounds, located in front of the gate of the Mi family. Ma Shiming’s wife donated 1000 copper coins for the purchase of incense ... [the list continues]. In 1786, the year in which we built the great hall for the mosque, Ma Qi’s wife followed through on her late husband’s verbal contractual agreement with the mosque and donated 60,000 copper pieces for the materials for the mosque. Ma Qilong gave 30,000 copper pieces for the work related expenditures of the mosque. Ma Ziming donated 24,000 for material and work related expenditures.³⁹

A complete listing of the mosque donations, revealing the expenditures of the mosque in the late eighteenth century is provided in Table 2. In this style of mosque donation, members gave money for specific expenditures within the mosque.

A total of 22 donors are listed as providing money or land, many on behalf of recently deceased family members. Incense and the work that was involved with keeping it burning regularly— as this mosque presumably did—comprised a large portion of this budget, though considering so many family members were donating on behalf of their deceased relatives, it is hard to know exactly how representative these figures are of the mosque’s annual budget. All of the donors with the exception of one person held the surname Ma and all appear to have come from the same village. No officials are reported as having donated to the mosque.

Waqf structures of Islamic pious endowments exist locally in this region of Yunnan down to present times; and the recent anthropological research from Japan confirms that the contemporary structures reflect this mosque’s economic conditions in the late eighteenth century.⁴⁰ In these communities, which to a certain extent reflect patterns of *waqf* donations in Central Asia and Buddhist finances in late imperial China, Islamic teachers, architectural repairs, and religious instruction generally are funded through the produce from land endowments and monetary gifts.⁴¹ This mosque in Yunnan shows this trend, with its endowment compromised of donations of land as well as local monetary gifts for specific mosque requirements.⁴² Yet most importantly,

Table 2. Donations and itemized expenditure on mosques in late eighteenth century.

Total land donated (for the mosque’s cemetery)	19 qiu 丘	
Money for incense	21 taels	201,000 copper pieces
Money for the work of lighting incense	35 taels	NA
Materials for building	None	84,000 copper pieces
Labor fee	5 taels	30,000 copper pieces
Miscellaneous	20 taels	197,000 copper pieces
Celebration of the Prophet’s Birthday	None	60,000 copper pieces
Total	81 taels	572,000 copper pieces

Yunnan's Muslim communities were large enough to create local, self-sustaining mosques that did not have to seek support from distant Muslim communities or even seek out patronage from Muslim officials. The amount of money donated to the above mosque in the late Qianlong reign was so significant that we can observe the degree of wealth of the community, which probably derived from the caravan trade.⁴³ This is not to say of course that these Muslims did not participate in the circulatory networks of scholars, goods, and money, but only that financial solvency was maintained by the strength and continued wealth of the community into the nineteenth century, demonstrated by the fact that an entire mosque was rebuilt without asking for help from any Muslims outside of Mamichang Village.

B. Two Eighteenth-Century Mosque Inscriptions from Hubei and Zhejiang

This section highlights two mosque donation inscriptions from famous mosques in non-Muslim majority areas. Comparing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century mosque donations is not without peril: the value of silver itself changed greatly during the period.⁴⁴ Yet since the focus is primarily on the donors themselves rather than the precise amounts they donated, these differences do not affect the study's overall conclusions. The two mosques profiled in this section reveal a previously unacknowledged characteristic of state-Muslim relations in Chinese history. The rule of avoidance, which prohibited officials from serving in their home provinces or adjacent counties depending on the position and rank, often actually helped Muslims living in predominantly the central, eastern areas of the country, yet at the same time it put Muslims living in heavily Muslim-populated areas such as Gansu and Yunnan at a disadvantage. For instance, Muslims from Yunnan who entered officialdom would typically not take office in Yunnan, and thus would have to support their home communities from a distance until their retirement. Likewise, a non-Muslim official hailing from Anhui, which has relatively few Muslims, could very well have taken a post in a heavily Muslim populated area such as Baoji (Shaanxi) or Dali (Yunnan). Support, let alone tolerance, was never a guarantee. On the other hand, Muslims living in areas such as Hubei or Zhejiang would regularly receive donations from Muslims working in the local government who were originally from Muslim-populated regions such as Shaanxi, Yunnan, or Gansu.⁴⁵ This is not to say that mosques in the northwest and southwest did not also receive local official compensation—they often did, but by the eighteenth century it was more often from local military officers rather than *jinshi* degree holders. Political atmospheres and local demographics also certainly played a role, as Jonathan Lipman points out that “after 1873 Muslims were excluded from living within the city walls of most towns in (Gansu) province, for fear of a repetition of the violence of 1862 – 1873”.⁴⁶ Such a prohibition was never considered in Hangzhou, Nanjing, or Guangzhou—where Muslims were perceived as posing little threat to the existing social order, and where Muslim-related unrest had not occurred for centuries.

Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque is one of the oldest continuously used Islamic structures in China, dating from the Song dynasty (960 – 1279). In spite of Hangzhou's small Muslim population, the mosque, which holds a high place in Sino-Muslim historical imagination, has been rebuilt many times over the past 800 years.⁴⁷ The 1743 restoration was in part presided over by a local Muslim scholar identified as Scholar Ding, who also commissioned an inscription on behalf of those who contributed to the restoration project. The inscription bears a total of 233 donors, including numerous Zhejiang and neighboring provincial officials, military officers, merchants, and over 40 different sur-

names, largely hailing from the Grand Canal region. Donors who held office are listed first: an official from the office of the governor-general of Jiangsu gave 120 taels, the largest donation of the pool, while a military officer from Chuzhen (in Jiangsu) gave 40 taels.⁴⁸ An assistant to the magistrate of Shanyin County (in Zhejiang near Shaoxing) with the surname Wu gave two taels. The farthest donation came from Cangzhou (today part of a Hui Autonomous County in Hebei, near Beijing), in the amount of three taels. Following the list of donations from officials and scholars, the remaining donations were divided up by the monetary amounts they donated. There was a fairly even distribution between copper and silver donations, but no land was given. Muslim officials, military officers, and worshipers were donating to the mosque for the purpose of repairing it, not to expand it, and the opening lines of the 1743 inscription capture their motivations:

The temple of the true teaching (the mosque) was built in the city of Hangzhou many years ago. Our faith has been a candle of light (for the country), and from the Tang, Song, Yuan, and Ming periods, there is a written record of our history here. During this time, the mosque was built and destroyed many times, but there were always people of sincere hearts who enabled this temple to be rebuilt. But then, the Hongwu Emperor sent out an order commanding that every province must build mosques, and that this order was to be carried out in posterity (after his reign). After that time, we followed these orders and renewed them with every generation, and the mosque was restored to a noble appearance that all could admire ... In a saying transmitted from the *tianfang*, Muhammad the sage would bring change to the lands of China, and he sent out countless capable followers to carry the classics throughout all of China.⁴⁹

Although the project of rebuilding the Hangzhou Phoenix Mosque was not undertaken by the government per se, Muslims ascribed the demand to build mosques to the first Ming emperor's edict of toleration and his commissioning of two mosques in Xi'an and Nanjing.⁵⁰ Unlike Daoism or Buddhism, which were regularly institutionalized and patronized by the imperial center and local officials, Muslims wanted to believe their faith shared such a relationship, even if it involved invoking a 400-year-old edict. The eighteenth-century memory of that edict was thus reimagined to apply to the immediate present. The continued legacy of the Phoenix Mosque on the landscape of Hangzhou was a testament that they had followed the instructions of the Prophet in bringing the classics (Qur'an) to China.

Most important from the list of donors and donations is the insight it provides into how a large, historical mosque such as Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque survived in spite of the lack of a large and robust immediately local Muslim population: donations were solicited from an amalgam of places outside of Hangzhou. Numerous donors hailing from counties and townships all over Jiangsu and Zhejiang donated money—from Zhejiang's Ningbo to Jiangsu's Zhenjing.⁵¹ Two donors, Ma Shixiu and Zhang Qishan donated money from Henan province. Due to the terse nature of the source, it is impossible to know whether these were remittance payments from Hangzhou locals living in another region of the country or whether these donors were from distant communities, though considering that Hangzhou's Muslim population consisted of just several hundred families in the eighteenth century, it is probably the latter. A recent article by Susanna Thorton's quotes a Wu Hill temple gazetteer from 1596, when the temple was in need of repairs. Her analysis provides a comparative source—*albeit* from the late Ming—for contextualizing the Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque's donations:

They (the priests of the temple) ask the Prefect to extend an appeal for funds to the Provincial Administration Commissioner, and the Salt and Grain Commissioner. They each made contributions. In addition, an official summons to Haining County required that county to transfer one hundred taels of silver for repairs.⁵²

Intra-provincial donations for large temple projects were thus not uncommon, and may have been the norm in late imperial China. Yet what is particularly noteworthy in the case of the 1743 Hangzhou mosque repairs is the sheer geographical diversity of donors from numerous provinces and the fact that while some officials donated, the project was not overseen or planned by the official authorities, but rather by a local Muslim degree-holder.⁵³

Unlike Zhejiang's Phoenix Mosque, Hubei's Gucheng Mosque was not extremely famous, but like its counterpart in Hangzhou, the mosque attracted large donations from distant donors when it was rebuilt in 1781. Gucheng, which is located in Hubei's northwest corner near the Shaanxi border, was home to a small Muslim community that presumably was in contact with Muslims in the northwest. The inscription that commemorates the reconstruction does not list small donations, but the donations listed are particularly surprising: 65 taels were received from an official in Yunnan, 22 taels from an official in Zhili (the administrative area that surrounded Beijing), and 5 taels from a different official in Yunnan. A Muslim from Zhaoqing in Guangdong Province gave 2000 copper cash. An official from Shanxi also contributed.⁵⁴ The list of donors shows a geographic diversity that even surpasses that of Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque.

These contributions reveal a deeper reality about how Islamic centers controlled their financial endowments during the Qing. Beginning in 1781, the year this mosque was rebuilt, Muslim uprisings raged in Gansu and Shaanxi province. These disturbances grew out of disputes between Sufi networks in northwestern China, marking the first of many large-scale Muslim uprisings that continued into the nineteenth century.⁵⁵ Yet this mosque's inscription does not mention any of the northwestern violence. Nor does it list any donors from that region despite the fact the mosque was located very close to the Shaanxi border. Furthermore, it is important to note that officials donating from provinces as far away as Yunnan, Zhili, and Guangdong were evidently not discouraged from donating to the mosque despite the ongoing violence in the northwest. What inspired these distant officials to donate? Most likely, they were originally from Hubei but entered civil service or the military and pursued careers in officialdom. While it is thus possible that Muslim officials from distant provinces could have been donating to Hubei's Sucheng Mosque, it is far more likely that these sums of money were remittance payments from traveling officials sending parts of their salaries home.

The donations also remind us that while Muslims in late imperial China did not enjoy official religious ties with the imperial center on the level of the imperial court's relationship with the dGe Lugs Pa (Tb. Gelug) tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, individual Muslim communities often maintained ties with the state through Muslim officials or military officers, which were not insignificant in number, though reliable statistics are impossible to attain. Such official donations, which were publically displayed on a stone inscription in front of the mosques, probably helped avert suspicion against the community, particularly during times of Muslim unrest elsewhere in the empire. While the topic lies outside of the scope of this study, it is important to note that the Ming court patronized Sino-Muslim institutions (largely mosques) at a much higher rate than its successor, which is potentially at least partially attributable to the power and

number of Muslim eunuchs in the Ming court. Textual sources regarding numerous mosques in Xi'an, Beijing, Nanjing, Kaifeng, and Central Asia denote direct imperial patronage from the Ming period, though remarkably almost no Sino-Muslim mosques from the Qing note such direct patronage (the court did contribute to several mosque projects for the Uyghur communities of Xinjiang and Beijing after the conquest of Xinjiang).⁵⁶ The position of Muslim communities within China in relation to the imperial court probably changed during the Ming-Qing transition, though this subject needs further exploration.

Hubei's Gucheng Mosque, like Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque, relied on non-local donor sources to preserve long-term solvency.⁵⁷ These inscriptions also seem to highlight the origins of their donations from official sources as a possible legitimizing mechanism and, in the case of Hubei's Gucheng Mosque, appear to have been conscious in avoiding soliciting money from nearby sources engaged in political and social unrest, such as Gansu. Hangzhou's Phoenix Mosque appears to have utilized its lofty place in Sino-Muslim historical memory to raise enormous funds for rebuilding projects, while Hubei's Gucheng Mosque relied on governmental officials serving outside of Hubei to send remittances. By the middle of the nineteenth century, mosque donations from distant Muslim communities or Muslim officials had become the norm for famous, historical mosques in the southern regions, in spite of the extensive uprisings in Shaanxi and Yunnan.

C. Donations to Guangzhou's Huaishengsi in the Nineteenth Century

The final part of this section will deal with donations to Guangzhou's Huaisheng Mosque in the nineteenth century, for which many inscriptions exist. The Huaisheng Mosque may be the oldest in China and purportedly dates from the Tang dynasty.⁵⁸ The Huaisheng Mosque was rebuilt at least three times during the nineteenth century: in 1846, in 1857, and in 1871, when its minaret was restored. The 1846 and 1857 inscriptions explicitly make note of the mosque's Tang dynasty (618 – 907) origin and both include the phrase: "mosques from all four corners (of the country) kindly donated".⁵⁹ This section highlights how this one mosque, which held an extremely high position in the collective historical memory of Sino-Muslims, was particularly adept at exploiting distant connections for the maintenance of the mosque. Muslims in Guangdong did not always have to use these long-distance connections, unlike their co-religionists in Zhejiang and Hubei, as Guangdong's Muslim population was estimated to be approximately 20,000 people around 1910, though once again these statistics are to be approached with caution and cannot be verified.⁶⁰ While the precise historical demographics of the Muslims of Guangdong for the Qing dynasty are difficult to discern, they were noticeable enough to their neighbors that Wu Jingzi described the Muslim community of Tangzhi County (Guangdong) in some depth in the fourth chapter of his novel *Rulin waishi* (*The Scholars*). The non-local donations to Guangzhou's Huaisheng Mosque therefore substantiate the notion that Muslims were not only paying remittances, but rather they were specifically donating money because the mosque held special meaning for a wide audience of Sino-Muslims.

The 1846 restoration of the Huaisheng Mosque saw donations from a variety of sources within Guangdong and from other provinces. Over 200 donors and organizations are listed. Donors from Zhaoqing, a town in Guangdong that had sent donations to Hubei's Gucheng Mosque over 60 years earlier, provided funding for the project. Money was additionally collected from Guangxi and Sichuan (five donors), among

other provinces.⁶¹ The restoration of the Huaisheng Mosque in 1857 displayed similar geographical diversity: donors came from as far as Yunnan and Shandong.⁶² When Guangzhou's Xiaodongying Mosque was restored in 1866, a collection of merchants, officials, and military officers contributed money from Yunnan, Shaanxi, and Gansu, in spite of the fact the southwestern (1856 – 1873) and northwestern (1862 – 1877) Muslim rebellions were both on-going at the time of the mosque's rededication. For that mosque, 67 officials from across the country, the vast majority being military officers and generals, donated to the rebuilding. Three hundred and fifty-one additional donors, some local, others from very distant communities in the northwest and southwest, donated to the Xiaodongying's mosque rebuilding effort in 1866.⁶³ Due to a lack of earlier sources, it is hard to know whether Sino-Muslim remittances and cross-provincial charity were increasing in size and scale in the nineteenth century, or whether prominent mosques in the southeast had always attracted such largesse.⁶⁴

The Huaisheng Mosque's minaret restoration project in 1871 probably marks the largest recorded Islamic philanthropic project in China prior to the twentieth century. The 1871 project restored the ancient stone minaret (*ta*), which many Muslims believe dates back to the Tang dynasty, when Islam first entered China. The nature of the donations and the donors themselves speaks to the symbolic place of this mosque in the Sino-Muslim's collective memory. Five-hundred and seventy donors and organizations from across China contributed to the rebuilding effort, including 68 persons from Hong Kong with transliterated names such as *muhamode ali* (*Muhammad Ali*). The donors from Hong Kong were probably from the community of the Shelley Street Mosque, which was built after the start of the British Mandate in 1849.⁶⁵ Donors came from cities in Guizhou, Zhili, Shandong, Sichuan, Hunan, Anhui, Shaanxi, Shanghai, Yunnan, and Hubei. The donor list is unprecedented for its inclusion of Muslims from all corners of China.⁶⁶

From the eighteenth-century restoration of the Phoenix Mosque in Hangzhou to the rebuilding of the Huaisheng Mosque's minaret, inter-provincial donations have always existed in the Sino-Muslim history and are probably part of Islam's survival in the Chinese cultural area. Considering the frequency of both remittances and charity-donations from non-local sources, it is not an understatement to say that mosques in Guangzhou, as well as mosques in other southern cities, were dependent on long-distance aid for the long-term upkeep of the mosques. Like the late imperial Sino-Muslim intellectual networks, long distance financial connections were established over distant geographical localities. The foreign donors from Hong Kong to the Huaisheng's mosque's minaret restoration project should give readers pause, as should the donors from Shaanxi—these donors were not just contributing to any mosque; they were contributing to China's first mosque. Whether or not Muslims actually prayed there or taught the basics of Islam there did not matter as much as the fact that the mosque was central to the historical memory of Islam in China. In this sense, foreign Muslims, along with some northwestern Muslims, had participated in the acknowledgement and on-going construction of this sacred Islamic geography of China.

Moreover, other examples exist that point to an increasing concern with protecting cultural relics from outside an immediately local context: in 1908, a stone notice was erected in front of a mosque in Panyu County, Guangdong that urged Muslims to protect famous Muslim graves in Hubei, Anhui, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang from the burial of newly arrived merchants in old Muslim cemeteries. The announcement also warned against the theft and reuse of their tablets for new building projects and the raising of livestock on the properties.⁶⁷ The public exhortation shows that Panyu's Muslim population was aware

of southern China's historic Islamic sites and is indicative of the trend that Chinese Muslims from distant communities were envisioning a greater religious community within the lines of imperial borders by the end of the Qing Dynasty that would shortly be borders of a new nation in a mere three years' time.

The Resiliency of Mosques and the Rise of Women's Mosques in China

Quzhou, in the far rural southwestern corner of Zhejiang province, has supported one mosque from the start of the seventeenth century to the present, in spite of the fact that the community was small and the upkeep of the mosque was largely maintained by Muslims traveling east for trade and business. The Republican-era Gazetteer of Qu County notes, "The prayer hall of the Huihui (the Muslims) is called a clean and true temple ("Mosque"; *qingzhensi*). It is located inside Fuxi Gate on the Xima Street. Its architecture is quite quaint and ancient. This type of people (the Muslims), came to Qu County in the Kangxi or Yongzheng period at the start of the Qing dynasty, and here they built their temple".⁶⁸ Stories like this dot the gazetteers of late imperial China and reveal how the maps of China's Muslim communities were always in motion. Some of these maps have changed with time: prior to China's Communist Revolution in 1949, Beijing had approximately 46 active mosques.⁶⁹ Before 1949, there were 32 active mosques in the city of Nanjing, and another 21 in the regions surrounding the city.⁷⁰ At the same time, Jinan in Shandong province had more than eight mosques in its old walled city. Susan Naquin's research on Beijing has shown that many of these numbers, while not insignificant, would have been dwarfed by the number of Buddhist or Daoist structures in late imperial Chinese cities—Beijing alone had over 1700 temples by the end of the Qing dynasty.⁷¹

The mosques of these cities would have easily blended into the local settings and few Muslims would have complained about such a ratio as it was in fact the regions of China with the greatest visible concentrations of mosques where discrimination against Muslims was most pronounced by the close of the Qing Dynasty. But the twentieth century changed the religious landscapes of China: today, only a fraction of those temples have survived and less than 200 actually remain in the city of Beijing. The number of mosques however in the city has surprisingly remained resilient, and thus the percentage of religious structures in the city today which are mosques is potentially higher than at any other time since the Mongol period. Curious visitors might ask how the mosques continued to be rebuilt and survive all of the trials of twentieth century China's tumultuous history. Historians interested in imperial China could ask how is it that a community of a relatively small number of believers in Beijing, Nanjing, Guangzhou, or other localities could maintain all these active mosques without state patronage. While the case of modern China is no doubt different from its late imperial history, there might be some common answers.

To answer these questions, we must consider the history of mosques as financial institutions within China. Mosques as Chinese institutions built upon Central Asian and Islamic notions of *waqf*, while incorporating much of the rich fiscal vocabulary that Buddhism had developed in its centuries of propagation in China. But unlike the hero and troubled monk Lu Zhishen of *Shuihu zhuan* (*The Water Margin*), a Muslim could not simply head out into the vast empire and expect lodging and a pecuniary donation for his trip home or a mosque's refurbishing. Muslims across China had to know where to go and whom to ask. The Islamic map (or rather, maps) of China was never static and many mosques, like businesses, at times went bankrupt and closed their doors while

new ones were opened by migrating communities or traveling businessmen. If a mosque could not find or hire a teacher who could teach the faith and the language of the classics like the Qur'an, then the faith could not be passed to the new generation, marriages could not be performed, and the dead could not receive their proper burial.

It was probably out of such financial and religious considerations that women began to become *ahongs* of their own mosques in the Ming dynasty. There is reason to assume that the rise and proliferation of mosques for women in late imperial China was in part because they were good business: families were willing to pay to ensure their daughters had a firm foundation in religious knowledge and thus many such mosques were privately sponsored across China. This inevitably created a powerful precedent: since women needed to be educated as Muslims, communities needed female instructors who could work for the mosque or at an independent women's mosque (*qingzhen nüsi*). These instructors would be paid for by the mosque's estate and these women could then in turn, fund more education for Muslim women. Wang Yangmeng's 1937 article in *Yuehua* on Islam in Beijing notes that there were five women's mosques in the early twentieth century.⁷² Hundreds of women's mosque inscriptions and tombstones survive in China today, but in this limited space I will share just two to give a sense of how such institutions were established. In the town of Nanzhuang's village of Sangpo, located in the Henan province, the following inscription was erected in 1881:

The women's temple (*nüsi*).

For the believers of our village, there are five mosques. But there were no mosques for women. Every time we thought of this we felt it was such a pity. But there was the mother of Ding Changgui—in her youth she studied the classics, and for the rest of her life she taught the faith. The family's mosque had three teaching rooms, in addition to two side rooms for drawing water. She was very kind and helpful. [Here] she had a place to teach and recite the classics, and a place where [women] could wash and pray.⁷³

This inscription is insightful for its view into the process of how the women's mosque of Sangpo was established. First, a mosque was built by a local family, the Dings, who privately managed it. Since the family's matriarch was known for her depth of knowledge about Islam, the mosque gradually became the village's first mosque for women. Second, after Ding became established as the village's most eminent female Islamic instructor, Muslim women from across Sanpo came to attend her lectures, recitations, and prayers. Today, that mosque is known as the East Women's Mosque in the village, which now boasts of several mosques for women. In late imperial China, mosque estates were adaptable and religious knowledge was cherished to the extent that private families built mosques for women to support the survival of the faith. In the case of the Ding family mosque in Sanpo, it is easy to see how it transformed into a women's mosque: five mosques for the general community were already in existence in the eighteenth century and the opening of another would have meant local competition for resources, donations, and teachers. By converting their family mosque into a women's mosque, the Dings cornered a market that they helped to locally create. Their success was quickly replicated: in their book on women's mosques in China, Maria Jaschok and Shi Jingjun have noted that today, the number of mosques for women in Sangpo actually outnumbers the number of mosques for men.⁷⁴

This cannot be explained as deriving from the conservative Neo-Confucian orthodoxy that drove the examination system in the late imperial period: decades, and in many places centuries, before the state policy in China called for the establishment of schools

for girls, local conditions, community compacts, and the private market had produced scholarly and worship-centered spaces for women among many of China's Muslim communities. One may ask how the practice was justified. An inscription from Shadian, Yunnan, dating from the Daoguang Reign (1820 – 1850) provides such an insight:

The Grave of the Great Woman Teacher Ma

In Islam, there were female teachers. These women had knowledge and virtue and they were able to teach. [Our faith] came from the western regions to here [China], and there are many classics and treasures of our religion. Luckily, we had many women teachers, and their contributions were neither slim nor fleeting. These women are like the mother of the Sage Mencius—they are able to teach the next generation. They taught many things over a long period of time ... In the women's quarters of the houses, there are many women gentlemen (*junzi*) who want to learn. Throughout all of our history, this has always been the case. We sincerely thank Teacher Ma and the virtue that she left behind. Because of her contribution, the donors to our mosque were not disappointed at all. Now we celebrate, with the entire community, that God truly sent us this teacher.

Erected by Ma's Nephew, Sha Shuangde.⁷⁵

This inscription demonstrates the great subtlety and negotiation involved with women teachers in Chinese Muslim communities. First, the writer, Sha Shuangde, justifies the phenomenon of female teachers by appealing to two audiences: he notes that Islam always had female teachers and that these teachers were like Mencius's mother. One can easily imagine Muslims in China reading the nineteenth Surah of the Qur'an, *Surah Maryam*, and hearing the story of Mary, the virtuous mother of Jesus who underwent great hardship in bearing him, resonate with the story of Mencius's mother, who sacrificed greatly that her son might become a scholar. Second, Sha Shuangde explicitly mentions the financial aspects of the legacy of Ma on the mosque's estate. Teacher Ma was so successful in Shadian that donors gave generously to the mosque to ensure that their children had the opportunity to study under her. By creatively reading the legacies of Confucian and Islamic thought, Muslim communities formed financially successful teaching institutions that broke with cultural norms for the sake of upholding the faith in a minority context. This was accomplished through locating the precedent for such institutions in an imagined chain of tradition and transmission from the lands of their ancestors that corresponded to such a tradition in the local Chinese context (the mother of Mencius). One could apply this observation to a wide range of practices among the Muslims of China, including the patronage and remembrance of sacred geographies that marked the first regions where Islam entered the country. But we can also see these transformations of adaptation in conversation with the Islamic societies beyond China: Shahzad Bashir has noted that between 1300 and 1500, in the aftermath of the Mongol Conquest, Sufis in the Persian-speaking world came to place greater emphasis on lineage, whether descent from the Prophet (*sayyid*), or via a chain of Islamic mystical teachers (*sisila*).⁷⁶ During this time, there was a noted emphasis on embodied forms of transmission, with handshakes between masters of a Sufi network and their initiates marking a physical link that transposed the initiate back to the Prophet Muhammad. In this way, Muslims from China to Greater Persia were participating in local methods to reconnect with the origins of Islam in the seventh-century Hijaz, a place and time marked by the fact that with each passing year, it grew gradually further away.

With networks that were never truly understood by the central state and communities that mastered the art of adaptation, Muslims who were active in their congregations and protective of their traditions sought out fellow Muslims across the provincial and county lines for texts, knowledge, and financial support. On the border regions, Muslim commercial and religious networks stretched over critical borderland territories such as Turkestan, Tibet, and Mongolia. But in the southeast, which was home to some of the oldest mosques in the country, a different map was remembered. Though the Muslim communities of the Tang and Song periods had long dwindled and greatly acculturated into the local milieu, these mosques held the graves and marked the places where Islam had first come to China. Scholars, military officers, and believing subjects across the empire sent money to make sure those buildings, standing on private lands, would stay standing. Anthropologists have thus far affirmed that some of these remarkable fundraising activities from the imperial period have come into contemporary China as a powerful counterweight to a Communist state that seeks to regulate many aspects of religious life.⁷⁷

Conclusion

This brief history of the financial regimes of mosques in China complements and provides context for recent studies of Islam in China and across Eurasia. Jonathan Lipman's unsurpassed study of the world of Gansu and the rebellion of the nineteenth century northwest has discussed how it was the economic resources of Sufi networks that made the Muslim uprisings particularly devastating.⁷⁸ Zvi Ben-Dor Benite's scholarly network of Muslims in late imperial China also potentially began through circuits of financial donation that evolved into deeper networks of information exchange and text circulation.⁷⁹ These implications might also pose questions for scholars of Islam and Middle Eastern history. Timur Kuran, for example, has emphasized the rigidity and lack of transferability of the *waqf* as an institution in the Middle East for its strict adherence to the original intentions of an estate's founder.⁸⁰ While I do not wish to comment on the debate specifically as it pertains to the Middle East, scholars have seen that mosque estates in China were notable for their flexibility and some corporate features, which often involved multiple shareholders, adaptable frameworks for community engagement, and profit-accruing activities. The question of the limitations or successes of *waqf* in Islamic law might be best viewed from examples of historical enactment, and it might have been the minority position of Muslim communities in China that led to the type of experimentation and adaptation with long-held institutions that Kuran sees as missing in the Middle East.⁸¹

Yet this history speaks also to larger trends beyond Islamic law or economy. Many minority communities—Nestorian Christians, Sogdians, Manichaeans, and Jews—entered China at various times over its long imperial history, only to eventually disappear or seemingly assimilate into the local population. Muslims achieved something that very few groups in Chinese history can be said to have achieved: they survived and preserved their traditions until the present. While the reasons for this are multi-faceted and could be explored in further detail in future studies, for now we can safely conclude that Islam survived in China first and foremost because Muslims could build, maintain, and staff their mosques.

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NOTES

1. James M. Hargett, *Stairway to Heaven: A Journey to the Summit of Mount Emei*, New York: SUNY Press, 2007, p. 159.
2. James Robson, *The Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue) in Medieval China*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.
3. Joseph Fletcher, "The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China", in *Studies on Islamic and Islamic Inner Asia*, ed. Beatrice Forbes Manz, London: Variorum, 1995, pp. 1 – 33.
4. Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light*, New York: State University of New York Press, 2000, p. 14; Dru Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991, p. 415.
5. Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light*, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
6. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, *op. cit.*, pp. 261 – 290.
7. This claim is consistent with C.K. Yang's statement regarding local, public temples: "Temples that were not part of formally organized social groups but existed for general public worship were built or repaired by community subscription or occasionally by individual donors". C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and Some of Their Historical Factors*, Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1961, pp. 351 – 352. Mosques however did not exist for general public worship, which is why many gazetteers undercount or simply overlook their existence.
8. Jianwei Wu, *Zhongguo Qingzhensi Zonglan*, Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1995, pp. 304 – 307.
9. See Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005. More specifically, Zvi Ben-Dor Benite has written on the importance of lineage to the Sino-Muslim intellectual network. He has identified Sino-Muslim genealogies as one of the primary markers of Chinese Muslim identity in the historical context: Hei Jinyuan of Linqing, Shandong, the late Ming author of the introduction to the Hei lineage genealogy, furnishes an earlier instance of the thinking identified by Gladney: "Our family originates from the Western Regions (Arabia, Persia) ... We first came to Linqing, and then other families gathered there: the Cuis, the Chens, the Zhaos and others, a total of eighteen families, all from the Western Regions". Genealogical memory, then, not only established the "Muslimness" of the lineage but also reinforced and maintained its diasporcity (Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, *op. cit.*, p. 70).
10. Qur'an 6:141.
11. R.D. McChesney, *Waqf in Central Asia: Four Hundred Years in the History of a Muslim Shrine, 1480 – 1889*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
12. See Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 315.
13. Hill Gates, *China's Motor: A Thousand Years of Petty Capitalism*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 168.
14. Examples of Muslim communities buying local fields to support local mosques are very numerous in the Qing. For a purchase of such a field in 1791 in Anhui see, "Anhui huainanshi taiping qingzhendongsi: qingzhensi xuetian ji [Anhui Province, Huainan city, Taiping Village's East Mosque: The Record of the Mosque's Study Fields]", in Yu Zhengui, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu* [Stone Inscriptions of the Hui People]. Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 2000, pp. 340 – 341.
15. Xinghua Li, "Qingdai huizu qingzhensi de sichan wenti [The Question of Mosque Estates among the Hui in the Qing Dynasty]", *Shijie Zongjiao Yanjiu*, Vol. 2, 2002, pp. 46 – 54. p. 47.
16. Joanna Handlin Smith, *The Art of Doing Good: Charity in Late Ming China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009, p. 54.
17. Jacques Gernet provides a comprehensive definition of *changzhu* in his book *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History from the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*. During the Tang, the term "applied to all consecrated assets, and it appears regularly in Chinese texts to denote Church property". Jacques Gernet (Trans. Franciscus Verellen). *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History from the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 67. The mosque inscription is located in the Forest of Steles, Dali Old City, Yunnan. It has never been published and can be found under the title *jin jiangge shishi zhu xishe changzhu* [Today We List the Donors and Their Contributions to the waqf]. The reason for this critical primary sources' lack of pub-

lication is probably its relatively non-descript nature. The Stele's only mention of a religious property is *si* (temple), so in the years following Du Wenxiu's chaotic Muslim rebellion of nineteenth-century Yunnan, when the mosque it was located in was destroyed, the origin of the inscription was rendered inscrutable. However, the names of people donating to the mosque reveal a community of Persian language origin that was only gradually starting to take on Chinese names in the fourteenth century. Some of the donors have Chinese names while others have transliterated Persian names, implying that the members of the community were acculturating to their new homes in China at different speeds. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that many members of the community probably could not write or even speak Chinese, a stone-inscribed contract was absolutely necessary for ensuring land rights and keeping a public record of finances, and it was probably first and foremost through China's vibrant and complex contract culture that Middle Arab, Persian, and Turkic Muslims first began engaging with the economic, cultural, and linguistic demands of their new home in the Yuan and early Ming periods—not to discount the smaller Muslim communities that had already acculturated during the Tang and the Song.

18. One possible reason why China today has so many mosques today, over 40,000 by some counts, may be partially attributed to tax structures in the late imperial period. In much of the Islamic world, *waqf* land was tax-exempt, which was a major motivation for rich landowners to “donate” land to *waqf* endowments in the Ottoman Empire. Thus, there was not an inherent demand for the profitability of a mosque estate in Egypt or Syria. In China however, temple (including mosque) land was largely taxable, meaning the deed of a mosque's land had to be in the name of one or more persons, depending on how the shares were distributed. Because mosque land was taxed, they had to be profitable, which is why Chinese mosques potentially launched so many contribution campaigns but also why many mosques simultaneously shadowed as farms, businesses, and native-place associations. When an *ahong* took a position at a mosque, he was also becoming the head of that business structure and for the sake of the community, had to maintain a level of fiscal solvency. The number of mosques that exists in China today, which in some places like Xi'an, Dali, Kaifeng, Kunming, Chengdu, and Nanjing, can rival or surpass the number of active Buddhist temples, is in part attributable to the success of these religious-economic ventures galvanized by a minority community's determination to survive.
19. Xinghua Li, “Qingdai huizu qingzhensi de sichan wenti”, *op. cit.*, p. 47. See also Ma Zhu, *Qingzhen zhinan* [Guide to Islam], Tianjin: Huizu zhongguo yisilanjiao, 1987.
20. Zhi Liu, *Tianfang dianli* [The Rites of Islam], Nanjing: Jinling congshu, 1903.
21. Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2007, p. 250.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 249.
23. Guanzhong Luo, *Sansui pingyaozhuan* [The Three Sui Quash the Demons' Revolt], Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1983, pp. 76 – 77. In this episode, a treacherous monk petitions an official in Kaifeng for money:

I am a penniless monk from the Wutai Mountain's Wenshu Temple. The abbot of the temple sent me out to collect donations for the repair of the destroyed temple gate, which will require 3,000 strings of cash.

Although the episode reflects a popular stereotype in late imperial China that itinerant monks were not always to be trusted, a wandering *ahong* would have never been able to petition such a high official, unless he had previous knowledge that the official was a Muslim. Interested scholars should also consult chapters five of the 120-chapter version (Rongyutang), version of *Shuihuzhuan*, when Lu Zhishen is asked to leave the Wutai Mountain due to his reckless behavior and move to the Xiangguo Temple in Kaifeng. He is eventually given lodging after his monastic exile precisely because an old man takes him to be a sincere monk from the Wutai Mountain.
24. Ma Zhu, *Qingzhen zhinan* [Guide to Islam], Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1988, pp. 433 – 434. That Ma Zhu cites the opening of the edict is referring to the roads that connect Yunnan to the rest of China, not to Muslims coming directly from the listed provinces. Many northwestern Muslim travelers would have been arriving in Yunnan by way of roads passing through Sichuan.
25. *Da Qing lichao shilu* [Veritable Records of the Great Qing through All Reign Periods], Taipei: Huawen Chubanshe, 160. 2b-2b.
26. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 385 – 386.
27. Some Sufi shrines also have proper, rather than geographical names, such as the Babasi “Father Mosque” of Langzhong, Sichuan. Many of these structures are not just mosques, but also include tombs and cemetery complexes.

28. James Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759 – 1864*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, p. 169.
29. This is probably a reference to the Muslim eunuch Zheng He's journey to the Middle East and Africa during the Ming dynasty. More research can be done on the history of the names of this mosque, but the "Giraffe" title seems to have been present as early as the seventeenth century, if not before.
30. Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997, p. 49.
31. She Jianming, "Suiyuan huizu shangbang de neibu jiegou [The Internal Structures of Merchant Groups among the Hui of Suiyuan]", *Huizu yanjiu*, Vol. 4, 2006, p. 100.
32. See in particular the Bukui Mosque in Qiqihar, Heilongjiang, which was originally constructed in 1684 by Muslim Bannerman. See Wu, *Zhongguo Qingzhensi Zonglan*, *op. cit.*, p. 102. The subject of Muslims as *Nikan* in the Eight Banners is almost completely unstudied outside of the Chinese language scholarship. The genealogical implications of these families are particularly fascinating because many came in as officers and officials (*semuguan*) with China's first conquest dynasty, the Mongol Yuan, served as military officers for the Ming military, and then were absorbed into the military system of China's second conquest dynasty, the Manchu Qing. For more information on some of these families, see Liu Tong, *Liaoning huizu jiapu xuanbian* [Selections of Family Genealogies of the Hui of Liaoning], Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1992. The presence of these Chinese practitioners of Islam in the Banners may have colored the Manchu's first impressions of the Islamic faith.
33. Yibo Xie, ed., *Zhongguo difangzhi jicheng* [Collected Gazetteers of China], v. 56, Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1992, pp. 687 – 688. This telling of the history of Islam in China by the non-Muslim gazetteer writers of the Langzhong county gazetteer reads much more like a history of Buddhism in China than of Catholicism or Protestantism in China. There has been a trend to see Islam and Christianity in China grouped together as "foreign" faiths in China, and we must avoid this tendency: Islam was in China centuries before Matteo Ricci's arrival in the late Ming and was not considered to be a foreign faith in late imperial China. Mosques were generally taken as a type of temple (*si*), with the exception of Sufi shrines in the northwest (Ch. *gongbei*), and mosques were generally listed among Buddhist temples in provincial and county gazetteers under the title *qingzhensi* or *libaisi*, ["Prayer Temple"] which no particular distinction in general up until the great rebellions of the nineteenth century. In the late nineteenth century, in the aftermath of the rebellions and intense Christian missionary activity in China, it became common to see churches and mosques grouped together in some gazetteers—though this was a new phenomenon. Scholars should remember however that the religion had by that point been in China for over a millennium. A final critical point is distinction is that Muslims generally did not actively seek out converts, whereas foreign Christian missionaries did.
34. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 354.
35. Zhihong Wu, *Xi'an qingzhensi gubei xuanzhu* [Selections of the Ancient Stone Inscriptions of the Mosques of Xi'an], Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2011, pp.124 – 125.
36. Daye Yang, "Mingqing huizu jinshi kao lue [Textual Study of Ming and Qing Muslim Jinshi]", in *Zhongguo huahui minzu shi* [History of the Hui Minzu in China], ed. Shouyi Bai, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007, p. 357.
37. Dillon, *China's Muslim Hui Community*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
38. David G. Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in southwest China, 1856 – 1873*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2005.
39. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 308.
40. Kimura Mizuka, "Chugoku unnan shou ni okeru kyōdōkyōiku [Brief Report of Traditional Arabic Education in China: The Case Study from Weishan Autonomous County]", *Higashiajia bunka kōshō kenkyū* [Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Studies], Vol. 2, 2002, pp. 245 – 258.
41. R.D. McChesney, *Waqf in Central Asia: Four Hundred Years in the History of a Muslim Shrine, 1480 – 1889*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
42. This trend is also seen in a Guangxi mosque's restoration project in 1812. Muslims of the Old Village Mosque of Lingui County, Guangxi gathered together 22 silver taels for the purchase of a plot of land to support education in the Muslim community there. See "Guangxi Linguixian jiucun qingzhensi xuetician beiji [Guangxi Province Lingui County Old Village Mosque: Inscription Record of Study Fields]"; Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 352.
43. Mosques in Guangzhou did exhibit some characteristics of Islamic *waqf* for the maintenance of tombs. Broomhall translates an inscription from an inscription titled "The Selling of an Charitable Piece of Land" thus:
 In the 31st year of Kanghsi the seventh month (1693), Sha Ting-piao, Ma King-hsui of our religion, in consequence of a landowner Kwei Ming-Feng having sold them in perpetuo a portion of land of which the title was perfect, and fearing it would run to waste if there was no

- one to keep up the ownership by paying the taxes, came together in the mosque outside of the Northern Gate publically to deliberate respecting it. Seeing the produce of this land was small, Sha Ting-piao and others, in the tenth month, bought of Kwei Ying-kuin another portion of land in perpetuo which had descended from his uncle King Yoh... Sha, and the others, engaged two brothers (named) Chou, and two brothers (named) Shen, to cultivate the plot annually, and that after enough had been reserved to meet the taxes, they should bring every year 30 stone of grain from the produce, to supply oil and incense for the mosque and also to defray what was necessary for keeping in good repair the grave of the ancient worthy Shih-ha-peh Sahib (Companion of the Prophet Muhammad) buried there. These are the circumstances of the public meeting of Sha Ting-piao, and the others, when this land was jointly purchased (Marshall Broomhall. *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2007, 116 – 117).
44. Madeleine Zelin, *The Magistrate's Tael*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, pp. 294 – 295.
 45. In his impressive study of Muslim officials in the Ming and Qing dynasties, Yang Daye has found conclusive evidence for at least 64 Muslim *jinshi* from China's northwest (Shaanxi and Gansu) and 48 from China's southwest (Yunnan, Guizhou, and Sichuan). Shaanxi and Yunnan were respectively the two largest producers of Muslim *jinshi* in the Ming and Qing dynasties. Yang Daye, *Mingqing huizu jinshi kaolüe* [Textual Study of Ming and Qing Muslim Jinshi], Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2011, p. 9. This subject is naturally awaiting further research.
 46. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
 47. Broomhall notes of Zhejiang's Muslim population:

Although history shows that there was formerly a strong Mohammedan community in parts of Chekiang, there are probably not more than 1500 families today... Chuchowfu and Wenchow have mosques, but at the latter place worship depends upon the visit of a Mullah from some other place (Broomhall 2007, 212).
 48. "Zhejiang Hangzhou, Mosque Restoration Inscription", Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
 49. The original inscription is from Zhengui Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 55 – 60. Muslims seemed to have put great effort into making their mosques look like pleasant places, probably in order to evade discrimination. A mosque from Jinan, Shandong in 1796 erected a sign that read:

This mosque is located on a big street, and sometimes officials come by, so we can absolutely never let excrement or dirt pile up in front (of it). Furthermore, the mosque is the place where we all pray, so it's got to be well ordered and very peacefully quiet. We cannot intentionally desecrate it. Always follow the prophet's words, and everyone strictly follow (these rules).

Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 377.
 50. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "The Marrano Emperor: The Mysterious Bond between Zhu Yuanzhang and the Chinese Muslims", in *Long Live the Emperor!: Uses of the Ming Founder Across Six Centuries of East Asian History*, ed. Sarah Schneewind, Ming studies research series, no. 4., Minneapolis: Center for Early Modern History, 2008, pp. 275 – 308.
 51. Jiangsu's Zhenjing has one of southern China's most famous and active Muslim communities and many Muslims of the area contributed to Han Kitab texts.
 52. Susanna Thorton, "Provinces, City Gods, and Salt Merchants: Provincial Identity in Ming and Qing Dynasty Hangzhou", in *Unity and Disunity: Local Cultures and Identities in China*, ed. David Faure, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1996, pp. 15 – 35.
 53. At least three provinces are represented by name in the list, though with a total of 233 donors and over 40 surnames, there were donors from other provinces such as Fujian or even Shandong.
 54. "Hubei Chongjian Gucheng Qingzhensi bei [Inscription for the Rebuilding of Hubei's Gucheng Mosque]", Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 94 – 95.
 55. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, *op. cit.*, p. 103.
 56. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 186, 211; Wu, *Xi'an qingzhensi gubei xuanzhu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 21, 33, 37, 49. Xi'an's collection of Ming mosque inscriptions is particularly impressive: almost every mosque inscription from the Ming bears evidence of very high ranking patronage from court eunuchs, governors, scholars from the Hanlin Academy, and even directly from the Ministry of Rites. Qing mosque inscriptions from Xi'an show a stark contrast: in addition to religious affairs, they largely focus on the ability of charismatic religious leaders to privately fundraise for the mosque while several other inscriptions defend the community from prejudice and association with Muslim uprisings. See, for instance, Wu, *Xi'an qingzhensi gubei xuanzhu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 124 – 125. For an example of Ming court patronage for mosques in Hami, see the collection of Persian letters in the *Huihuiguan laiwen* [Letters Received by the Huihuiguan]. One example, dating from the early sixteenth century (1509 – 1521), is:

The envoy, Captain Sayyid Hussein from Qāmul (Hami) presents a memorial to the Khān of Da-i-mīnk (“Emperor of the Ming”): The mosques that were constructed everywhere in the city (Qāmul), with the help of the imperial court, all get patronage (for the maintenance of the mosques). Now, in the city of Suzhou (Pr. Sujēū; city in modern day Gansu), there is a mosque that was built many years ago. Muslims go there to worship God and pray for the Khān’s long life at the set times. Now, (I) hope the court will be empathetic to the situation and generous and aid this mosque. It is a virtue of the imperial court (to do it). Wu Haiying, ed., *Huizu diancang quanshu* [The Complete Books of the Collected Treasures of the Hui People], Vol. 214, Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2008, pp. 309 – 310.

- For research on Qing support for Islamic (Uyghur) institutions, see Kwangmin Kim, “Profit and Protection: Emin Khwaja and the Qing Conquest of Central Asia, 1759 – 1777”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 71, No. 3, pp. 603 – 626. James Millward, “A Uyghur Muslim in Qianlong’s Court: The Meaning of the Fragrant Concubine”, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 2, pp. 427 – 458.
57. Marshall Broomhall notes in his 1910 study of Chinese Muslims: “In Hupeh the Mohammedan element is very small, there being probably not more than 10,000 persons in all” (Broomhall 2007, 210). Once again, these numbers are vague approximations and official demographics are impossible to attain.
 58. Jianwei Wu, *Zhongguo qingzhensi zonglan* [Comprehensive Guide to China’s Mosques], Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1995, p. 227.
 59. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 120.
 60. Broomhall, *Islam in China*, *op. cit.*, pp. 212 – 213.
 61. Guangdong Guangzhou “Chongxiu huaishengsi beiji [Inscription Record for the Restoration of the Huaisheng Mosque]”, Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
 62. *Ibid*, p. 120.
 63. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, pp. 124 – 134.
 64. There are reasons to believe this was not limited to Guangdong. Guangzhou’s Huaisheng Mosque, like Hangzhou’s Phoenix Mosque, held a high place in Sino-Muslim collective historical memory, yet wealthy Muslims in other areas often donated to help small, isolated Muslim communities whether in remittance payments home or as pure charity. Guangxi’s Pingle county’s Mosque saw donations from Beijing and Henan in 1845 (Guangxi Pinglexian “Chongjian qingzhensi beiji”, Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.) Guangxi’s Nanning county’s Mosque received donations from Sichuan, Shaanxi, Jiangxi, and some military officers stationed in Shandong in 1805, despite the fact the mosque itself dates only to the early Qing dynasty (Guangxi Nanning “Chongjian qingzhensi beiji” [Guangxi Nanning: “Inscription for the Rebuilding of the Mosque”], Zhengui Yu, p. 152). The Nanning county Mosque traces its origin to Ma Xiong, who was a Muslim and the governor of Guangxi during Kangxi’s reign. He was originally from a village which is located in today’s Ningxia. His biography is mentioned in the 45th *Liechuan* of the *Qingshigao*. This is one of possibly many historical examples of a Muslim official establishing a mosque in an area with a very small Muslim community and thereafter ensuring the mosque’s financial sustainability through donations from wealthy Muslims in other provinces.
 65. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries, Muslims in Hong Kong appear to have been some of the biggest donors to mosques in Guangdong province. Thirty Muslims from Hong Kong, many with non-Chinese names, donated for the establishment of a Muslim school for a mosque in Guangzhou in 1909. See Zhengui Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu* [Stone Inscriptions of the Hui People], *op. cit.*, p. 349. Also see “Guangdong Guangzhou dongyingsi yixuetang beiji”, *op. cit.*, pp. 249 – 352.
 66. “Guangdong Guangzhou Chongxiu Huaisheng Guangtasi bei er fang”, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
 67. “Guangdong Panyuxianfu guanyu jiangnan yishan fendu baoshi [Announcement from Guangdong Panyu County Regarding the Graves of Yishan Located in Jiangnan]”. Yu, *Zhongguo huizu jinshilu*, *op. cit.*, p. 682.
 68. Jianwei Wu, *Zhongguo Qingzhensi Zonglan Xubian* [Continued Comprehensive Guide to China’s Mosques], Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1998, p. 47.
 69. Bryan S. Turner, ed., *The New Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2010, p. 447.
 70. Juemin Shi, “Nanjingshi huimin shenghuo ji qingzhensi tuanti zhi diaocha [Field Study on the Life of Muslims in Nanjing City and the Community of Mosques]”, in *Zhongguo yisilanjiaoshi cankao ziliao-xuanbian* [Selections of Historical Sources Regarding the History of Chinese Islam], ed. Li Xinghua and Feng Zhiyuan, Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 1985, Vol. 2, pp. 152 – 153.

71. Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, p. 20.
72. Wang Mengyang, “Beipingshi huijiao gaikuang [The Situation of Islam in Beijing City]”, *Yuehua*, Vol. 9 (*Juan*. 9, Issue 12), 1937, April, pp. 7 – 8.
73. Sun Jincan, *Henan mengzhoushi nanzhuangzhen sangpocun qingzhemüsi yan* [A Study of Henan Province, Mengzhou City, Nanzhuang Town, Sangpo Village’s Women’s Mosques], Ningxia University Master’s Thesis, 2011, p. 16.
74. Jascok, Maria, and Shi Jingjun, *The History of Women’s Mosques in Chinese Islam: A Mosque of Their Own*, Oxford: Psychology Press, 2000, p. 109.
75. Wang Zihua and Yao Jide, eds., *Yunnan Huizu renwu beichuan jingxuan* [The Prized Selections of Inscriptions Transmitting the Eminent Muslim Personages of Yunnan], Kunming: Yunnan minzu chubanshe, 2004, p. 795.
76. Shahzad Bashir, *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.
77. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, *op. cit.*, 1991, pp. 156 – 158. Maris Boyd Gillette, *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000, pp. 86 – 90.
78. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, *op. cit.*, pp. 120, 151, 165.
79. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, *op. cit.*, p. 80 – 95.
80. Timur Kuran, *The Long Divergence: How Islamic Law Held Back the Middle East*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011, pp. 128 – 129.
81. Timur Kuran, “The Scale of Entrepreneurship in Middle Eastern History: Inhibitive Roles of Islamic Institutions”, in *Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship in Economic History*, eds. William J. Baumol, David S. Landes, and Joel Mokyr, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 62 – 87.

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