

Towards an Understanding of Qianlong's Conception of Islam: A Study of the Dedication Inscriptions of the Fragrant Concubine's Mosque in the Imperial Capital*

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In the 1760s, a mosque was built in Beijing by the order of the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor which faced north to the Imperial Palace rather than west to Mecca, rendering it effectively defunct as a legitimate mosque even though it was the only mosque built throughout the entire Qing period (1644–1911) with imperial funds and the direct involvement of the central government.¹ This paper seeks to provide

* A complete translation of the Chinese inscription mentioned in this piece can be found in Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1910; Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007), pp. 94–98. The original Chinese inscription is in wide circulation. Corresponding translations of the Mongol, Manchu, and Uyghur versions, while desired by the author, were probably impossible to produce at that time. The mosque in question was destroyed in the early twentieth century and the only copies of the inscriptions were published in the form of greatly reduced facsimiles of rubbings taken by Arthur Cotter in the late nineteenth century. It is my hope that clearer copies of the corresponding inscriptions will surface in the coming years. I would like to thank Dr Nathan Hill, Dr Huang Yao-ting, Eric Himmelberger, Jin Yuhan, and Qian Xu as well as all anonymous reviewers of this article for their advice, critiques, and extensive support on the research and writing of this paper.

¹ The Khoja Afaq tomb near Kashgar was financially supported by the Qing, though it existed prior to the Qing's conquest. The Emin Khoja Mosque in Turfan was constructed by local authorities with a grant from the Qianlong emperor. See James A. Millward, "A Uyghur Muslim in Qianlong's Court: The Meanings of the Fragrant Concubine," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no. 2 (May 1994), pp. 445. Both of these examples though, are limited to Xinjiang 新疆—the Qing emperors appeared to have been much more reluctant to directly sponsor or endow Chinese Muslim religious establishments.

the background, societal context, and historical implications of this mosque for analysing the Qing's relationship with Islam as it was incorporated into imperial ideology following the conquest of Xinjiang and the quelling of the Jungar tribes. The primary sources of this paper are the *Qinding Rixia jiuwen kao* 欽定日下舊聞考, a historical record of Beijing published between 1785 and 1787 during the final years of Qianlong's reign; the 1764 Chinese-Manchu-Uyghur-and Mongolian inscription by Qianlong presented at the dedication of the mosque (*Chijian Huiren libaisi beiji* 敕建回人禮拜寺碑記); Kobayashi Hajime's 小林元 1941 Tokyo-based study *Fuifui* 回回 (Chinese "Huihui"); and finally Marshall Broomhall's 1910 missionary study *Islam in China*. In recent decades, "New Qing History" has attempted to define the imperial ideology underlying Qing polity and governance. Pamela Kyle Crossley has argued that the emperors aspired to be universal monarchs to all the constituent "parts" of their empire.² Yet while the case for the Manchus and the Mongols have been extensively explored,³ the Qing's relationship to Islam and Muslims as a distinct group has hitherto not been fully explored beyond the local level. While some scholars have posited that the Qing clearly differentiated Hui and Uyghur in the decades following the conquest of Xinjiang, this paper questions the Qing Imperial government's knowledge of Islam during Qianlong's reign. The question before us then is, beyond vague statements of "imperial patronage" of various mosques, how is "New Qing History" exactly applicable to Chinese Islam in the eighteenth century through the lens of a previously overlooked imperial inscription.

Beijing's Muslims During Qianlong's Reign

The Huiziying qingzhensi 回子營清真寺 would have stood out among Beijing's collection of Muslim communities and mosques, which by Qianlong's reign numbered between thirty and forty, although indubitably many smaller mosques have escaped the historical record. With the death of Liu Zhi 劉智 in 1739 in Nanjing, the era of the great *Han Kitab* literature—the hybridization of Confucian pedagogical techniques, philosophical tenets, and technical vocabulary with Islamic practice and Arabic and Persian literature—of which Beijing Muslims contributed greatly,

² Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).

³ Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001); Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

was ending.⁴ Up until this point in Chinese Muslim history, the common word for Islam was *Huijiao* 回教 (The teachings of the Hui), a name that primarily referenced Muslims (Hui) themselves and not their religion (Islam). Yet even this term for Islam was only seldom used, and more often than not, terms such as “Classical Learning” (*Jingxue* 經學) were employed by Muslims to denote “Islam.”⁵ The arrival of Uyghurs to Beijing during the 1760s and the construction of a Central Asian-styled mosque brought a Muslim community that defined Islam in traditionally Islamic terms, in an “Islamic,” Turkic language. As will be discussed later in this paper, it is difficult to know how “different” the Qing emperors saw Islam as prior to the conquest of Central Eurasia, yet the presence of a Uyghur community living next to a large, indigenous Chinese Muslim community should have made Islamic cultural differences evident to the Imperial Court.⁶

The new mosque and community also stood out due to its proximity to the Imperial Palace. As James Millward has pointed out, the mosque and surrounding community was located uncharacteristically close to the Imperial Palace, where private non-imperial residence was generally forbidden.⁷ The mosque was also very expensive to build.⁸ Qianlong notes in the inscription that it had marble steps as well

⁴ There are many examples of Beijing's Muslims contributing to *Han Kitab* literature. The *Jingxue xi chuan pu* 經學系傳譜 (The genealogy of Classical Learning), of which Zvi Ben-Dor Benite's book, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), is based, was found in Beijing.

⁵ Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, p. 34. Likewise, there was no standardized word for Arabic, which was often referred to as *Jingwen* 經文 (Classical Language).

⁶ In the *Shengzu Ren huangdi shengxun* 聖祖仁皇帝聖訓, the Kangxi 康熙 emperor provides a rare insight into such perceived difference. This edict dates from 1698:

如爾等雖招撫回子，遏止其教，亦能令其皈依佛法，跪拜喇嘛乎？今天下太平之時，惟令各行其道。若強之使合，斷不可行。

If you pacify the Hui people, stop their religious practice, is it possible covert them to Buddhism, to bow and pray before the lamas? Now that the world has peace, make things run as the way they are, forcing them to assimilate is definitely not practical.

See *Shengzu Ren huangdi shengxun* (1731; Changchun 長春: Jilin chuban jituan youxian zeren gongsi 吉林出版集團有限責任公司, 2005), *juan* 60.

⁷ Millward, “A Uyghur Muslim in Qianlong's Court,” p. 435.

⁸ Kobayashi Hajime 小林元, *Huihui* 回回, trans. Wang Zhizhong 王枝忠 and Zhang Jiwei 張冀煒 (Yinchuan 銀川: Zhongguo Huizu guji congshu bianweihui 中國回族古籍叢書編委會, 1992), p. 42. This book contains some statistics on the cost of mosques built in Manchuria during the Qing period, though unfortunately he translates them into the costs of the mosques into Republican-era Chinese customs gold units 關金圓. Nevertheless, the statistics

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as “lofty arches, spacious halls, winding corridors, and elaborate decorations.”⁹ This would have distinguished the mosque from predominantly wooden mosques of the capital and the mosque was probably one of the earliest mosques in Beijing to blend architectural styles.¹⁰ The final, most important characteristic of this mosque was its direction in relation to Mecca. Kobayashi Hajime in his 1941 book *Fuifui*, dedicates a portion of the work to a study of mosque structures in late imperial China. He concludes that the vast majority of Chinese-cultural area mosques were relatively stylistically uniform prior to the twentieth century: mosque buildings, from the *wudu* (الوضوء, “washing,” 淋浴室) rooms to the prayer hall (禮拜殿) to the Arabic study areas (初等阿文室) all in fact generally faced west, in spite of the fact that this is not mandated by Islamic law.¹¹ The fact is that Chinese Muslims probably became accustomed to orientating all mosque-related building west to overcompensate for their perceived distance from Mecca and the Arab world. Many mosques contained inscriptions devoted to the history of the buildings and the essentials of Islam, and many such as the Great Mosque of Ji’nan 濟南 in Shandong 山東 province explicitly noted such things as “the [mosque’s] orientation is towards the west as its pole” 故向方以正西為極.¹² Regardless, as we will see in the following section, Qianlong ensured that at least some of the buildings of the Huiziying qingzhensi faced northward.

The Mosque and the Inscription

The history of the Huiziying Mosque is well documented in the Qing historical record. The Mosque was built in 1764, at government expense, after the Qianlong emperor adopted a Kashgarian woman as a concubine.¹³ He ordered the building of

(Note 8—Continued)

are informative to get a sense of scale. The price of building a mosque was determined by two factors: the land in question and the cost of the requisite building materials. The price of land varied between 20,000 CGU and 32,000 CGU and the cost of construction varied between 20,000 CGU and 43,000 CGU. Qianlong’s mosque was literally invaluable because the land it stood on was not normally for sale and the materials used were not “local” but rather imported from Xinjiang.

⁹ Quoted in Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. 96.

¹⁰ Arthur Cotter took several photographs of the mosque’s entrance and the stone tablets. See Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. 93.

¹¹ Kobayashi, *Huihui*, p. 41. His major case study for this section is the Fengtian qingzhensi 奉天清真寺 in Liaoning 遼寧 province.

¹² Yu Zhengui 余振貴 and Lei Xiaojing 雷曉靜, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu* 中國回族金石錄 (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe 寧夏人民出版社, 2001), p. 80.

¹³ Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. 93. In Chinese the woman is referred to as the “Fragrant Concubine” 香妃.

this mosque, adjacent to the Imperial Palace grounds, so that the Uyghur entourage which accompanied her from Kashgar would have a place to pray. A tower was first constructed within the grounds of the Imperial Palace—called the *Baoyuelou* 寶月樓—so that the concubine could look out and be reminded of her home by seeing the mosque and the Turkish encampment.¹⁴ The fact that Qianlong's inscribed monument was written in four languages—Manchu, Chinese, Mongol, and Uyghur—lends a deeper significance to the mosque as it related to the geographical and ethnic realities of the imperial capital and the empire itself as it was by the mid-1760s.¹⁵ Upon the dramatic enlargement of the empire in Central Asia, Qianlong saw it fit to have a governmental-endowed mosque alongside the many Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian temples of Beijing. While I attempt to use all four inscriptions in this study, Broomhall's copies of the Mongol, Manchu, and Uyghur versions are largely illegible, though the Chinese version is accessible.

The Huiziying qingzhensi was destroyed in 1915, and there are very few extant photographs of the structure as it stood. Yet there nonetheless are a few facts about



1909 photograph of the entrance to the Huihuiying qingzhensi. The Forbidden City would have been located to the far right of the scope of this photograph. This photograph also implicates the mosque's orientation because had it been located in any other orientation towards the Imperial Palace, the palace would be in view in this photograph.¹⁶

¹⁴ Han Liheng 韓立恆, "Huihuiying qingzhensi cangsang" 回回營清真寺滄桑, *Xicheng Jiujing* 西城舊景 (Beijing: Beijing Xichengqu dang'anguan wang kan 北京西城區檔案館網刊, 2007), p. 2.

¹⁵ The fact that the inscription was given in four languages of the empire, only one of which was the language of a predominantly Muslim population, is evidence in itself for a reading of the intentions and implications of Qing Imperial ideology in regards to the building and significance of the mosque.

¹⁶ Han Liheng, "Huihuiying qingzhensi cangsang," p. 1.

the mosque that can be established with confidence. The mosque was situated on Western Chang'an Street 西長安街, near the Chang'an Gate 長安門. This places the mosque directly to the south of the Imperial Palace, across from Nanhai 南海 and Nanchang Street 南長街 in modern-day Beijing. Without doubt, it was the closest mosque, geographically speaking, to the Imperial Palace from the time it was dedicated in 1764 until the end of the dynasty.¹⁷ Much like the Yonghe Temple 雍和宮, built in the northeastern corner of the Imperial City during the reign of the Emperor Yongzheng 雍正 in 1722–1723, had established Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhists as central elements of the Qing state, the presence of the mosque built under the direction of the emperor and so close to the centre of Qing governance represents less of an endorsement of Islam as a faith, but a formal acknowledgement of Muslims as a pillar of the empire.

Yet the most intriguing fact about the mosque comes from the *Qinding Rixia jiuwen kao* (c. 1785–1787), which after discussing the history of Qianlong's writing dedication to the mosque, includes an insight into the mosques orientation: 回營之西建禮拜寺，北向，which translates to “The Muslim camp's western area a mosque was built with a northern orientation.”¹⁸ The passage in question appears in entirety below:

乾隆二十五年奉旨授白和卓為回子佐領，以投誠回眾編為一佐領，於西長安街路南設回營一所居之，共房百四十有七楹。回營內設辦事房，以內府官董其事。回營之西建禮拜寺，北向。寺門內恭立御製勅建回人禮拜寺碑記。……為天下共主，俾阻遐遜聽，壹稟我約束，而後戎索所屆，風氣莫敢以自私，尚已。

In the twenty-fifth year of the Qianlong emperor, there was an Imperial Order that appointed Baihezhuo the local administrator of the new Muslim community. This community was comprised of the recently surrendered (Turkestani)

¹⁷ 1764 was also the same year that the Anyuanmiao 安遠廟 (Temple of pacifying the outlying areas) was built at Chengde 承德 in imitation of another temple in the Ili Valley 伊犁河谷 of Xinjiang. See Philippe Forêt, *Mapping Chengde: The Qing Landscape Enterprise* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), p. 51. Joanna Waley-Cohen also mentions in her book *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military under the Qing Dynasty* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), p. 35, a monument erected outside of Beijing that bears an inscription greeting generals returning from the Xinjiang campaigns in Chinese, Manchu, Mongol, and Arabic. The question of why an inscription dedicated to the returning generals was made in Arabic while an inscription dedicated to the Uyghur community in Beijing was made in Uyghur is a fascinating, unanswered question.

¹⁸ Yu Minzhong 于敏中, *Qinding Rixia jiuwen kao* (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe 北京古籍出版社, 1981), *juan* 71, Guanshu Yingzaosi 官署·營造司, pp. 1193–94.

Muslims and was located around West Chang'an Street, the south part of which held a Muslim camp with 147 houses. In this camp, an administrative office was established and the officer of the Imperial storehouse managed it. To the west of the camp, a mosque was built, facing north, and inside of which was respectfully erected an inscription by the Emperor as the Son of Heaven, so that from far and wide his orders may be obeyed—all under his sole control. Since our law has now reached the western peoples (peoples of Turkestan), they should dare not to esteem themselves with self-interest.

This detail implies architectural ingenuity within the Qing court for the structure of this mosque; namely, the mosque, instead of having a western, Mecca-oriented direction that the Sharia (شريعة) would dictate, actually faced northwards to the Imperial Palace.¹⁹ It is important to point out that in the Islamic world, some mosques do not technically face Mecca, particularly those which were converted into mosques such as the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, and we must remember that no matter the architectural orientation of the mosques, Muslims inside the mosque could have prayed in any direction they wanted beyond of the gaze of imperial authority. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of mosques did and do face Mecca and this would have been the only Islamic structure in Beijing without a western orientation. One thus wonders at how the large Muslim population of Beijing would react to such a strange architectural feature, and since this building was built as a mosque, it is difficult to imagine Muslim support for its northern orientation.²⁰ However, as Qianlong's inscription makes clear, the mosque does not appear to have been intended for usage by the public. He writes:

回眾以時會聚其下輪年入伯克等無不歡欣瞻拜²¹

The Muslims occasionally assemble there [in the mosque], and every time Begg come to the capital to pay homage to the emperor, they cannot help but be delighted to pray in a temple they admire.

¹⁹ There is a wealth of Islamic scholarship exploring the history of the Qibla's (قبلة) Mecca-orientation and its relationship to Islamic mosque architecture. The earliest such reference can be found in al-Qur'an 2:144. In the Manchu version of the inscription, it appears that "north" is *amargi*.

²⁰ Beijing had at least thirty-nine mosques by the end of the Qing dynasty. See Zhou Chuanbin and Ma Xuefeng, *Development and Decline of Beijing's Hui Muslim Community* (Bangkok: Asian Muslim Action Network; Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 2009), p. 14.

²¹ Wang Dongping 王東平, "Qianlong yuzhi 'Chijian Huiren libaisi beiji' de liang ge wenti" 乾隆御製〈敕建回人禮拜寺碑記〉的兩個問題, *Xiyu yanjiu* 西域研究, 2007, no. 2, p. 72; Yu and Lei, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu*, p. 199.

Qianlong thus gives us a few insights into the purpose of the mosque. The mosque, which may well have been built to alleviate his concubine's homesickness, was a diplomatic and propagandistic tool that explicitly targeted Uyghur élites and by means of its physical presence and architectural features, marked the subjugation of Xinjiang onto the landscape of the capital city. Theological concerns are not mentioned in the inscription, nor were probably relevant to the writers.

It is important to relate here the immediate implications of this discovery of the unorthodox, even heretical direction of the mosque. This mosque, other than its construction, has left very few traces in the Qing historical record. There is doubt as to whether the mosque was used at all; many studies, including Zhou Chuanbin 周傳斌 and Ma Xuefeng's 馬雪峰 recent book, the *Development and Decline of Beijing's Hui Muslim Community* (2009), and Zvi Ben-Dor Benite's *The Dao of Muhammad* (2005), do not even mention the mosque. In his inscription, Qianlong appears more interested in ensuring that the exterior of the mosque confirms to a local, Turkestani model, rather than Islamic theological accuracy. The reason thus why the mosque's northern orientation did not spark more interest was that the mosque itself was probably rarely used and existed on the Beijing landscape for mainly symbolic purposes.

In a later part of the same inscription, Qianlong indirectly mentions the "unorthodox" orientation of the mosque. He concludes the inscription with a mediation on Islam and the newly constructed mosque:

孰為天方
孰為天堂
花門秘刹
依我云間
.....
西向北向
同歸一尊²²

What is the Kaaba? (or possibly "Arabia")

What is the Heavenly Hall?

It is the mysterious shrine

Of the Muslims near my Palace Gate
.....

(their) Bowing west or bowing north

Alike show one respect

²² Yu and Lei, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu*, p. 200. The translation that follows is by Broomhall. See his *Islam in China*, p. 97.

In this passage, which concludes Qianlong's inscription, it is clear that he acknowledges the "unorthodox" orientation of the mosque and attempts to defend it. The emperor classifies "bowing west towards Mecca" as equal and equivalent towards "bowing north towards the seat of the emperor," effectively obfuscating the line between religious piety and political allegiance. This passage, coupled with the inventive structural duality of Chinese-Islamic architecture with Central Asian Turkish-Islamic architectural forms makes the most compelling case for the thesis of "New Qing History" to be also applicable to Chinese Islam. Yet, there remains the question as to precisely why Qianlong mandated such an unorthodox direction for the mosque. Up until now, most scholars would point to the vast literature, partially historical, partially fictional, regarding the "Fragrant Concubine" that James Millward analysed so extensively in his article "A Uyghur Muslim in Qianlong's Court." The traditional story has been that Qianlong constructed the Baoyuelou within the Imperial City's walls directly across from the mosque site in question in order to gaze out upon the Muslim encampment and the mosque and thus be reminded of her homeland. While this may account for the location of the Baoyuelou, the direction of the Huiziying qingzhensi probably held particularly significance for Qianlong and his desire to incorporate not only "Xinjiang" but also "Islam" into his empire through the lens of imperial ideology.

However, with this in mind, it is important not to overemphasize this one example. This instance of direct imperial intervention in the construction of a mosque for more decorative and diplomatic purposes rather than pious ones is an exception, not a rule. As has previously been established by Jonathan Lipman and numerous Chinese scholars, the Qing rulers did not have a consistent or coherent policy towards its Muslim subjects.²³ Yongzheng and Qianlong both often defended Muslims from the whims of local, scapegoating magistrates who were never allowed to serve in their home provinces and thus were often unfamiliar and culturally unsympathetic to the needs of local Muslim communities.²⁴ Muslims were also maligned as fierce, brutal, and often mocked as bandits (*feitu* 匪徒). Thus, most probably this historical discovery regarding the Huiziying qingzhensi may reveal more about how Qianlong personally wished to perceive and be perceived by Muslims rather than establish the exact place that Islam held in the Qing Empire during the eighteenth century.

²³ Jonathan N. Lipman, "A Fierce and Brutal People': On Islam and Muslims in Qing Law," In *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen Siu, and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 83–110.

²⁴ Jonathan N. Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1997), p. 97.

The Linguistic Dimensions of the Huiziying qingzhensi

Since the original inscription written by Qianlong was erected in Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, and Uyghur, it is important to take note of all four translations for a greater appreciation of the nuances of Qianlong's inscription as much as scholarly analysis will allow at this time. It appears to me that Qianlong wrote the initial copy of the inscription in Manchu since the term *Huihe* (回紇) and *Huiren* (回人) is used to denote "Muslim" in the Chinese version. *Hoise* is the Manchu word for Muslim and the word itself was probably adopted into the Manchu language from Mandarin, when the term *Huihe* specifically denoted the Uyghurs.²⁵ Nevertheless, by the time that Qianlong was writing the inscription in the 1760s, the term *Huihe* was already slightly esoteric and it is noteworthy that the words *Huihui*, *Huimin* 回民 or even *Huijiaotu* 回教徒 were not used. Yet it seems that the usage of these words would have underscored the meaning of "Muslim practitioner" in the most general sense. Qianlong's (or the transcriber's) usage of the term *Huihe* thus makes it difficult to know if Qianlong was consciously attempting to underscore the fact that he was dedicating the mosque to a purely Turkish audience, or whether Qianlong's Manchu "Hoise" was inscribed into Chinese by a Manchu official as "Huihe." The latter is potentially more probable because Qianlong himself claims in the inscription that the "Huihe" are descendents of traders who came to settle in China during the Sui and Tang dynasties.²⁶ Qianlong is thus willing to invoke the Hui (Chinese Muslims) to reiterate how long Islam has been in China, but ultimately he seems to be dedicating and intending the mosques for a specific ethnic group, the Uyghurs. This is assuming, however, that Qianlong himself was fully conscious of such a difference—a question which will be explored later in this study.

Another important linguistic element to mention is the fact that out of the four languages that were inscribed, it appears that only one—the Uyghur version—uses explicitly Islamic "linguistic" terminology to denote a mosque. The word that seems to be used in the Uyghur is *meschit* مسجد which derives from the Arabic *masjid* ("place of prostration") مسجد. The Chinese word for mosque used by Qianlong here is *libaisi*, which today is often translated as "mosque" but most literally means "prayer temple." Manchu and Mongolian differentiate Buddhist temples from temples in general—the Manchu term "Muktehen" can mean temple or altar in the general sense while the term "Šajingya" or "Samadi" are often used for Buddhist terminology,

²⁵ The usage of the term "Hui" to denote Muslims derives from a medieval Chinese word for the Uyghurs. See Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic* (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1991), p. 18.

²⁶ Yu and Lei, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu*, p. 199.

such as “Šajingya sabsik” (Buddhist monk's habit) or “Šamadi Baksi”²⁷ (Buddhist Monk). Unfortunately, due to the poor quality of the extant reduced facsimiles, it is nearly impossible to ascertain the readings of “mosque” in the Mongol or Manchu inscriptions. But it must be pointed out that Qianlong, who was only superficially acquainted with Islam, was well acquainted with all three languages with the exception of Uyghur. We must not force therefore an anachronistic assumption that Qianlong automatically drew a line between “mosque” and “temple”—he may well have conceived the consecrated building as a type of “temple” and was thus free to dedicate it to the preservation of the dynasty rather than to God, who is conspicuously absent from Qianlong's inscription.²⁸ In short, it is very difficult to conclude with any certainty how much Qianlong, or any Qing emperor, knew about Islam. In spite of the fact that there was much interaction with Muslims during the conquest of Xinjiang and many Manchu documents mention local Muslim leaders in the northwest, most of what the imperial bureaucracy knew about it probably came through Chinese sources.²⁹ The Manchu word for Islam is *Hoise tachiyan*, which literally means “the teachings of the Hoise”—apparently a direct translation of the Chinese *Huijiao*.

At one point, the inscription speaks of “mullahs” accompanying Uyghurs to pay tribute to an emperor during the Tang dynasty.³⁰ While the Mongolian, Uyghur, and Manchu versions of the text use recognizable transliterations of the word ملا (mullah, Turkish: *Molla*), the Chinese translates the term as *Moni* 摩尼 (lit. Manichaeans)—an error in Qianlong's inscription already recognized by Broomhall and several other contemporary Chinese scholars.³¹ This error once again gives credence to the idea that the inscription was first written in Manchu and then subsequently translated into the other languages. But the problem is further complicated by the fact that it appears that the Tang history is actually referring to Manichaeans.³² We thus are left with Mongolian, Manchu, and Uyghur transcriptions with the appropriate transliteration

²⁷ This Manchu word, clearly a fusion word combines a Mongolian word for “Buddhist” with the Chinese word for “Scholar” (*Boshi* 博士) to render, in Manchu, “Buddhist monk.”

²⁸ In the final passage of the inscription, Qianlong implies that the Qur'an is the teachings given to the Muslim people by Muhammad, who he calls “their ancestor.” See Yu and Lei, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu*, p. 200.

²⁹ Matthew W. Mosca, “Empire and the Circulation of Frontier Intelligence: Qing Conceptions of the Ottomans,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 70, no. 1 (June 2010), pp. 147–207.

³⁰ Yu and Lei, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu*, p. 199.

³¹ Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. 95. The reason I am able to conclude that the Manchu and Mongol inscriptions share this feature is solely because Broomhall cites it as a scholarly consensus.

³² Wang Dongping, “Qianlong yuzhi ‘Chijian Hui ren libaisi beiji’ de liang ge wenti,” pp. 72–73; Broomhall, *Islam in China*, p. 95.

for an Arabic word which fit the occasion yet presented an inaccurate historical record of events and a Chinese transcription with the correct history but the wrong word. Qianlong's conception of Islam in light of this translation and historical error can be illuminated through a comparison with European conceptions of Islam during the Ottoman Empire. Eighteenth-century Europeans did not see Islam so much as distinct religion spanning multiple continents but rather as "the Turkish faith."³³ Russian writers also used the terms "Turkish" and "Muhammadan" interchangeably throughout much of the Romanov dynasty. I would contend that Qianlong saw Islam as a "Uyghur" faith and that "Chinese-speaking Muslims," the Hui, were seen as Sinitized descendents of Uyghurs from the Tang dynasty. This confusion was probably made possible through the similarity of the words "Huihe" (Uyghur), "Huihui" (Muslim), and "Hoise" (Manchu: interchangeably Muslim or Uyghur) and reflected in errors such as the one just provided. The Qing's imperial ideology as it applied to Islam was thus novel for Chinese dynasties but also part of a larger, Eurasian continuum of large, sedentary dynasties trying to classify and understand peripheral "Turkic" peoples (Ottoman Turkish, Uyghur, Uzbek) by a creed that was seen as being culturally and geographically-specific. Furthermore, it must also be said in light of the errors on the inscriptions that Islam was not conceived in a unified and coherent manner across the linguistic and ethnic divides of the Qing Empire, from the practitioners of Islam on the local level to the upper echelons of imperial bureaucracy.

Implications for Qianlong's Understanding of Islam

One of the many mysterious things about Qianlong's inscription for the mosque's erection is the complete lack of mention of any Muslims in the Beijing area other than the Uyghurs. Beijing was a very active city for both Muslim intellectual activity and mosque building during the Qing dynasty. At least thirty mosques were built in Beijing during the Qing dynasty, many of them built prior to 1764.³⁴ Thus while the conquest of Xinjiang and the arrival of Uyghur captives to the capital necessitated some formal, imperial sanction of Islamic practices, Qianlong evidently does not want to overly align the various Muslim peoples (in this case, Uyghur and Hui) of the capital. Foreshadowing the minority discourses of the twentieth century regarding China's many Muslim ethnicities, we see here an implicit judgement that Turkish speaking Muslims and Chinese speaking Muslims were not to be socially, religiously, or politically taken as a single entity, which may appear to contradict my claim of

³³ Robert D. Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 37.

³⁴ Zhou and Ma, *Development and Decline of Beijing's Hui Muslim Community*, p. 14.

a perceived historical link between the Uyghurs and Hui yet in reality was probably the most expedient political and cultural strategy for the Qing to pursue. After all, Uyghurs and Hui spoke different languages and had fundamentally different cultures, not to mention they were both seen as possibly subversive to central authority.

This ambiguous tension finds resonance in Pamela Crossley's recent article, which identifies the Qing strategy as defining Uyghurs as "Turkic" and the Hui as primarily "Muslim."³⁵ In this formulation, Qianlong would have addressed Uyghurs primarily with attention to their language and historical consciousness, while skirting direct references to their religious identity. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite also notes Qianlong's ability to differentiate groups of Muslims, citing an episode when Qianlong scolds a governor for not differentiating "Salar Hui" (撒拉回民) and "neidi Hui" (內地回民).³⁶ While I agree that the Uyghurs and the Hui were certainly differentiated, it remains dubious that there was a single way of doing so across the empire throughout all levels of bureaucracy: a local official working in Xinjiang would "differentiate" the two groups differently than the emperor in Beijing would have, or in Ben-Dor Benite's example, fail to do so entirely. Furthermore, while the emperor's architects manipulated the orientation of the Huiziying mosque in such a way to address the universal imperial centre in Beijing, the building was fundamentally religious in nature and, at the same time, fundamentally a mosque intended for the Uyghur community. Uyghurs were thus, at least in some contexts, identified directly with Islam and while linguistic and historical differences between Uyghurs and Hui Muslims were noted, the nuances of these two historical narratives seem to have been opaque to the higher levels of the Qing bureaucracy. As a final example, I would point once again to Qianlong's mediation written in the inscriptions: after asking "What is the Kaaba? /What is the Heavenly Hall?" Qianlong continues with the couplet: "The Thirty Classics/entrusted to the *ahongs* . . ." 經藏三十詔之阿渾.³⁷ What is peculiar about this choice of words is that the institution of the *ahong* was unique to Sino-Muslims of the interior, though the word is of Persian origin;

³⁵ Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Pluralité impériale et identités subjectives dans la Chine des Qing," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales* 2008, no. 3 (63e année), pp. 597–621.

³⁶ Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad*, p. 229.

³⁷ Yu and Lei, *Zhongguo Huizu jinshilu*, p. 200. Even more peculiar is the usage of the term *jingzang* 經藏, which shares the name of the Buddhist text *Sutra Pitaka*, the second of the three volumes of the *Tipitaka* (the Pali Canon). While it is without doubt that the term *jing* 經 was often invoked to denote Classical Islamic texts, the term *zang* 藏 gives the text a heavily Buddhist connotation. Then there is the equally perplexing question as to why Qianlong pairs the *jing-zang* with "thirty" (*sanshi* 三十). One possible answer is the fact that the Qur'an is traditionally divided into thirty *juz* جزء (lit. "part"). Qianlong, with his extensive knowledge of complex Buddhist canons, could have conceivably inquired into the structure of the Qur'an, as the Buddhist

(Continued on next page)

Uyghurs would have spoken of imams إمام or ئىمامەتچىلىك (Uyghur: *imametchilik*, “the office of the imams”). While possible conclusions are limited pending on the subsequent complete translations of the Uyghur, Mongol, and Manchu inscriptions, we can at least note that Qianlong is identifying a Sino-Muslim, Hui religious office as appropriate to mention in the dedication of a Uyghur mosque. Thus, while it is possible that he differentiated the two groups culturally and linguistically, he did not necessarily appropriately differentiate the respective Islamic practices the two groups followed, and his conception of Islam was potentially heavily influenced through his acquaintance with Sino-Muslim Confucian élites of the *Han Kitab* literature, whose own conception of Islam differed vastly from the Uyghur *ulema*.³⁸ In approaching this conclusion, one should keep in mind that the historical contents of Qianlong’s dedication (see Appendix One) for this Uyghur mosque are in fact a condensed history of Sino-Muslims (Hui) in China—not a “Turkic” history of Central Asian Muslims. With Ben-Dor Benite’s previously mentioned example in mind, we can at least conclude that Qianlong could choose to differentiate Uyghurs and Hui when deemed appropriate in local governance and yet associate them together through a singular “origin-story” in order to legitimise Qing control over newly conquered northwestern Muslim territories.

The mosque’s location, its imperial inscription written in four languages, its unorthodox—even heretical—structure, and the historical context surrounding its construction renders it easy to conclude at least some of Qianlong’s intentions in building it. As his father Yongzheng (r. 1723–1735) had ordered the construction of the Lama Temple (Yonghegong) in Beijing in 1722–1723, a year before large parts of Amdo became under *de facto* Qing indirect rule and four years before Qing *amban* were stationed in Lhasa, Qianlong ordered the construction of the Huiziying qingzhensi. It had been less than seven years after the conquest of the greater Kashgar region. The mosque’s orientation towards the seat of the emperor away from Mecca—attested to both in Beijing historical records and Qianlong’s inscription—was probably a manipulation of Islamic religious practice for Qing imperial ideology. The

(Note 37—Continued)

scriptures themselves were divided by “part, collection” (部) and “sutra” (經). While a definite picture of Qianlong’s conception of Islam is impossible to determine with certainty, it is clear that he made efforts to make sense of this unfamiliar, monotheistic religious system through the lenses of Neo-Confucian (Islamic) literati thought as well as his own Buddhist sensibilities.

³⁸ Qianlong was familiar with some of the writers and works of the *Han Kitab*. Ben-Dor Benite writes: “In reading the *Zhisheng shilu*, the Qianlong emperor was on some level interacting with Muslim literati thought; at the same time, by using the ‘rebellious’ Salar Hui as a foil against which to compare them, he was interacting with his empire’s northwestern peoples” (*The Dao of Muhammad*, p. 229).

mosque appears to have been associated with Manchu rule, hence its destruction in the years after the fall of the Qing dynasty with little fanfare.³⁹

The building of the Huiziying qingzhensi, as well as its imperial inscription attests simultaneously to the multi-group, multi-ethnic consciousness of Qing imperial ideology as well as provides an example of that ideology being ineffective. Through building this mosque, Qianlong was at least symbolically attempting to bring Islam—as the Manchus had done with Confucianism (the Examination System, Support of the Kong 孔 clan in Shandong)⁴⁰, Daoism (Imperial pilgrimages to sites like Mount Tai 泰山, Shandong)⁴¹, and Buddhism (Temples at Chengde, Yonghegong)⁴²—into the fold of imperial ideological control and influence. Yet in regards to Islam, Qianlong's resolve to keep distinction between the Uyghurs and the Hui (Chinese-speaking Muslims), prevented a coherent, consistent approach to both Islam and Islamic peoples from being realized in the upper echelons of the Qing government.⁴³ Since the Huiziying mosque is just one episode from Qianlong's long and complex relationship with Islam and Muslim peoples, I hesitate to apply its implications to a more general history of Islam in the Qing here, which once

³⁹ There is a parallel here with the Russian occupation of Turkestan in the nineteenth century. Seeking to symbolically proclaim Russia's newfound sovereignty over the region, Governor-General Konstantin von Kaufman constructed Russian Orthodox Churches, without bishops or any formal clergy, in Islamic cities such as Tashkent. See Daniel Brower, "Islam and Ethnicity: Russian Colonial Policy in Turkestan," in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700–1917*, ed. Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 115–37. Many of these churches remain, consistently unused, until today. This is yet another example of an imperial power colonizing Muslim peoples and using defunct edifices to establish physical, architectural proof of primacy: as Qianlong built an empty mosque in the capital, the Russians built empty churches in Turkestan. Ironically, they were attempting to colonize the same land inhabited by related groups of people.

⁴⁰ Ichisada Miyazaki, *China's Examination Hell: The Civil Service Examinations of Imperial China*, trans. Conrad Schirokauer (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981).

⁴¹ Brian R. Dott, *Identity Reflections: Pilgrimages to Mount Tai in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005).

⁴² Forêt, *Mapping Chengde*.

⁴³ In this aspect of Qing local administration, there is a parallel with the Russian incorporation of Turkestan into their Empire. The Romanovs had established the Orenburg Muslim Spiritual Assembly (Оренбургское магометанское духовное собрание) in 1788 in order to oversee particularly aspects of Islamic activity in Central Eurasia. After the conquest of Tashkent in 1763–1865, the Kazakhs were expelled from the assembly so as to prevent cross influences between Kazakh-Tatar peoples, two distinct Muslim groups. See Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar*, p. 257.

exhibits vastly different trajectories depending on the period and region in question. Yet Muslim discrimination across the empire increased in the decades following the construction of the Huiziying qingzhensi as Hui Muslims slowly came to be tacitly considered a separate category in the Qing legal system.⁴⁴ Within thirty years of the building of this mosque, Muslims began to rebel against the Qing state—less as practitioners of a religion and more of members of an ethnically distinct group.⁴⁵ These rebellions however were part of long and complicated undercurrents dating back to the Ming dynasty and deeply intertwined with local—for instance, northwestern—histories detached from Muslim life in the imperial capital. It is thus impossible to say that any one aspect of Qing policy towards Islam “caused” these rebellions or any Muslim discrimination. One possible influence of Qianlong’s attempted co-option of Islamic practice to fit Qing ideology was that Sino-Muslims did slowly begin to see themselves as more than just believers of a faith and rather as members of a distinct category of imperial subjects as the number of groups (Uyghur, Salar) to whom the term “Muslim” (Hui ren) applied expanded during Qianlong’s reign—though this process is in need of further inquiry extending beyond this singular case study. Nevertheless, in approaching the topic of Qianlong’s conception of Islam, we must differentiate between imperial acknowledgement of linguistic and cultural diversity within general religious categories from imperial acknowledgement of intra-religious (i.e. Islamic) diversity. From today’s standpoint, we conclude that the Qing would keep Xinjiang, but China—to Qianlong’s dismay—would never fully co-opt Islam as a source of legitimacy for ruling Muslim lands, in spite of the fact that Muslims had lived in China continuously for over a millennium.

Much of the previous scholarship on the topic of Islam in the Qing has hovered around two poles: the history and background of violent uprisings and persecutions of the nineteenth century and Sino-Muslim intellectual history as it relates to the *Han Kitab* of the previous centuries. Yet little remains known about how Islam was popularity conceived and practised on the ground outside of the contexts of Central Asian Sufi networks and the philosophical writings of Liu Zhi, Ma Zhu 馬注, and Wang Daiyu 王岱輿. This case study is limited in scope to how Qianlong may have conceived of Islam—but the implications should give us pause. Many of the popular “facts” about Islam that permeate global discourse today cannot be assumed to have been known in previous centuries. Qianlong, without knowing who Muhammad was, where Mecca was located, or even what his Muslim subjects precisely believed in, made conscious attempts to understand the faith—even if these attempts were coloured by Qing imperial ideology.

⁴⁴ Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, p. 100.

⁴⁵ David G. Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856–1873* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

Appendix One: Huiziying Mosque Dedication Inscription in the Original Chinese

為天下共主，俾阻遐邇聽，壹稟我約束，而後戎索所屆，風氣莫敢以自私，尚已。顧在昔寄象鞮譯之掌，必與之達志通欲，修其教不易其宜，厥旨豈相戾哉？蓋惟極天下之不齊以致其大齊，而觀化者益臻於無外。考前史，回紇自隋開皇時始入於中國，至唐元和初，偕摩尼進貢，請置寺太原，額曰大雲光明，實為禮拜寺所由昉。然其致之也，或以假師以通市，於納土服屬我毗我隸之義故無當焉。朕寅承天地祖宗鴻庥，平準噶爾，遂定回部各城。其伯克霍集斯、霍什克等並賜爵王公，賜居邸舍。而餘眾之不令回其故地者，咸居之長安門之西，俾服官執役，受廛旅處，都人因號稱回子營。夫齒繁則見龐，類辨則情渙，思所以統同合異，使瞻聽無奇袞，初不在闢其教而揉矯之也。且準部四衛拉特內附，若普寧寺，若固爾札廟，既為次第創構，用是寵綏，回人亦吾人也，若之何望有缺耶！爰命將作支內帑羨金，就所居適中之地，為建斯寺。穹門塏殿，翊廡週阿，具中程度。經始以乾隆癸未清和吉月，浹歲落成。回眾以時會聚其下，輪年入覲之眾伯克等無不歡欣瞻拜。詫西域所未曾覩，問有叨近日之榮，而兼擅土風之美，如是舉者乎！咸鞠脛虞抃曰：然。復重諗之曰：爾回之俗嚮，惟知有魯斯訥墨，今則朔奉朝正矣。嚮惟知有騰格，今則鑄頒泉府矣。越及屯賦覲饗諸令典，其大者靡弗同我聲教，而國家推以人治人之則，更為之因其教以和其眾。揆諸萬舞備銅繩之技，九賓綴塵頭之班，此物此志云爾。其誰曰不宜！乃為之記而系以銘。孰為天方？孰為天堂？花門秘刹，依我雲間。厥城默伽，厥宗墨克。派哈帕爾，傳依鐵勒。經藏三十，咨之阿渾。西向北向，同歸一尊。珉城相梁，司工所作。會極歸極，萬邦是若。乾隆二十有九年歲在甲申仲夏之吉，御製并書。

從〈敕建回人禮拜寺碑記〉 了解乾隆帝對伊朗斯蘭教的概念

(中文摘要)

Tristan G. Brown

這份論文始於一個回子營清真寺被忽視的細節。此清真寺於十八世紀下半葉依聖旨在北京建築。清真寺朝向紫禁城，而非麥加，引發了伊斯蘭教在新清史中所佔地位的更重要的討論：清帝乾隆如何看待伊斯蘭教以及 1760 年與準格爾的戰役如何徹底改變清廷對伊斯蘭教為統一也可能為顛覆其政權的策略。通過對現存一次文獻（包括乾隆賜給回子營清真寺的碑文、北京十八世紀及十九世紀的地方歷史、傳教士的口述和關於清真寺的文獻記錄）的分析，一些清朝對伊斯蘭教關係的新角度得以展現。儘管乾隆帝對伊斯蘭教信仰細節的理解尚不得而知，但應相信他可以像其父雍正帝拉攏藏傳佛教一樣，拉攏伊斯蘭教以建立其政治和宗教的合法性。不僅如此，通過對文本的分析，證據表明，乾隆帝認為回族（中國穆斯林）為在唐代遷入中國的回回（維吾爾人）之後。但悖理的是，他又避免將中國的穆斯林與回回（維吾爾人）聯繫過緊：他考慮到了社會、文化差異與政治後果。儘管乾隆意在拉攏伊斯蘭以建立其政治合法性，不論在邊境地區還是在內部份，清朝都從未產生出一套有條理的或連貫的接近伊斯蘭信仰的途徑。

Keywords: Qianlong, Islam, Mosque, Uyghur, Hui

關鍵詞：乾隆 伊斯蘭教 清真寺 維吾爾 回教徒