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WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

Department of Architecture

Thesis Examination Committee:

Dr. Shantel Blakely, Chair

Robert McCarter

Eric Mumford

MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE AND IDENTITY:

A STUDY OF THE AUTOCHTHONOUS MOSQUE IN CHINA

by

Yutong Ma

A Master's Thesis presented to
Graduate School of Architecture & Urban Design
Of Washington University in
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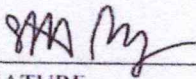
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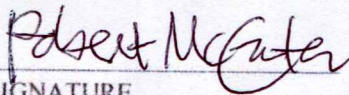
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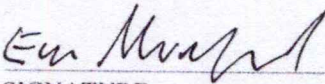
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Eric Mumford
THESIS COMMITTEE MEMBER


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Yutong Ma

Washington University in St. Louis

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Introduction

In this thesis, I argue against a common conception in the ongoing trend of mosque-building in southeastern China in the 21st century. Many Hui Muslims and architects in this region refuse to consider historical mosque architecture built in traditional Chinese architectural style as their cultural references in constructing new mosques, as they believe that the traditional Chinese architectural language is insufficient to express their identity as Muslims. Instead, they prefer a collection of symbolic architectural elements to be used in mosque architecture loosely termed as the “Arabic” style. In response to this misconception, I argue that a Chinese type of mosque architecture, exemplified by the Great Mosque of Xi’an, has formed as early as in the late 15th century; it is rooted in the historical process in which a unique Chinese Muslim identity – Hui – was formed. It is this Chinese type of mosque architecture, not the imagined set of exotic “Arabic” mosque style, which manifests the cultural identity of Hui Muslims in southeastern China.

To begin with, I define three main concepts or terms used in this thesis in Chapter 1. Firstly, in section 1.1, I trace the construction of the term “Hui” as an ethnic and cultural designation in Chinese Islamic history. The changes in denotation of “Hui” corresponds to the historical processes in which immigrant Muslims in China were assimilated and a unique “Hui” ethnicity was formed. “Hui” denotes a syncretic Islam formed in China through the dialogic interaction between Islam as an imported religion and the long-established Chinese social, political, and cultural institutions. It serves as a legitimate cultural foundation for the development of a Chinese type of mosque architecture. I narrow the scope of contemporary Chinese mosques examined in this thesis to southeastern China, because the history of Muslim

communities in this region (in contrast to Muslim ethnicities in northwestern China) fits exactly into this narrative of Sinicization of Islam in China. In section 1.2, I discuss the definition of mosque architecture. As the definition of mosque architecture has been elusive in the field of Islamic art and architecture, I approach this issue by answering what necessary architectural features constitute a mosque. There is no fixed aesthetic style for mosque architecture, as long as the mosque fulfills the liturgical requirements of Islamic worship. This section also clarifies that some architectural symbols generally associated with Islamic architecture, such as the dome and the crescent, are in fact not essential components of mosque architecture. The third group of terms that I concern about is autochthonous and type, borrowed from the discourse of critical regionalism and typology in post-modern architecture. In this thesis, the “autochthonous” type is meant to denote a localized type of mosque in China, which is closely associated with the formation of Hui identity, in contrast to the imported mosque styles conceived by many Chinese Muslims to be the only true “authentic” Islamic style.

With these contextual analyses, I move on to examine in Chapter 2 a case study of a contemporary mosque built in southeastern China, the New Mosque of Hangzhou. The formal analysis reveals that it is an aggregation of architectural components borrowed from Islamic architectural traditions in several Muslim-majority regions. Arguably, the arrangement of volumes in this new mosque follows the imperial mosque architecture in Ottoman Turkey, the design of the minarets draws reference from that in Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and the design of the central dome is likely inspired by a style found in Lahore, Pakistan (then the Mughal empire of India). These imported symbols were deliberately chosen by the local Muslims as they allow the mosque to be recognized as being “Arabic” and thus “authentically Islamic”. Equating exotic symbols with Islam reflects an identity crisis faced by Hui Muslims in

contemporary southeastern China. As religious practices were prohibited in China for a few decades in the 20th century, Hui Muslims' connection with their religious and cultural traditions were severed, especially in southeastern China, which leads to a desire for an anchor to prove their identity as Muslims. A lack of knowledge in their own history results in their lack of cultural confidence in the Chinese type of mosque in demonstrating the unique Hui identity.

Chapter 3 uses the Great Mosque of Xi'an as an example to prove that there exists an "autochthonous" type of Chinese mosque architecture which speaks to the dual identity of Hui Muslims, whose identity was constructed through the interaction of Chinese culture and Islamic religion. The Great Mosque of Xi'an fulfills both the requirements of traditional Chinese architecture and the liturgical requirements of mosque architecture. It can be considered a work of Chinese architecture in terms of site planning and architectural design. The mosque complex adopts the Chinese courtyard-complex style with a long central axis; the design of individual buildings, represented by the main prayer hall, follows the hierarchy of Chinese timber-frame architecture. On the other hand, the mosque fulfills the essential liturgical requirement of mosque architecture, as it highlights the directionality of Islamic worship. Tailoring to the need for maximized space for worship, the main prayer hall adopts a special form rarely seen in Chinese halls. It exemplifies that an autochthonous Chinese architectural type is sufficient to fulfill the essential requirements for Islamic worship and demonstrate the cultural identity of Hui Muslims.

Chapter 4 synthesizes the analyses in Chapters 2 and 3 and engages in a comparison of the two mosques studied in the earlier chapters. I compare these two mosques in terms of how they respond to their respective urban and cultural contexts and conclude that the Great Mosque of Xi'an is an autochthonous type of mosque architecture.

Chapter 1: Definition of Terms and Scope of Study

This chapter aims to define three key concepts involved in this thesis: the cultural designation of Hui Muslims in China, the definition of mosque architecture, as well as the definition of an autochthonous architecture.

1.1 The Ethnic/Cultural Designation of Hui Muslims in China

To have a clear definition of the term “Hui” (Chinese: 回), one has to trace the history of Islam and Muslims in China. It is an umbrella term with varying denotations in terms of religion, ethnicity, culture, and politics in different periods of Chinese history. It helps to clarify identities of the Hui Muslims who are users of the two mosques studied in this thesis.

Early arrivals through trade routes, land, and sea

Muslim merchants and emissaries were present in China as early as the seventh century through the Silk Roads. Chang’an (today Xi’an), the capital of one of the greatest empires in the world at that time, was a key trading hub at the east end of the Silk Roads and the destination of Muslim merchants from the Middle East and Central Asia. The transmission of Islam to China occurred in this period with Muslim settlements in China.

In the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and the Song Dynasty (960-1279), Muslim existence in China was largely one of segregation.¹ They lived within extra-territorial districts sanctioned by the imperial governments called *Fanfang* (foreign districts) and conducted their lives according

¹ Yee Lak Elliot Lee, “Muslims as ‘Hui’ in Late Imperial and Republican China. A Historical Reconsideration of Social Differentiation and Identity Construction,” *Historical Social Research*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (2019): 234.

to the implementation of Sharia. Architecture historians usually call this period as the emergent period of Islamic architecture in China², as foreign Muslims brought styles from the central Muslim world into China when constructing their mosques. During this period, “Hui” was a vague term loosely referring to foreigners from the Middle East, regardless of their religious designation.

Large influxes of Muslims into China during the Mongol conquest

A significant rise in the Muslim population in China came with the Mongols’ conquest of China and establishment of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), when a huge number of Muslims from Central and Western Asia emigrated to China to serve the Yuan imperial administration. Muslims moved from earlier enclaves in southern and eastern commercial cities to form new settlements across China. The term “Hui” in this period referred to Muslims from the Middle East or West Asia, regardless of their ethnicity.

State-enforced Sinicization of Muslims in inland China in the Ming Dynasty (the late 14th century)

Following the fall of the Yuan Dynasty and the restoration of Han Chinese’s rule, Chinese elites embarked on programs to revive the vibrant Chinese culture in the Tang and Song Dynasties. The first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, Emperor Hongwu (r. 1368-98), decreed a series of Sinicization programs. Imperial policies enforced foreigners’ adoption of Chinese language, name, and apparel, as well as obligated the intermarriage between Muslims and the majority Han Chinese. The irresistible sweep of state sanctions rapidly accelerated Muslims’

² Martin Frishman et al., *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development & Regional Diversity* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 210.

acculturation into the Chinese society. As noticed by an Islamic historian, the Muslim settlement in China would be defined as “Muslims in China” rather than “Chinese Muslims” until the reign of the Ming Dynasty.³ Previously referring to “Muslims”, the Chinese term “Hui” gradually became the umbrella term for a new ethnicity arising in China, which constituted of diverse groups of people of different genetic origins but following the same localized Islamic culture in China. The Great Mosque of Xi’an (discussed in Chapter 3) was built at this historical turning point.

Vernacularization of Islam and the formation of syncretic Islam in China by Hui scholars in southeastern China (from the 16th to the late 19th centuries)

For a couple of centuries following the state-enforced Sinicization of Muslims, Islam in China was facing a crisis, as the number of Muslims who mastered the lingua franca of Islam – Arabic or Persian – had dropped drastically. Chinese-language Islamic scholarship developed as a response to this erosion of Islamic literacy. Sino-Muslim scholars saw themselves as part of a continuous Islamic tradition in crisis which they wished to preserve and perpetuate. To make Islam applicable to their contemporary local cultural settings in China, these scholars embarked on the construction of Sino-Muslim discourses.

These scholars engaged in reinterpretation of the Qur’an using Confucius philosophy, known as the *Han Kitab* scholars (“Han” is the Chinese term which denotes “being Chinese”, whereas “Kitab” is the Arabic term for “books”). The first Chinese Muslim scholar who dedicated himself to the Sinicization of Islam and his syncretic religious thoughts was Dengzhou Hu from Weicheng, Shanxi province (the provincial capital of which was Xi’an): Hu initiated

³ Raphael Israeli, “Established Islam and Marginal Islam in China from Eclecticism to Syncretism,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Jan., 1978): 99.

private Islamic education in the late 16th century, which was later moved to occur in mosques, termed as the “scripture-hall education”. Towards the end of the Ming Dynasty (1683), Xi’an and Shanxi had become the center of Sino-Islamic education in China, and Hu’s disciples had travelled to eastern and southern Chinese provinces to develop their “scripture-hall education”, including Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces which are the target of this research.⁴

With the widespread “scripture-hall education”, another important Sino-Islamic cultural movement commenced in the early 17th century in Nanjing and Suzhou (cultural and economic centers of Jiangsu province as well as the southeastern China): the Chinese translation of Islamic classics. The first stage of this movement was pioneered by Chinese Muslim scholar Daiyu Wang (1584-1670), whose translation works focused on providing translated Islamic classics for both Muslims as well as non-Muslim Chinese.⁵ The second stage was also the climax of this movement, represented by Zhi Liu (1655 – 1745), who demonstrated through his translation that Chinese Muslims should have a duality of loyalty, swearing their allegiance both to the non-Muslim, secular Chinese emperors, and the God in Islam.⁶ At this stage, Sino – Islamic scholarship emphasized the mutual inclusiveness of Islam and Confucianism, which served as the foundation of their belief system.

The political construction of Hui Muslims as an ethnic minority group in China in the 1950s

After the establishment of People’s Republic of China in 1949, the government launched a program to officially classify 56 different ethnic groups in China. Constituting more than 92

⁴ Shoujiang Mi, Jia You, and Min Chang, *Zhongguo yisilan jiao* [Islam in China], Beijing: China International Press, 2004: 60.

⁵ Ibid., 65.

⁶ Ibid., 66.

percent of the population, Han Chinese was the ethnic majority in China. Among the 55 ethnic minority groups, there are 10 minority groups were all considered as Muslims in China. “Hui”, a term referring to Han Chinese who practiced Islam before 1949, was used to name the only Muslim ethnic group in China which has Mandarin as their mother language. Hui people, especially those living in southeastern China, are more culturally close to the majority Han Chinese than their Muslim counterparts in other ethnic groups such as the Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

The pause in religious practices in the 1960s and 1970s

In the 1960s and 1970s, religious practices were banned completely in China under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. Mosques, along with other temples and monasteries, were abandoned or demolished. For Hui people born and grown up during this period, there was a complete absence of their predecessors’ religious tradition.

Religious practices resumed in the late 1980s and the identity crisis

Religious practices resumed in China after the Cultural Revolution ended in late 1970s, although they have been closely monitored under government control. Renovation of mosques began in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and new mosques have been built in places with rise in Muslim population.

Starting in 1979, the Chinese government began a series of economic reforms and opened up to foreign investments and international trade. With rapid urbanization, there was also a large-scale demolition of old districts to make way for the construction of new city centers. Residents moved from state-controlled housing to commercial housing erected in new neighborhoods. Old urban districts used to have Muslim aggregations for centuries, where Hui Muslim communities

lived in close proximity to mosques. With the demolition of old residential districts, Hui Muslims were displaced across the city. This leads to the symbolic and psychological destruction of the social fabric of families and neighborhoods.

This thesis concerns about contemporary mosques built in the three provinces in southeastern China (Jiangsu Province, Shanghai, and Zhejiang Province) because the historical development of Hui Muslim population in this region closely follows the trajectory mentioned above. This group of Muslims, as well as the Muslims in Shanxi Province (including Xi'an) are mostly close in culture to the majority Han Chinese due to the proliferation of Sino-Islamic scholarships historically in these regions. Muslims in other regions in China, such as the Uyghurs and Kazakhs in northwestern China, have undergone drastically different processes of social construction as compared to Hui Muslims in southeastern China, so they are not within the scope of discussion in this thesis.

1.2 Definition of Mosque Architecture

The core of Islam constitutes of five Pillars, at the center of which is the First Pillar, the *shahada*, referring to the principal creed that declares the belief in monotheism and Muhammad's prophethood. Surrounding this central Pillar, the rest four Pillars are *salat* (prayer), *siyam* (fasting), *zakat* (donation to the impoverished), and *hajj* (pilgrimage), obligations to be performed by Muslims. Of the five Pillars, the Second (prayer) and the Fifth (pilgrimage) are related to the use and design of architectural space. While the pilgrimage to the holiest site of Islam terminates at the Masjid al-Haram in Mecca which hosts the Ka'ba shrine, prayer of

Muslims across the world could take place in various types of space. This section concerns about necessary liturgical requirements for prayer in the public space.

A thorough definition of the mosque as an architectural type seems to be elusive. In terms of function, there are a variety of mosque types, such as the collegiate mosque (*madrassa*), the monastic mosque (*khanqah*), and the “tomb” or memorial mosque, but this thesis investigates the mosque type for congregational prayer only. Yaqub Zaki classifies the prayer space into three levels depending on the number of Muslims attending the prayer: the individual, the congregation, and the total population of a town, and each level requires a distinct liturgical structure⁷. A mosque used for daily prayers by individuals or small groups is called the *masjid*, and it has a *mihrab* (a niche marking the direction of prayer) but no *minbar* (a pulpit for the *imam*); a congregational or Friday mosque is called the *jami*; which is much larger than a *masjid* and has a *minbar* in the prayer hall; The mosque for the assembly of the entire population of a city is the *idgah*, which is a large open space designated for prayer, with only the qibla wall and the *mihrab*⁸. While each type of mosque has different liturgical requirements, there are also variations in architectural components within each type in different parts of the world. This paper concerns chiefly about the congregational or Friday mosques (the *jami*).

Reduced to the essence, the mosque is nothing more than a wall placed at the correct angle to the qibla axis indicating the direction of prayer towards the Ka’ba in Mecca. As Zaki clearly states, “a mosque is a building erected around a single horizontal axis, the qibla, which passes invisibly down the middle off the floor, and, issuing from the far wall, terminates

⁷ Yaqub Zaki, “Allah and Eternity: Mosques, Madrasas, and Tombs”, *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2002:18.

⁸ Zaki, 19.

eventually in Mecca.”⁹ The liturgical axis is made visible through the mihrab, the directional niche at the center of the far wall of the prayer hall where the qibla axis intersects with the wall. The mihrab is usually modelled after the Roman niche, having a semicircular plan and a semicircular arched top. Situated at the climax of the qibla axis, the mihrab is usually the object of extensive ornamentation. However, the mihrab is not regarded as sacred¹⁰, unlike the altar in a Christian church, it is the direction of prayer and the qibla axis marked by the presence of the mihrab that is the liturgically essential feature of a mosque.

The direction of prayer towards the Ka’ba in Mecca is sacrosanct as it is the holiest sacred space of Islam¹¹. Before the conquest of Mecca by the Muslim army in 630, the Ka’ba was a polytheistic temple held sacred by the late antique Arabia. After the conquest of his hometown, Prophet Muhammed paid homage to the Ka’ba and erased symbols of polytheism in the building. Mattia Guidetti, from a socio-anthropological perspective, interprets the Islamization of the Ka’ba as the construction of “the topographical sacred center of their religious system” by early Muslims¹². From a Qur’anic perspective, the inherent sacredness of the Ka’ba lies in its link with prophet Abraham, who is “the first monotheist, builder of the Ka’ba, and destroyer of the idols worshipped by his contemporaries” as described in the Qur’an¹³. Muhammed’s restoration of the Ka’ba from idolatry and polytheism to monotheism fulfilled his role as the “restorer” of the true religion of Abraham. With its consecration connected to the call for the oneness of God, which is the essence of the religion, the Ka’ba was chosen as the religious center towards which all the other mosques around the world are oriented.

⁹ Zaki, 33.

¹⁰ Martin Frishman, “Islam and the Form of the Mosque”, *The Mosque*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1994: 35.

¹¹ Mattia Guidetti, “Sacred Spaces in Early Islam”, *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2017:134.

¹² Guidetti, 134.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 132.

As stated by Guidetti, this process helped to establish “a sociopolitical unity”¹⁴ of the *umma*, the worldwide community of Muslims tied together by Islam. Qibla axes of all the mosques in the *umma* converge on a point – Ka’ba at the center of Mecca, as the *axis mundi* of Islamic cosmology.

There are ancillary architectural components required for Islamic worship. The minaret is a tower from which the muezzin stands high on the balcony and chants the *adhan*, the summons to prayer. It is said that the first minaret was developed from the corner tower of the Church of St. John the Baptist of Damascus, although the Islamic tower was much slender than its Christian model sturdily built to bear the weight of the bells¹⁵. In the pre-electronic days without the loudspeaker, it was the muezzin’s *adhan* that drew the community to the compulsory attendance of congregational prayers at noon on Fridays. In the modern times, however, the minaret has gradually transformed into a symbol of the mosque rather a functional feature.

There are features required for worship which demarcate the transition between the exterior and interior space in a mosque. The worship has to be physically clean to attend the prayer, so ablution is necessary before one enters areas of ritual purity. Running water is mandated for ablution¹⁶. There is usually a courtyard ablution fountain and supplementary ablution facilities, where worshippers wash prescribed parts of the body to achieve a status of purity before starting the prayer. Another barrier with a similar purpose stand at the entrance of the prayer hall: one has to take off the footwear and place them on racks, or against the walls, or

¹⁴ Ibid., 134.

¹⁵ Zaki, “Allah and Eternity”, 34.

¹⁶ Ibid., 35.

in wooden troughs on the floor¹⁷, before entering the sanctuary. It prevents contaminating the floor covered by carpets with impure substances brought in from outside the mosque.

A set of liturgical furniture placed at specific locations inside the prayer hall is required to facilitate the congregational prayer. As mentioned earlier, the principal feature of the mosque architecture is the mihrab, a niche which is at the intersection of the qibla (back wall) of the prayer hall and the invisible axis indicating the prayer direction. However the mihrab varies in form, it is an omnipresent feature readily visible in the prayer hall of every mosque, be it a masjid for daily prayer or a *jami'* for congregational prayer. It is the inclusion of a sermon that mainly distinguishes Friday service from the daily prayer. As the sermon involves an *imam khatib* (preaching imam) as the prayer-leader, the masjid has the minbar, a pulpit to the right of the mihrab from which the imam could address the congregation. Functionally the minbar serves as an acoustic elevation whereas symbolically represents delegated religious authority. The imam always preaches from one step lower from the top of the pulpit, as it is suggested that the top space is left empty to represent the absent Prophet¹⁸. Many mosques have the *kursi* (lectern) placed at about the middle of the prayer space. It is a platform with the cantor kneeling towards the *qibla* wall, which holds a gigantic lectionary type of Qur'an. Right beside the *kursi* and along the *qibla* axis is the *dikka*, a piece of liturgical furniture which used to be common before the advent of loudspeakers but are now mostly in desuetude¹⁹. It is a platform for respondents who acted as human amplifiers who transmitted the imam's liturgy to the ranks behind, where the imam is neither visible nor audible. Another important piece of furniture in the prayer hall is the prayer-rug for worshippers to perform prostration.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Zaki, "Allah and Eternity", 36.

¹⁹ Ibid., 37.

While the dome is a prominent feature of Islamic architecture, it is of minor liturgical significance²⁰. Domes of various types had long been a common structure employed in architecture across the world in the pre-Islamic ages. The earliest remaining example, and probably the first use of dome in mosque architecture is the Prophet's Mosque in Medina rebuilt by the Umayyad caliph al-Walid²¹, with a dome covers the spot where the Prophet Muhammed used to preach. Oleg Grabar believes that initially, the domed space in front of the mihrab bore royal connotations, serving to emphasize the presence of the ruler²², as the caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty, the first Islamic empire after the Prophet, were both the political and the religious leader of the empire, and they led congregational prayers in the mosque. Over the course of time, the dome eventually acquires a role as the focal point of the mosque complex, and decorative values, as well as a symbolic indication of the direction of the prayer²³. Despite its prominence in mosque architecture, however, the dome is never a standard requirement of the mosque, unlike the mihrab which serves as the essential liturgical component of a mosque.

1.3 Definition of the Autochthonous Type

This section refers to terms developed by postmodernist theories of critical regionalism and typology as the conceptual foundation for defining the Great Mosque of Xi'an as an autochthonous type of Chinese mosque in later chapters.

The term "autochthonous" appeared in the essay "The Grid and the Pathway" written by architecture theorists Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre in 1981, in which they coined the

²⁰ Zaki, 34. Oleg Grabar, "The Islamic Dome: Some Considerations": 195.

²¹ Oleg Grabar, 194.

²² Ibid., 195.

²³ Ibid.

concept “Critical Regionalism”.²⁴ As Tzonis and Lefaivre put it, regionalist ideals in Greece celebrated the classical orders of Greek architecture for the “autochthonous values”. The term “autochthons”, according to Oxford English Dictionary, has Latin and Greek origins, meaning “a person indigenous to a particular country or region and traditionally supposed to have been born out of the earth, or to have descended from ancestors born in this way”.²⁵ The theory of critical regionalism was later developed by Kenneth Frampton. Frampton seeks to mediate between the global international style propelled by the Modern Movement and the preindustrial local languages of architecture; he calls for a critical regionalist architecture grounded in modernist tradition while at the same time tied to its geographical and cultural context.²⁶ While this thesis does not directly discuss critical regionalism, it does investigate the tension between the preference for international styles and vernacular architectural traditions in mosque building. I would thus use the term “autochthonous” to describe the Great Mosque of Xi’an as an architectural work rooted in Chinese socio-historical contexts.

This thesis also entails a discussion of the architectural type. Typology as an architectural concept first formulated by the eighteenth-century rationalist Abbé Laugier, who founded the “First Typology” on the basis of the rational order of nature, proposing that the model of the primitive hut could be the natural basis for design.²⁷ Architecture theorists in later centuries further developed theories of typology which responded to the Modern Movement and postmodernist movement. In 1966, Alan Colquhoun calls for revisiting the typology of past

²⁴ Alexander Tzonis, and Liane Lefaivre. "The grid and the pathway," *Times of Creative Destruction: Shaping Buildings and Cities in the late C20th* (London: Routledge, 2018): 123.

²⁵ Oxford English Dictionary Online, 2021. <https://www-oed-com.libproxy.wustl.edu/view/Entry/13384#eid32774443>

²⁶ Kenneth Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance,” 1983, republished by *OASE Journal* (nai010 publishers, 2019).

²⁷ Anthony Vidler, “The Third Typology,” *Oppositions* 7, 1976:1.

design solutions in his essay “Typology and Design Method”.²⁸ In his critical review of the Modern Movement, Colquhoun claims that a vacuum exists in the form-making process, as modern functionalists insisted on the use of analytical methods and design and abandoned traditional models emphasized until the nineteenth century.²⁹ Believing in an “onomatopoeic relationship” between forms and their associated meanings, Colquhoun claims that “it is necessary to postulate a conventional system embodied in typological problem-solution complexes”.³⁰ Based on Colquhoun’s theory, I will argue in later chapters that the Great Mosque of Xi’an should be referred to as an established type of mosque architecture China. It offers a coherent set of forms adapted from traditional Chinese timber-frame architecture and courtyard-style complexes, establishing a system of representation which manifests Chinese Hui Muslims’ historical heritage and cultural identities. Certainly, the Great Mosque of Xi’an is not an architectural model to be copied unthinkingly in the contemporary context, but its forms and associated significance could be adapted to the needs of the present. Rather than picking out fragments of superficial formal similarities from mosque existing antecedently in distant Islamic cultures, new mosque architecture in China should draw typological analogies from the autochthonous type exemplified by the Great Mosque of Xi’an.

²⁸ Alan Colquhoun, “Typology and Design Method,” Essay. In *Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change*, (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1981):43.

²⁹ Colquhoun, “Typology and Design Method,” 49.

³⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 2: Questioning Context and Identity: Constructing New Mosques for Hui Muslims in Southeastern China

After being prohibited for about three decades, religious practices in China were legalized and resumed activity in the late 1980s. Hui Muslims across China began a series of projects to renovate mosques abandoned or expropriated for other uses in the previous decades or to build new mosques for congregational prayers. This trend later coincided with China's economic reform and massive urban renewal in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which led to many old mosques in the old urban districts being demolished and relocated to newly developed urban districts. Amid this trend of constructing new mosques, there is a tendency to build a mosque in the "Arabic" style, especially in the southeastern provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai.

2.1 The General Situation

Weiyu Hu, a graduate student in architectural design at the Southeast University in Nanjing, conducted research on 11 mosques in these three provinces built or designed between 1990 and 2008 (refer to Table 1).³¹ Of the 11 mosques, ten of them are clearly identified as built in the "Arabic" style by their architects or local Muslims. These new mosques were built either to accommodate the expanding population of Muslim worshippers, or to replace historical mosques demolished for real estate development with new ones at other locations.

³¹ Weiyu Hu, "The Contemporary Design of Islamic Mosque in Jiangsu-Zhejiang and Shanghai Districts," Nanjing, China: Southeast University, 2008.

Jiangsu Province	江苏镇江市古润新礼拜寺 New Mosque of Gurun, Zhenjiang, Jiangsu designed.2005, built. 2007	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.1)
Jiangsu Province	江苏常州市清真寺 Mosque of Changzhou, Jiangsu designed.2003, built. 2006	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.2)
Jiangsu Province	江苏无锡市清真寺 Mosque of Wuxi, Jiangsu designed.1998, built. 2000	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.3)
Jiangsu Province	江苏苏州市清真寺 Mosque of Suzhou, Jiangsu built. 1995	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.4)
Zhejiang Province	浙江杭州市新清真寺 The New Mosque of Hangzhou, Zhejiang designed.2005, built. 2009	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style
Zhejiang Province	浙江义乌市清真寺 Mosque of Yiwu, Zhejiang built. 2004	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.5)
Zhejiang Province	浙江衢州市清真寺 Mosque of Quzhou, Zhejiang designed.1993, built. 1996	No prominent style (Image 2.1.6)
Shanghai	上海市沪西清真寺 Shanghai West Mosque	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.7)

	designed.1990, built. 1992	
Shanghai	上海市沪西新清真寺 New Shanghai West Mosque designed.2006, built. 2009	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.8)
Shanghai	上海市浦东清真寺 Pudong Mosque, Shanghai designed.1997, built. 1999	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.9)
Shanghai	上海市杨浦新清真寺 The New Mosque of Yangpu designed.2007, built. 2009	Self-proclaimed “Arabic” style (Image 2.1.10)

Table 1. Lists of New Mosques in Southeastern China Built in the Early 21st Century

One has to acknowledge that for these Hui Muslims and architects of the new mosques, the “Arabic” style is an umbrella term used indiscriminately to denote architectural symbols of a mosque which are readily observable and immediately associated with a presumed image of the Middle East – the origin of an “authentic” Islam. The dome, the minaret(s), and the crescent(s) are the three symbols which they assume to be the essence of a mosque. In reality, however, the aesthetic references they labelled as “Arabic” are not limited to case studies in the Arabic peninsula, but also in the Anatolia region, North Africa as well as Central Asia.

2.2 The New Mosque of Hangzhou

The New Mosque of Hangzhou was designed in 2005 and constructed in 2012, located in a newly developed urban district in the east of Hangzhou. Urban grids in this region are irregular and fragmented due to the confluence of two river systems (Image 2.2.1). To the east of the site

is the Qiantang River which runs all the way east to the Pacific Ocean at the Bay of Hangzhou. To the west runs the Jing-Hang Grand Canal. Running from Beijing in northern China and ending in Hangzhou in southeastern China, this grand canal reached its current massive scale in the Tang Dynasty, connecting the Yellow River, the Yangtze River, and the Qiantang River. It had facilitated economic and cultural communication between northern and southern China for more than a thousand years before the advent of the modern age. To the north side of the site rests the Hangzhou East Railway Station, with four high-speed railway lines extending southwards across the Qiantang River. This contemporary transportation artillery intersects with the two river systems near the site of the mosque.

The new mosque was built in 2012 to accommodate the expanding Muslim population in Hangzhou. By the start of the 21st century, there were about 4,000 local Hui Muslims in Hangzhou. The number of immigrant Hui Muslims from northwestern China, however, had exceeded 16,000. The newly arrived Hui Muslims in Hangzhou mostly come from the Qinghai province, a multiethnic region to the south of Xinjiang and to the north of Tibet. This is a common trend in China where people from inland western China migrate to southeastern China, with far more developed economy and greater demand for human resources. With the drastic increase in the number of Muslims attending congregational prayers, the old historical mosque in Hangzhou could no longer accommodate massive prayers at important Islamic festivals. During the *Eid al-Fitr*, the festival of fast breaking, for instance, there were about three thousand Muslims attending the congregational prayer, and most worshippers had to do prostration on the street outside the old mosque due to the limited space available. To provide sufficient prayer space for Muslims in Hangzhou, the municipal government authorized the construction of a new mosque and designated a plot of land for the Islamic Society of Hangzhou. The project, designed

to accommodate about two thousand worshippers at a time, was funded by both the government and the Islamic Society at an estimation of 50 million RMB (7.75 million USD).³²

The New Mosque of Hangzhou is a six-story building with a hexagonal plan (Image 2.2.2). The plan is symmetrical about a central axis in the east-west direction, with the entry space at the east end and the main building located at the west. Extending from the main building are two wings, one at the north and the other at the south, which embrace a courtyard in the center of the complex. Two twin minarets are towering above the complex at both sides of the main gate (Image 2.2.3). Right opposite the gate at the other end of the courtyard is the main building of an octagonal plan. There are two prayer halls in this building: the main prayer hall is a double-height space located on the second floor, whereas the secondary prayer hall is another double-height space located on the fifth floor. There are three tiers of domes decorating the top of the complex (Image 2.2.4). The main building is crowned by a huge dome above its center, with four smaller domes surrounding the central dome at a lower height. Each of the two wing buildings, which are one floor lower than the main building, has a small dome at the center of its rooftop. The complex is built with reinforced concrete covered by light-yellow stone panels, whereas the ribbed domes are covered by bronze tiles glittering under the sun.

It is likely that the architectural composition of this mosque complex is modelled after the Ottoman imperial style. The typical imperial mosque built in the classical period of the Ottoman architecture, such as the Suleymaniye mosque complex in Istanbul (Image 2.2.5), which is known for the centralization of the colossal pendentive dome and stratified massing of spatial volumes. The central masonry dome rests on pendentives carried by piers, which is a delicate transition from a circular to a square plan. From the exterior, the main dome is flanked by a

³² Hu, "Contemporary Design of Mosque," 123.

pyramidal cascade of half domes and small domed volumes arranged on stepped platforms. The new mosque in Hangzhou, according to the sectional drawing, only referred to the spatial hierarchy of the Ottoman mosques, but not the structural system integrated in the massing.

Other conspicuous architectural components of this mosque are also arguably derived from iconographic references in the Middle East. The shape of the central dome is likely a combination of the Fatimid dome in Egypt (Image 2.2.6) and the Mughal dome (Image 2.2.7) in South Asia, resembling an onion-shaped dome than a half-dome. The golden color of the dome is likely paying tribute to the Dome of Rock in Jerusalem built in the late 7th century (Image 2.2.8), which is the earliest existent major Islamic monument. However, the dome of the New Mosque of Hangzhou is significantly larger in proportion to the rest of the building in comparison to its potential references. The pair of minarets are three-tiered slender white towers with domed cupola, which possibly follows the design of minarets in Masjid al-Haram of Mecca, another phenomenal monument of the Islamic world.

The “Arabic” style was deliberately chosen by the Islamic Society of Hangzhou which owns the new mosque. According to the interview with an officer in charge of construction at the Islamic Society of Hangzhou, it was the Islamic Society that played the key role of decision-making in the design process³³. The Islamic Society and the architects organized field trips to Xinjiang in northwestern China as well as the Middle East, to study references for mosque design. They were exposed to mosques with modern or contemporary design in the Middle East and realized that there is no fixed form prescribed for mosque architecture as long as it fulfills the few liturgical requirements. With this understanding, however, the Islamic Society decided to have a mosque in the “Arabic” style. Dongrong Ding, the chief architect of this mosque design

³³ Hu, “Contemporary Design of Mosque,” 125.

from the Institute of Architectural Design in Hangzhou, stated in an interview that the “Arabic” iconography was chosen to obtain approval from the Islamic Society as well as the local Muslim communities, since the “Arabic” style entails symbols with a culturally centripetal force³⁴. Ding resignedly pointed out that while his team, as contemporary architects, should interpret tradition with a contemporary architectural language, they had to make a compromise to their clients’ preferences.

³⁴ Hu, “Contemporary Design of Mosque,” 126.

Chapter 2 Images

Image 2.1.1: New Mosque of Gurun, Zhenjiang, Jiangsu

Source: Weiyu Hu, “The Contemporary Design of Islamic Mosque in Jiangsu-Zhejiang and Shanghai Districts,” (Nanjing, China: Southeast University, 2008):108. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.2: Mosque of Changzhou, Jiangsu

Source: Hu, 112. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.3: Mosque of Wuxi, Jiangsu

Source: Hu, 116. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.4: Mosque of Suzhou, Jiangsu

Source: Hu, 120. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.5: Mosque of Yiwu, Zhejiang

Source: Hu, 130. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.6: Mosque of Quzhou, Zhejiang

Source: Hu, 134. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.7: West Shanghai Mosque, Shanghai

Source: Hu, 139. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.8: The New Mosque of West Shanghai, Shanghai

Source: Hu, 143. Rendering by the Architectural Design Institute of East China.



Image 2.1.9: Pudong Mosque, Shanghai

Source: Hu, 146. Photo by Weiyu Hu.



Image 2.1.10: The New Mosque of Yangpu, Shanghai

Source: Hu, 150. Rendering by the Urban Architecture Design Institute of Shanghai .



Image 2.2.1: Urban context, the New Mosque of Hangzhou

Source: Baidu Map. Annotation by Yutong Ma.



Image 2.2.2: Plans and Sections, the New Mosque of Hangzhou

Source: Weiyu Hu, "The Contemporary Design of Islamic Mosque in Jiangsu-Zhejiang and Shanghai Districts," (Nanjing, China: Southeast University, 2008):124.

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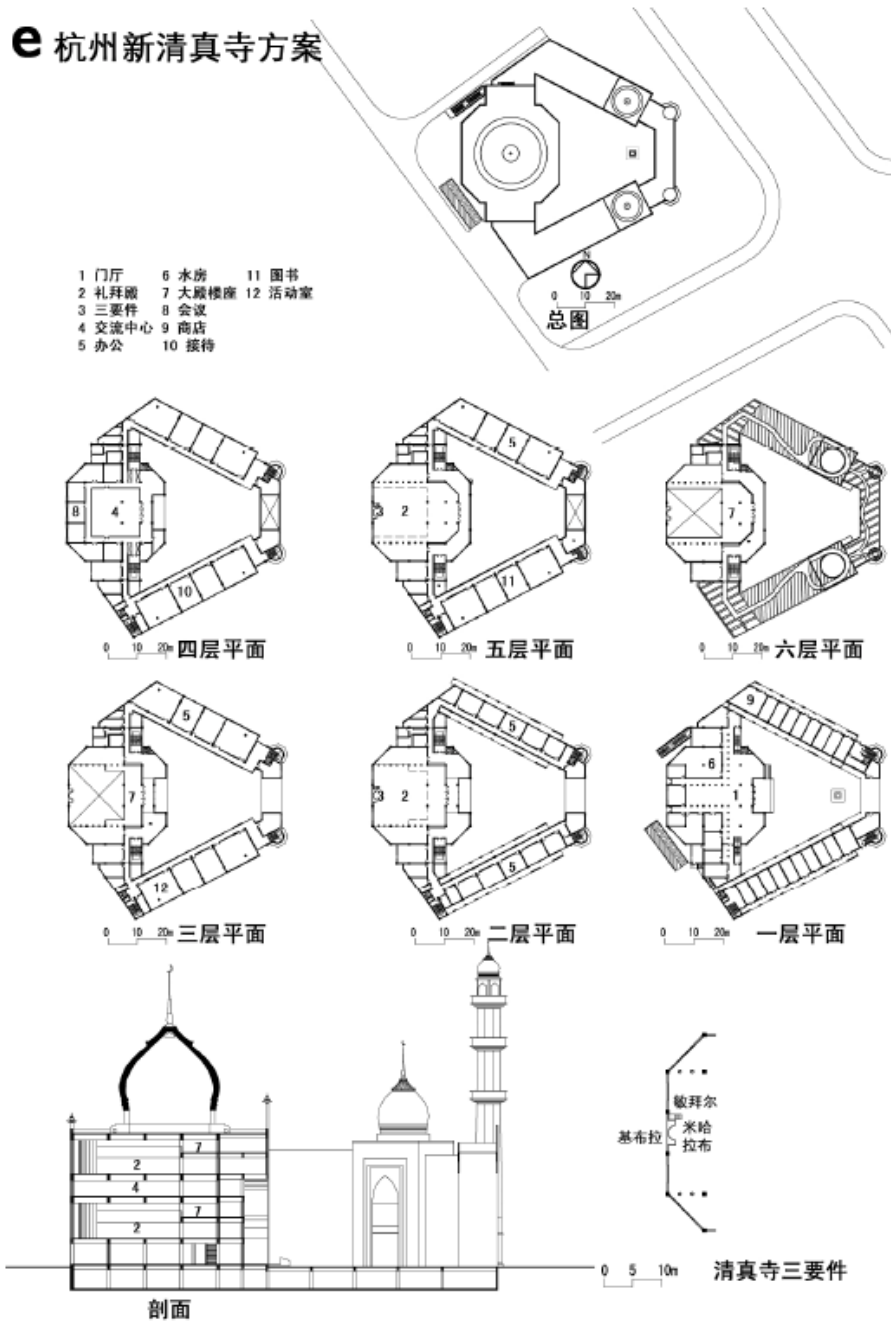


Image 2.2.3 Aerial View, the New Mosque of Hangzhou

Source: <https://www.bing.com/images/blob?bcid=SFIw.7erj5wD5w>



Image 2.2.4 Rendering, the New Mosque of Hangzhou

Source: <https://www.bing.com/images/blob?bcid=SM9Z4w2nD5wDTw>



Image 2.2.5: Section, Süleymaniye Mosque Complex, Turkey
Source: Kaitlyn Nichols, and Laylah Roberts, "Süleymaniye Mosque," drawing, Department of Art History, Florida State University, 2019. <https://arthistory.fsu.edu/ottoman14/>

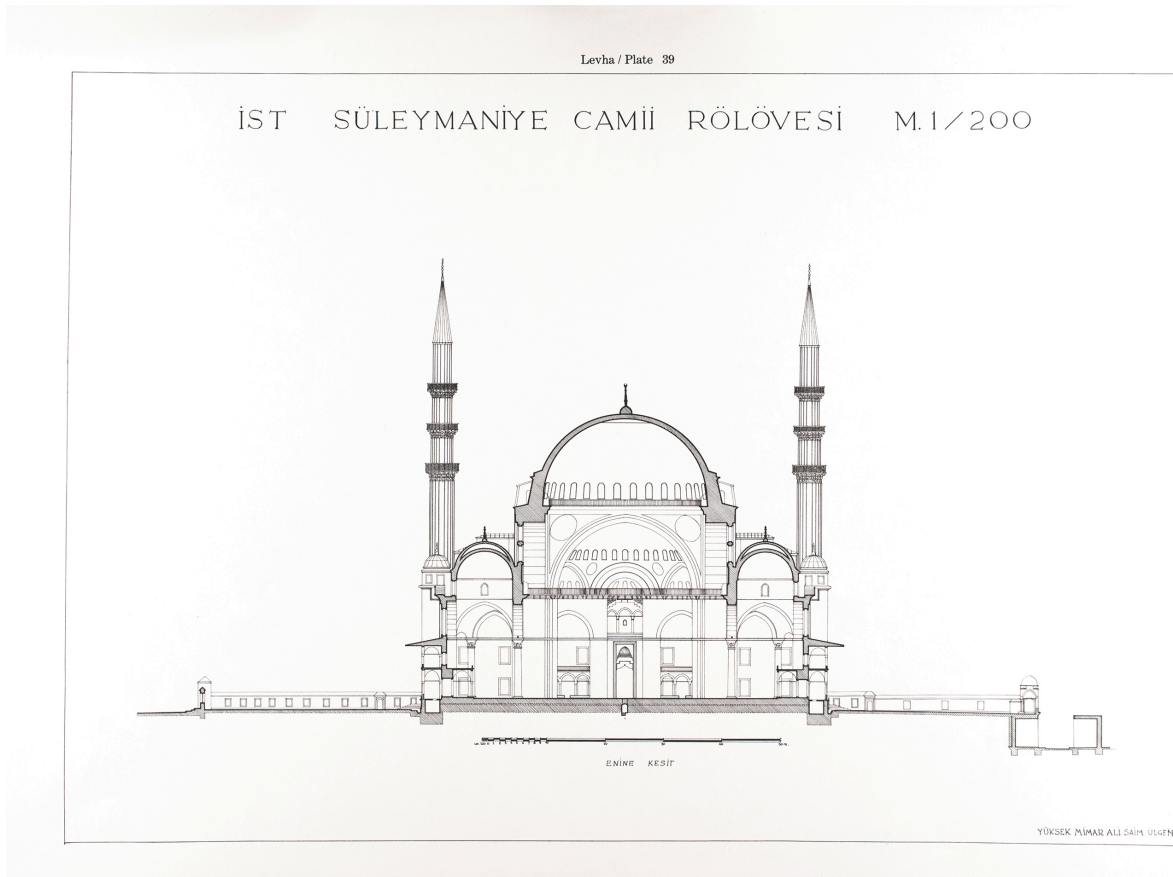


Image 2.2.6: Al-Azhar Mosque, Cairo, Egypt

Source: Photo by Daniel Mayer.

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b1/Cairo - Islamic district - Al Azhar Mosque and University.JPG/1024px-Cairo - Islamic district - Al Azhar Mosque and University.JPG](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b1/Cairo_-_Islamic_district_-_Al_Azhar_Mosque_and_University.JPG/1024px-Cairo_-_Islamic_district_-_Al_Azhar_Mosque_and_University.JPG)



Image 2.2.7: Badshahi Mosque, Lahore, Pakistan

Source: Archnet. <https://www.archnet.org/sites/2741>



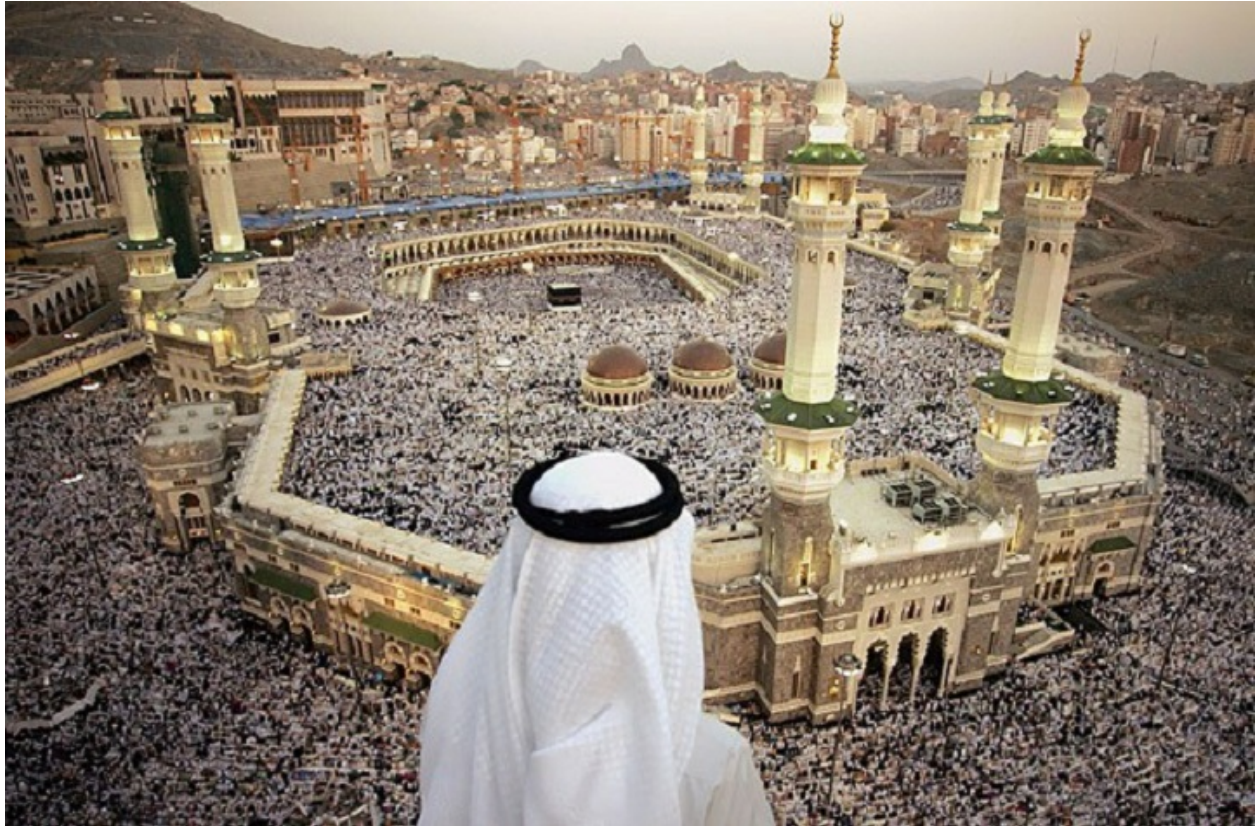
Image 2.2.8: Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem

Source: https://library-artstor-org.libproxy.wustl.edu/asset/SCALA_ARCHIVES_10310474882.



Image 2.2.8: Minarets of the Ka'ba, Mecca

Source: <https://thelajme.co/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/mecca-islam.01.01.jpg>



Chapter 3: The “Autochthonous” Type: The Great Mosque of Xi’an

This chapter investigates the architectural design of the Great Mosque of Xi’an. My analysis begins with the historical and urban contexts of the mosque, followed by a visual description of its design. In this chapter, I argue that this mosque is an autochthonous architecture which also fulfills the liturgical requirements of a mosque.

3.1 Historical and Urban Contexts

The Great Mosque of Xi’an, also known as the Mosque of Huajue Lane (“Huajue” literally means “purifying senses”), was built in 1392, commissioned by the Emperor Hongwu (r. 1368-1398), the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644). Its construction was amidst a greater socio-anthropological transition in which Sinicization of Muslims in China was enforced by the newly established imperial government of the Ming Dynasty (see section 1.1). In 1388, four years before the construction of the Great Mosque of Xi’an, Emperor Hongwu first commissioned a grand mosque named Jingjue (literally meaning “cleaning senses”) in the imperial capital Yingtian (now Nanjing, the provincial capital of Jiangsu in southeastern China), which is the earliest royal-commissioned mosque in China by historical records. Although the Jingjue Mosque only has its main prayer hall remained now, the Great Mosque of Xi’an stays intact today through a series of restoration in the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Xi’an is one of the most important cities in China which had served as the capital for many dynasties before the Ming Dynasty and is home to a large Muslim population then and now. Muslim merchants from the Arabic lands and Persia travelled eastwards along the Silk Roads and arrived in Chang’an (the ancient name of Xi’an) as early as in the seventh century,

which was then the capital city of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). The urban landscape of Xi'an at that time had an orthogonal layout and a grid system called *lifangzhi*, or ward system (Image 3.1.1). Since the Warring States (475 B.C.), residential districts in ward-system cities were rectangular wards ("*lifang*" stands for each grid) surrounded by short walls, with gates on four sides that had designated opening and closing hours.³⁵ Xi'an in the Tang Dynasty was divided by long avenues into 110 wards, with a walled palace-city located at north center of the city³⁶. In the Tang Dynasty, foreign Muslim merchants' interaction with the Chinese mostly occurred within the East Market and the West Market, the only two ward-blocks designated for commercial purposes. They lived within extra-territorial districts sanctioned by the imperial governments called *fan-fang* (foreign districts) and conducted their lives according to the implementation of Sharia. Architecture historians usually call this period as the emergent period of Islamic architecture in China³⁷, as foreign Muslims brought styles from the central Muslim world into China when constructing their mosques.

With the vicissitudes of time, the size of Xi'an city had decreased drastically when the Great Mosque of Xi'an was built in 1392 (Image 3.1.3), with the outer wall shrinking from 36.7 kilometers in the Tang Dynasty to 13.74 kilometers when it was reconstructed in the Ming Dynasty in the 1370s. The city of Ming Xi'an was only slightly larger than the imperial-city within the outer city of Tang Chang'an, and the site of the Great Mosque of Xi'an fell within the imperial-city of Tang Chang'an. It is also not far away from where the East Market or the West Market was during the Tang Dynasty, which were centers of activities historically for Muslims. While the rigid ward-system had ended in the eleventh century, Ming Xi'an still had an

³⁵ Fu, Steinhardt, *Chinese Traditional Architecture*, 1984: 15.

³⁶ Steinhardt, *Chinese Architecture*, 2019: 105.

³⁷ Martin Frishman et al., *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development & Regional Diversity* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 210.

orthogonal urban layout (Image 3.1.2), consisting of rectangular blocks of varying sizes. The rectangular complex of the Mosque fit neatly into the urban fabric of Ming Xi'an.

Today, contemporary Xi'an has expanded far beyond the limits of the historical city wall built in the Ming Dynasty (Image 3.1.3). The neighborhoods surrounding the Mosque are now considered as the historical urban center, filled with high-density residential blocks and commercial blocks (Image 3.1.4). Populated mainly by Hui Muslims, this area is named the "Hui Muslim Streets" and crowded with tens of thousands of tourists everyday who come to taste halal food and experience the culture and history of Hui Muslims in Xi'an. A sharp contrast to the hustle and bustle in its dense surroundings, the mosque complex is quiet and full of greenery. One could only approach the mosque from a meandering lane leading to the northeast corner of the walled complex, without getting a full picture of its exterior view (Image 3.1.5).

3.2 Visual Description

From a bird's-eye view, the mosque occupies a rectangular site of 47.56 meters by 245.68 meters,³⁸ with seven consecutive courtyards of varying sizes arranged along a central axis in the east-west direction. There are more than twenty halls and pavilions in the complex (Image 3.2.1 and Image 3.2.2).

One enters complex from the main entrance at the northwest corner, which is not located along the central axis. As the smallest courtyard in the complex, the first courtyard serves as a formal space of entrance. The eastern wall of the entry is marked by a wide screen wall at its center, known as *zhaobi*, built by gray bricks carved with floral patterns in three diamond-shaped

³⁸ Jinqiu Zhang, "Art and Architecture of the Xi'an Mosque at Huajuexiang," *Jianzhu xuebao* [Architecture Journal] no.10,1981: 70.

frames. Standing at the center of the first courtyard is a nine-meter-high wooden gateway, known as *pailou*. This structure has its four red wood columns buttressed by wood props and anchored upon gray stone bases. On top of the capitals, multiple layers of carved *dougong* brackets support a roof with blue-glazed tiles.

Passing by a shallow roofed pavilion, one comes to the second courtyard. There is a three-bay stone *pailou* that resembles its wooden counterpart in the first courtyard. Following the *pailou*, there are two freestanding brick pavilions decorated with floral motifs and crowned with tiled roofs. One can read the stone stele with Arabic inscriptions in each pavilion.

Passing by another roofed pavilion, one makes the way into the third courtyard. Two avenues appear symmetrically about the central route, one on the north side and one on the south. The tallest structure of this complex stands at the center of the central avenue: a tower named “Tower for Introspection”. Bearing the form of a Chinese pagoda, the 10-meter-tall octagonal tower has three stories, each separated by eaves covered by blue-glazed tiles and ridges decorated by dragon heads. Located along the north and south walls of the third courtyards are service buildings, including Imams’ quarters and ablutions rooms.

The three avenues in the third courtyard lead all the way to the fourth courtyard. Passing by three connected marble gates with wooden doors that mark the boundary between the two courtyards, one enters into the largest courtyard in this complex. It is the Phoenix Pavilion that first enters one’s view. The hexagonal structure with its roofline resembling a phoenix with its outstretched wings blocks one’s direct view to the prayer hall at the western end of the courtyard. Passing by a platform behind the pavilion, one finally faces the focus of this mosque, the prayer

hall. Behind the prayer hall is the fifth courtyard where one can join the ceremonial viewing of the new moon on two constructed hills.

The prayer hall is raised upon a platform called *yuetai*. The hall is comprised of an open portico and three sub-halls. The first two sections are joined structurally in parallel and a smaller hall, which is the qibla bay, project perpendicularly towards the west, with the roof of each section structurally connected. Entering the hall, one can look up to the ceiling of the hall decorated with six hundred poly-chromatic panels of floral motifs and carved brackets. The first two sections of the hall are seven bays in length and four bays in depth, divided by cylindrical columns painted in crimson, where blue scrolls bearing Arabic calligraphy are hung. Two skylights light up the qibla bay, showing carved arabesques and calligraphy on the pointed arch of the two-meter-tall mihrab, which is the niche indicating the direction of prayer.

3.3 Attributes Recognizable as Chinese Architecture

This section explains how the Xi'an mosque adopts a system of Chinese architectural language. In terms of layout, the mosque is a traditional Chinese courtyard-style complex. In terms of architectural design, buildings in the mosque complex are built with Chinese timber-frame structure and strictly follows the hierarchy of traditional Chinese architecture.

The courtyard-style layout

The layout of the mosque complex follows the long-established plan of Chinese courtyard architecture, characterized by a succession of rectangular courtyards along a long central axis and axially symmetrical arrangements of buildings. Chinese courtyard architecture

can be as small as a one-courtyard house for commoners and as big as complexes of multiple courtyards as seen in imperial palaces, governmental offices, and monasteries. Most courtyard-complexes are north-south oriented, with main building situated at center-north along the central axis, facing the south. On the eastern and western sides of the courtyard are the wing buildings of lesser importance, and along the southern side of the complex is the main gate facing the street. Such spatial arrangements with buildings situated within walled courtyards determine that the view from outside is obstructed. As the most important building is shielded by layers of courtyards, ancillary buildings, and gates, one has to walk through a long prelude to reach the climax, the building of the highest rank in this complex. For the Great Mosque of Xi'an, unlike most north-south oriented Chinese courtyard-complexes, it is east-west oriented to fulfill the requirements of Islamic worship (to be explained in section 3.4). However, it still adopts the spatial settings of Chinese courtyard architecture to create a procession which highlights the superior rank of the prayer hall of the mosque. One passes the gate of each courtyard that signifies the approach to the worship hall. The promenade leading to the worship hall is rhythmic, as one passes through courtyards of different sizes and transitions, constructions of varied forms and scales (Image 3.3.1). When one sees the prayer hall elevated on a large platform, one reaches the climax of this melody.

Compared with earlier mosques in China built before it, the Great Mosque of Xi'an is the earliest existing mosque with such an extensive court-yard layout³⁹. Huaisheng Mosque is the oldest extant mosque in China. Recorded to be present as early as in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the current plan (Image 3.3.2) was formed in a rebuilding in 1350, during the Mongols' reign. The plan of Huaisheng has one courtyard with a north-south axis and a prayer hall facing

³⁹ Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt, *China's Early Mosques* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2015): 34-108.

westwards with an entrance on the east. As the prayer hall does not align with the central axis, one's procession to the worship space is discontinued. One walks towards north from the first gate and is forced to turn right before entering the prayer hall. In comparison, designers of the Great Mosque of Xi'an shifted the direction of central axis in traditional Chinese monasteries from north-south to east-west but still arrange major buildings along the central axis. This allows an uninterrupted processional experience for worshippers, from the first gate at the east end all the way to the main worship hall at the west end. Other earlier mosques in China do not have a central axis, as evident in Shengyou Mosque of Quanzhou (Image 3.3.3), which was initially built in 1009-10 and has a current plan from a reconstruction in 1310, and Xianhe Mosque of Yangzhou (Image 3.3.4), built in 1275 – 76 under the reign of Mongols' Yuan Dynasty (1271 – 1368). The person in charge of the renovation of Shengyou Mosque in 1310 was from Shiraz, in Il Khanate Iran, whereas Xianhe Mosque is said to be designed by a cleric from West Asia named Puhaoding, a sixteenth-generation descendant of Muhammed. Builders of Islam origins introduced features of Islamic architecture in West Asia to these mosques in China. Unlike these mosques before the Ming Dynasty, which were built on lands bought by Muslims from the imperial governments, the Great Mosque of Xi'an was a royal-decreed project on a designated plot of land, which provides abundant space to accommodate such a long plan.

Following the Hierarchical System of Chinese Timber-Frame Architecture

The main prayer hall fits into the hierarchy of China's timber-frame architecture, in terms of the column grid which determines its scale in accordance with the socio-political status of the mosque. The longitudinal dimension of a hall, determined by numbers of *kaijian* (bay, the space

between two columns), is one of the most important indicators of hierarchy in Chinese architecture. Kaijian is always in an odd number from three as the lowest to eleven as the highest, as columns are always in an even number.⁴⁰ The main prayer hall in the Great Mosque of Xi'an has seven bays which forms a longitudinal dimension of 32.95 meters (Image 3.3.5).⁴¹ Seven bays are the third highest in ranking, as halls of nine bays and eleven bays are exclusively used for imperial architecture related to the emperor himself.⁴² For instance, in the imperial complex of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, also known as the Forbidden city, the main reception hall (Taihe Dian) has eleven bays, and the rear reception hall (Baohe Dian) has nine bays. It is deemed as defiance to the emperor and assured death penalty if any other institutions' or personnel's building with the number of bays exceeding seven. The Great Mosque of Xi'an has reached the highest rank of religious architecture, whereas the earlier Huaisheng Mosque and Xianhe Mosque only have five-bay halls. The fact that the Great Mosque of Xi'an, along with other religious architecture in China, has a lower rank in form than imperial architecture, sends a clear message to the emperor's subjects: they are expected to swear higher allegiance to the Chinese emperor, the secular ruler and self-proclaimed "son of Heaven", than to their God in Islamic religion, or deities in any other religions.

The roof of the main prayer hall also abides by the hierarchy of China's timber-frame architecture in line with the socio-political status of the mosque. *Yingzaofashi* [Construction Standards], a manual on the standardization of timber-frame construction published in the Song Dynasty, distinguishes four types of construction, among which *diantang* (a palatial-style hall)

⁴⁰ Sicheng Liang, *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, second printing, 1985), 20-21.

⁴¹ Zhang, "Xi'an Mosque at Huajuexiang", 73.

⁴² Liang, *A Pictorial History*, 20.

represents the highest rank of structural form.⁴³ Only reserved for China's most eminent buildings such as imperial palaces and religious complexes, *diantang* type is used for the main prayer hall. *Diantang* is characterized by its composition of three horizontal structural layers built upon each other: the first layer is the column grids, which supports the *dougong* (bracket sets) layer; the uppermost layer is the structural framework of the roof, which consists of transverse and triangular frames of posts, beams, and struts, as well as purlins and rafters (Images 3.3.6). The form of a roof is thus integrated with its structural systems.⁴⁴ In the Great Mosque of Xi'an, only the key structures along the central axis are built in the *diantang* type, whereas ancillary buildings have structures of lower ranks.

Like the number of longitudinal bays, the roof design also indicates how the prayer hall fits into the hierarchy of Chinese architecture. Each part of the composed roof has the style of gable-and-hip roof (*danyan xieshan*) (Images 3.3.7). Still, the highest rank of a roof, termed as double-eaved hip roof (*chongyan wudian*) is only used for the greatest hall of an emperor, such as the main reception hall (Taihe Dian) in the Forbidden City. Besides form, the two roofs also differ in the colors of roof tiles. Both have *liuli* glazing tiles, a distinguished type of ceramics reserved for imperial architecture and royal-commissioned projects, but the roof of the imperial hall has yellow glazing while the that of the prayer hall in the Great Mosque has blue glazing. Yellow, as the imperial color, is used exclusively for imperial and Buddhist architecture. Additionally, the blue color possibly indicates its Islamic background as this color is widely used in Islamic architecture in West and Central Asia.⁴⁵ Ranks of Chinese roofs can be distinguished by their differences in roof types (such as gable roof, gable-and-hip roof, or hip roof), the

⁴³ Xinian Fu, *Traditional Chinese Architecture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017): 254.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

number of eaves (single or double-eaved), the color and material of roof tiles, or a combination of all these indicators. With a legitimate design of roof as well as a legitimate number of longitudinal bays corresponding to its rank, the Great Mosque of Xi'an is incorporated into the stringent hierarchical systems of Chinese architecture.

3.4 Attributes Recognizable as Mosque Architecture

In this section, I analyze how the system of traditional Chinese architectural language is able to fulfill the essential requirements of mosque architecture, in terms of directionality and space.

The Directionality of the Mosque

The axial arrangement of buildings fulfills the most important architectural requirement for mosque architecture – Qibla – as the axis extends from the east to the west, with the main prayer hall located on the west end of the axis. (Qibla is the prayer direction towards Mecca, which dictates that all Muslims in China should pray westwards, since Mecca is located geographically to the west of China.) This mosque adopts the courtyard-style complex of a typical Chinese monastery, except that it changes the north – south orientation in a typical Chinese monastery to the east-west orientation to fulfill the prayer direction required for mosque architecture.

Fulfilling the Spatial Requirement of a Mosque

To maximize the prayer space, the prayer hall is composed of three sub-halls joined together, resulting in a floor plan and roof structure rarely seen in Chinese architecture. The prayer hall in the Great Mosque is unique because it is composed of three independent structures joined together (Images 3.4.1 and 3.4.2): the first two are longitudinal halls of equal size joined together, whereas the last space hosting mihrab and minbar is a transverse hall termed *Yaodian*, a protrusion from the longitudinal hall, which is sometimes used in Chinese Buddhist monasteries. The double-roof of the prayer space is created using a technique called *Goulianda*: two independent roofs, each with an eight-rafter construction (Image 3.4.1), are connected head to tail and share a purlin. This shared purlin is supported by a row of columns with double shafts. The second roof also has three purlins connected with the third roof. The *goulianda* technique is employed to enlarge the prayer space which accommodates congregational prayer of up to a thousand worshippers. It can be interpreted as a moderation of China's Buddhist prayer space characterized by a single roof, as Buddhist worship space in China is individual rather than congregational, thus requiring smaller prayer space than Islamic worships.⁴⁶ The prayer space (under the first two roofs) has a transverse dimension of 27.6 meters, and 6 meters in height from floor to ceiling; were there a single roof, the height of the roof would have exceeded 8 meters, significantly out of proportion with the space below.⁴⁷ The actual design provides an appropriate proportion with two parallel roofs and enriches the form of the main prayer hall. This design serves as a model for many mosques built later in China.⁴⁸ With this structural and formal innovation, it is possible for the main prayer hall to provide sufficient space for mass prayers and

⁴⁶ Steinhardt, "China's Earliest Mosques," 334.

⁴⁷ Zhang, "Xi'an Mosque at Huajuexiang", 73.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.

maintain an appropriate formal proportion at the same time, without breaching the hierarchy of Chinese architecture.

Chapter 3 Images

Image 3.1.1: The Urban Grids of Chang'an (Xi'an) in the Tang Dynasty, 618-907

Source: Nancy Steinhardt, *Chinese Architecture: A History* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019): 105.

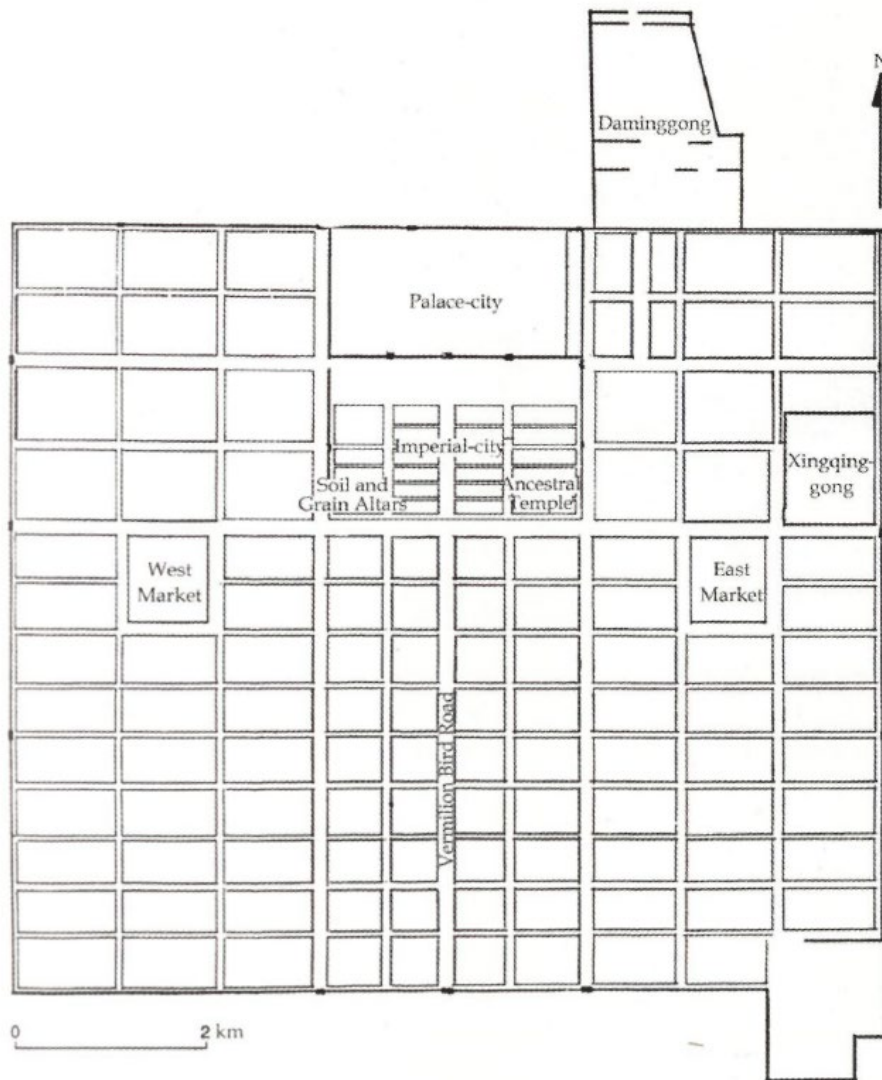


Image 3.1.3: Overlapped Maps of Xi'an in the Tang Dynasty, Ming Dynasty, and the contemporary Xi'an

Source: drawing by Yutong Ma

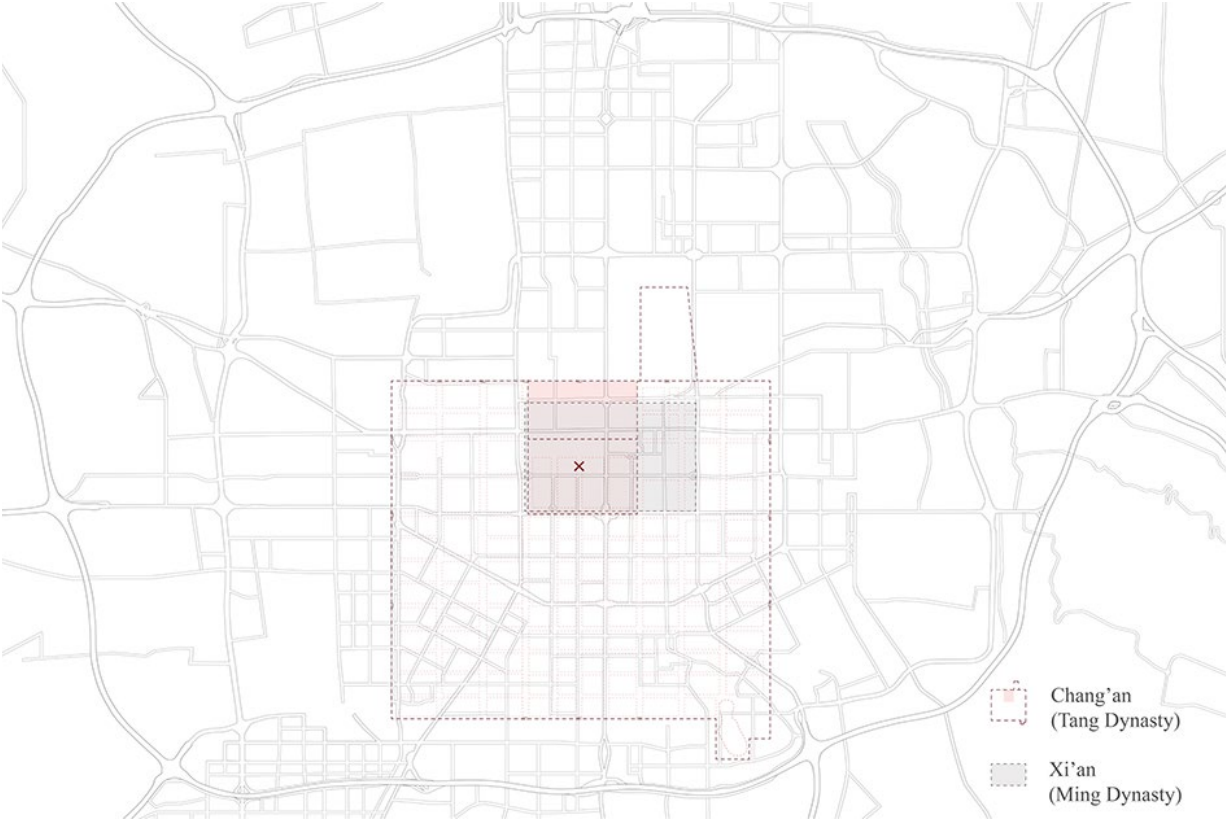


Image 3.1.4: Urban density of the district where the Great Mosque of Xi'an is located

Source: Shijun Chen, "Research of Architecture art of Xi'an Huajue Lane Mosque," (Chongqing, China: Chongqing University, 2013): 16. Drawing by Shijun Chen.

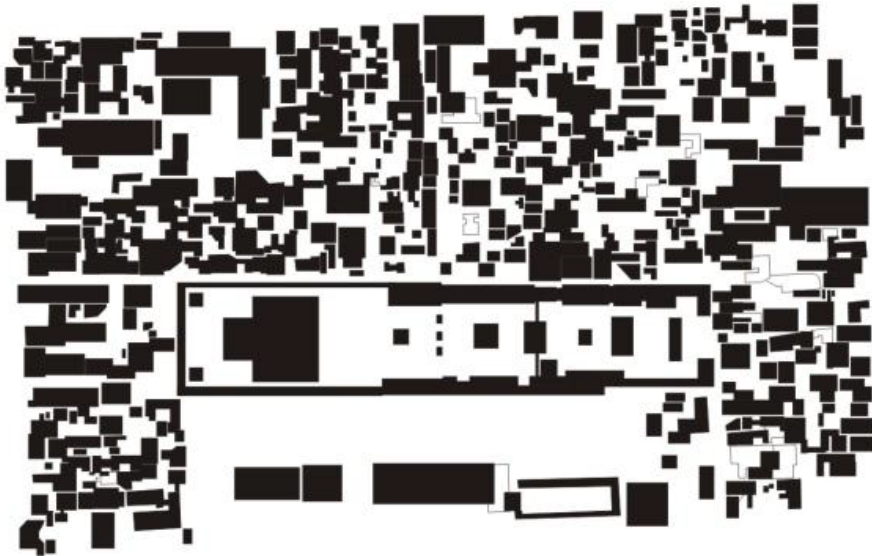


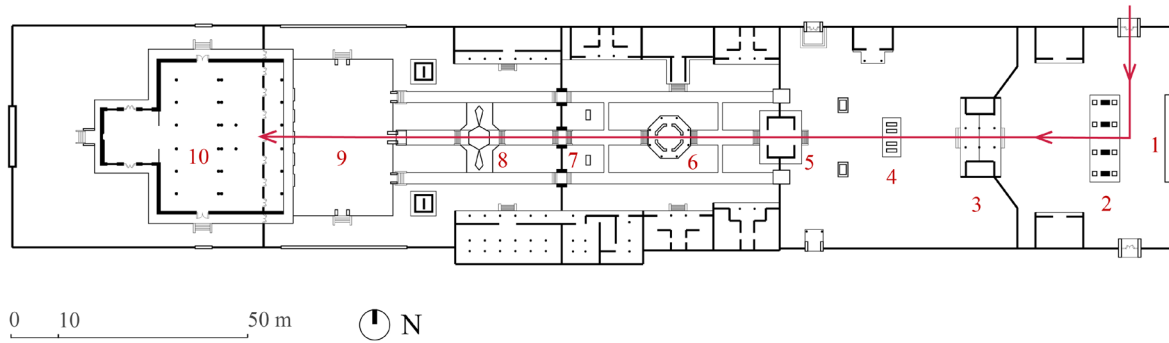
Image 3.1.5: one of the busy commercial streets packed with tourists at night near the Great Mosque of Xi'an, with a sign indicating the direction of the mosque

Source: Photo by Yutong Ma, 2018.



Image 3.2.1a: the Great Mosque of Xi'an, Plan

Source: Drawing by Yutong Ma.



1. Zhaobi
2. Wooden *pailou*
3. “Chici Dian” Hall
4. Masonry *pailou*
5. Pavilion
6. “Tower for Introspection” Pagoda
7. Marble gates
8. Phoenix Pavilion
9. Yuetai
10. Prayer Hall

Image 3.2.2: the Great Mosque of Xi'an, perspective drawing

Source: Shijun Chen, "Huajue Mosque," 42.

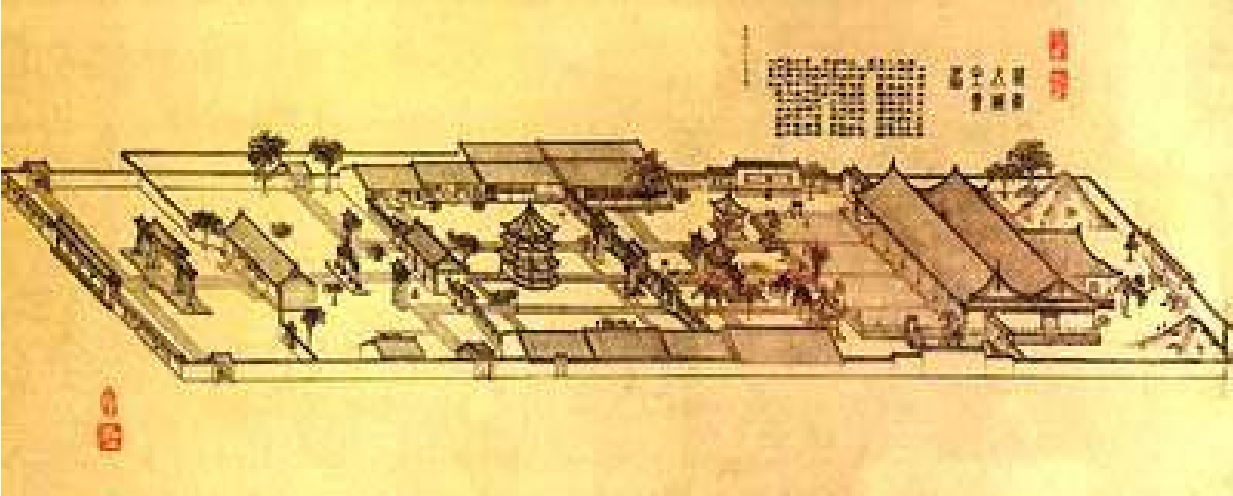


Image 3.3.1: the Great Mosque of Xi'an, Annotated diagram

Source: drawing by Yutong Ma

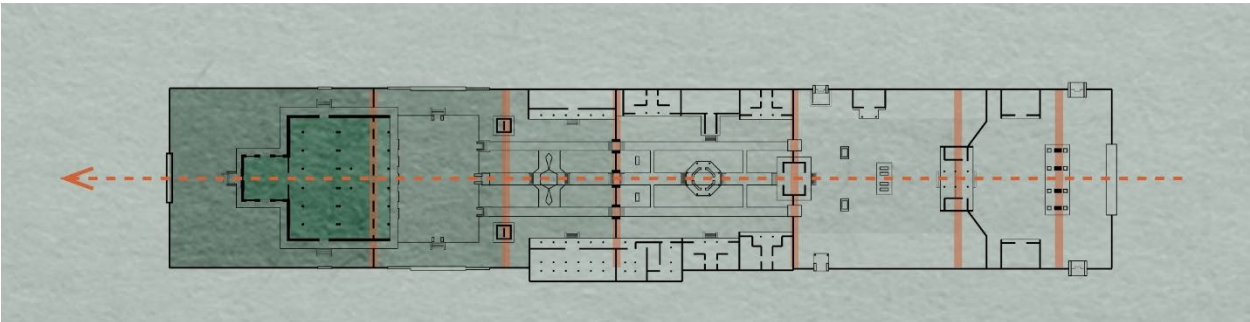


Image 3.3.2a: Huaisheng Mosque, Plan

Source: Nancy Steinhardt, *China's Early Mosques*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2015.

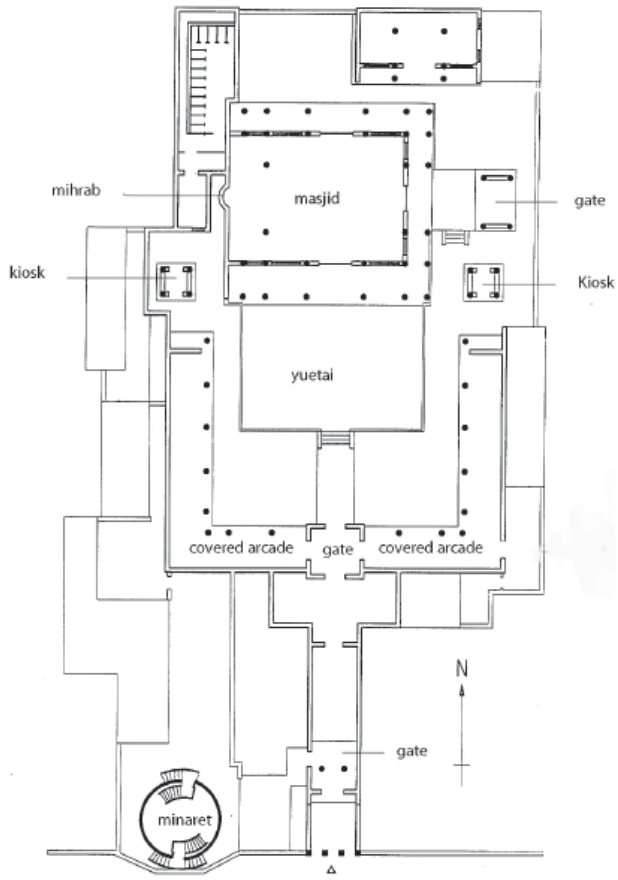


Image 3.3.2b: the main gate and the minaret, Huaisheng Mosque

Source: The Islamic Society of Guangzhou.

<http://512381.s21i.faiusr.com/2/ABUIABACGAAgvK2WiQUogPTwZDCMCzj0Bw.jpg>

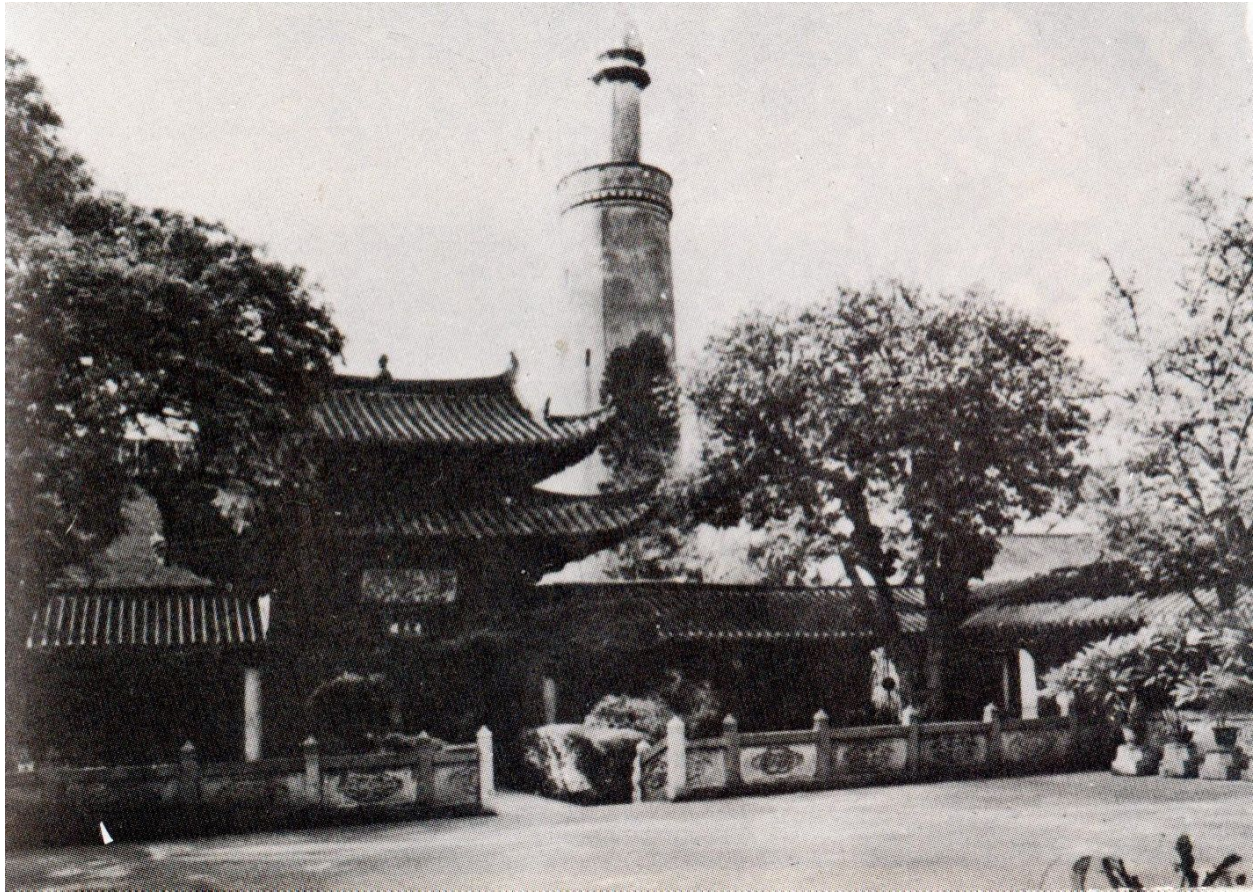


Image 3.3.3a: Shengyou Mosque, Plan

Source: Nancy Steinhardt, *China's Early Mosques*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2015.

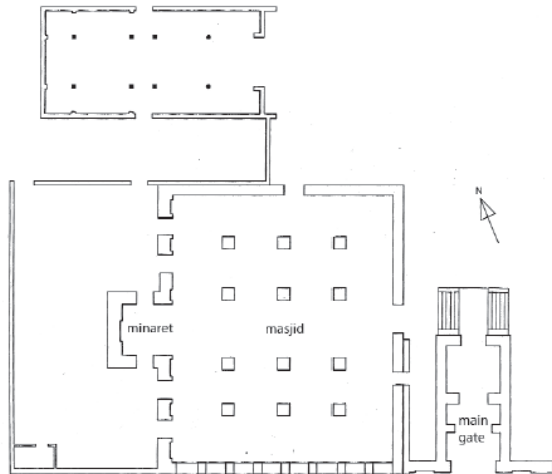


Image 3.3.3b: the main gate (*iwan*), Shengyou Mosque

Source: http://www.hsscsl.net/2016-04/10/content_5304979.htm

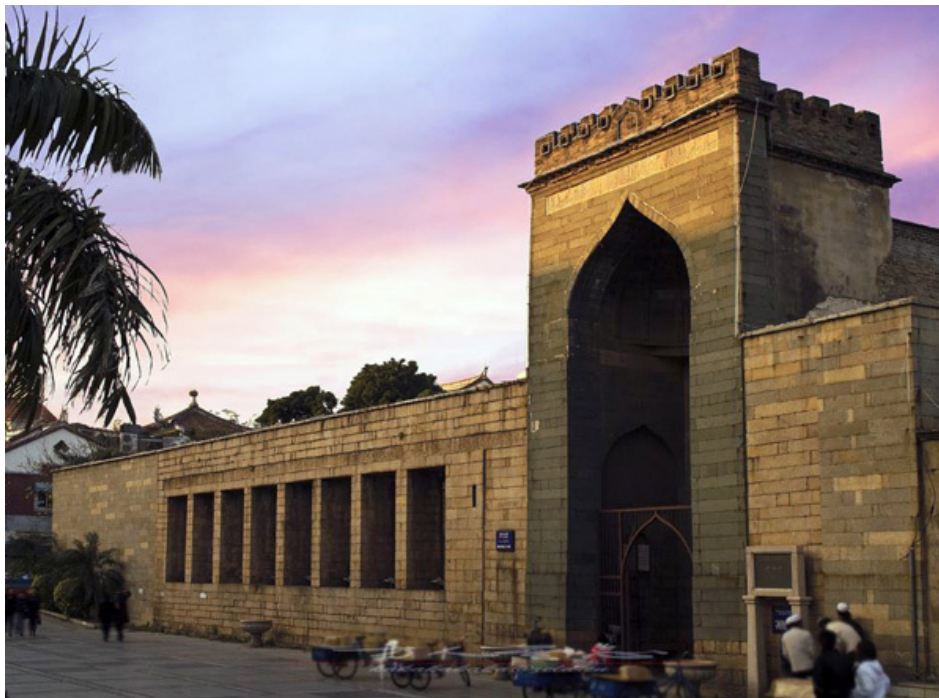


Image 3.3.4a: Xianhe Mosque, Plan

Source: Nancy Steinhardt, *China's Early Mosques*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2015.

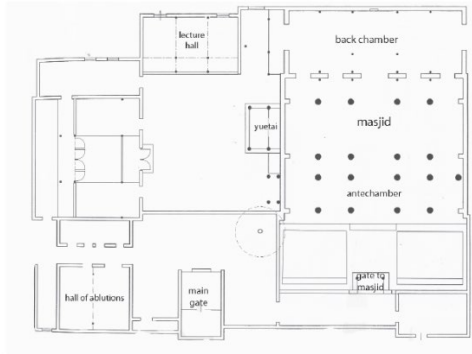


Image 3.3.4b: Xianhe Mosque

Source:

https://img1.qunarzz.com/travel/d1/1702/c1/7cea2359979909b5.jpg_r_720x480x95_9a3c688d.jp

g



Image 3.3.5: Main Prayer Hall of the Great Mosque of Xi'an, East Elevation

Source: Jinqiu Zhang, "Art and Architecture of the Xi'an Mosque at Huajuexiang," *Jianzhu xuebao*, [Architecture Journal] no.10 (1981).



Image 3.3.6: The Structure of a Diantang Type, Section

Source: Liang, Sicheng. *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, second printing, 1985).

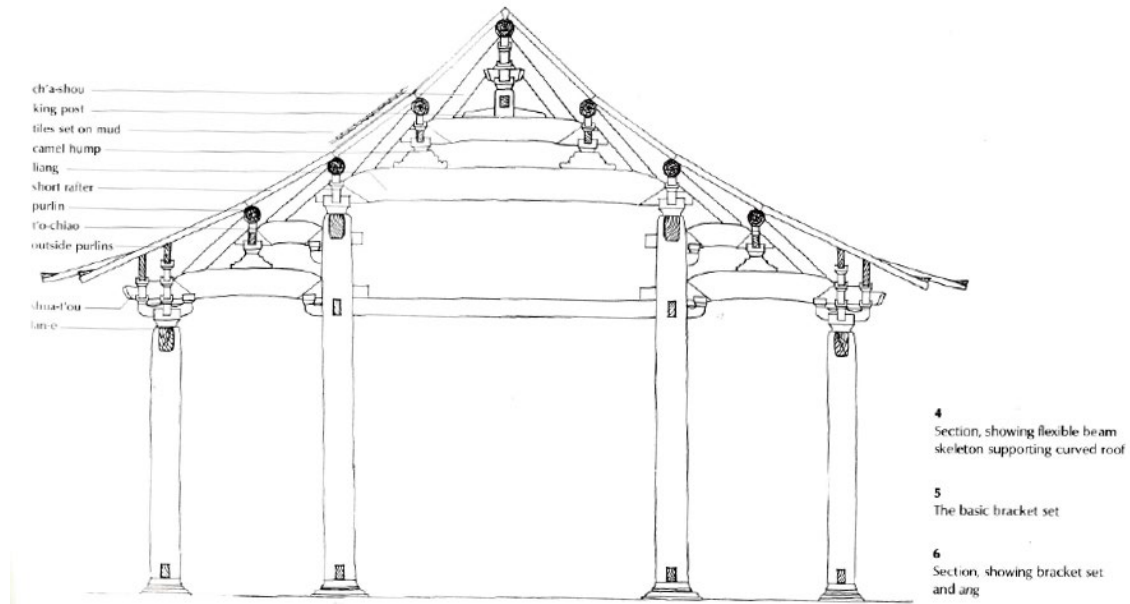


Image 3.3.7: Roof Types of Traditional Chinese Architecture

Source: Liang, Sicheng. *A Pictorial History of Chinese Architecture*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, second printing, 1985).

1. Overhanging gable roof
2. Flush gable roof
3. Hip roof
4. Gable-and-hip roof
5. Pyramidal roof
6. Gable-and-hip roof
7. Double-eaved pyramidal roof
8. Double-eaved gable-and-hip roof
9. Double-eaved hip roof

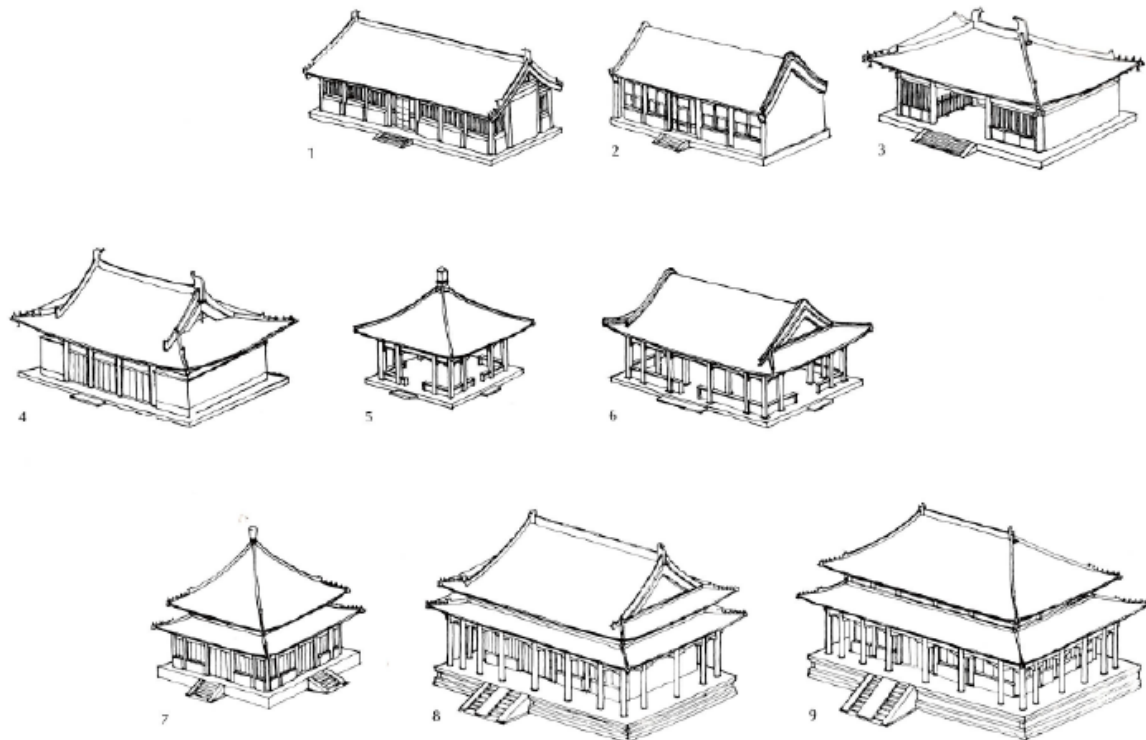


Image 3.4.1: Main Prayer Hall of the Great Mosque of Xi'an, Transverse Section

Source: Bingjie Lu, Chinese Islamic Architecture (Shanghai, *Sanlian chuban*, 2002):234.

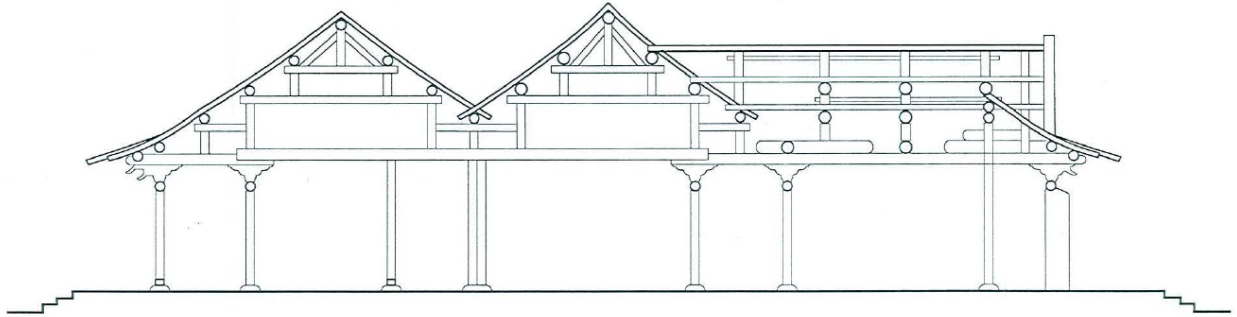
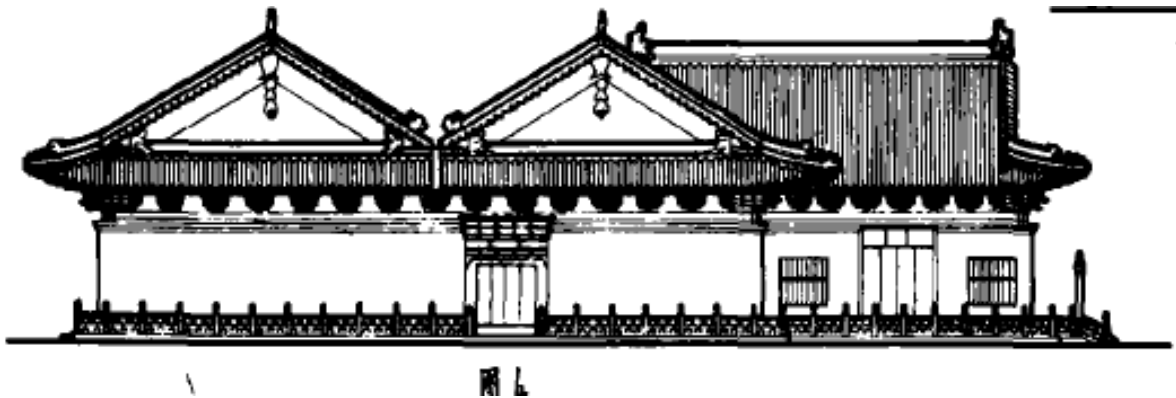


Image 3.4.2: Main Prayer Hall of the Great Mosque of Xi'an, North Elevation

Source: Jinqiu Zhang, "Art and Architecture of the Xi'an Mosque at Huajuexiang," *Jianzhu xuebao*, [Architecture Journal] no.10 (1981).



Chapter 4: Comparison

I have analyzed two main case studies separately in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 in this thesis: the first is the New Mosque of Hangzhou, selected to represent the new mosques built in contemporary southeastern China; and the second is the Great Mosque of Xi'an, which I argue that it suffices to be an autochthonous type of mosque architecture in China. Below is a table which summarizes the differences between these two mosques:

	The Great Mosque of Xi'an	The New Mosque of Hangzhou
Basic Information		
Year of Construction	1392	2012
Location	Xi'an, Shanxi Province Northern China	Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province Southeastern China
Patron(s)	Emperor Hongwu of the Ming Dynasty	The Islamic Society of Hangzhou (Run by local Muslims, supervised by the local government)
Intended Users (at the time of the construction)	Hui Muslims in Xi'an	Local Hui Muslims in Hangzhou Hui Muslims from northwestern China who work in Hangzhou
Purpose(s) of Construction	Demonstrating the state's support for the Muslim population State-initiated programs Sinicizing foreigners in China	Accommodating the expanding population of worshippers in Hangzhou
Urban Context		
Site	A historical urban center Orthogonal urban grids High-density, low-rise residential and commercial buildings Limited access to automobile	A newly developed urban center Irregular urban grids Relatively-low-density, high-rise residential buildings The node of a transportation network

	transportation	
Relation to the Site	A semi-private complex in a public space A quiet complex hidden in a busy urban tourist district	A public landmark readily visible in the urban space
Design		
Layout	A seven-courtyard complex with discrete buildings arranged along the central courtyard	A single structure
Main Structure	Traditional Chinese timber-frame structure	Reinforced concrete
Directionality	The prayer direction is pointing towards Mecca. All the buildings in the complex are arranged about the central directional axis, creating a processional promenade.	The prayer direction is pointing towards Mecca.
Essential Liturgical Furniture Inside the Prayer Hall	Qibla: Yes Mihrab: Yes Minbar: Yes	Qibla: Yes Mihrab: Yes Minbar: Yes
Non-compulsory, symbolic mosque features	Minaret: Yes (although the function is uncertain) Dome: No	Minaret: Yes (non-functional, symbolic) Dome: Yes (multiple)
Potential Precedents	Traditional Chinese Buddhist monasteries (references for the layout) Traditional Chinese timber-frame building types (references for the form)	Ottoman imperial mosques (references for the main form) Domes in Fatimid and/or Mughal mosques, Dome of the Rock Minarets in Masjid al-Haram of Mecca

Table 2. Comparing the New Mosque of Hangzhou with the Great Mosque of Xi'an

Given the differences in historical and urban contexts, it is hardly reasonable to compare these two designs directly and claim which mosque has a better design. Instead, the comparison in this chapter focuses on how each mosque relates to its urban and cultural contexts. In terms of

the relation to the urban context, each mosque plays a distinct role in the city. As described in section 2.2, the New Mosque of Hangzhou is placed at an urban node, where several transportation systems intersect near the site. It is the only building on the block, surrounded by high-rise residential buildings which are relatively monotonous in design. The New Mosque, with its monumental golden dome, is readily noticeable from distance and thus serves as a landmark in this newly developed urban district (Image 4.1). In contrast, the Great Mosque of Xi'an is a quiet, walled complex hidden in a busy district in Xi'an with much higher density than that in Hangzhou, surrounded by densely arranged low-rise residential and commercial buildings. Unlike the case in Hangzhou, transportation in this tourist district is largely confined to pedestrian traffic. One has to squeeze through crowds in a network of narrow lanes to discover the walled mosque complex.

In view of the mosque as a design-solution to its cultural and historical contexts, the New Mosque of Hangzhou fails to produce a coherent system of representation of mosque architecture. In an attempt to approximate the "Arabic" style of mosque architecture which in reality does not exist, the architects, albeit pressured by their clients, compounded an eclectic mix of forms borrowed from a variety of sources in the Middle East and Muslim-dominant countries. The use of imported styles is largely superficial: the cascade of domes only caps the cubical space below without any structural relevance, whereas the domes in Ottoman mosques serve as key components in both the structural system and the spatial composition. Such appropriation for solely symbolic purposes ironically fails to communicate the messages associated with these forms in their original sociocultural contexts, since one could not discern whether it is a mosque in China, Turkey, India, or any other context.

Contrary to the poor orchestration in the new mosque design, the Great Mosque of Xi'an should be considered as an autochthonous type of mosque architecture in China. Order and hierarchy, the key attributes which characterize both the layout of the mosque complex as well as the form of individual buildings, correspond to the ethos of the era when the mosque was first built in the late-fourteenth-century imperial China. It offers a coherent system of Chinese architectural language to accommodate and adapt to the liturgical requirements of mosque architecture, which signifies the transition of the Hui people's identity from "Muslims in China" to "Chinese Muslims". As the pause of religious activities in the mid-20th century has left a vacuum in the construction of mosques in China, the Great Mosque of Xi'an could fill in the gap as an autochthonous type to be studied and transformed into new forms of mosques that respond to the contemporary Chinese contexts, especially in southeastern China due to the close cultural links among Hui Muslims in these two regions.

Chapter 4 Images

Image 4.1: Viewing the New Mosque of Hangzhou from the bridge across the Qiantang River

Source: https://bking.cdn.bcebos.com/pic/8644ebf81a4c510f25d1954b6f59252dd42aa54e?x-bce-process=image/watermark,image_d2F0ZXIvYmFpa2UyNzI=,g_7,xp_5,yp_5/format,f_auto



Conclusion

In this thesis, I argue that architects and their Hui-Muslim clients in southeastern China, in the process of designing new mosques in this region, should refer to the autochthonous mosque architecture in China as the key historical references. Contrary to many Hui Muslims' belief that traditional Chinese architectural language fails to communicate their identity, the autochthonous mosque architecture exemplified by the Great Mosque of Xi'an is rooted in the historical processes in which Hui Muslims' identity is constructed. It suffices to both fulfil the liturgical requirements of Islamic worship and serve as a system of representation for Hui Muslims' culture in southeastern China.

What is the definition of mosque architecture? This is the fundamental problem to be resolved before discussing the design of any particular mosque. The essential requirement for the place of Islamic worship is the orientation towards Mecca, which is the key gesture uniting the umma around the world around the center of the Islamic cosmology. Since it is the directionality of prayer which constitutes the essence of the space in a mosque, there is no prescribed form for any components in the mosque architecture. Even for the qibla wall and the mihrab, indicators of the directionality towards Mecca, there is a great flexibility in terms of representation, since what truly matters is the directional axis in a spiritual sense, not the visible form of this sacrosanct symbol. For congregational mosques, there are requirements for the sake of function. A minbar placed beside the mihrab offers a platform for the preaching imam; one or more minaret tower(s) at the gate of a mosque allowed the muezzin to summon the community to prayer in the past, although the minaret is mostly reduced to a symbolic feature today, with its function replaced by the loudspeaker. The minimal liturgical requirements for mosque architecture leave room for a

great extent of flexibility in design, which helps explain the diversity of mosque architecture across the world. Indeed, the monumental mosques in the center of the Arabic lands are important historical precedents of mosque architecture, as they are easily recognizable symbols of Islam. However, they do not constitute a code of forms for mosque architecture by which contemporary architects have to abide in designing new mosques.

For the clients and/or architects of many contemporary mosques built in southeastern China, the forms borrowed from mosques in the Middle East compose an “authentic Islamic” style of mosque architecture. These forms are integrated to the system of structure in their original architectural contexts, but when regrouped as an eclectic mix in the case of the mosque in Hangzhou, they do not make up a coherent architectural composition. On the other hand, the Great Mosque of Xi’an offers a consonant system of forms, which fulfills the liturgical requirements of mosque architecture using forms adapted from traditional Chinese architecture. In terms of layout, it adopts the Chinese courtyard-style complex but shifts the direction of the central axis so that it is oriented towards Mecca. Each structure in the mosque complex is built in the traditional Chinese timber-frame system and follows the hierarchy system of traditional Chinese architecture. The structural innovation in the main prayer hall proves that Chinese timber-frame structure is flexible enough to adapt to the spatial requirements of a mosque. This autochthonous mosque type is still of value in designing new mosques today. While not to be copied directly, architects could learn from the design ideologies in these autochthonous precedents and create new design solutions for contemporary mosques that respond to the cultural contexts in southeastern China.

Admittedly, the tension between an “international” style and autochthonous architecture is not limited to the design of mosque architecture in China but related to contemporary Chinese

architectural practice in general. In the recent thirty years, China has undergone a massive scale of urbanization at an unprecedentedly rapid rate. Historical urban landscape that had existed for centuries is now replaced by modernist, international architecture which forms a monotonous image, wiping out the unique historical memories in each city. The problem here is not an antagonist dichotomy between the international style and traditional Chinese architecture. It is about the lack of a new autochthonous Chinese architecture which responds to the specific urban and cultural contexts in contemporary China. As the Chinese Pritzker-prize-winner Wang Shu comments, most contemporary Chinese architectural design has superficial appearance but is “impoverished within”,⁴⁹ which he means that such design lacks concern for the interior space as well as the cultural context. Wang Shu is the most internationally well-known scholar-architect among those Chinese architects who have been experimenting with design and construction methods to produce an autochthonous Chinese architecture which manifests the specific identity of a region. The question “what should an autochthonous mosque in China look like” can be considered as a subset of the broader inquiry of autochthonous architecture in contemporary China. Perhaps the autochthonous mosque or autochthonous architecture in general will not be a rigid system of representation, but a set of design and construction methods which allow architects to produce solutions specific to the context.

⁴⁹ Wang Shu, *Zao fangzi* [Constructing Buildings] (Hunan: Hunan Art Press, 2018):105.

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Appendix

This thesis approaches the issue of building contemporary Chinese mosques from a perspective of architecture theory. To further investigate this issue, an ethnographic approach based on cultural/social anthropology will be helpful in analyzing why the Hui Muslim clients of the new mosques discussed above prefer the “Arabic” style to the autochthonous Chinese type. In the current identity crisis created by the decades of religious vacuum due to political reasons in the mid-20th century, many Hui Muslims in China today are urgent to assert their Muslim identity. They consider Islamic cultures in the Arabic lands as the authentic Islam and view Hui people’s Sinicized Islam as a deviation from the orthodox. This conception is related to the discussion of syncretic Islam.

Recent scholarships of religion have increasingly shifted towards considering Islam in a given cultural environment as “a vernacular tradition”, viewing Islam as a heterogenous composite in contrast to a universal and monolithic phenomenon.⁵⁰ Kristian Peterson defines vernacularization of Islam as the “reappropriation of Islamic discourses within the new local environment” when “Muslim” is adopted as an identity marker within an existing cultural environment.⁵¹ In this gradual process, the localization of Islamic authority and authenticity also takes place. In response to the shifting social, economic, and political contexts in this complex historical process, “a broad range of cultural matters interact in historically and geographically specific ways” to create sets of indigenous interpretive and performative systems.⁵² Peterson

⁵⁰ Kristian Peterson, *Interpreting Islam in China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018): 29.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 28.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 29.

uses “vernacularization” to highlight the discursive space as vernacular linguistic interpretations become a vehicle for negotiating global and local visions of Islam.⁵³

Scholars of religion usually use the term “syncretism” to signify a mixture of various cultural elements used to explain religious interpretive and performative systems in multicultural contexts.⁵⁴ Implied in this syncretic form of Islam is the interaction of two or more different cultural realms, and in this case of Islam and Confucian China. Scholars have different views towards the interaction of these two cultures. Raphael Israeli, a formative Western scholar on Sino-Islamic studies, insists that a tension exists between Islam and Confucian China, and that Islam has always posed a challenge to the Chinese establishment.⁵⁵ For Israeli, Islam and China are two incompatible essences with different intrinsic principles.⁵⁶ Peterson counters this framing. He argues that the term “Islam” is a heuristic construct utilized by scholars as “an analytic category to denote a set of principles and actions of a particular group of Muslims”, so in historical reality, a monolithic notion of Islam does not exist.⁵⁷ Peterson aims to prevent scholars from dismissing the Sino-Islamic intellectual development as polluted products from a pure, “orthodox” Islam. He instead views it as the interaction of multiple factors in which Sino-Muslim communities negotiate with tradition, reconcile contradictions between Islam and Confucian China, and represent themselves as a distinct Hui (Sino-Muslim) people.⁵⁸

The debate between orthodox Islam and syncretic Islam is yet to be solved, as scholars may approach this issue from a humanist perspective, defining “Islam” as a diverse, global culture, or interpreting the term from a strictly religious perspective. A scholar’s position in this

⁵³ Kristian Peterson, *Interpreting Islam in China*, 31.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵⁵ Raphael Israeli, *Islam in China: Religion, Ethnicity, Culture, and Politics*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Kristian Peterson, *Interpreting Islam in China*, 33.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

debate will affect their approach to the investigation of Islamic art and architecture. In general, I believe that a multi-disciplinary research methodology is necessary in the study of Islamic architecture.