

Islam In Taiwan

CHINESE MUSLIM ASSOCIATION

62 Hsin Sheng South Road, Section II

Taipei

TAIWAN



Part of the large crowd of Muslims and well-wishers who attended opening ceremonies of the new mosque in Taipei, capital of Free China.

ISLAM IN TAIWAN

ON HSIN SHENG SOUTH ROAD in Taipei, temporary capital of Free China, the graceful minarets of a new mosque rise as a symbol of the vitality of Islam on the island of Taiwan. Completed in 1960, the new mosque testifies to the dedication, hard work, and spirit of sacrifice of Muslims who came to Taiwan ten years ago to preserve their freedom to worship Allah according to their ancient faith.

The guiding force in this work was the Chinese Muslim Association, which continued its activities in Taiwan after the Communist conquest of the China mainland. Here in Free China the Association has completed another notable task: the first complete translation of the Holy Koran into the Chinese language. A special translation board devoted seven years to this momentous project. Published in *pai-*

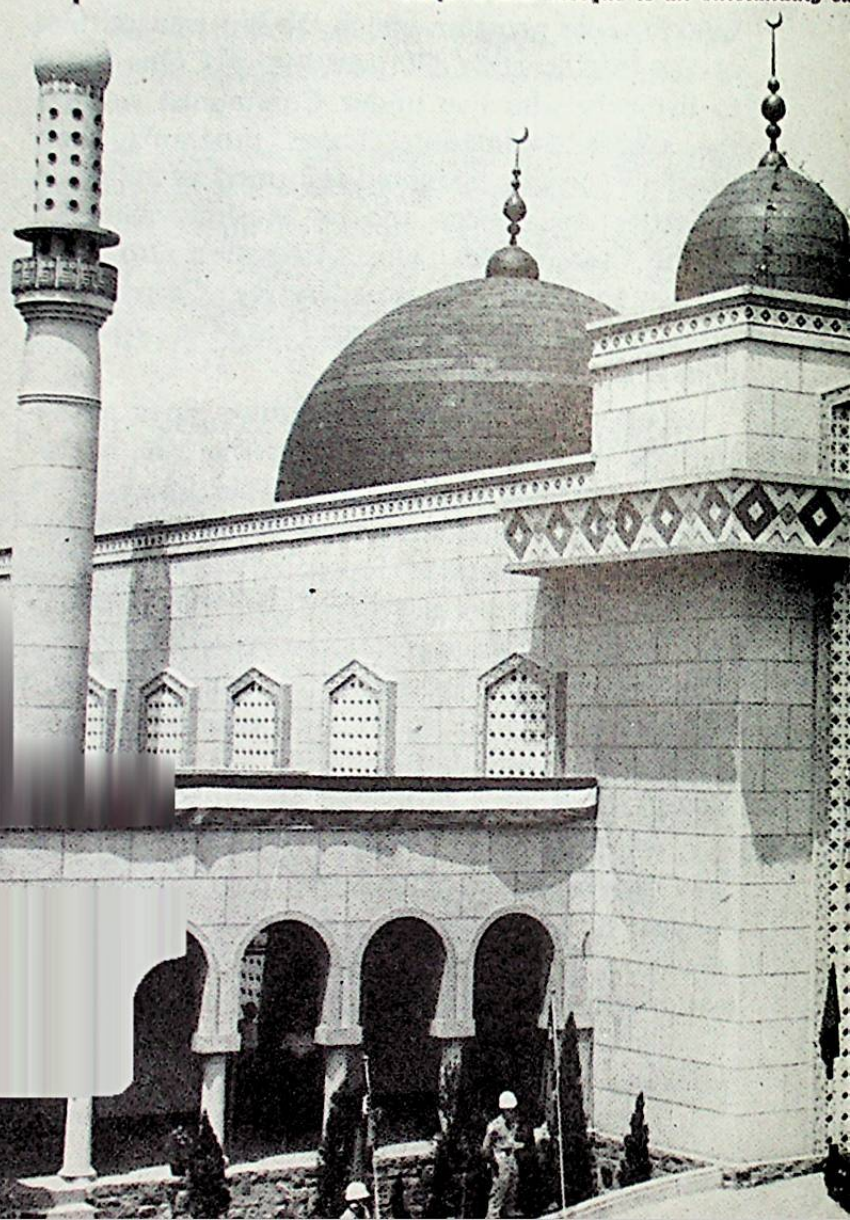
weekly radio program which the big transmitters of the Broadcasting Corporation of China beam to listeners who live under Communist rule on the China mainland. These programs keep Muslims on the mainland informed of religious activities in Taiwan and in Muslim countries of the Free World. The Association also finds Arabic speakers for Broadcasting Corporation of China programs beamed at the Muslim countries.

Summer seminars for Muslim boys above the age of 12 are sponsored by the Youth Department of the Association. This agency also supplies books and magazines to Muslim fighting men in the armed forces of Free China.

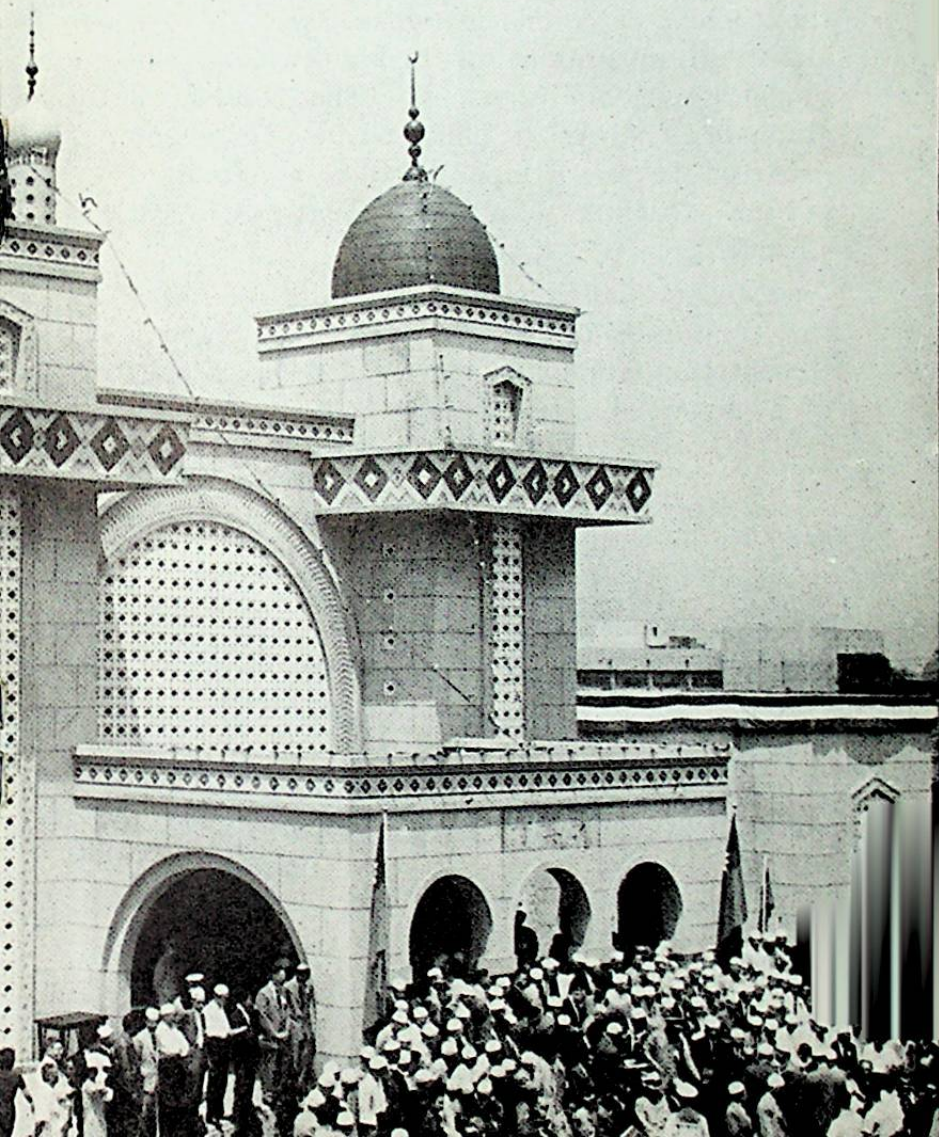
Another important branch of the Association is the Committee for the World Muslim League, which maintains contact with co-religionists in other nations. Taiwan Muslims value their relationships with the traditional centers of Islamic faith and learning.

With the help of the Government, Muslims in Free China have sent five *hadj* missions to Mecca in the last six years. After visiting Mecca, the pilgrims usually visit other Muslim nations en route back to Taipei. Various groups of pilgrims from Taiwan have visited such nations as Egypt, Libya, the Sudan, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Singapore, and Malaya.

Taipei's new mosque is an outstanding ex



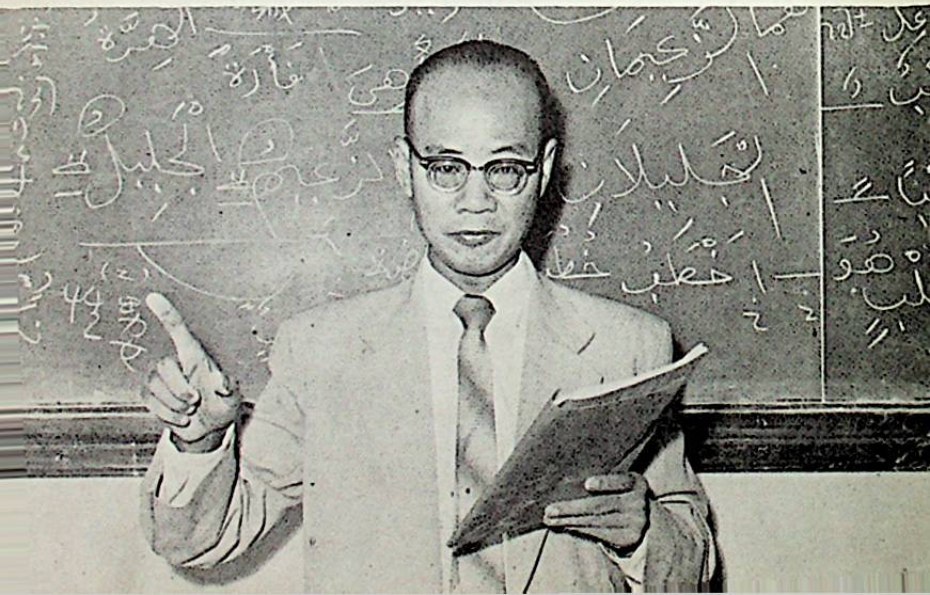
Sample of Arabic and Persian architecture.

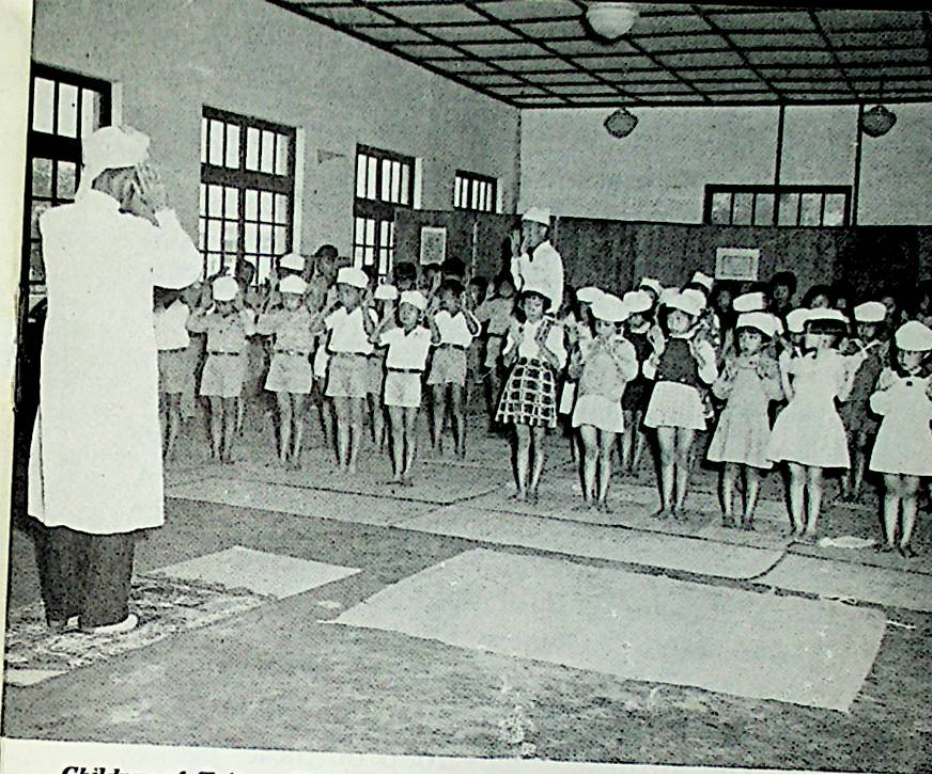


In order to facilitate contacts with the Muslim world, the Government has sponsored the teaching of Arabic in one of Taiwan's most important institutions of higher learning, National Chengchi University. The teacher, a graduate of Al-Azhar University in Cairo and *imam* of the new Taipei mosque, is also head of the Oriental Languages Department at Chengchi.

Muslim scholars in Taiwan are active in the translation of Arabic books into Chinese. Recent translations include three different lives of Mohammed, *The Muslim in China*, *Islamic*

The imam of Taipei's mosque teaches Arabic at Taiwan's National Chengchi University.





Children of Taiwan Muslims receive religious instruction.

Law, Islam in China, Fifty Lessons on Islam, and The Muslim World.

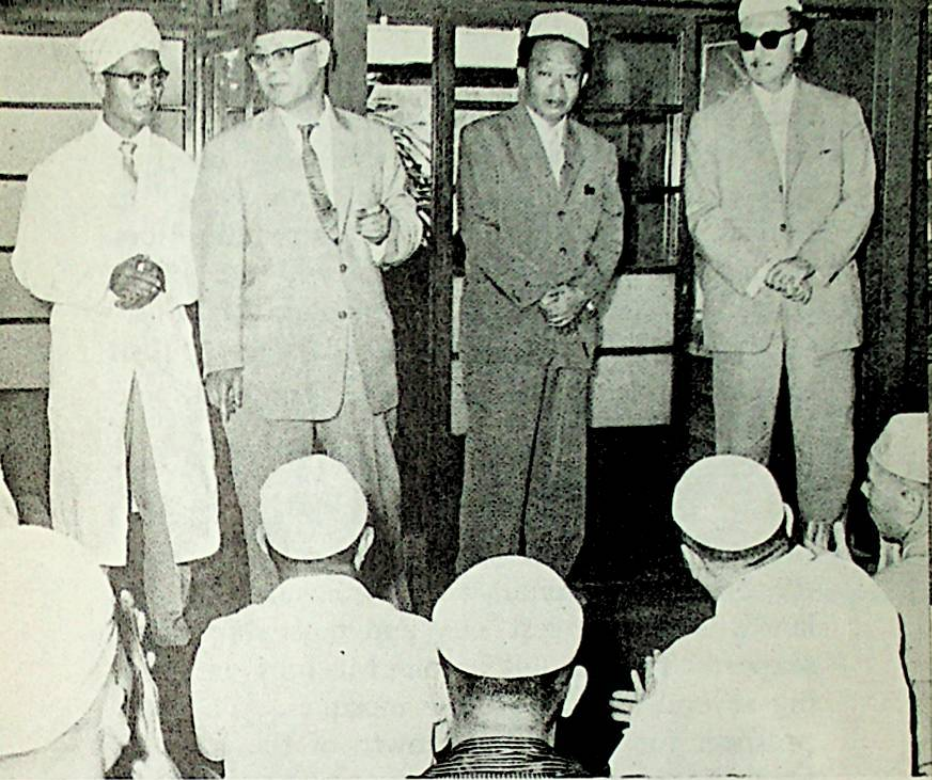
Muslims occupy high positions in the Government of the Republic of China. The present chairman of the Association, Khalid T. C. Shih, is senior policy advisor to President Chiang Kai-shek. General Pai Chung-hsi, former chairman of the Chinese Moslem Association, is deputy chairman of the Military Strategy Advisory Committee, and General Ma Cheng-hsiang is deputy commander of the Taiwan Garrison

Command. Muslims are well represented in Free China's legislative bodies, with 25 members of the National Assembly, four members of the Legislative Yuan, and one member of the Control Yuan. Other Muslims serve in the Republic of China's diplomatic service.

Most practicing Muslims in Taiwan today are from mainland China, from such remote areas as Sinkiang and Ninghsia, and from such nearby provinces as Fukien and Kwangtung. One of the most important projects of the Muslim community is to bring back into the ranks of the Faithful the 20,000 Taiwan-born descendants of Chinese Muslims who came to this island 300 years ago with the hero Koxinga, who recaptured Taiwan from the Dutch.

The greatest single group of these people, some 4,000 souls, lives in the fishing village of Lukang on the west coast. The foundation of an early mosque is still to be seen here. Volunteers from the Muslim community spend a great deal of time with these people instructing them in the tenets of the Islamic faith. One of the volunteers is the former *imam* of the mosque at Kaohsiung, who has accepted a permanent teaching post at Lukang.

The most impressive tangible accomplishment of Taiwan's Muslims, of course, is the building of the new mosque in Taipei.



Muslim leaders from Malaya, Jordan and Indonesia visit Taipei's new mosque.

Contributions from Muslims in Taiwan and overseas (including Their Majesties the Shah of Iran and King Hussein of Jordan) and a loan from Taiwan's principal Government bank raised a building fund of NT\$6,000,000, about US\$150,000. In contrast with older mosques on the China mainland, which were constructed in Chinese-temple style, the new mosque incorporates elements of design from Arabian- and

Persian-mosque architecture. The central hall can accommodate 600 worshipers under a spacious, high-ceilinged dome emblazoned in bronze. The building also has an auditorium seating 400 people and, of course, the indispensable bathing facilities for ritual ablutions.

The opening of the mosque in April 1960 attracted international attention. The handsome building has become one of the landmarks of the capital city of the Republic of China.

In addition to Taipei, there are also formally established Muslim congregations in Taichung, the provincial capital, and Kaohsiung, the island's second-largest city and most important seaport. There is talk among Muslims of building several additional new mosques. Thus the prospect for continuing growth of the Faith in Free China appears bright.



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