

Narratives of Kinship and Ethnicity across the South China Sea

The Manila Muslim Five-Surname Association

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General Guo Ziyi was renowned for his loyalty to the Tang emperors. He played a major role in saving the Tang from annihilation during the An Lushan Rebellion (755-763) and later on he successfully defended Changan saving it from destruction at the hands of the raiding Tibetans. Thanks to his military prowess he was bestowed many official ranks and honorific titles, most well-known among them is the **prefect of Fenyang** 汾陽王.

Guo Ziyi 郭子儀 697 – 781 Prefect of Fenyang 汾陽王

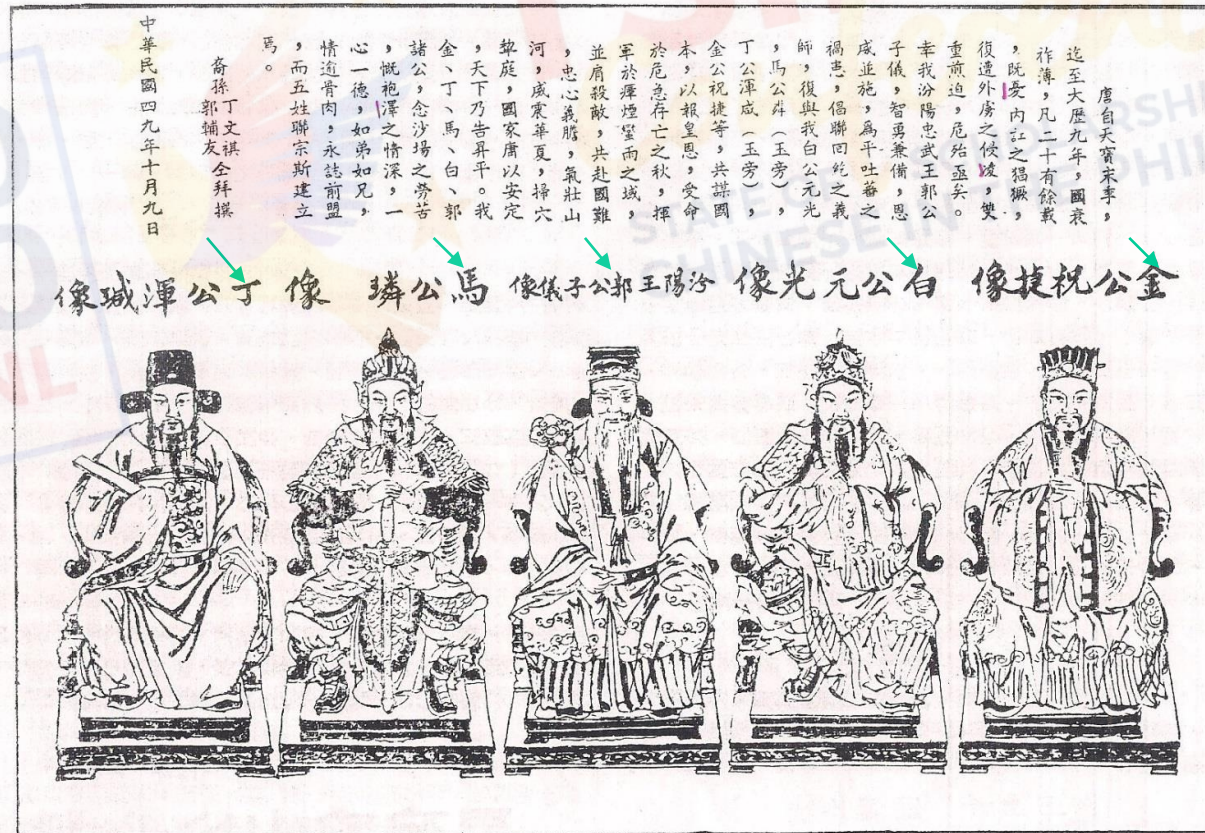


Guoziyi's Biography and *The History and Origin of the Qingzhen (Muslim) Five Surname Association of Lineages.*

汾阳王郭子仪公传记与清真五姓联宗族史由来

The essay, accompanied by a portrait of the five families' presumed ancestors ("Wu Xing Lianzong Tu" 圖宗聯姓五) ends with the sentence:

..... *So that the former alliance of sworn brothers will be engraved for eternity, this Five Surname Association of Lineages is herein established.*



The Guo in China

Quanzhou 泉州 1087-1368

Also known in its Arab or Persian name 'Zaytun'



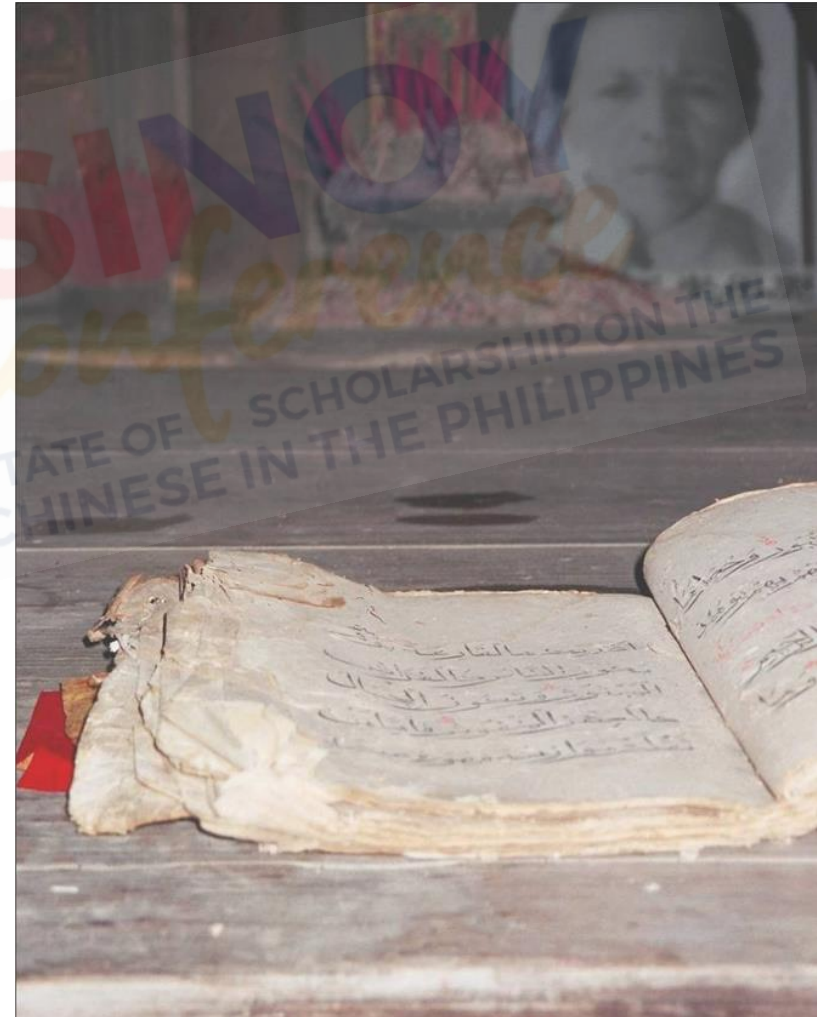
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Guo 郭 Lineage of Baiqi Township 百崎乡, Huian 惠安 County, Fujian

The Baiqi Guo Lineage's earliest ancestor was a Muslim trader of Persian origin who settled in Quanzhou in the early fourteenth-century. In 1376, shortly after the Ming takeover, his grandson left Quanzhou and built his new home in Baiqi village, east of the city. At present, all Guos in the vicinity are his descendants.



By the beginning of the seventeenth century, most Guos had completely abandoned the Muslim faith. Today, like their neighbors, they meticulously perform rituals for their ancestors' souls. However, they maintain traditions of observing a pork taboo during ancestral rites, and make offerings of ancient Quran manuscripts, reflecting recognition of their ancestors' Muslim belief







Stone inscription
of Quranic verse



In recent decades the ancestral halls and graves have won an important political role as tools for fostering Muslims' descendants separate identity.

The *World Guo Clan Genealogy* contains a section written in 1961 by two descendants of Baiqi Guos living in Singapore. The section opens with the sentence: “The honorable Huian Fenyang family” 族望陽汾安惠, referring to Guo Ziyi’s honorary title, and then provides a general outline of the family history, including their Muslim heritage.

Tracing the line of descent from famous historical figures, and from Guo Ziyi particularly, is by no means unique to the Baiqi Guos: it is a widely accepted Han custom. ...

All Guo lineages claim descent from Guo Ziyi. Until the 1980's, the Baiqi Guos shared with the rest of the Guos this marker of Guo identity, and saw no contradiction between being Guo Ziyi's descendants and practicing Islam.



Singapore Fenyang (Guo Ziyi's title)

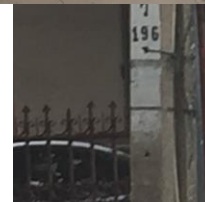
Guo Association 汾陽郭氏公會



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泰國郭氏宗親總會

The Association of the Thailand Guo Lineage in Bangkok

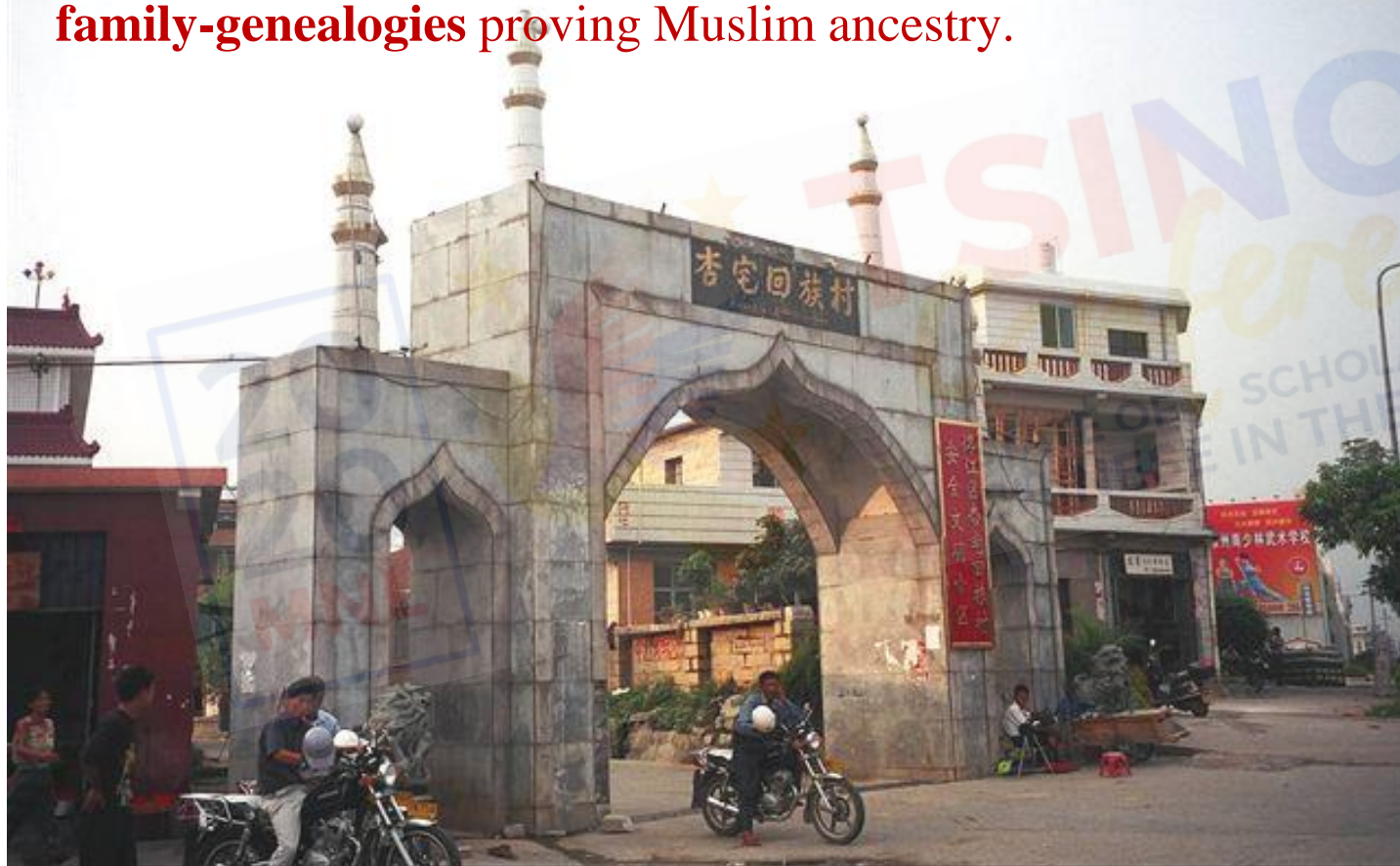


The Guo Ziyi hall in Kowloon, Hong Kong



The Unfolding of a New Family Narrative

During the political reforms of the 1980's, the Fujian Guo were granted special privileges as members of the **Hui 回 minority**. Although they are not Muslim, since 1979 the government granted Hui status to a few households, based on evidence they presented of maintaining **ancestral worship customs** with special characteristics, and **family-genealogies** proving Muslim ancestry.



Less restrictions on birth control

Larger local political representation and government subsidies

祖汾陽,派富陽



customs relating to the veneration of Guo Ziyi are still widely practiced today in Baiqi. Most notably, the restored ancestral hall carries inscriptions and couplets alluding to Guo Ziyi as their mythic founder.

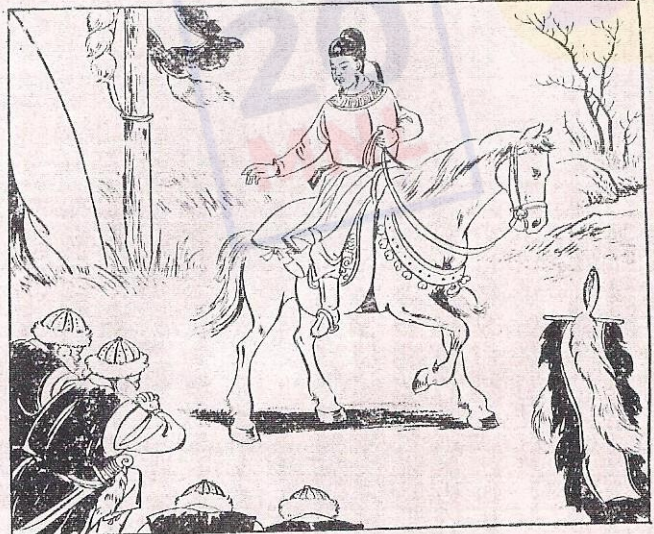
The Guo in Taiwan

Beginning in the 18th century, several branches of the Baiqi Guo lineage crossed the Taiwan strait and settled in one neighborhood in Lukang 鹿港, on Taiwan's western coast. Their rather fragmented social background required different institutions, ritual organization, and focal symbols to bond around.



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公單騎見回紇
掃蕩叛逆安史亂
名唐延祚三百年
福祿壽考五代昌
榮來仲夏
鄭恒瑞 畫



紇回見騎單僕子郭

A temple for the Guo neighborhood tutelary god in Lukang

郭厝里保安宮

Although their relations to the mainland Guos are unquestioned, the Guo Ziyi traditions in Lukang remain thriving. Generally speaking, Lukang lineages do not possess ancestral halls. In the Guo neighborhood as in other Lukang communities, it is the local temple for the community's tutelary god that

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In Taiwan, the Baiqi Guo are included in the Taipei *Global Guo Clan Genealogy* (*Huanqiu Guoshi Zongpu* 環球郭氏宗譜). It aspires to chart the entire universal Guo surname-group descending from Guo Ziyi.

<http://www.worldkuos.org.tw/p.asp?lan=C&id=2>

汾陽王 郭子儀 公 像



世界郭氏宗親總會 敬印

Back in the Philippines: The office and shrine of the Muslim Five Surname Association in Manila

Outside Mainland China and Taiwan, the Guo Ziyi heritage developed its own unique character, extending the veneration of Guo Ziyi to other southeastern families of Muslim descent.

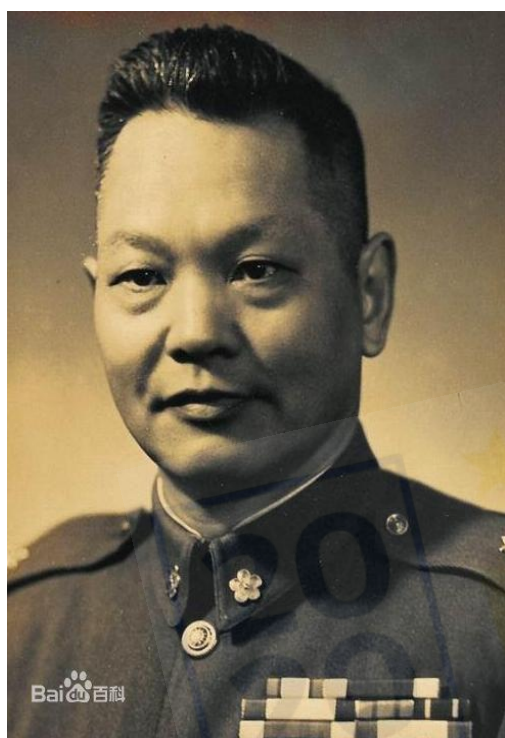


Smaller lineages teaming together to form multi-surname associations became quite common among the Manila Chinese, and many of their narratives feature myths of sworn brotherhood.

The shrine for the five ancestors in Manila



Guo Jijiao 郭寄峤 (1902—1998), Ding Weixi 丁维禧 (1898 – 1989?),
Ma Jizhuang 馬紀壯 (1912-2003)



The generals were also important figures in the Chinese Nationalist party prior to the communist takeover.

The activities of a Muslim-Nationalist movement: *Muslim Chinese Association for Rescuing the Nation* (中国回教救国协会) aimed at mobilizing the Hui to contribute to the Nationalist cause and promote the Muslim Chinese role in building and strengthening the Chinese nation.



Visiting ancestral homes in Shishi 石狮 Fujian



Fujian Muslims' descendants, who recently obtained Hui status, readily endorse the narrative introduced by their Philippine kinsmen as an ancient tradition, even if it was once unfamiliar to them.



Plaque donated to the Taipei Grand Mosque 台北清真寺 by the Manila Five Surname Association.



The photo of this plaque is displayed nowadays in the Quanzhou Museum of Maritime History in Fujian with the following caption: "Guo, Jin, Bai, Ding, Ma are the first five Chinese Muslim families that united during Tang Dynasty." Thus the myth of the five Muslim ancestors completes a full cycle of the South China Sea.

