Shadian's Muslim communities and trans-local connectivities: observations from the field

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Shadian, a town located in Deqin County in Yunnan Province, China, has a long history of Islamic presence. The town is known for its distinctive architectural style, known as the 'Shadian Style', which is a synthesis of Islamic and Chinese architectural traditions. The style is characterized by the use of traditional Chinese materials and techniques in the construction of Islamic structures, such as mosques and madrasas.

The first mosque in Shadian was built in the 13th century, and the town has since grown into a hub of Islamic learning and practice. The town is known for its madrasas, which are religious schools where students study various aspects of Islamic learning, including the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic law.

Shadian is also known for the so-called Shadian Incident of 1975, in which villagers forcibly opened closed-down mosques during the latter years of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The 'incident' led to the deaths of a significant number of people, and the mosque was subsequently abandoned.

In the aftermath of this incident, the mosque was reconstructed and has since been used as a place of worship and learning. The town has continued to attract students from across the country, who come to study Islamic learning in the various madrasas and other religious institutions.

References