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EVERYDAY LIFE OF A CHINESE MUSLIM:
BETWEEN RELIGIOUS RETENTION AND MATERIAL ACCULTURATION

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Abstract: This research focuses upon tracing the acculturative trends of the Hui Muslim community in Xi'an. It suggests that the existence of Muslims in China is a dialectical process between the adaptation to the Chinese culture and the retention of essentially Islamic religious traits. It is exclusively based upon ethnography and aims to investigate qualitatively the patterns of acculturation/retention of the Hui in the light of four socio-religious variables, i.e. identity, dietary habits, religious festivals and life passage rituals, social networking and marital homogamy. This is a small scale qualitative research based on participant observation, interviews, and an analysis of historic, archival, and documentary material. The sample consists of Hui people of Xi'an both from within and outside the Muslim Quarter without any restriction of age and gender. The archival and qualitative data is derived from the iconography and fieldwork in Xi'an between November 2011 and December 2014. Applying Gans' definitions of acculturation and assimilation, this paper concludes that the Hui are acculturated in the Han society but not assimilated, as they exhibit retention of ethnic religious traits.

Key Words: Islam in China, Acculturation, Ethnicity, Minority, Identity, Muslims in China, Hui community

Introduction to the locale and the community of research

This research is focused upon a Chinese Muslim minority known as Hui in today's China and the locale of research is confined to Xi'an, the capital of the Shaanxi province in central China. The Communist government has included Muslims among the 'five great people of China', along with Mongols, Tibetans, Manchus and the Han majority. Islam in China today includes ten "nationalities" (minzu). These are partly the Turkish or Turko-mongol speaking communities (Uyghur, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Bao'an, Dongxiang, Tatar, Ouzbek, Salar) living in the provinces of Northwest China (Xinjiang, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai), a small group of Farsi speakers, the Tadjik in Xinjiang, and partly a population of Chinese speaking Muslims, the Hui, who are scattered all over China. Islam has been the characteristic element of Hui identity until the Republican period, but the CCP has devised a new nationality criterion based upon Stalin's definitions. Based on this standard, there are 55 nationalities in China and the Hui are one of them with its basic determinant being the lineage of people. It has always been a problematic and debatable issue among scholars whether Stalin's definition of nationality can be applied to the Hui since they don't possess any of the characteristics mentioned in the definition of Minzu (nationality). Minzu is supposed to share a common territory, language, form of economic livelihood, and psychology, all of which are non-existent with the Hui, so that they are not eligible to be categorized as Minzu on this basis. But despite all these debates and arguments, the State Nationalities Commission of 1989 agreed to bestow on anyone who could verify his or her descent from foreign Muslims, a distinct Minzu called Huizu¹. The ancestors of today's Xi'an Hui community were the Arab and Persian Muslim settlers who came as traders and soldiers during the Tang and Song dynasties in several waves. Xi'an comprises more than 8 million people out of which the Muslim Hui population counts almost 50000 people according to the 2005 census. The Hui have been selected as a subject of research among the ethnic minorities of China because they have displayed the maximum tendency towards acculturation. Xi'an, located in central-northwest China, records the great changes of the country just like a living history book. Called Chang'an (meaning the eternal city) in ancient times, Xi'an is one of the birthplaces of the ancient Chinese civilization in the Yellow River Basin area. As the Eastern terminal of the Silk Road and the site of the famous Terracotta Warriors of the Qin Dynasty, Xi'an has won a reputation all over the world. More than 3,000 years of history including over 1,100 years as the capital city of the ancient dynasties, have endowed Xian with an amazing historical heritage. Xian boasts 1,300 years of Islamic history. Proud of their Islamic heritage and their country's traditions, the Muslims of Xi'an have merged their parent ancient Chinese culture with Islam,

remaining faithful to the central tenets of their religion. Moreover, the long heritage of the Chinese Muslims is evidently visible in the Muslim quarter of Xian. A visit to the Muslim quarter strongly evokes the feeling of a unique blend of Chinese and Muslim cultures.

Literature Review

We live in an age marked by globalization and intercultural communication, where cross-cultural interaction and its impact on individual and social lives are commonplace. With the ever-growing progress of the means of communication and transportation, people and societies are influencing each other more vigorously than ever. This intercultural interface has brought about significant changes in the behaviors and social patterns, i.e. in the identity and culture of immigrants and sojourners. Numerous models have come to be employed in the analysis of the patterns and consequences of acculturation and adaptation in an alien cultural atmosphere². Acculturation is defined as a multidirectional cultural change process triggered by intercultural contact which produces changes in attitudes, norms, behaviors, knowledge, and identity. It is suggested that when people are confronted with a culturally unfamiliar atmosphere, they experience a kind of 'cultural shock' or 'transition shock'³. This transition shock is characterized by conscious self-awareness of the new cultural paradigms. The comparison between two cultures leads to a sense of disorientation/alienation in the beginning, and then familiarization with the new culture resulting into the learning of new cultural traits and embarking on creating a new identity later. The new identity often emerges as a result of a bilateral process, i.e. retention of native cultural traits and adaptation to new social norms. Therefore, this research investigates the social indicators of the integration/retention of the Hui in their daily lives today.

We find a variety of opinions among the historians of Islam in China regarding the attitude of Muslims in Mainland China towards the Chinese culture and civilization. Donald Leslie perceives Muslims to be acculturative and conforming with the Chinese civilization and neither assimilating nor outrageously anti-Confucian⁴. Israeli on the other hand, contends that Muslims in China are totally misfit in the Confucian Chinese world order and are inherently violent and aggressive⁵. Dillon refutes the arguments of Muslim acculturation in China maintaining that the Hui 'stubbornly' preserved their identity, language, culture and most importantly their religion⁶. Dru C. Gladney argues that Muslim minorities have successfully adjusted in the Chinese society by allowing for reconciliation between religious injunctions and the Chinese culture. He strongly opposes the view representing the Muslims as an inherently problematic minority for the Chinese society⁷.

Lipman understands Muslims as ‘familiar strangers’ in China who are materially acculturated to, but religiously distinct from, the Chinese majority. According to him, the Muslims in China are ‘normal but different, Sino-phone but incomprehensible, locals but outsiders’ and thus not completely transformed by the Chinese civilizations⁸. Both Gladney and Lipman advocate that the history of Muslims in China should be written in such manner as would accommodate the variety of attitudes exhibited by the Muslims residing in China towards their host culture, because a humanistic approach to historiography prevents the reduction of their behaviors to the sharp dichotomies of either complete assimilation or total exclusion. Zvi Ben-Dor Benite opines that Muslims in China consider themselves essential to both the Chinese and Islamic civilizations and situate themselves at the intersection of the two, the simultaneity reflected in their folk stories, customs, culture, language and the body of knowledge they produced in China. Thus, he clearly refutes the dichotomy of Chinese Muslims as either Muslims or Chinese⁹. Berlie thinks that although Islam is an essential part of their identity, Muslims in China are as flexible as the bamboo in their adaptation to the Chinese civilization¹⁰. Mi Shoujiang and You Jia represent Muslims as an internalized part of the Chinese society by tracing their history from foreigners in Tang through different phases of localization and internalization under different dynasties to the Modern China of the twenty first century¹¹. We suggest that the existence of Muslims in China is a dialectical process between their adaptation to the Chinese culture (not only material but also epistemological and philosophical) and their retention of essentially Islamic religious traits.

Methodology and data collection tools

The present study employs the case study research methods used in the social sciences, which entails the observation, description and analysis of a particular case: the Hui Muslim community of Xi’an. This is a small scale qualitative research based on participant observation, interviews, and the analysis of historic, archival, and documentary material. The open ended interviews have been conducted with a view to understand the concern of people in a particular case, rather than applied as a basic instrument to find out or validate a theme. The archival and qualitative data is derived from iconography and fieldwork in Xi’an between November 2011 and December 2014. Personal observation of the nature of the Hui-Han relations in Xi’an and other Chinese localities during three years of extensive field surveys helped setting the archival data in the proper context.

Conceptual Framework of the Research

“Only in the quarter could Hui eat without anxiety, attend the mosque with ease, find suitable marriage partners, host proper life-cycle rituals, and associate with neighbors who shared their predispositions.”¹² This statement belongs to an old lady of Xi’an who uttered these words during a conversation with Maris Gillette in the 1990’s. It briefly delineates the aspects of Hui life which distinguish Hui from Han and serve as major barriers between the complete integration of the Hui into the Chinese culture. Since this research is centered upon the acculturation of a religious minority, the distinction is made between the social processes of material and religious acculturation.

This research is primarily inspired from Gans’ suggestion of reconciliation between assimilation and pluralism¹³. He differentiates between acculturation and assimilation proposing that acculturation may occur without the minority being assimilated into the larger majority group. Thus, the acculturation process leaves room for ethnic retention as well. In this vein, we propose that the ethnic culture does not stay as a passive entity or becomes a victim of acculturation but is reconstructed or invented anew every time. We see that although the Hui are acculturated into the Han society, they nevertheless retain the ethnic social ties within their community as well as their ethnic religious traits, so they are neither assimilated nor marginalized/segregated completely. Furthermore, we have embarked on the analysis of the material traits of the Hui in order to evaluate their acculturation/retention because we understand that segregation and acculturation can be imagined in terms of their concrete spatial outcomes, such as identity, socialization and networking, rather than in the terms of ambiguous theoretical debates¹⁴.

We employ here Harold S. Jacoby's conceptualization, which breaks down “assimilation” into three related but distinguishable facets: “When an immigrant group ... enters a territory occupied by another, and usually larger, body of people, the two groups are separated from one another in three different ways. First, they are culturally separate. Each has its own language, manners, beliefs, food preferences, and clothing styles. Secondly, they tend to be separate in their more durable social relationships ... separate families, separate friend-ship groups, separate religious groups, separate clubs and organizations. And thirdly, the family lines will be biologically separate. Where families exist, ancestral lines will remain wholly within one or the other population.”¹⁵ Thus, the acculturation of the Hui in the Chinese society is examined here qualitatively, in terms of four socio-religious variables, i.e. identity, dietary habits, spouse selection and marital homogamy, festivals and life passage rituals. These parameters have been chosen after an extensive ethnographic research

upon the Hui (as the researcher is free to choose the material and non-material traits from the whole cultural inventory determined by the trends of the group subjected to research).

These variables have been noticed as the distinguishing features of the Hui by many scholars of Islam in China. For instance, Israeli posits that Muslims remained isolated from and exclusive to the mainstream Chinese society throughout their history as their cultural customs and social habits were essentially incompatible with the Chinese social order. He states, "They went their own ways, in prayers and ceremonies, in their calendar and festivals, in their weddings and burial of the dead, in their socializing and eating habits, in their traveling and dwelling. Consequently, no matter how much the Muslims wished to put on an appearance of being Chinese, they were and remained Hui people, which is non-Chinese in the eyes of the Chinese."¹⁶ Thus, we can see that he highlights the very issues of identity, eating habits and life passage rituals as the features which distinguished Hui from Han Chinese. The present research is meant to prove the contrary, i.e. these features do not represent the exclusivism of the Hui in China but rather stand as the symbols of their integration in Chinese society. To elaborate even further, we posit that these features exhibit the essential duality of Muslims' selves in China as these cognitive and social aspects of their lives merged the Chinese and Islamic socio-cultural norms in a coherent and harmonious way.

Identity

Identity is one of the most often used watchwords during any research dealing with ethnic minorities. Most researchers associate it with retention and take it as the unequivocal measure of acculturation/retention of a particular ethnic community. It has been usually defined as 'self naming'¹⁷, 'self-identification'¹⁸ or 'strongly held feelings and associated actions concerning some aspect of ethnicity.'¹⁹ At a more mundane or lay level, identity is exhibited in the form of local ethnic conflicts²⁰ and workplace brawls in a multiethnic society. Like all other ethnic/cultural minorities, the Hui do possess a sense of identity that not only sets them off from their Han neighbors but also distinguishes them from the other Muslim minorities of China. We suggest that Hui identity is not only an outcome of their self-identification but its development in its more recent nuance involves various external factors, such as the inevitable role played by the PRC government and the Han majority population. Thus, we will analyse the connotations of Hui identity from both the insiders' and outsiders' perspectives.

Ethno-religious Identity and state

Religion and foreign ancestry have remained the two essential constituents of Hui identity all the way from the Ming age to New China, but the situation has changed considerably since the establishment of PRC. Islam, once the key to Hui identity, has been officially redefined as a matter of individual belief rather than a source of collective identification, and only genealogy (descent) can now determine who is or is not Hui. Despite that, for the majority of the Chinese (both Han and Hui)²¹ Islam is still an inseparable element of the Hui ethnic minority. Officially, the only element identified as common to the Hui minority all over China is their dual ancestry. They are believed to be the descendants of foreign Muslim men and Han Chinese women, so their identity is constructed through an overlapping of the Chinese and Muslim cultural realms. Ethnicity and identity should not be intermixed while discussing the state devised conception of the Huizu currently: Islam is the main component of Chinese Muslim identity rather than ethnicity. A Muslim who violates the criteria of Islamic ethic is considered a "bad Hui," but he/she absolutely cannot become a Han. Religious affiliation as such has no official recognition.²² Consequently, the concept of Minzu or nationality as coined by the state has virtually nothing to do with the religious affiliations of the term Hui. The former is purely based upon the racial grounds and ethnic origins of the Hui community. Therefore, when the term Huizu is used it denotes only a people who originated from foreign ancestors and are culturally, as well as racially, different from the local inhabitants of China, and are therefore classified as a minority.

Minzu is a concept coined by the Soviet Union, and it was adopted by the Chinese Communist state to classify the inhabitants of China and employed as a tool to Sinicize the cultural minorities. The emphasis upon the nationalization and integration of the ethnic minorities into the mainstream Chinese society has been the primary, and rather inevitable, goal of the CCP state as it is the only way to run a multiethnic state such as China. The Chinese state policy towards minorities has been described as 'applied experimental anthropology'²³. It aims to preserve and strengthen the political unity in the country, which is not possible without nationalizing and assimilating the ethnic minorities. Interestingly, the Hui represent a case of ethnic minority in China which does not fit in any of Stalin's four criteria of minzu. Minzu is applied to a group of people who share a common territory, language, form of economic livelihood, and psychology, whereas Huizu lack all of these as they are scattered all across China, speak different regional languages and practice various occupations. A good number of scholars have shown that nationality labels have been incompatibly applied in the PRC, they exhibit lack of historical precision, overlook the local conceptions of identity, and are staunch

manifestations of age-old folk Chinese notions of ethnic/racial difference²⁴. However, this does not mean that the Hui "nationality" identity was entirely enforced by the state. In fact, the Chinese Muslims actively solicited the PRC government for a "nationality" label because they wanted the state to make a distinction between them and the non-Muslim Chinese (Han), and between them and non-Chinese Muslims, such as the Turkic-speaking Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

How do Hui identify themselves?

For most Chinese Muslims prior to the twentieth century, and for many now, Islam has been at the center of Hui identity. Islam as practiced and understood by Chinese Muslims has been strongly influenced by the Chinese culture, ethics, social organization, and history, hence Hui identity has become an amalgam of Islamic and Chinese cultural practices in the course of history. Apart from their religious affiliation, it is also a matter of great significance for the Xi'an Hui that they are the descendants of early Muslim Arabs. They characterize themselves as "born of Hui paternal grandfathers and Han paternal grandmothers" and the historical records prove that this way of deeming local identity existed in the Xi'an Muslim district as early as the Ming Age, as the genealogies of Han Kitab authors explain Hui origins using the same phrase²⁵. Related accounts of Hui identity, which place the founding figures in the parental generation, occur in the Hui mythologies and folk lore²⁶. Their Arab ancestry relates them to their past and commemorates their origin, as the Xi'an Hui sometimes say "we are also Arabs to some extent" even while their Islamic identity is crucial for them in the contemporary state of affairs. Berlie, too, observes the same and states that the Islamic identity of the Hui "woven during the long history of Islam in China is constructed around written traditions such as the Koran but is also composed of simple things such as cooking and feasts that bind the community... Many Muslims do not much care about administrative concepts classifying them as an ethnic minority. In general, their religion counts for most for them."²⁷

The educated Hui of Xi'an understand the difference between the religious affiliation and the state-coined concept of nationality, and therefore they use Hui and *Muslim* independently and not synonymously. One Muslim lady Fatima elaborated on the difference by saying that Hui is only a nationality and is not an essential part of her cognitive Muslim self. She stated that what matters to her most is her religion, i.e. Islam, which connects her to the Muslim Ummah through the Islamic brotherhood. Her stance is reinforced by many other Hui youth of Xi'an who avoided the alternative usage of Hui and Muslim stressing the fact that they are not tantamount. On the other hand, some of the more introvert Hui, who are less vulnerable to state propaganda and the tools of Sinicization, still

retain the traditional connotation of Hui that was equated to Muslim essentially, since for centuries they have been called "Hui" owing to their affiliation with their religion, i.e. Islam. Here are a few of the many instances which I experienced during my interaction with Xi'an Hui. A 9 year old Hui girl whose father owned a private halal restaurant on a Muslim street, with all her peers and neighbors being Hui Muslim, asked me wonderingly how it was possible for me to be a Muslim and not a Hui. To her young mind, Hui and Muslim were two inseparable conceptual categories and all Muslims ought to be Hui essentially. This pattern of thought definitely reflected her family having nurtured her with this perception of self identification. Similarly, once a Hui taxi driver asked me whether everybody in my home country was a Hui and by Hui he meant Muslim. Then he further regretted that in Xi'an Hui girls are not very committed to religion, so he wished to travel to my country to get an observant Hui (Muslim) wife who could raise his children according to the commandments of Islam.

The most important thing in the Muslim quarter inhabitants' ideology is that their locus of ideal civilization has been Islam to this day despite the existence and propagation of CCP Marxist ideals. Although the Islam practices by the Xi'an Hui may be far from ideal, they still tend to focus on the ideal Islam. Thus, even in postmodern times, history has not changed its course for the Xi'an Hui as the waves in global Islam continue to affect them and determine their course of action by serving as a source of religious hegemony.

Qingzhen food and dietary habits

Concept of Qingzhen, Hui food and religious identity

The Concept of Qingzhen has been a crucial element of the Hui cuisine and subsequently a hallmark of Muslim identity in China since the inception of Islam. Qingzhen is the Chinese equivalent of the Islamic term 'halal' and can be literally translated as 'pure food'. With reference to this phrase, Islam in China is known as *Qingzhen jiao* and the mosques are known as *Qingzhen si*. Qingzhen is applied to the food obtained and prepared according to the Islamic laws of permission and prohibition. Hui Muslims maintain their distinct dietary modes and means and never eat at Han restaurants. The entrances to the Hui restaurants display their identity noticeably; the most frequent phrases used for this purpose include 'ta'am ul muslimeen', 'hlal', 'mat'am al-islam' and the Chinese characters for the word Qingzhen. Sometimes, the pictures of the dome of a mosque or a pitcher²⁸ are painted on the restaurant signboards.

The most important vehicle through which the concept of Qingzhen food operates among the average Hui is the Islamic pork taboo. The pork taboo has been documented among Chinese Muslims from Taiwan to Tibet and has remained in use among the Hui who have given up all other

expressions of Muslim identity²⁹. Abstinence from pork is more obvious among the Chinese Muslims than among Muslims in other regions because pork is the primary Han food for ritual use and a key ingredient in the common Han diet. The second significant implication of Qingzhen manifests itself in the process of animal butchering. The Hui eat the meat obtained after the ritualistic butchering of animals by cutting their throat (*zabiha*). The meat and other products obtained from the animals not butchered by the Hui are prohibited. In this way, Hui food becomes an exclusively community bound enterprise and an insignia of Hui identity segregating them from the Han majority.

The third noteworthy distinction of Hui food practice is the abstinence from Alcohol. Although unlike the pork taboo, alcohol is not strictly avoided by the Hui practically, but ideally it remains outside the sphere of Hui meals. Not only that, but the Hui restaurants are ideally expected to sell no alcohol even to their Han customers. In 1992, an anti alcohol committee was established to free the Muslim quarter shops from alcohol. In July 1994, this committee was very active. It conducted rallies in the quarter, arranged discussions with the ahong of different mosques. Their stance was clear that 'this part of town is *huimin diqu* and Hui standard should be enforced.'³⁰ By the Hui standard, they definitely meant the Islamic laws of prohibition of alcohol. The leaders said talking to the rallies "our parents in the 1950's and 1960's passed on to us what they knew about Islam, even though no one dared worship or talk about religion then. It is our responsibility to ensure that the young people today follow Islam."³¹ This statement refers to two concerns; the first is to safeguard the sanctity of the Hui quarter at least by protecting the Qingzhen identity of Hui, and the other is to give the new generation a proper understanding of Islam. Since Huiminjie is the area identified with Muslims and they are fortunate enough to practice Islam there under the new post-Mao regime, they must avail themselves of the opportunity and should not pollute the area with non Qingzhen food at all. Nowadays, Xi'an Huiminjie is completely free of alcohol and none of the Hui restaurants offers it, but in other parts of the city almost all Hui restaurants (operated by Xi'an Hui and not Qinghai Hui) sell alcoholic products.

The Xi'an Hui themselves tend to associate their traditional foods with their unique ethnic identity and regret the fact that they lost connection to their history as they forgot their traditional knowledge of food under Mao suppression³². Most of the scholars and ahong who were repositories of Hui knowledge were martyred during the violence of 1958 and the Cultural Revolution. Despite these losses, Hui traditional food still remains a unique element of the Muslim quarter in Xi'an and the Han often go there to relish the Hui cuisine. Serving the traditional Hui cuisine is a way for the Hui to reconnect with their past and relate to their identity.

Han Chinese people believe in the direct relationship of body traits with the food consumed. The Xi'an Hui also employ the same principle in order to justify their religious notion of Qingzhen food. They also argue for the superiority of Hui over Han on the basis of purity of the food the former consume. Since the Hui eat only Qingzhen, they are purer and cleaner as compared to the Han, as the latter may eat anything and do not distinguish between good and bad food. The Xi'an Hui do not constrain the concept of Qingzhen to apparently clean and pure food, but have instead quite extensive connotations of the word. Their understanding of Qingzhen does not confine itself to the Islamic concept of halal but is affected by the local Han beliefs as well. For instance, the Hui along with the Han believe that appearance and intrinsic qualities are closely related. They state that the animals the Hui use for food, are clean, filial, moral and domestic. The sheep and the cows remain clean, do not eat excrements, and behave properly to their parents. To explain the behavior, they say that unlike pigs (which the Han use for eating mostly), the calves and lambs never bother their mothers while suckling milk. Pigs climb over their mothers and behave improperly, whereas the lambs kneel and suckle respectfully, which points towards their filial nature. Furthermore, pigs are immoral in their mating behavior; they can have intercourse with their mothers, whereas the sheep never show such unfilial behavior. On the basis of the food consumed, the Hui possess the more appropriately filial behavior, like sheep and cows, and the Han possess unfilial and immoral characteristics like the pigs they eat. Since the Hui diet is more filial as well as cleaner, they are superior to the Han according to moral and ethical standards. Here we find a purely Confucian virtue taken into consideration by the Xi'an Hui, seeking to prove Hui superiority over the Han by using the Han archetype of virtue i.e. filial piety. Interestingly, abiding by the principle of the effect of the qualities of food on the consumer, the Hui do not eat fish with teeth, which is halal in Islam. They believe that since fish with teeth is ugly, they can grow ugly by eating ugly things.

Another persistent belief among the Xi'an Hui is that the evil spirits of the world are changed into pigs by God, so the souls of the latter are fierce. This concept corresponds to the Quranic verse which mentions that Allah Almighty punished some transgressed nations by transforming them into pigs overnight.

Dietary habits and integration into Chinese Culture

The food of a minority community can serve as a measure of its integration into the host society as suggested by Gans³³ who analyzed the meals of Italian Americans on Thanksgiving dinner. The meals of the Xi'an Hui are illustrative examples of their integration in the Chinese material culture as they combine the elements from both traditional Chinese and

Islamic cuisines. Halal things are made and served on traditional Chinese festivals, and similarly, Chinese meals are made and served on the Islamic religious occasions or life passage rituals. The most popular Hui meal, known as *pao mo*, is a combination of Muslim and Chinese cuisines. The Muslims in Arab, Central Asian and South Asian countries consume bread dipped in gravy or soup prepared with meat while Chinese Muslims add noodles from the local cuisine to this traditional Muslim food, thus creating the unique Hui meal known as *pao mo*.

The Hui, in the tradition of the Han people, divide food into the categories of *re xing* and *liang xing* meaning hot food and cold food. Therefore, their eating habits resemble those of the Han by maintaining the balance between the hot and cold components of food, which keeps the body healthy and fit.

Pork Taboo and Socializing in Chinese society

Pork taboo is the major *raison d'être* behind the social abyss between the Han and the Hui as the Hui never use the tableware of the Han, never eat at their homes and previously were even reluctant to use their water wells. According to the concept of *Qingzhen*, the Hui cannot use the pots and pans that have been used for cooking or keeping pork. They strictly avoid mixing of *Qingzhen* with even the tiniest bit of impure food and maintain that mixing the pure with the impure is the same with eating lamb stew from an impure bowl. Sometimes, a Hui will even refrain from having a cup of tea with a Han, which is a striking violation of Chinese hospitality, which becomes even more conspicuous when it is unidirectional. It can be compared to the behavior of the Hindu to Muslims in India.

All the historians and social scientists³⁴ engaged with Islam in China have noted that the dietary habits are the most marked distinction between the Han and the Hui. Indeed, the abstinence from eating pork and drinking alcohol prevented the Hui and the Han from creating social networking. The etiquette observed during drinking parties definitely shapes up the Chinese society and helps improve relationships. By not participating in such activities, the Hui place themselves outside the main Chinese social circle. Stewart rightly observes, "Eating is a huge part of Chinese social and cultural life, so difficulties in sharing food can create serious social rifts. Yet most observant Muslims (and Jews) all over the world hold this taboo, so its presence hardly constitutes a nationality. But the separation from the Han created is a major historical factor in preventing Hui assimilation over the course of their many centuries in China. The pork taboo is not constitutive of Hui identity, but a cornerstone of difference upon which it can be built."³⁵ Since Hui customs and standards of eating are different from Han, there is less probability of socialization between the two. They develop business and working

relationships with each other but avoidance and separation characterize their intergroup social relations in general. The restaurants at the universities have separate Qingzhen food areas for Hui students and employees, operated by Hui owners. Thus, in educational institutes the ethnic segregation determined by the Qingzhen food is just as visible.

Some researchers from other areas of China report that apart from the pork taboo, the Hui do not avoid Han food and are to a large extent integrated in Han society, particularly in the areas with a smaller Muslim minority. Thus, the Communist state policies of integration are working positively towards the assimilation of the Hui into the mainstream cultural sphere. It is worth noting that the cultural integration of the Hui into Han culture through food consumption does not affect their ethnic status at all, as according to the modern definition of Huizu, foreign lineage is the only determinant of Huiness. So, these increasing trends of assimilation only endanger the religious identity of Hui Muslims and not their political ethnic minority status.

Social Networking and marital homogamy

Peer selection and neighborhood relationships

Network relationships are the personal communities including family, relatives, friends, and associates, or the group of people with whom the individual is directly involved. Erickson and Freud proposed: "The family is the principal agent of religious socialization, while peers and the religious institution are secondary agents... Himmelfarb suggests that "parents socialize their children by channeling them into other groups or experiences (such as schools and marriage) which will reinforce (have an additive influence on) what was learned at home and will channel them further into adult activities".³⁶ Furthermore, it is generally believed by the social scientists that segregation of ethnic minorities in their ghettos leads to the high values of intra group social networking as well as lack of intergroup social integration.³⁷ For instance, White claims that the people who maintain strong interactive ties outside the ethnic/religious minority community and weak interactive ties within the group are least influenced by the cultural traits of their native community and are more prone to withdraw eventually.³⁸

This hypothesis has been tested through personal interviews conducted in the Xi'an Hui community. Fifty Hui youth living in the Huiminjie (including 35 males and 15 females) were asked about their peers up to the age of six. All of them affirmed to have had exclusively Hui peers in their early childhood. On the other hand, thirty Hui people living outside Huiminjie were asked the same question and most of them responded to have had almost equally Hui and Han friends during kindergarten. Next, both groups were asked about the ethnicity of their friends spanning six to eighteen years of age. The group living within the

quarter was divided on the answer with sixty percent of them having mostly Hui friends, while the remaining forty percent having both Hui and Han friends. On the other hand, the respondents living outside Huiminjie displayed a converse ratio. Seventy percent of them stated to have mostly Han friends and only twenty percent of them reported having equally both Han and Hui, whereas ten percent declared having exclusively Han friends.

Further communication with these respondents revealed that most of the Hui living in the Muslim Quarter had departed for their studies and were running their private businesses within the Muslim area, and so they had very little interaction with the Han living outside. Thus, their networking was confined to their ethnic group. Those who had Han friends, though residing in the Muslim area, were studying in High schools outside the Huiminjie, so they were bound to interact with Han peers at their educational institutes. Moreover, the Hui youth living outside Huiminjie had to spend most of their time with Han people at the educational institutes, play grounds and community neighborhoods, so their intergroup interactions were diverse, frequent and uninterrupted, leading eventually to their integration into the Han society. Among the respondents living outside Huiminjie, those who had peers equally from among the Hui and the Han belonged to the families who visited their native homes in the Muslim quarter periodically and more frequently than others. Their ethnic ties with their parental homes at Huiminjie were intact and strong even though they had moved out due to varied, inevitable reasons. By contrast, those who had exclusively Han friends belonged to the Hui families who had left their ethnic community and seldom visited their native Muslim area. They preferred to integrate in the Han culture and thus deliberately chose Han peers and neighborhoods for their children in order to accelerate the process of assimilation. Thus, we can see that the segregation of an ethnic minority in a ghetto is directly proportional to the intra-group socialization and inversely related to the intergroup integration.

Marital Homogamy and assimilation

From among the social networking institutions, the family is considered to be the principal agent of religious socialization³⁹. In the research conducted upon the socialization of the ethnic religious minorities and their trends of religious retention, marriage has been used as a tool for helping the progeny in socializing with like-minded people and for reinforcing the ethnic cultural traits in the future generations⁴⁰. Minority groups tend to be homogamous everywhere in order to preserve their identity⁴¹. On the other hand, the frequency of homogamy directly determines the extent of acculturation/retention of an ethnic minority as the families in which parents share the same cultural traits (homogamous families) exhibit more retentionist attitude towards their shared traits

than the families with mixed cultural parents (heterogamous families). Therefore, choice of the marriage mate crucially determines the ability of an individual to transmit his/her set of cultural traits to their eventual children and this axiom is emphatically true for the Xi'an Hui as well. Inter-marriage statistics have been used as indices of assimilation and retention among Americans and European immigrants frequently.⁴² We consulted the Adult Scale Orthogonal Cultural Identification Scale to investigate the influence of homogamy and heterogamy upon the cultural integration of the Hui. Thirty Hui homogamous couples and twenty heterogamous ones of Hui husbands and Han wives were selected for sampling. Each couple was asked three open-ended questions.

The first question was related to the Hui and Han festivals being celebrated within the family. Almost all the homogamous couples reported celebrating all the Hui cultural festivals and none of the Han festivals. Only five percent stated they celebrated some Han festivals occasionally with their Han colleagues, and not within the family. On the other hand, the heterogamous couples reported celebrating all the Han cultural festivals enthusiastically. As far as the Hui religious and cultural activities were concerned, forty percent of the Hui males (from heterogamous couples) responded that they celebrate their religious festivals outside the home, whereas thirty percent said that they celebrate them at home all together, and the remaining thirty percent reported that they do not celebrate Hui festivals very often. The second question was about their way of life, i.e. according to either Hui or Han cultural values/social norms. Eighty percent of the homogamous couples responded that they have an exclusively Hui life style with all the religious and cultural bindings safeguarded, whereas fifteen percent claimed having a mixture of Hui and Han lifestyles, and only five percent said that they practice most of the Han socio-cultural norms. From among the heterogamous couples, sixty percent reported practicing predominantly a Han way of life, thirty percent reported practicing a combination of Hui and Han cultural values, whereas ten percent responded they had switched to a complete Han way of life.

The third question revolved around their personal evaluation of their families, i.e. how they saw their families on the scale of integration. Sixty percent of the homogamous families rated themselves as successful in the Hui ways of life, whereas twenty percent stated that they were in a continuum between both but they tended to improve their ties with the Hui cultural values, and the remaining twenty percent stated that they tried to keep a balance between both Hui and Han socio-cultural values as they desired to enjoy a good status in the Han social setup. As for the heterogamous families, eighty percent of them rated themselves as successfully integrated into the Han cultural paradigms, whereas twenty percent said that they wanted to impart to their kids the Hui cultural values so they kept a balance between both Hui and Han values. Thus, we

can deduce from the above data that families comprised of Han mothers are more prone to integration and assimilation than those with Hui mothers, and hence homogamy is a significant instrument for keeping ethnic cultural values intact and for handing down to the next generations their native religious and cultural traits.

The elderly Hui of the Muslim quarter feared that due to increased Han socialization, inclination towards modernization and media glamour, Hui youth is moving away from Islam, so that parents needed to ensure the proper environment and necessary Islamic education for their offsprings, and most importantly, they were to emphasize homogamy.

Amalgamation is not a very common phenomenon among the Xi'an Muslims currently living in Huiminjie as they prefer to keep within the community boundaries their matchmaking. And whenever it occurs, it works in the reverse direction as the majority group member has to be assimilated in the Muslim minority by adopting their religion. But in the case of people living outside the Huiminjie, matters are different, for it rarely happens for a Hui girl to choose a Han husband; I met only one Hui woman who had married a Han man throughout my stay and she was not owned by her parental family anymore. So, the community pressures restrain Hui women from selecting Han spouses. Hui males, however, enjoy more freedom while selecting their spouses. In most cases, Han women get converted to the Islam, thus adopting the Hui religious traits. But there are many instances (including our heterogamous respondents) where Han women retain their different religious-ethnic identity and in this case the families tend to follow the Han ways of life rather than the Hui. The ethnic ties with the husband's family of origin wane and thus intra-group social integration decreases making room for intergroup integration, eventually leading to the assimilation of the next generations.

Religious festivals and life passage rituals

Cultural festivals and life passage rituals are important tools in evaluating the trends of acculturation of a community. By celebrating the traditional festivals, one revives the relationship with one's past and strengthens ties with one's inherited/native culture and tradition. The social gatherings on such occasions enhance the chances of intra-group social networking and serve as cohesive bonds between the members of an ethnic community. The enthusiastic participants in traditional ethnic/religious cultural activities intend to retain their inherited cultural traits, whereas those who do not frequent these gatherings finally detach themselves and end up being assimilated in the mainstream society. Keeping the foregoing in view, we have decided to analyze the participation of the Hui in the Islamic religious festivals and the local Han celebrations and the extent of their integration in the surrounding Han culture.

Islamic Religious Festivals

The Hui of Xi'an are closely bound to the community for the most part; although sometimes they move outside the quarter due to some inevitable reasons, educational, economic or professional, they always return to the family home for all major events including family celebrations and religious festivals. The three great religious festivals are the Feast of the Prophet, the Feast of the Sacrifice (Gu'erban jie), and the End of Fasting (kaizhai jie). The Hui share all of these festivals with Muslim Ummah all over the world and commemorate their membership of Muslim brotherhood through these cultural festivities transcending the regional boundaries. All of these festivals are celebrated according to the Muslim lunar year and are and follow the new moon phase. The feast of the Prophet P.B.U.H is celebrated on the twelfth of the third lunar month of the Hijri calendar as this is the proclaimed date of the birth of the prophet of Islam. The Hui decorate the mosques and markets with small flags, lights and chandeliers on this occasion. Special feasts are arranged and the Gedimu⁴³ mosques especially arrange religious exhortation in which the Hui from all over the quarter participate.

With the onset of the reform *Yihewani*⁴⁴ movement in the Xi'an Muslim quarter, there has been a difference of opinion on the issue of the celebration of the feast of the prophet P.B.U.H as the reform sect considers it contrary to authentic Islamic practices. Therefore, the Reform mosques do not celebrate this festival imitating the *Wahhabi* school of thought prevalent in the Gulf countries. The second major festival is *Khaizhai jie* known as *Eid ul Fitr* among the Muslims all over the world. It occurs on the first day of the tenth month of the lunar year. It marks the end of Ramadan, the month in which Muslims fast from dawn to sunset, so the Hui call it 'the festival of breaking fast'. All the mosques, irrespective of their factional affiliation, celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm. The mosques are extensively decorated. The Hui wear new dress and the males go to the mosques to offer Eid prayer after the sun rise. They exchange greetings with each other and prefer to wear garments which imitate their Muslim Arab brothers. Children teams of martial arts (*wushu*) affiliated to mosques organize martial arts shows on *Eid ul fitr*. Hui households arrange big feasts for themselves and their relatives. During the month of Ramadan, the mosques are full with people at sunset; people bring food from home and share it with each other in the mosque to break the fast. Thus, during the whole month of Ramadan and Eid ul fitr, there is a noticeable hustle and bustle in the mosques of Huimin jie which speaks for the Hui enthusiasm of celebrating their religious festivals.

The third most significant festival is *Gu'erban jie* or the *Eid ul Azha*. It occurs on the tenth day of the last month of the lunar year. It marks the occasion of Muslim pilgrimage to Makkah and is celebrated on the day immediately after the day of pilgrimage. Muslims slaughter animals on

this day as a symbol of sacrifice to God. They commemorate the tradition of Prophet Abraham who was ready to sacrifice his son in the name of God. There are special places at Huiminjie where animals including sheep, goats and cows are kept for this purpose and slaughtered on the day of the festival by reciting the name of God and abiding in the Muslim ritual way. The meat of the slaughtered animal is distributed among family members, relatives, friends and the poor people of the Hui community.

All the Hui return to their native homes to celebrate these rituals and enthusiastically participate in these activities. The Hui autonomous region of Ningxia has declared them holidays, as it comprises a Hui majority, whereas in Xi'an the Hui are granted special minority holidays to celebrate these festivals.

Chinese Cultural Festivals

The lunar New Year festival that marks the beginning of the Chinese year is also a festive moment for Muslims. Sinicized Hui watch national television programmes throughout the night, as do most other Chinese households. It is not possible for Hui youth to resist the lively, popular joyousness. Although Huiminjie is not decorated or lighted on these occasions of Chinese cultural celebration, Hui youth do participate in the celebrations. Fire crackers and fireworks are seen in the Muslim area as in other parts of Xi'an. The restaurants on the Muslim street remain open till late at night. Hui people, like the Han, go back to their hometowns, cook feasts and visit each other. Other Chinese festivals are also celebrated; for instance at the moon-cake festival, special halal moon-cakes are made and similarly, rice dumplings are made on the dragon-boat festival by the Hui on Muslim Street with the labels of halal. Chinese folk religious festivals are, however, not celebrated by the Hui; for instance, on the tomb sweeping day, Han Chinese burn fake currency and imitations of household items for the souls of their deceased relatives. The Hui strictly refrain from doing so. Similarly, at the Chinese New Year, the Han hang the paper cuttings of the door gods or the zodiac symbol associated with that year at the main entrance of their houses but the Hui houses lack such hangings. The latter adorn their houses with Arabic calligraphy or pictures of the sacred houses of God in the holy lands.



Picture 1. Hui in the mosque on Khaizhai jie



Picture 2. Hui in the mosque on Gu'erban jie



Picture 3. Ritual slaughtering of sheep on Gu'erban jie



Picture 4. A view of Hi slaughter house on Gu'erban jie



Picture 5. Hui Ahong in the prayer hall after Eid prayer

Life passage rituals

Births, weddings and funerals are the key life passage rituals in the life of the Xi'an Hui. Traditional Hui Muslims get the Holy Quran recited by a *ahong* and *mullah* at all the main life cycle rituals, whether it is a wedding or a funeral. The usual practice is for thirty men to read together in such a way that each reads a whole part together completing the Quran, but all of them read aloud and together. The voices become quite unclear and it gets hard to understand what one is reading. This practice is called *nian yixia jing* (reciting a case of scripture). Muslims give the Quranic name of *Jing ming* to the child within seven days of his birth and do *aqeeqa*. The imam of the local mosque is responsible for the selection of this Islamic name and within the community the Hui are called by their Muslim names predominantly. *Aqeeqa* is a ritualistic slaughtering of sheep (one in case of a daughter and two in case of a newborn son) and this ceremony is purely religious as Muslims all over the world perform this sacrifice in the name of God. It helps, according to their belief, the newborn guarding him/her against ailments and bad fortune. The male Hui children are circumcised, too, before reaching puberty (preferably at an early age) and there are special clinics at Huiminjie for this purpose. A feast is also arranged on this occasion by the family of the child. The practice of circumcision is found among the Hui exclusively as they inherit it from their religion. The Han condemn this act and consider it to be brutal and mutilating.

At the Hui weddings of Xi'an, on the first day there is a *nikah* ceremony called *yizabu* (*yijab*) and on the second day, the bride moves to the groom's house marking the wedding day. *Nikah* is the act of tying the knot between husband and wife in front of two witnesses. At this event, *Ahong's* presence is inevitable, as he recites some holy verses from the Quran and asks both the groom and bride if they agree to be a couple. After this act of acceptance, the man and woman become husband and wife, as authenticated by religion and society. This aspect of Hui weddings is totally different from Han weddings as all the Han have to do is get their marriage registered and conduct reception banquets to announce their relationship socially. The Hui follow purely Islamic instructions while executing the marriage contract, as their marriage becomes legal in Islamic jurisprudence only when they conduct the act of *yizabu*. Apart from this act, all wedding activities resemble those at Han weddings. Hui brides wear western white gowns which often do not express the proper modesty of a Muslim woman's dress. The *ahongs* often criticize the Han like wedding attire of Hui brides declaring the dress to be against Islam and contrary to Hui customs, but it is not enough to prevent the young couples from wearing it.

At funerals, they resemble the Han wearing white caps but become Hui while praying, chanting the scriptures and handing out donations. Their customs of preparing the dead body for the coffin and burial are

quite different from that of Han people. They give the dead body a ritual bath, wrap it in white unstitched pieces of cloth and put it in the coffin. The coffin is then taken to the mosque where the Ahong offers a prayer laying the dead body before him. All the male relatives, friends and acquaintances of the deceased join this prayer. Females, however, do not pray and stand some way off. This prayer is meant to ask for divine forgiveness for the dead person. The coffin is then taken to the graveyard where the body is buried in the grave. The family and friends of the deceased accompany the dead body to the graveyard with women usually mourning loudly. The Hui funeral procession is like the Han, where people express their sorrow loudly and mourn. Wearing mourning dress and commemorating the anniversaries of the death of ancestors is said to be an influence of Chinese customs and therefore it was criticized by the Ma Wanfu's reform sect. The food served at funerals is particularly Hui including youxiang and a bowl of mirmei (sareed) for each mourner. Meal is first served to laorenjia (the senior family members), then to males, females and finally to children, a purely Hui order. Youxiang in Xi'an are not sold in the markets, but are reserved for funerals and anniversaries.

The Hui host *guo nietie* for all important life events, including births, circumcisions, engagements, weddings, and the completion of the pilgrimage to Mecca, funerals, and death date anniversaries. *Nietie* is a transliteration of the Arabic term *niyyah*, which means "aspirations," "wishes," or "intentions". In the Hui neighborhood, any charitable act could be called *nietie* but they are usually remembrances for the dead. Gedimu adherents believe that *nietie* accumulate merit for the deceased, helping them to enter heaven. *Guo nietie* are held in private homes. They comprise a banquet and either an exhortation by an ahong or a complete recitation of the Qur'an. In this way, Hui life passage rituals become specific to their community through the recitation of their Holy Scriptures and the ritualistic way of performing certain acts.

Conclusion

We can conclude that the Hui are acculturated in the Han society but not assimilated. They have retained their identity and religious customs that mark them as different from their Han counterparts despite their apparent semblance. For centuries the Hui have safeguarded their religion and associated cultural values that keep them connected with their Muslim brothers outside the Chinese lands. Despite being classified as a purely ethnic cultural minority, they still recognize and rejoice the fact that Islam is their true identity mark. They have chosen to integrate and acculturate linguistically and materially but diligently safeguard their ethnic-religious cultural traits through preferred homogamy, strong intra-group social networking, persistent celebration of religious cultural festivals and emphasis upon the consumption of Qingzhen food. They are

enthusiastic about transmitting these values to their forthcoming generations through folk lore and Hui mythology. In view of all of the above, one can conveniently grasp the resilience of the Hui Muslim minority and anticipate their prosperous future in China with their dual identity remaining intact.

Notes

¹ For the inherent problems in the application of Leninist categories to Chinese ethnicities, please see Martin King Whyte, Ezra F Vogel, and William L Parish Jr, "Social Structure of World Regions: Mainland China," *Annual Review of Sociology* 3, no. 1 (1977).

² John W Berry and David L Sam, "Acculturation and Adaptation," *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology* 3(1997); John W Berry, "Acculturation as Varieties of Adaptation," *Acculturation: Theory, models and some new findings* (1980); John W Berry, "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," *Applied psychology* 46, no. 1 (1997). John W Berry, "Conceptual Approaches to Acculturation," (2003); John W Berry, "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29, no. 6 (2005); John W Berry, "Acculturation Strategies and Adaptation," (2007); Young Yun Kim, *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation* (Sage, 2001); Paul N Lakey, "Acculturation: A Review of the Literature," *Intercultural Communication Studies* 12, no. 2 (2003); Amado M Padilla, *Acculturation, Theory, Models, and Some New Findings*, vol. 39 (Westview Pr, 1980); Floyd W Rudmin, "Critical History of the Acculturation Psychology of Assimilation, Separation, Integration, and Marginalization," *Review of general psychology* 7, no. 1 (2003); Larry Samovar, Richard Porter, and Edwin McDaniel, *Intercultural Communication: A Reader* (Cengage Learning, 2011); Colleen Ward and Arzu Rana-Deuba, "Acculturation and Adaptation Revisited," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 30, no. 4 (1999).

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⁵ Raphael Israeli, "Muslims in China: The Incompatibility between Islam and the Chinese Order," *T'oung Pao* (1977).

⁶ Michael Dillon, *China's Muslim Hui Community: Migration, Settlement and Sects* (Routledge, 2013).

⁷ Dru C Gladney, "Islam in China: Accommodation or Separatism?," *The China Quarterly* 174(2003).

⁸ Jonathan Lipman, "Familiar Strangers: A Muslim History in China," (Stanford,

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⁹ Z.B.D. Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Published by the Harvard University Asia Center, 2005).

¹⁰ Jean A Berlie, *Islam in China: Hui and Uyghurs between Modernization and Sinicization* (White Lotus Press, 2004).

¹¹ Shoujiang You Jia Mi, *Islam in China* (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2004).

¹² Maris Boyd Gillette, *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims* (Stanford University Press, 2002), 52.

¹³ Herbert J. Gans, "Toward a Reconciliation Of "Assimilation" And "Pluralism": The Interplay of Acculturation and Ethnic Retention," *International Migration Review* 31, no. 4 Special Issue: Immigrant Adaptation and Native-Born Responses in the Making of Americans (1997).

¹⁴ Ludi Simpson, "Ghettos of the Mind: The Empirical Behaviour of Indices of Segregation and Diversity," *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society. Series A (Statistics in Society)* Vol. 170, No. 2 (2007).

¹⁵ Prodipto Roy, "The Measurement of Assimilation: The Spokane Indians " *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 67, No.5 (1967): 542

¹⁶ Israeli, "Muslims in China: The Incompatibility between Islam and the Chinese Order", 307.

¹⁷ Richard D. Alba, *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America* (Yale University Press, 1990).

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²¹ Alexander Blair Stewart, "Ways to Be Hui: An Ethno-Historic Account of Contentious Identity Construction among the Hui Islamic Minority Nationality of China," (2009), 12.

²² Berlie, *Islam in China: Hui and Uyghurs between Modernization and Sinicization*, 6.

²³ Gutorm Gjessing, "Chinese Anthropology and New China's Policy Towards Her Minorities," *Acta Sociologica* 2, no. 1 (1956): 49.

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²⁵ Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China*.

²⁶ Shoujiang Li and Karl W. Luckert, *Mythology and Folklore of the Hui, a Muslim Chinese People* (SUNY Press, 1994).

²⁷ Berlie, *Islam in China: Hui and Uyghurs between Modernization and Sinicization*, 6.

²⁸ A remarkable feature of Hui cleaning is to wash with running water and to use a pitcher or Tang kettle for this purpose. This practice can be well traced to Islamic roots where running water is declared to be clean and pure unlike stagnant water. The Hui disapprove of the Han practice of washing, as the latter use water in a basin to wash hands collectively and they may reuse the same water again. The Hui never reuse the same water and use pitchers for washing purposes, so pitchers are associated with the Hui in Xi'an. Broomhall also noted the link between Hui restaurants and the pitcher as the image of pitcher was considered

to be the identity mark of Hui eating places. Even today, the products bearing the image of a pitcher are considered to be Qingzhen in Xi'an.

²⁹ Barbara LK Pillsbury, "The Muslim Population of China: Clarifying the Questions of Size and Ethnicity," *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs* 3, no. 2 (1981).

³⁰ Gillette, *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims*, 7.

³¹ Gillette, *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and Consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims*, 132.

³² Personal communication with Musa and Isa at a Hui restaurant before Xi'an Jiaotong University on March 2013

³³ Herbert J. Gans, *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italians-Americans* ([New York]: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962).

³⁴ Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China : A Neglected Problem* (London; Philadelphia [etc.]: Morgan & Scott, ltd. ; China inland mission, 1910); Dillon, *China's Muslims*; Xiaowei Zang, *Ethnicity and Urban Life in China a Comparative Study of Hui Muslims and Han Chinese* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

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³⁶ Marie Cornwall, "The Determinants of Religious Behavior: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Test," *Social forces* 68, no. 2 (1989): 577.

³⁷ Simpson, "Ghettos of the Mind: The Empirical Behaviour of Indices of Segregation and Diversity", 406.

³⁸ Richard H. White, "Toward a Theory of Religious Influence," *Pacific Sociological Review* (1968): 574.

³⁹ Erik H. Erikson, "Growth and Crises of The" Healthy Personality", (1950).

⁴⁰ Harold S. Himmelfarb, "Agents of Religious Socialization among American Jews*," *The Sociological Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1979); Marie Cornwall, "The Influence of Three Agents of Religious Socialization: Family, Church, and Peers," *The religion and family connection: Social science perspectives* 16(1988); Alberto Bisin and Thierry Verdier, "" Beyond the Melting Pot": Cultural Transmission, Marriage, and the Evolution of Ethnic and Religious Traits," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (2000).

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⁴³ Gedimu is Chinese adaptation of the Arabic word *Qadeem* which means 'the old'. Here, it is used for the Hui denomination who took on the traditional inherited practices of Muslims in China as legitimate and authentic unlike the new Reform sects.

⁴⁴ Reform movement known as *Yihewani* 伊赫瓦尼 in Xi'an raised the slogan of *Zunjiang gaisu* which means "venerate the scriptures, reform the customs". This faction became rooted in the Xi'an Hui community only in the twentieth century and now enjoys recognition being the second largest Hui faction in Xi'an. They call themselves *Sunnaiti* (Sinicized form of *Ahlussunnah*).

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