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COMPARING STATE ACCOMMODATION
OF MUSLIM MINORITIES

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Since the end of the nineteenth century, Muslim minorities in China have been confronted by two key questions regarding their religious and national identity. These questions, once thought resolved, have reemerged with critical relevance in the aftermath of 9/11 and in the midst of the ongoing war on terrorism—a war that has affected China's Muslims more directly than any other of its many peoples. These questions have been best articulated by theorists struggling with the nature and notion of nationalism, which, when combined with religious ideologies, produces a very modern and violent strain of religious nationalism. The first question was best articulated by Benedict Anderson when he asked, in his seminal work *Imagined Communities*, why it is that one would be willing to "die for the nation" (Anderson 1991, 7). The second question is even more relevant to today's events, and was perhaps most cogently suggested by Mark Juergensmeyer (2003, 24–30) in his treatise, *Terror in the Mind of God*. Seeking to understand the logic of religious violence, he asks how seemingly good people can commit terrorist acts against others "in the name of religion." Jessica Stern (2003) rephrased this question in her book, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill*. The questions are close, but distinct. Anderson asks what makes it possible for so many people "not so much to kill, as willingly die for such limited imaginings" (1991, 7). For Juergensmeyer and Stern, it is more a question of why *expanded* imaginings (the certainty of Truth, the quest for eternal salvation, the restoration of religious sovereignty) have led so many people to martyr not only themselves, but to take others with them. For many analysts, transnational Islamist movements have provided a key to answering both these questions: why Muslims would so willingly die, as well as take so many others with them.

Chinese government reports suggest that Uyghur militants have killed and are threatening to kill other Chinese citizens in the name of radical Islam, drawing direct parallels to current events in nearby Chechnya and neighboring Afghanistan. Since the end of the nineteenth century, China has been engaged in an unremitting project of nationalization and secularization that includes, among other things, emancipation from its imperial past, engagement with Western political institutions, and establishment of complete control over its bounded territory. One ongoing challenge to this nationalist project, with roots in the early twentieth century, is that of a widespread sovereignty movement among a Muslim minority known as the Uyghur. That the largest Muslim minority in China, known as the Hui, have neither participated in nor been sympathetic to such a movement speaks volumes on the diversity of Islamic identity and practice in China over the last century in response to state projects of nationalization and secularization.

The identification of China's Muslims as distinct minorities has been redefined over the centuries. The people now known as the Hui were from the beginning the liminal, the perpetual immigrants to China; as Jonathan Lipman (1997) calls them, in the title of his Hui history, they are "familiar strangers." Not only do they have an entirely different culture from their hosts, but despite over 1,300 years of intermarriage and integration, they are still regarded as a separate race. In China, "race . . . would create nationhood," according to Dikötter's (1992, 71) thesis, and this idea had much to do with Han Chinese representations of Hui religious and national identity. Even their name in Chinese, *Hui Hui* (回回), can mean "to return" (literally, "return and return"), as if they have never been at home in China and are destined to leave. Descended from Persian, Arab, Mongolian, and Turkish Muslim merchants, soldiers, and officials, the so-called Hui who settled in China between the seventh and fourteenth centuries intermarried with Han women, living together in largely isolated communities; the only thing that some—but not all—had in common was a belief in Islam. Until the 1950s, Islam in China was simply known as the "Hui religion," (*Hui jiao* 回教) and believers in Islam were "Hui religion disciples" (*Hui jiao tu* 回教徒).

The term *Hui* (回) narrowed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century from a generic term including all Muslims, no matter what their ethnolinguistic background, to denote mostly Chinese-speaking Muslims who were caught up in the nationalist movements of twentieth-century China. Djamal al-Din Bai Shouyi, the famous Hui Marxist historian, was the first to argue persuasively that a Muslim is different from a Hui person (*Hui min*) and Islam should be glossed in Chinese as *Yisilan jiao* (Islam), not *Hui jiao* (Bai 1951). In a chapter entitled "The Huihui People and the

Huihui Religion," Bai (1951) argued that even though Hui are descendants of Muslims and have inherited certain Muslim cultural traditions such as pork abstention, they do not all necessarily believe in Islam. He argued that the Hui are descended from Muslims who believed not in their own religion, but in the world religion of Islam, and therefore are Muslims in faith. In ethnicity they are the Hui people, not Hui religion disciples. In Marxist terms, he identified a process of the indigenization of a world religion, in this case Islam, to a local context, which for the communities now known as the Hui had been going on for 1,300 years. Muslim groups identified by Chinese linguists as having their own language derived their ethnonym from their language family; in this way the Uyghur, Kazakh, Tajik, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Tatar were identified. In this, the Chinese were heavily influenced by the 1920s Soviet identification of these peoples in Soviet Central Asia (Connor 1984, 53ff). Bai Shouyi went on to identify Muslim peoples not distinguished by language or locality by a catch-all phrase—the *Hui min*. Thus, the official category of the Hui was legitimated, and one might even say invented (so far as the legal definition of who is considered Hui is concerned).

For China's Muslims, two questions strike to the heart of their ethnoreligious identity as minorities in a non-Muslim state: should they die for the (Chinese) nation? Or should they support terror in the name of religion and heed the call of jihadist Islam? After the events of the last ten years in Xinjiang, as well as deteriorating violence in nearby Chechnya and Uzbekistan, not to mention the ongoing presence of the Taliban (and presumably al-Qaeda) in neighboring Afghanistan and Pakistan (despite the loss of their titular leader, Osama bin Laden), these questions are increasingly demanding response.

Notably, China hosted Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in April 2012, which the Turkish daily *Hurriyet* heralded as not only the first visit of a Turkish prime minister to China in twenty-seven years, but also the inaugural arrival of *any* Turkish prime minister to the restive Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang—a region that many Turks regard as an ancient Turkic homeland—since the founding of either republic (*Hurriyet Daily News*, April 12, 2012). As will be discussed below, this may signal a new effort by China's leadership to address problems in the region, where civil unrest in July 2009 was China's bloodiest incident since the Tiananmen protest of 1989. This may also be seen as part of China's continuing efforts to maintain national unity and address separatist movements at home and abroad. On December 14, 2003, for the first time in its history, China's Ministry of Public Security acknowledged its terrorist problem by releasing a list of four organizations and eleven individuals deemed to be state terrorists, all

of them Uyghur. This list included the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), which was identified as an international terrorist organization by the United Nations in 2002 after Chinese and U.S. prompting, as well as the Eastern Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO), the World Uygur Youth Congress (WUYC), and the Eastern Turkistan Information Center (ETIC). The eleven identified Eastern Turkistan terrorists were: Hasan Mahsum, Muhanmetemin Hazret, Dolqun Isa, Abudujelili Kalakash, Abudukadir Yapuquan, Abudumijit Abduhammatkelim, Abudula Kariaji, Abulimit Turxun, Huadaberdi Haxerbik, Yasen Muhammat, and Atahan Abuduhani (*Xinhua*, December 14, 2003). Of these, Hasan Mahsum, the reputed leader of the ETIM, had been reportedly killed in a Pakistani raid on an al-Qaeda camp in Waziristan on October 2, 2003 (Radio Free Asia 2003). On November 10, 2003, I actually met Dolqun Isa, a young Uyghur living in Munich (who was also included on the list of terrorists), who was the elected president of the WUYC (also listed as one of four terrorist organizations). During that meeting Mr. Isa claimed that he had nothing to do with terrorism, that such violence was contrary to his devout faith in Islam, and handed me a printed anti-terrorism brochure of the East Turkistan (Uyghuristan) National Congress (2003) that was entitled "Help the Uyghurs to Fight Terrorism." Mr. Isa is still barred from traveling to the United States as a result of being placed on this list.

These rather conflicting reports raise important questions about the status of Muslim minorities, transnational Islam, the war on terror, and the institutional links between the state and the status of religion and Muslim identity politics in the People's Republic of China (PRC) since September 11, 2001. Are all Muslims supportive of Uyghur separatism? Is Uyghur separatism inspired by radical Islam? Why do the Hui not support an independent Islamic state? How do these differences illustrate the unity and diversity of Islam in China today?

Muslims in China live as minority communities amid a sea of people who, in their view, are largely pork-eating, polytheist, secularist, and heathen (*kafir*). Nevertheless, many of their small and isolated communities have survived in rather inhospitable circumstances for over a millennium. Though small in terms of population share (about 2 percent in China, 1 percent in Japan, and less than 1 percent in Korea), the Muslim populations of East Asia are nevertheless large in comparison with those of other Muslim states. In fact, there are more Muslims living in China today than there are in Malaysia, and more than in every Middle Eastern Muslim nation except Iran, Turkey, and Egypt (and about the same number as in Iraq). Indeed, China's primary objection to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(NATO) involvement in Kosovo centered on its fear that this might encourage the aiding and abetting of separatists, a potential problem in light of the fact that independence groups in Xinjiang, Tibet, and even Taiwan remain a major Chinese concern. Muslims in Asia form the largest regional Islamic population in the world. And if Kosovo and Bosnia are to serve as lessons, failure to accommodate Muslim minorities can lead to national dismemberment and international intervention.

This chapter seeks to examine Muslim minority identity and expression in China with special attention to strategies of accommodation among the Hui and Uyghur. I put forth the thesis that successful Muslim accommodation to minority status in China can be accomplished if Muslim groups can reconcile the dictates of Islam to the shifting contexts of their particular sociohistorical setting. This goes against the view that can be found in the writings of some analysts of Islam in China, such as Raphael Israeli and Michael Dillon, who have consistently argued that Islam in the region is almost unavoidably rebellious and that Muslims in general are inherently problematic to a non-Muslim state (Israeli 1981, 2002; Dillon 1997, 2004). For these analysts, the questions about Muslim identity in China raised at the beginning of this chapter have already been answered: Muslims in China—whether Uyghur, Hui, or otherwise—are Muslims first and citizens last; their loyalty is to transnational Islam, which will always be a threat to a nationalizing, secularizing state that seeks to regulate religion in the name of modernity and authority.

China's Islams

According to the reasonably accurate 2000 national census of China, its total Muslim population is 20.3 million. This number encompasses the Hui (9,816,805), Uyghur (8,399,393), Kazakh (1,250,458), Dongxiang (513,805), Kyrgyz (160,823), Salar (104,503), Tajik (41,028), Uzbek (14,502), Bonan (16,505), and Tatar (4,890).[1] The Hui speak mainly Sino-Tibetan languages; Turkic-language speakers include the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Salar, and Tatar; combined Turkic-Mongolian speakers include the Dongxiang and Bonan, concentrated in Gansu's mountainous Hexi corridor; and the Tajik speak an Indo-Persian dialect. It is important to note, however, that the Chinese census registered people by nationality, not religious affiliation, so the actual number of Muslims is still unknown, and all population figures are clearly influenced by politics in their use and interpretation. Nevertheless, there are relatively few Han converts to Islam, and perhaps

1 For an analysis of 2000 population statistics, see Yang and Ding (2002).

even fewer members of the ten nationalities listed above who would dare to say they are not Muslim, at least in front of their parents. As I have argued elsewhere (Gladney 1996, 112–18), Muslim identity in China can best be described as ethnoreligious: history, ethnicity, and state nationality policy has left an indelible mark on the contemporary Muslim identity, and it is almost impossible to discuss Islam without reference to ethnic and national identity.

While the Hui have been labeled Chinese-speaking Muslims, Chinese Muslims, or even Sino-Muslims,[2] this is somewhat misleading since by law all Muslims living in China are Chinese by citizenship, and many (who are also classified by the state as) Hui speak various non-Chinese languages (such as the Tibetan, Mongolian, Thai, and Hainan [海南] Muslims). Yet most Hui are closer to the Han Chinese than the other Muslim nationalities in terms of demographic proximity and cultural accommodation, and have adapted many of their Islamic practices to the Han ways of life—which has often been criticized by Muslim reformers. In the past, acculturation was not as problematic for the Turkish and Indo-European Muslim groups, as they were traditionally more isolated from the Han and their identities not as threatened, but this has begun to change in the past few decades. As a result of state-sponsored nationality identification campaigns in the 1950s, these groups began to think of themselves more as ethnic nationalities than as only Muslims. The Hui are unique among the fifty-five identified nationalities in China in that they are the only nationality for whom religion (Islam) is the only unifying category of identity, even though many members of the Hui nationality may not practice Islam.

Resulting from a succession of Islamic reform movements that have swept across China over the past six hundred years, one finds a wide spectrum of belief and practices among the Muslims in China today. Archaeological discoveries of large collections of Islamic artifacts and epigraphy on the southeast coast suggest that the earliest Muslim communities in China were descended from Arab, Persian, Central Asian, and Mongolian Muslim merchants, militia, and officials who settled first along China's southeast coast from the seventh to the tenth centuries, and then took part in larger migrations to the north from Central Asia under the Mongol Yuan dynasty in the thirteenth to the fourteenth centuries. They gradually intermarried with the local Chinese populations, and raised their children as Muslims. Practicing the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam, they resided in relatively isolated, independent Islamic

2 For a debate over the definition of the Hui and reference to them as "Sino-Muslims," see Lipman (1997, xxiv). See also James Frankel's (2011, 15–17) recent contribution that follows this reasoning closely, which argues that the "simultaneity" of the Hui Muslim identity infuses Islam with a Confucian mentality.

villages and urban enclaves clustered around a central mosque, relating with each other via trading networks. These communities belonged to the wider Islamic *Umma* (the "community of faith") and were headed by an *ahong* (阿訇, also written 阿洪, or *aheng* 阿衡, from the Persian *akhund*, which means "preacher") who was invited to teach on a more or less temporary basis.

Sufism began to have a substantial impact in China proper in the late seventeenth century, arriving mainly along the Central Asian trade routes with saintly *shaykh*s, both Chinese and foreign, who brought new teachings from the pilgrimage cities. These charismatic teachers and tradesmen established widespread networks and brotherhood associations, most prominently the Naqshbandiyya, Qadariyya, and Kubrawiyya. The hierarchical organization of these Sufi networks helped in the mobilization of large numbers of Hui during economic and political crises in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, assisting widespread Muslim-led rebellions and resistance movements against the late Ming and Qing imperial rule in Yunnan, Shaanxi, Gansu, and Xinjiang. The 1912 nationalist revolution allowed further autonomy in the Muslim-concentrated regions of the northwest; wide areas came under Muslim warlord control, prompting frequent intra-Muslim and Muslim-Han conflicts until the eventual Communist victory led to the reassertion of central control. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Wahhabi-inspired reform movements, known as the Yiheiwani (依黑瓦尼, also written 伊黑瓦尼, or Yihewani 伊赫瓦尼, from the Arabic *ikhwan*), rose to popularity under nationalist and warlord sponsorship. They were noted for their critical stance toward traditionalist Islam as too acculturated to Chinese practices, and Sufism as too attached to saint and tomb veneration. These Islamic movements have influenced all present Muslim nationalities in China; however, they found their greatest political expression among the Hui, who were faced with the task of accommodating each new Islamic movement with Chinese culture. Among the northwestern Muslim communities, especially the Uyghur, their more recent integration into Chinese society as a result of Mongolian and Manchu expansion into Central Asia has forced them to reach social and political accommodations that challenged their identity. The Uyghur are perhaps the least integrated into Chinese society, while the Hui are at the other end of the spectrum (due to several historical and social factors that are discussed below).

Uyghur Indigeneity and Challenges to Chinese Sovereignty

While Lipman describes the Hui as "familiar strangers" in Chinese society, Gardner Bovingdon (2010) tellingly characterizes the Uyghur, in his excellent treatise, as "strangers in their own land." After nearly ten years of

relative peace in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, sporadic incidents of violence in 2008 presaged a huge urban uprising in Urumqi on July 5, 2009, that nearly overwhelmed local authorities, leading to the highest death toll from civil violence in the history of the PRC.[3] Previously, in 1997, bombs exploded in a Beijing city park on May 13 (killing one), on two buses on March 7 (killing two), and in the northwestern border city of Urumqi (the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) on February 25 (killing nine), though none of these incidents were independently verified as being promulgated by Uyghurs. There were thirty other bombings in 1998 and six in Tibet as well, most of which were attributed to Muslim and Tibetan separatists. Many Uyghur Muslims have been executed since those events of the late 1990s, with hundreds arrested on suspicion of taking part in ethnic riots and engaging in separatist activities. Though the harsh treatment of the suspects had been sporadically reported since the early 1980s, it was frequent in the late 1990s, as documented in a scathing report of Chinese government policy in the region by Amnesty International (1999).

These events of the late 1990s probably represent the only documented incidents of well-coordinated violence that took place at the same time across urban and national spaces. Nothing since has matched the level of sophistication or coordination. On August 11, 1999, the *Wall Street Journal* reported the arrest of Rebiya Kadeer (a well-known Uyghur businesswoman who had once represented the Xinjiang region at the International Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995) during a visit by the United States Congressional Research Service (USCRS) delegation to the region, indicating China's strong response to the violence (Johnson 1999). Amnesty International labeled Rebiya a "prisoner of conscience," as her only tangible offense was an unsuccessful attempt to meet with the USCRS (Amnesty International 2000). Her release to the United States in 2005 and her active role in promoting a World Uyghur Congress (WUC), led to her assuming a prominent position among the Uyghur exile community (both in the United States and abroad) and her being labeled as a "terrorist" and "separatist"

3 Estimates ranged from 140–400+ deaths (two-thirds of which were Han Chinese), and led to unprecedented coverage and criticism in the Chinese media (*Xinhua*, July 7, 2009; also Pei 2009; Bloomberg 2009). One year later, the Uyghur American Association (2010) issued an extensive report on the uprising, *Can Anyone Hear Us? Voices from the 2009 Unrest in Urumchi*. A follow-up report examined the aftermath of the riots in the city: *A City Ruled by Fear and Silence: Urumchi Two Years On* (Uyghur American Association 2011). Also available is a graphic video of the harsh treatment of suspected Uyghur militants, "Arbitrary Detention of Uyghurs after July 5, 2009" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRcOZOygmZc), and an edited video report by the *Guardian,* "Urunqui [sic] Fight" (http://vimeo.com/16243553).

by the Chinese government.[4] Her leadership helped galvanize the Uyghur diaspora like never before; some analysts started referring to her as the Uyghur "Dalai Mama." She has extensively publicized the plight of the Uyghur people through social media and international news outlets.

It is important to note that the Uyghur protests and subsequent crackdowns of the 1990s and mid-2000s have rarely been connected to freedom-of-religion issues, but rather to a range of indigenous rights issues, of which religion has been only one concern. Chinese officials argue that so-called splittists violate the law and that full freedom of religion is allowed under Article 36 of the constitution.[5] An earlier white paper on the National Minorities Policy (published just prior to the fiftieth anniversary of the PRC in October 1999) argued that religious freedom was guaranteed for all minorities, but acknowledged that there were continuing problems in minority regions, including vast economic inequities (China State Council 1999).

Despite ongoing tensions and frequent reports of isolated terrorist acts, there has been no evidence that any of these actions have been aimed at disrupting the economic development of the region. Not a single documented incident has targeted infrastructure (railways, bridges, power stations, airports), which one would expect of a well-organized terrorist or separatist conspiracy. Most confirmed incidents have been directed against the Han Chinese security forces, recent Han Chinese émigrés to the region, and even Uyghur Muslims perceived to be too closely collaborating with the Chinese government. Even those who claim there is active Taliban and al-Qaeda involvement in the Uyghur violence have a hard time pointing to incidents that resemble al-Qaeda attacks—such as violence involving sophisticated weaponry, roadside bombs, or even suicide bombings.[6] Almost all incidents have involved low-grade weaponry (knives, stones), public buses, and

4 Ms. Kadeer testified on June 10, 2009, to the U.S. Committee on Foreign Affairs, Congressional Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight (Kadeer 2009).

5 Article 36 of the PRC Constitution states: "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief. No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion. The state protects normal religious activities. No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state. Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination."

6 Rohan Gunaratna as cited in "Xinjiang Riot Hits Regional Anti-Terror Nerve" (2009). He has recently been sued by the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) for his writings that suggest the CTC has links to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) (Gunaratna 2011).

public security targets (police stations, checkpoints, and so on). Most analysts agree that China is not vulnerable to the same ethnic separatism that split the former Soviet Union (USSR), but few doubt that, should China fall apart, it would divide (like the USSR) along centuries-old ethnic, linguistic, regional, and cultural fault lines. If this happens, Xinjiang would split up in a way that would resemble the tumult experienced in the neighboring region of modern Kashmir, or the mid-1990s violent civil war of Tajikistan.

The historical discussion of the Uyghur below elaborates the ongoing tensions in the area and the implications for future international relations and possible refugee flows. What has changed dramatically is the role of the Internet and that of the international media in informing domestic Uyghur of world events. Despite China's efforts to control the Internet and staunch the information flow, many Uyghur from the region continue to find ways to connect to the outside world and are well aware of events in South Asia and the Middle East.

Ethnic and cultural divisions in the region showed themselves at the end of China's last empire—being as it was divided for over twenty years by regional warlords with local and ethnic bases in the north and south, and by Muslim warlords in the west. Ethnicization has meant that the current cultural fault lines of China and Central Asia increasingly follow official designations of national identity. Hence, for Central Asia, the breakup of the USSR did not lead to the creation of a greater Turkistan or a pan-Islamic collection of states, despite the predominantly Turkish and Muslim population of the region. Rather, the USSR dissolved along ethnic and national lines that had been created by the Soviet state itself. China's booming economy and increased attention to domestic integration and security suggests that it is not about to fall apart anytime soon, yet it has unresolved ethnic and religious conflicts that are increasingly attracting international concern.

Xinjiang: A New Region Rooted in the Past

Chinese histories notwithstanding, every Uyghur firmly believes that his ancestors were the indigenous people of the Tarim Basin, which was not known in Chinese as Xinjiang ("New Dominion") until the eighteenth century. The identity of the people today known as the Uyghur is a rather recent phenomenon related to Great Game rivalries, Sino-Soviet geopolitical maneuverings, and Chinese nation-building. While a collection of nomadic steppe peoples known as the Uyghur have existed since before the eighth century, their identity as "Uyghurs" was rarely mentioned in historical sources between the fifteenth and the twentieth centuries. It is one of the world's least-subtle ironies that Chinese histories resolutely assert the

long-term dominance of the region by Chinese rulers, yet continue to offi-cially promote the term Xinjiang (新疆 "New Dominion") as the territory's appellation. The irony is certainly not lost on the Uyghur, who continue to regard themselves as an internal colony of China, and a rather recent one at that (Dautcher 2009; Gladney 1998b).

It was not until the fall of the Turkish Khanate (552–744 CE) to a people reported by the Chinese historians as *Hui-he* (回紇) or *Hui-hu* (回鶻) that we find the beginnings of the Uyghur empire. At this time the Uyghur were part of a collection of nine nomadic tribes, who, initially in confederation with other Basmil and Karlukh nomads, defeated the Second Turkish Khan-ate and then dominated the federation under the leadership of Koli Beile in 742.[7] As the Uyghur became more sedentary and defeated the Turkish Khanate, trade with the unified Chinese Tang state became especially lu-crative. This was accompanied by socioreligious change: the traditionally shamanistic Turkic-speaking Uyghur came increasingly under the influence of Persian Manichaeanism, Buddhism, and eventually, Nestorian Christi-anity. Extensive trade and military alliances along the old Silk Road with the Chinese state developed to such an extent that the Uyghur gradually adopted the cultural, dress, and even agricultural practices of the Chinese. The conquest of the Uyghur capital of Karabalghasun in Mongolia by the nomadic Kyrgyz in 840 (without rescue from the Tang, who might by then have been intimidated by the wealthy Uyghur empire), led to further seden-tarization and crystallization of the Uyghur identity. One branch that ended up in what is now Turpan took advantage of the unique socioecology of the glacier-fed oases surrounding the Taklamakan and were able to preserve their merchant and limited agrarian practices, gradually establishing Kho-cho (also known as Gaochang), the great Uyghur city-state based in Turpan for four centuries (850–1250). With the fall of the Mongol empire, the de-cline of the overland trade routes, and the expansion of trade relationships with the Ming, Turfan gradually turned toward the Islamic Moghuls, and, perhaps in opposition to the growing Chinese empire, adopted Islam by the mid-fifteenth century.

The Islamicization of the Uyghur from the tenth to as late as the seven-teenth century, while displacing the Buddhist religion, did little to bridge their oases-based loyalties. The people of Uyghuristan, centered on Turpan, resisted Islamic conversion until the seventeenth century and were the last to be known as Uyghur. The others were known only by their oasis or by the generic term of "Turki," and spoke a Turkic language that is closely related to modern Uzbek (though unlike the cyrillic Uzbek script borrowed

7 For an excellent historical overview of this period, see Franke and Twitchett (1994).

from Russian, they use a modified Arabic script that was revived in the 1970s). With the arrival of Islam, the ethnonym *Uyghur* fades from historical record. Indeed, the late Joseph Fletcher concluded that the contemporary Uyghur identity was a product of modern notions of nationalism (a derivative discourse, to use Partha Chatterjee's [1986, 11] formulation, of Soviet and Chinese Communist policies), perhaps in order to "divide and rule" the Uyghur as much as to recognize and incorporate them into new nation-states. Joseph Fletcher (1968, 364n96) concludes:

> The Uighur empire (ca. 760–840) once stretched as far as Kashgaria. But the idea that the Kashgarians and the inhabitants of Uighuristan were one and the same nationality—let alone that they were all Uighurs—is an innovation stemming largely from the needs of twentieth-century nationalism.

This history is crucial for this chapter, as I will argue that a fully formed Uyghur identity did not exist until the modern era, and this national identity was aided by Soviet and Chinese policies of colonization and nationalization. The idea of a Uyghur nation, and an eventual independent state that has roots back in the seventh-century Uyghur empire, has been further aided by regular references on the Internet to the Uyghur's romanticized, territorialized past.[8] The Uyghur culture and its people's genetic makeup reflect the fact that they migrated from Mongolia to the region now known as Xinjiang or Eastern Turkistan. This region was always at the center of a civilizational crossroads for long-distance travelers who spoke Iranian, Indian, Chinese, Tibetan, Turkic, Mongolian, and even European tongues. Until their rather belated conversion to Islam (compared to the rather rapid conversion of the other Central Asian peoples), the Uyghur were eclectic multi-religionists (Tang 2005). The Uyghur-dominated oases of the region, due to their superior agricultural and mercantile economies, were frequently overrun by nomadic powers from the steppes of Mongolia and Central Asia, and intermittently, Chinese dynasties who showed only occasional interest in dominating the trade routes across Eurasia. According to Morris Rossabi (1979), it was not until 1760, and after their defeat of the Mongolian Zungars, that the Manchu Qing dynasty exerted full and formal control over the region, establishing it as their new dominion (Xinjiang新疆). The Qing were mainly interested in pacifying the region by setting up military outposts, which supported a vassal-state relationship. This administration lasted barely a hundred years, before it fell to the Yakub Beg rebellion

8 One of the best examples of this is "Introduction to Uyghur Culture and History," a website maintained by the ethnomusicologist Nathan Light, http://homepages.utoledo .edu/nlight/uyghpg.htm (last updated March 2005; last visited January 2014).

(1864–77) and expanding Russian influence. Colonization had begun with the migrations of the Han in the mid-nineteenth century, but was cut short by the Yakub Beg rebellion, the fall of the Qing empire in 1910, and the ensuing warlord era, which dismembered the region until its incorporation as part of the People's Republic in 1949.

The Great Game played among China, Russia, and Britain further contributed to divisions among the Uyghur along political, religious, and military lines. The peoples of the oases, until the challenge of nation-state incorporation, lacked any coherent sense of identity. Thus, the incorporation of Xinjiang for the first time into a nation-state required unprecedented delineation of the so-called nations involved. The reemergence of the label *Uyghur,* though arguably inappropriate as it was last used five hundred years previously to describe the largely Buddhist population of the Turfan Basin, stuck as the appellation for the settled Turkish-speaking Muslim oasis dwellers and was never disputed by the people themselves or the states involved. There was too much at stake for the people labeled as such to wish to challenge that identification. Uyghur nationalists today accept the direct lineal descent from the Uyghur kingdom in seventh-century Mongolia as a fact, despite rather tenuous historical links to this kingdom.[9]

The end of the Qing dynasty and the rise of Great Game rivalries saw the region torn by competing loyalties and marked by two short-lived and drastically different attempts at independence: the proclamations of an East Turkestan Republic (ETR) in Kashgar in 1933 and another in Yining (Ghulje) in 1944 (Wang 1999, 21).[10] As Linda Benson (1990) has extensively documented, these rebellions and attempts at self-rule did little to bridge competing political, religious, and regional differences within the Turkic Muslim people who did not become officially known as the Uyghur until 1934 under successive Chinese Kuomintang (KMT) warlord administrations. Andrew Forbes (1986) describes in exhaustive detail the many ethnic, religious, and political cleavages during the period 1911–49 that pitted Muslim against Chinese, Muslim against Muslim, Uyghur against Uyghur, Hui

9 The best "Uyghur nationalist" retelling of this unbroken descent from Karakhorum is in the document "Brief History of the Uyghers," originating from the Eastern Turkestani Union in Europe (http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/55/041.html, last visited January 2014). For a review and critique, including historical evidence of the multiethnic background of the contemporary Uyghur, see Gladney (1998a, 812–34). For a discussion of the recent archeological evidence derived from DNA dating of desiccated corpses found in Xinjiang, see Mair (1998, 1–40).

10 The best discussion of the politics and importance of Xinjiang during this period is that of an eyewitness and participant, Owen Lattimore (1950).

against Uyghur, Uyghur against Kazakh, warlord against commoner, and Nationalist against Communist.

The Uyghur today claim these two important short-lived periods of independent Uyghur rule as indisputable evidence of self-governance and even secular-inspired democratic rule. During the first period, Uyghur, Uzbek, and other Central Asian Turkic peoples formed the ETR in Kashgar for less than a year in 1933, which was inspired by religious, Islamic ideals. A decade later, the Soviet Union supported another attempt at independent Uyghur rule, establishing a more secular nationalist state (another Eastern Turkestan Republic) in the northern part of Xinjiang, now the town known as Yining (a Russian consulate was even opened in recognition of the newly formed nation-state). During 1944–5 the ETR fought against the Chinese Nationalists (KMT) who were holding southern Xinjiang. Due to a wartime alliance between the KMT and the Soviets, the Russians eventually pressured the ETR to cooperate with the Chinese, and they formed an uneasy alliance, until the Chinese Communists defeated the KMT and occupied the region in 1949 (which was described as a "peaceful liberation," due to Sino-Soviet cooperation at that time). Uyghur nationalists had hoped to achieve a semi-independent republic along the lines of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, but they had to settle for recognition as a Chinese "minority nationality" in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (新疆维吾尔自治区), which had much less juridical authority than the Soviet republics. The extraordinary factionalism and civil disunion during this period, which depleted lives and resources in the region on a large scale, still lives in the minds of the population. It is this memory that many argue keeps the region together, perhaps due to a deep-seated fear of widespread social disorder (Millward 2007).

Today, despite continued regional differences among three, and perhaps four macroregions (including the northwestern Zungaria plateau, the southern Tarim Basin, the southwest Pamir region, and the eastern Kumul-Turpan-Hami corridor), there are nearly 10 million people spread throughout this vast region that regard themselves as Uyghur, among a total population of 17 million (Rudelson 1998, 8).[11] Many of them dream of, and some agitate for, an independent Uyghuristan. The KMT's nationality policy identified five peoples of China, with the Han in the majority. The Uyghur were included at that time under the general ethnonym of the Hui nationality, which included all Muslim groups in China. This policy was continued under the Communists, who eventually recognized fifty-six nationalities, including the Han majority, and ten Muslim minority nationalities delineated

11 For Uyghur ethnogenesis, see also Chen (1977, 57) and Gladney (1990, 1–28).

from within the general category of Hui (which under the CCP consisted of mainly Chinese-speaking Muslims).

A profoundly practical people, the Uyghur and their regional leaders actually invited the People's Liberation Army (PLA) into the region after the defeat of the Nationalists in 1949. The "peaceful liberation" by the Chinese Communists of Xinjiang in October 1949, and their subsequent establishment of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region on October 1, 1955, perpetuated the Nationalist policy of recognizing the Uyghur as a minority nationality under Chinese rule. Ongoing political uncertainties and social unrest led to large migrations of the Uyghur and Kazakh from Xinjiang to Central Asia between 1953 and 1963, culminating in a Central Asian Uyghur population of approximately 300,000. This migration stopped with the Sino-Soviet split in 1962 and the border was closed in 1963, only to be reopened twenty-five years later in the late 1980s.[12]

The separate nationality designation awarded to the Uyghur in China continued to mask considerable regional and linguistic diversities, including the non-Uyghur groups (such as the Loplyk and Dolans) who had very little to do with the oasis-based Turkic Uyghur Muslims. At the same time, contemporary Uyghur sovereignty activists look back to the brief periods of independent self-rule under Yakub Beg and the ETR, in addition to the earlier glories of the Uyghur kingdoms in Turpan and Karabalghasan, as evidence of their rightful claims to the region. Contemporary Uyghur independence organizations based in Istanbul, Ankara, Almaty, Munich, Amsterdam, Melbourne, and Washington may differ in their political goals and strategies for the region, but they all share a common vision of a continuous Uyghur claim on the region that has been disrupted by Chinese and Soviet intervention. The independence of the former Soviet Central Asian Republics in 1991 did much to encourage these Uyghur organizations in their hopes for an independent Uyghuristan, despite the fact that the new, mainly Muslim, Central Asian governments all signed protocols with China in Shanghai in the spring of 1996 that they would not harbor or support separatists groups. These protocols were reaffirmed in the August 25, 1999, meeting between Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin, committing the Shanghai Five nations (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan) to respect border security

12 The best account of the Uyghur diaspora in Central Asia—their memories of migration, and longing for a separate Uyghur homeland—is a video documentary by Sean R. Roberts, *Waiting for Uighurstan* (Roberts 1996). Roberts maintains a blog that regularly comments on Xinjiang and Central Asian affairs (http://www.roberts-report.com/). A virtual archive of interviews with the Uyghur diaspora and other Uyghur-related videos is being maintained by S. L. James (http://www.archive.org/details/uyghurs).

and suppress terrorism, drug smuggling, and separatism (Brahimi 1999; Hoyt 2013). This policy was notably enforced on June 15, 1999, when three alleged Uyghur separatists (Hammit Muhammed, Ilyan Zurdin, and Khasim Makpur) were deported from Kazakhstan to China, with several others in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan awaiting extradition (Eastern Turkistan Information Center 1999). The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has evolved from what was originally a trade-and-border-settlement alliance to become an increasingly powerful multilateral organization with a strong focus on anti-terrorism security cooperation.

That Islam became an important, but not exclusive, cultural marker of Uyghur identity is not surprising, given the sociopolitical oppositions with which the Uyghur were confronted. In terms of religion, the Uyghur are Sunni Muslims, practicing Islamic traditions similar to their coreligionists in the region. In addition, many of them are Sufi, adhering to branches of Naqshbandiyya Central Asian Sufism. The Uyghur are powerfully attached to their musical traditions, folklore, and patronage of saintly tomb complexes (*mazar*).[13] These practices are anathema to the strict Wahhabi-inspired Islamist codes of the Taliban and al-Qaeda, who have severely persecuted many Sufis and folk artists.

However, it is important to note that Islam was only one of several unifying markers of the Uyghur identity, depending on with whom they were cooperating at the particular time. This suggests that Islamic fundamentalist groups such as the Taliban in Afghanistan will have only limited appeal among the Uyghur. For example, to the Hui Muslim Chinese in Xinjiang, numbering over 600,000, the Uyghur distinguish themselves as the legitimate autochthonous minority, since both share a belief in Sunni Islam. In contrast to the formerly nomadic Muslim peoples (such as the Kazakh, who number more than one million), the Uyghur stress their attachment to the land and their oases of origin. Most profoundly, modern Uyghur, especially those living in larger towns and urban areas, are distinguished by their resistance to Chinese influence and incorporation. Therefore, Islamic traditions have often become the focal point of Uyghur efforts to preserve their culture and history. One such popular tradition that has resurfaced in recent years is that of the *Mashrap*, where young Uyghurs gather to recite Islam-inspired poetry and celebrate Uyghur songs, dance, and food. These evening events have often become the foci for Uyghur resistance to Chinese rule in past years.

Although within the region many portray the Uyghur as united around separatist or Islamist causes, Uyghur continue to be divided from within by

13 See an important article by a female Uyghur ethnohistorian on Uyghur tomb complexes and grave veneration with beautiful color photographs (Dawut 2009).

religious conflicts (in this case competing Sufi and non-Sufi factions), territorial loyalties (whether they be of oases or places of origin), linguistic discrepancies, commoner-elite alienation, and competing political loyalties. These contested loyalties continue to influence much of the current debate over separatist and Chinese claims to the region. That many of these divisions over Islam and regions of origin are beginning to be overcome in the diaspora marks an important development in global Uyghur identity. As Kristian Petersen (2006, 66) notes, the Internet has played an increasingly important role in uniting Uyghur sectarianism and factionalism.

Han Nationalism and the Uyghur

The Uyghur are an official minority nationality of China, identified as the second largest of ten Muslim peoples in China, primarily inhabiting the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Many Uyghur with whom I have spoken in Turfan and Kashgar argue persuasively that they are the autochthonous people of this region. The fact that over 99.8 percent of the Uyghur population are located in Xinjiang, whereas other Muslim peoples of China have significant populations in other provinces (for example, the Hui) and outside the country (for example, the Kazakh), contributes to this important sense of belonging to the land. The Uyghur continue to conceive of their ancestors as originating in Xinjiang, claiming to outsiders that "it is our land, our territory," despite the fact that the early Uyghur kingdom was based in what is now Outer Mongolia, and the present region of Xinjiang is under the control of the Chinese state.

Unprecedented sociopolitical integration of Xinjiang into the Chinese nation-state has taken place in the last forty years. While Xinjiang has been under Chinese political domination since the defeat of the Zungar in 1754, until the middle of the twentieth century it was only loosely incorporated into China proper. The extent of the integration increased since the 1940s alongside Chinese policies encouraging greater Han migration, improved communication, higher education, and dramatic occupational shifts in the region. This enlarged the Han local population by a massive 2,500 percent between 1940 and 1982 (representing an average annual growth of 8.1 percent), and they have maintained an average growth of nearly 5 percent ever since. Indeed, many conclude that China's primary program for assimilating its border regions is a policy of integration through immigration.[14] This was certainly the case for Inner Mongolia, whose Mongol population now stands at a mere 12 percent, and—given the following figures—may well be the future for Xinjiang.

14 For China's minority integration program, see Mackerras (1994).

The increase of the Han population has been accompanied by the growth and delineation of other Muslim groups in addition to the Uyghur. Accompanying the remarkable rise in the Han population, a dramatic increase in the Hui (Dungan, or mainly Chinese-speaking Muslim) population can also be seen. While the Hui population in Xinjiang increased by over 520 percent between 1940 and 2010 (averaging an annual growth of 4.4 percent), the Uyghur population has followed a more natural biological growth of 1.7 percent. The Han population has gone from under 5 percent in the 1940s to over 40 percent today. This dramatic increase in both Han and Hui population has also led to significant tensions between the more recent immigrants and multi-generational Uyghur Muslims of the region. These tensions are exacerbated by widespread beliefs held among the exiled Uyghur community and international Muslims that the Muslim populations of China are vastly underreported by the Chinese authorities. Some Uyghur groups claim that there are upwards of 20 million Uyghur in China and nearly 50 million Muslims, but there is little evidence to support those figures.

The opening of China, under Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, led to increased exchange with the outside world. International travel began in large numbers for the Uyghur in the 1980s and 1990s. An important development in the 1990s was the opening of a rail line between China and Kazakhstan through the Ili corridor to Almaty, and the opening of several official gateways with the surrounding five nations on its borders. With the resumption of normal Sino–Central Asian relations in 1991, trade and personal contacts expanded enormously, leading many Uyghur to see themselves as important players in improved Sino–Central Asian exchanges. On a 1988 trip from Moscow to Beijing through the Ili corridor, I was surprised to find that many of the imported Hong Kong–made electronic goods purchased by Uyghur with hard currency in Canton and Shenzhen found their way into the marketplace and hands of relatives across the border in Almaty—who are also identified by the Kazakhstan state as Uyghur. However, since the late 1990s, Uyghur travel abroad has been severely restricted due to security concerns, and it is nearly impossible for most average Uyghur citizens to obtain a passport, let alone a visa to a foreign country.

Meager Uyghur Efforts at Cultural Survival

Integration with China has not been smooth for the Uyghur. Many Uyghur resent the threats to their cultural survival and have resorted to violence. After denying them for decades and stressing instead China's "national unity," official reports have detailed ethnic conflicts in the border

regions of Tibet, Yunnan, Xinjiang, Ningxia, and Inner Mongolia. With the March 1997 bus bombings in Beijing, widely attributed (though never verified) to Uyghur separatists, coupled with the Urumqi bus bombings on the day of Deng Xiaoping's 1997 memorial on February 25, Beijing was forced to try to account for the reasons for Muslim discontent, despite a long history of presenting all minorities as happy, smiling citizens. The Yining uprising on February 7, 1997, (which left at least nine dead and hundreds injured, with seven Uyghur suspects arrested and many later executed) was heavily covered by the world's media. This distinguishes these events from problems in the region in the mid-1980s that met with little media coverage. In 1996 the *Xinjiang Daily* reported five serious incidents since February 1996, and a crackdown that rounded up 2,773 terrorist suspects, 6,000 pounds of explosives, and 31,000 rounds of ammunition. Overseas Uyghur groups claimed that over 10,000 suspects had been arrested in the roundup, with over 1,000 killed. The largest protest in the 1990s, in February 2–8, 1996, was sparked by a Chinese raid on an evening *Mashrap* meeting. Protests against the arrests made during the meeting led to 120 deaths and over 2,500 arrests. On March 2, 1996, the pro-government *mullah* of Kashgar's Idgah mosque and his son were stabbed by knife-wielding Uyghur militants; on May 27, 1996, there was another attack on a senior government official; and in September of the same year, six Uyghur government officials were killed by other Uyghurs in Yecheng.

The government responded severely in the late 1990s to these events with widespread arrests and new policy announcements. In spring 1998 the National People's Congress passed a New Criminal Law that redefined "counter-revolutionary" crimes to be "crimes against the state," liable to severe prison terms and even execution. Included in "crimes against the state" were any actions considered to involve "ethnic discrimination" or "stirring up anti-ethnic sentiment." Many human rights activists have argued that this is a thinly veiled attempt to criminalize political actions and to make them appear as illegal as traffic violations, supporting China's claims that it holds "no political prisoners." Since any minority activity could be regarded as stirring anti-ethnic feeling, many ethnic activists are concerned that the New Criminal Law will be easily turned against them.

Chinese authorities rightly note that increasing international attention to the plight of the indigenous border peoples has put pressure on the regions. Notably, the former chair of the Unrepresented Nations and People's Organization (UNPO) based in the Hague was a Uyghur, Erkin Alptekin—son of the Uyghur nationalist leader, Isa Yusuf Alptekin, who died in Istanbul in December 1995 (and has a park dedicated to his memory there). There

are an increasing number of international organizations working for reform and increased sovereignty in Xinjiang (under the name of Eastern Turkestan). An organization that seeks to coordinate these disparate movements is the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), formed in 2004 with Erkin Alptekin as president. During its biannual meeting from May 21–25, 2006, in Washington, DC, the congress elected Rebiya Kadeer as president. Although, as Chung (2006, 7) has noted, the WUC is merely an umbrella organization uniting for the first time a large number of disparate Uyghur diaspora organizations in a democratic format, the Chinese government has nevertheless labeled the WUC a "terrorist organization" (Shen 2007, 101). Clearly, with Xinjiang representing the last Muslim region under Communism, Chinese authorities have more to be concerned about than just international support for Tibetan independence.

Documented separatist and violent incidents in Xinjiang have dropped off dramatically since the late 1990s. Philip Pan (2002) reported in a *Washington Post* interview that local Xinjiang security officials were only able to cite three relatively small occurrences. Beijing's official publication of the separatist issue may have more to do with domestic politics than any real internal or external threat. Recent moves (such as evidenced during the 2008 Olympics) suggest efforts to promote Chinese nationalism as a unifying ideology that will prove more attractive than Communism and more manageable than capitalism. By highlighting separatist threats and external intervention, China can divert attention away from the domestic challenges of natural disasters (especially the 2008 Sichuan earthquake), financial crises (such as China's economic downturn), rising inflation, increased income disparity, displaced floating populations, Taiwan reunification, and many other internal and external problems facing Xi Jinping's government. Perhaps nationalism will be the only unifying ideology left to a Chinese nation that has begun to distance itself from Communism, as it has from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism in the past. This is perhaps why religiously based nationalisms, such as Islamic fundamentalism and Tibetan Buddhism, are targeted by Beijing, while the rise of shamanism and popular religion goes nearly unchecked among Han and other minority communities (Yang 2008). At the same time, a firm lid on Muslim activism in China sends a message to foreign Muslim militant organizations to stay out of China's internal affairs, and the Taliban to stay well within their Afghan borders. Although it is hard to gauge the extent of support for Uyghur separatism among the broader population, it is clear that cultural survival is a critical concern for many, and a significant attempt to preserve Uyghur culture is taking place, assisted to some extent

by international tourism and the state's attempts to demonstrate its good-will toward its restive Muslim population (see Gladney 2004, 79).

Hui Muslims and Islamic Accommodation to Chinese Society

The variety of religious orders within Hui Islam represent a long history of reforms and Islamic movements. The late Joseph Fletcher (1988) was the first to suggest that the nature of China's present-day Islamic communities and orders can be traced to successive "tides" of influence and individuals who entered China during critical periods of exchange with the outside world. Like a swelling and ebbing sea, the influence of these movements grew or diminished with the interaction of China's Muslims and the Islamic world. This influence was not based on population migrations as much as gradual and profound exchange between the two regions. While this study does not begin to address Islam's complex history in China, an introduction to the context of Islamic reforms is necessary for an understanding of the challenges facing Hui accommodation to Chinese culture. All such reforms sought to transform Islam in China, accommodating Chinese culture with textual and discursive standards in the Middle East that were discovered by Muslims from China on the Hajj or preached by peripatetic Middle Eastern representatives of these movements in China. What many of the Muslims in China did not recognize, however, was that just as Islam in China had shifted over time on the periphery, so had the so-called "center" in the Middle East. The somewhat quixotic quest of these Muslims at the distant edge of Islamic influence for the fundamentals of their faith, and the dialectic interaction between periphery and center, engendered the rise of a series of reformist tides that washed across the Chinese Islamic hinterland (similar to movements among other Muslims in Asia). Just as Muslims in the Middle East peripheralize those in the wider diaspora as not truly Muslim (especially those not conversant in Arabic), Muslims in Asia often homogenize all Middle Eastern Muslims as Arab and religiously Sunni. This reflects a kind of "oriental orientalism," a formulation I employed in an earlier article (Gladney 1994a, 12) to describe the process whereby Muslims and other subject peoples might exoticize their own communities for pride and occasional profit.

The First Tide: Gedimu Traditional Chinese Islam

The earliest Muslim communities were descended from the Arab, Persian, Central Asian, and Mongolian Muslim merchants, militia, and officials who settled along China's southeast coast, and in the northwest in large and small numbers from the seventh to the fourteenth centuries. Generally residing in

independent small communities, they became known as the *Gedimu* (格迪目, from the Arabic *qadim*, "old") and were followers of Sunni, Hanafi Islam.[15]

These old Islamic communities established an early Hui pattern of zealously preserving and protecting their identity as enclaves ensconced in the dominant Han society. Each village was centered upon a single mosque headed by an *ahong,* who was invited to teach on a more-or-less temporary basis, and who usually moved every three years, on average, from one mosque to another. A council of senior local elders and *ahong*s were responsible for the affairs of each village and the inviting of the itinerant imam. Among late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century travelers who observed these isolated communities, Robert Ekvall (1939, 19) remarks, "I know of no strictly farming village where there is an equal mixture of the two groups [Han and Hui]; in every case the village is predominantly one or the other. In some instances, the population is composed almost entirely of one group, with only a few hangers-on of the other." Ekvall suggests that because different cultural, ritual, and dietary preferences might lead to open conflict, the communities preferred physical separation.

This isolation was mitigated somewhat during the collectivization campaigns of the 1950s, when Han and Hui villages were often administered as clusters by a single commune. They were brought closer together through national telecommunications and transportation networks established by the state, including such umbrella organizations as the China Islamic Organization (established in 1955), which sought to coordinate religious affairs among all Muslim groups. With the complete dismantling of the commune system, however, these rather isolated and homogeneous Hui communities have become much more integrated with the market and Han Chinese communities. While these disparate communities among the *Gedimu* in the past were generally linked only by trade and a sense of a common religious heritage (an attachment to their basic ancestral Islamic beliefs), it was the entry of the Sufi brotherhoods into China that eventually began to link many of these isolated communities together through extensive socioreligious networks.

The Second Tide: Sufi Communities and National Networks

Sufism did not begin to make a substantial impact in China until the late seventeenth century, during the second tide of Islam's entrance into China. Like Sufi centers that proliferated after the thirteenth century in other

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15 Many of the rural Hui with whom I spoke in the northwest had not even heard of Shi'ism, even though the Iran-Iraq war was at its height during my fieldwork and in the daily news.

countries (Trimingham 1971, 10), many of these Sufi movements in China developed socioeconomic and religio-political institutions around schools established by descendants of the early Sufi saintly leaders—known in Chinese as the *menhuan* (门宦), the "leading" or "saintly" descent groups.

The important contribution that Sufism made to religious organization in China was that the leaders of the mosques throughout the order owed their allegiance to their *shaykh* (the founder of the order who appointed them) and remained in the community for long periods of time, unlike the *Gedimu ahong*s who were generally itinerant, not well connected to the community, and less imbued with appointed authority. *Gedimu* mosque elders were loyal to their village first, and connected only by trade to other communities.

Many Sufi reforms spread throughout northwest China during the early decades of the Qing dynasty (mid-seventeenth to the early eighteenth centuries). Increased travel and communication among Muslims, both east and west, during what Fletcher terms the "general orthodox revival" of the eighteenth century, had great influence on Muslims from West Africa to Indonesia, and not least of all, on China's Hui Muslims (see Voll 1982, 33–86). Exposure to new ideas led to a reformulation of traditional Islamic concepts that rendered them more meaningful and practical for the Hui Muslims of that time. While socioeconomic organization is perhaps Sufism's most lasting contribution to Islam in China, the original contest between Sufis and non-Sufis was over much more practical turf. Sufis criticized traditional Muslims for being too materialistic and bound to their mosques, their rituals (such as the burning of incense to their ancestors), their lack of proficiency in the original texts, their use of Chinese in worship, and the adorning of their mosques with Quranic quotations and *hadith* (sayings and stories attributed to the Prophet) on colorful banners and flags. They also condemned them for wearing the traditional Chinese white funeral dress and sullying Islam with other Chinese cultural practices. They called for a purified return to the ascetic ideals of the Prophet and his Sufi followers and offered a more immediate experience of Islam through the rituals of remembrance and meditation and the efficacy of saints, instead of the daunting memorization and recitation of Quranic texts. While theirs was a reformist movement, it was less textual than experiential, revealing the power of Allah and his saints to transform one's life through miracles, healing, and other transformative acts.

Sufi orders were gradually institutionalized into such forms as the *menhuan*. Only four orders maintain significant influence among the Hui today. These were identified by Claude Pickens (1942), a Protestant missionary in northwest China, as the Qadiriyya, Khufiyya, Jahriyya, and Kubrawiyya. While

these are the four main *menhuan*, they are subdivided into a myriad of smaller branch solidarities along ideological, political, geographical, and historical lines. A detailed history of these divisions and alliances would reveal the tensions created for Hui communities, as they attempted to reconcile perceived disparities between the indigenous practice of Islam in China with the Islamic ideals as represented by the returned Hajji or itinerant foreign preachers who maintained, in their eyes, more orthodox interpretations of Islam.

It is unfortunate, but perhaps quite natural, that Western scholarship has prolonged the confusion of early Chinese writers over the rise of Sufism and the later Islamic orders in China. As each Islamic reformer established a new following in China, often in conflict with other older Islamic orders, the new arrivals replaced or converted the older and more traditional Islamic communities. Chinese officials during the Ming and the Qing dynasties naturally referred to these communities with their new teachings as *xinjiao* (新教, that is, "new religion" or "teaching," not "new sect" as it has been erroneously translated). As each new arrival replaced an older one, it became known as the "new" or even "new new" teaching (*xinxinjiao*新新教)—as was the case when the Ikhwan first arrived in China. Traditional Islam among the Hui generally was referred to as *laojiao* (老教), the "old teaching(s)." Also, some orders that had been new at one time were gradually classified as *laojiao* when even newer orders arrived (e.g., the Khufiyya, an early Naqshbandiyya Sufi order, became classified as an old teaching). Often those who saw themselves as old or more true to the established traditional beliefs of Islam represented the reformers as "new" and, thus, suspect. The reformers, on the other hand, generally thought of themselves as more orthodox, due to their more informed, sometimes esoteric interpretations of Islam, imbibed during their travels to the Muslim heartlands. They thus resented the title of "new teachings" (or the even more derisive, "new new teachings") and preferred to be known by the names of their orders—Qadariyya, Naqshbandiyya, Wahhabi, Ikwan, and so on—though the critics continued to refer to them as "new teachings" or "new sect." Even the name *Gedimu*, for the older Islamic communities in China, is a not-so-subtle jibe at the other Islamic orders as being *newer* and more removed from the traditional fundamentals of Islam in China.

These designations became important politically as well as theologically during the mid-nineteenth-century rebellions in the northwest (some of which were led by Sufi leaders), when the Chinese state proscribed all of those movements that became known as new teachings to root out the more rebellious Hui communities. This was precisely the rationale that had also

been used to proscribe Buddhist sectarian movements under the general rubric of the White Lotus rebellion in China, whereas recent scholarship has revealed only a few Buddhist movements fell under the shadow of that stem (Naquin 1976). Unfortunately, Chinese and Western scholars perpetuated these designations and until recently there were no accurate descriptions of the Hui Islamic orders in China (Israeli 1981, 155–80). The post-1979 opening of China to the West allowed for the appearance of Chinese publications on these groups as well as Western fieldwork for the first time, giving us a better glimpse into their origins and socioreligious complexity.

The Qadiriyya

While there is some dispute among the Sufis themselves as to which order was the earliest to enter China proper (since there had been regular contact with the Sufi orders of Central Asia for centuries), it is generally agreed that one of the earliest to be established firmly on Chinese soil was the Qadiri *tariqa* ("path," or Islamic "order"). The founder of the Qadariyya *menhuan* in China is Qi Jingyi (祁静一, Hilal ad-Din, 1656–1719). Known among the Hui as Qi Daozu (祁道祖, Grand Master Qi), he was buried in the "great tomb" (*da gongbei* 大拱北) shrine complex at Linxia (临夏), which became the center of Qadiriyya Sufism in China (Gladney 1987, 507–8). One of the reasons that Qi Jingyi continues to be greatly revered among all Sufis in China is because tradition suggests that he received his early training from two of the most famous Central Asian Sufi teachers—Khoja Afaq and Khoja Abd Alla. Qi Jingyi supposedly met with the revered Naqshbandi leader Khoja Afaq (see below) in Xining (西宁) in 1672, but (according to Qadariyya records) the master sent the sixteen-year-old acolyte home, saying: "I am not your teacher (*yu er fei shi* 余尔非师). My ancient teaching is not to be passed on to you. Your teacher has already crossed the Eastern Sea and arrived in the Eastern land. You must therefore return home quickly, and you will become a famous teacher in the land" (Ma 1983, 330). Qadiriyya followers today believe that their saint received the blessing of the great Naqshbandi Khoja Afaq, while their order was formally founded by his second teacher, Khoja Abd Alla, a twenty-ninth-generation descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (Trimingham 1971, 40–44). Chinese Sufi records state that he entered China in 1674 and preached in Guangdong, Guangxi; Yunnan, Guizhou; and Linxia, Gansu, before his eventual death in Guizhou in 1689 (Ma Tong 1989). While Abd al-Kadir al-Jilani is the reputed founder of the Qadiri *tariqa*, Abd Alla is known to have studied in Medina under the renowned Kurdish mystic, Ibrahim b. Hasan al-Kurani (1616–90), who was

initiated into both the Naqshbandi and Qadiri *tariqas* and several other Sufi orders (see below).

The appeal of Qadiriyya Sufism as a renewal movement among the Hui is related to its combining ascetic mysticism with a noninstitutionalized form of worship that centers on the tombs of deceased saints rather than the mosque.[16] The early Qadiriyya advocated long-term isolated meditation, poverty, and vows of celibacy. The head of the order did not marry and eschewed family life, a radical departure from other Islamic traditions in China. The Qadiriyya Sufi continued to attend the *Gedimu* mosques in the local communities in which they lived, gathering at the tombs for holidays and individual worship. Qi Jingyi was known for his emphasis upon ascetic withdrawal from society, poverty, and self-cultivation. Formalized Islamic ritual as represented by the "five pillars" (fasting, pilgrimage, prayer, almsgiving, and recitation of the *shahadah*—the confession of faith) was deemphasized by Qi Jingyi in favor of private meditation. The Qadiriyya maintain that: "Those who know themselves clearly will know Allah" and "The saints help us to know ourselves first before knowing Allah." They believe that union with the divine is accomplished through meditation and self-cultivation, rather than formalized public ritual. "The moment of thinking about Allah," they maintain, "is superior to worshiping him for a thousand years." Sufi mysticism in China combines many themes of the Daoist tradition, and draws heavily on its metaphysical vocabulary (Izutsu 1983; Murata 2000).

A Chinese inscription above the entrance to a Qadiriyya branch tomb complex in Beishan Hui (北山会) cemetery, Linxia, reads: *ti Dao wu she* ("the Dao is unceasing"). Through religious terminology familiar to the Hui in China, Confucian moral tenets, Daoist mystical concepts, and Buddhist folk rituals infused with new Islamic content pervade Qadiriyya Sufism (Ma 1983, 328–54). Although the Qadiriyya *menhuan* has always been less influential than other Sufi orders in China due to its rejection of worldly political involvement, it set the stage for many Sufi orders to follow. By stressing the intimate experience of Allah through the power of his appointed *shaykh*, Sufism in China became a force for renewal and transformation exemplified by a return to the pure ascetic ideals of Islam, and

16 Forbes (1986, 75) regards the popularity of tombs among the Hui as "probably due to isolation from the Islamic mainstream." On the other hand, Joseph Trippner (1961, 145) argues that these "grave-worshiping cults" give evidence of the pervasive influence of Shi'ism among the Hui. Alternatively, I suggest (Gladney 1987, 501–17) that the tombs reveal a wide variety of Hui religious meaning, serving as important charters that link different Hui communities to their foreign Muslim heritage.

initiated a new sociopolitical Islamic order. At once reformist and transformative, it unleashed a new tide of reform that swept across China.

The Naqshbandiyya

The Naqshbandi *tariqa* became most rooted in Chinese soil through the establishment of two *menhuan*—the Khufiyya and Jahriyya—that were to exercise tremendous influence on the history of Islam in China, especially the northwest. As Joseph Fletcher (n.d., 11) argued, "the history of the Naqshbandiyya is the history of Islam" from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in China. Fletcher goes on to explain that the reform movement emphasized

> . . . a shar'ist orthopraxy, political activism, propagation of the religion, and a strong Sunni orientation [which] came to mark the Naqshbandiyya in a way that proved definitive in the mystical path's subsequent history. . . . Two other general characteristics of popular mysticism, namely the veneration of saints (misleadingly called 'saint worship' by non-Muslim writers) and the seeking of inspiration by visiting and meditating at the saints' tombs (misleadingly referred to as 'tomb worship'), were also prominent features of the Altishahr Naqshbandiyya.

Founded by Baha' ad-Din Naqshband (d. 1389), who lived in Mawarannahr (a Central Asian region west of the Pamirs), the Naqshbandiyya order gradually spread east across trade routes, and by the middle of the fifteenth century gained ascendance over other Central Asian Sufi orders in the oasis cities of Altishahr, surrounding the Tarim River Basin in what is now southern Xinjiang. The Naqshbandi order that gained the most prominence in the Tarim Basin and played an important role in later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century politics in Xinjiang, was the Makhdumzada, established by Makhdum-i A'zam (also known as Ahmad Kasani, 1461–1542). It was his great-grandson, Khoja Afaq (d. 1694), known in Chinese sources as Hidayat Allah, who was the saint most responsible for establishing the Naqshbandiyya among the Hui in northwest China (Trippner 1961, 142–71). Khoja Afaq (Khwaja-yi Afaq, "the master of the horizons"), founded the Afaqiyya in Xinjiang, and from 1671 to 1672 visited Gansu, where his father, Muhammad Yusuf, had previously visited and preached (reportedly converting a few Hui and a substantial number of the Salars to Naqshbandi Sufism). During this influential tour, Khoja Afaq visited the northwest cities of Xining, Lintao (临洮), and Hezhou (河州) (now Linxia, China's "little Mecca"), preaching to Hui, Salar, and northeastern Tibetan Muslims. Two of these early Hui Gansu Muslims became his disciples and went to Central Asia and

the pilgrimage cities to be further trained in the order. When they returned to China, they established the two most important Naqshbandi brotherhoods among the Hui in the northwest—the Khufiyya and the Jahriyya.

Throughout its history, the Naqshbandiyya has stressed an active participation in worldly affairs (Schimmel 1975, 367). Their *shaykh*s worked wonders, chanted the powerful *mathnawi* texts of the Muslim Sufi mystic Jalal ad-Din Rumi (d. 1273), and advocated scriptural reforms. They emphasized both self-cultivation and formal ritual, withdrawal from and involvement in society. Unlike the Qadiriyya, their leaders enjoyed families and material wealth accrued from the donations of their followers. They also became committed to political involvement and social change based on the principles of Islam. Some of the Naqshbandiyya orders in China, I argue, advocated more of a transformationist perspective, in which they sought to change the social order in accordance with their own visions of propriety and morality. This inevitably led to conflicts with the Chinese rule and local governments, causing some orders of the Naqshbandiyya, especially the Jahriyya, to be singled out for suppression and persecution. By contrast, the Khufiyya sought more conformist solutions to local conflicts, stressing personal internal reform over political change. The different stance that the Naqshbandiyya orders took in China with regard to the state and Chinese culture reflects their dialectical interaction with local interpretations of identity and changing sociopolitical realities in the northwest: under one Sufi tradition, there were two movements and two interpretations of fundamental reform. A brief introduction to these two movements is necessary for our understanding of the later challenges to the movements by later reformers as a means of accommodating their interpretations of Islam with a changing Chinese political culture.

The Naqshbandi Khufiyya

During his 1672 visit to Hezhou, Khoja Afaq played an important role in the life of a certain Ma Laichi (马来迟, 1673–1753), a Hui of extraordinary talents who went on to found one of the earliest and most influential Naqshbandiyya orders in China, the Khufiyya *menhuan*. According to Sufi tradition, Ma Laichi was born to a childless couple after they received Khoja Afaq's blessing, and was later raised and trained by one of his disciples, Ma Tai Baba (马太爸爸, "great father"), who later gave him his daughter in marriage and passed on to him the leadership of the mystical path that he had received from Khoja Afaq (Ma 1983, 223–47). From 1728 to 1781, Ma Laichi went on pilgrimage to Mecca, Yemen, and Bukhara, where he studied several Sufi orders, and became particularly influenced by Mawlana

Makhdum—a man of uncertain origin, who Fletcher hypothesizes may have been Indian. When he returned from his pilgrimage, Ma Laichi established the most powerful of the Khufiyya *menhuan*, the Huasi (花寺, "flowery mosque") branch, propagating the order for 32 years among the Hui and Salar in Gansu and Qinghai (青海), before his death in 1766 at the age of 86. The *menhuan* is still quite active and centered on the Linxia Hui Autonomous Region, Gansu, at the tomb of Ma Laichi, which was restored in 1986.

Originating in an earlier Naqshbandi Sufism of Central Asia and Yemen, the Khufiyya order was permeated with an emphasis on a less poltical participation in society, the veneration of saints, the seeking of inspiration at tombs, and the silent *dhikr* ("remembrance," from whence came the name *Khafiyya*—the "silent" ones [Fletcher 1978, 38; Schimmel 1975, 172, 366]). There are now over twenty subbranch *menhuan* throughout China, with mosques in Yunnan, Xinjiang, and Beijing. Most Khufiyya orders are concentrated in Gansu, Qinghai, Ningxia, and Xinjiang. In outlying areas (such as northern Ningxia), several of the original Khufiyya practices have blended in with traditional Chinese Islam over time.

The Naqshbandi Jahriyya

The second Naqshbandi *tariqa*, the Jahriyya order, was founded in China under the dynamic leadership of Ma Mingxin (马明心, 1719–81). One of the most fascinating historical detective stories is the tracing of Ma Mingxin's spiritual lineage to Mizjaja, a village on the outskirts of Zabid in northern Yemen, by Joseph Fletcher (Ford 1974, 153–55; Fletcher 1975). While Chinese Sufis have known for generations that Ma Mingxin studied in the Middle East, it was never clear whom he received his "new teaching" from or where he studied. Middle Eastern Sufi accounts recorded the presence of Chinese Muslims studying in certain Sufi areas, but only Joseph Fletcher was able to put the two together. This was an important discovery, as Ma Mingxin's Sufi practice was thought to be novel, even heterodox, and the subject of many conflicts in northwest China. The controversy centers on Ma Mingxin's use of the *jahr* in remembrance ("vocal *dhikr*"—from whence comes the name *Jahriyya*, the vocal ones), which he openly advocated in opposition to the Khufiyya's silent remembrance, the more standard Naqshbandi practice. After an extensive search through arcane Sufi documents (in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Chinese) and a final personal trip to Yemen, Fletcher discovered that the name of the anonymous Sufi saint, under whom Chinese Muslim records indicate Ma Mingxin studied, was az-Zayn b. Muhammad Abd al-Baqi al-Mizjaji (1643/44–1725), a Naqshbandi Sufi whose family home was in Mizjaja, Zabid. Chinese Sufi records

only indicate that Ma Mingxin studied in Yemen in a Sufi order known as the *Shazilinye*, whose *shaykh* was Muhammad Bulu Seni, but do not detail the full ancestry and origins of the order. Most Jahriyya also only state: "the root of our order is Arabia, the branches and leaves are in China" (Ma 1983, 365). This discovery is extremely significant in the history of ideas, as it is known that az-Zayn had studied in Medina under the famous Kurdish mystic, Ibrahim b. Hasan al-Kurani (1616–90), who also advocated the use of vocal formulae in the remembrance of Allah (*al-jahr bi-'dh-dhikr*). Al-Kurani's students were at the forefront of Islamic reform and revolutionary movements throughout the Islamic world.

Under the direction of al-Kurani's student, it is not surprising that Ma Mingxin returned in 1744 after sixteen years of study in Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula with more activist and radical reforms on his mind. While advocating the use of the vocal *dhikr*, he generally opposed the heavy emphasis on the veneration of Islamic saints that had become popular in China. He also disputed the breaking of the fast at the beginning of the Ramadan feast followed by the Khufiyya; he maintained it was to be after the prayer, whereas the Khufiyya allowed for feasting before going to the mosque for prayer. This dispute led to bloody conflicts well into the early twentieth century. As the disputes grew worse and conflicts erupted, Qing troops, fresh from the conquest of Xinjiang in 1759, did not wish to have any more trouble among Muslims in Gansu. They arrested Ma Mingxin in 1781 and executed him as his followers attempted to free him. Three years later they crushed another uprising lead by a Jahriyya Sufi, Tian Wu (田五). From this point on, the Qing sought to limit the spread of these movements, outlawing many of the so-called new teachings, primarily the Jahriyya. The great northwest Hui rebellion (1862–76) was led by Ma Hualong (马化龙), another Jahriyya Sufi *murshid* (spiritual leader) and fifth-generation descendant of Ma Mingxin. His rebellion was responsible for cutting the Qing state off from the northwest, making way for the great 1864–77 Uyghur-led rebellion in Xinjiang under Yakub Beg. In 1871 Ma Hualong was captured and executed, supposedly with his entire family. His body was entombed in Dongta (东塔) Township, Jinji (金积) (just east of the Yellow River in Ningxia), while his head is reported to have been buried in Xuanhuagang (宣化岗, a Jahriyya center, north of Zhangjiachuan [张家川] in south Gansu). Following the failure of these uprisings, the Jahriyya dispersed and became much more secretive, leading to the establishment of the five main Jahriyya branch orders, all named after their ritual and historical centers: Shagou (沙沟), Beishan (北山), Xindianzi (新店子), Banqiao (板桥), and Nanchuan (南川).

The Kubrawiyya

Of minor influence in China is the fourth main Sufi order, the Kubrawi-yya.[17] An Arab, Muhi ad-Din, is said to have first introduced the order to China in the 1600s.[18] He taught in Henan (河南), Qinghai, Gansu, and died in Dawantou (大湾头, in Dongxiang [东乡] prefecture, Gansu province). Presently, many of the Dongxiang Muslim minority concentrated in that area are members of the Kubrawiyya *menhuan*.

Sufi Networks and Islamic Resurgence

The extensiveness of these Sufi orders and their importance in uniting disparate Hui communities across China cannot be underestimated. Gell-ner's suggestion, that "Sufism provides a theory, terminology, and technique of leadership" (Gellner 1981, 103), seems applicable to understanding the rapid proliferation of various orders during the turmoil of the late eigh-teenth and nineteenth centuries, when China was faced with widespread domestic social unrest and the advancing encroachment of Western impe-rialist powers. Unlike the isolated, patchwork *Gedimu* communities that had been the norm until that time, Sufi orders provided the leadership and organization that helped the Hui survive politically and economically (Lip-man 1984). During the fragmented Republican period (1911–49), extensive Sufi networks proved helpful to some Hui warlords in the northwest, though disruptive to others.

At the 1985 commemoration ceremony (*ermaili* 尔麦力) of the death of the Jahriyya order's founder, Ma Mingxin, over 20,000 adherents gathered for three days at the site of his original tomb outside Lanzhou. The local municipality initially intended to refrain from participation in the ceremony, but owing to the unexpected number of participants, the city eventually sup-plied sanitation facilities and food. The Provincial Islamic Society subse-quently agreed to allow Ma Mingxin's tomb to be rebuilt and it has become a major pilgrimage and religious tourism site. Two months earlier, a similar *ermaili* was held in remembrance of Ma Hualong, the Jahriyya rebellion leader. A crowd of over 10,000 followers from as far away as Urumqi, Kun-ming, and Harbin arrived at his grave in Lingwu (灵武) County, Dongta Township, demonstrating the extensive influence of this order and the man-ner in which a Sufi leader's tomb can galvanize collective action.

17 For the origins of the Kubrawiyya, see Trimingham (1971: 55–58).
18 Ma (1983, 451–55) suggests that the Kubrawiyya may have come to China as early as 1370.

Membership in various Islamic orders often significantly influences social interaction, especially among those Sufi orders who sometimes distinguish themselves by dress. Unlike the rounded white hat worn by most Hui men, Sufi followers often wear a six-cornered hat, sometimes black. Many Jahriyya Hui shave the sides of their beards to commemorate their founder, Ma Mingxin, whose beard is said to have been shorn by Qing soldiers before his execution in 1781. While these markers are almost universally unnoticed by the Han majority—for whom a Hui is a Hui—the northwest Hui can easily identify members of the various orders that divide them internally. The exclusivity of Sufi orders in China illustrates the importance of the question of identity and authority for the Sufi Hui. Hui can enter these orders through a ritual vow or by birth, but seldom maintain allegiance to two *menhuan* at once. This is unlike Sufi orders in other parts of the world that tend to be less exclusive and may allow simultaneous membership in several orders (Trimingham 1971, 11). In China membership in these orders is exclusive; changing to a new order is tantamount to a conversion experience for Chinese Muslims—perhaps the only one they will ever have, since most Muslims in China enter Islam by birth or marriage.

The Third Tide: Scripturalist Concerns and Modernist Reforms

The third tide in Chinese Islam began at the end of the Qing dynasty, a period of accelerated exchange between China and the outside world, when many Muslims began traveling to and returning from the Middle East. In the early decades of the twentieth century, China was exposed to many new foreign ideas and in the face of Japanese and Western imperialist encroachment, sought a Chinese approach to governance. Intellectual and organizational activity by Chinese Muslims during this period was also intense; increased contact with the Middle East led them to reevaluate their traditional notions of Islam. Pickens records that from 1923 to 1934, 834 known Hui Muslims made the Hajj, or pilgrimage, to Mecca (Pickens 1937, 231–35). In 1937, according to one observer, over 170 Hui pilgrims boarded a steamer in Shanghai bound for Mecca (U.S. Office of Strategic Services 1944, 127). By 1939 at least 33 Hui Muslims had studied at Cairo's prestigious al-Azhar University. While these numbers are not significant when compared with Hajj pilgrims from other Southeast Asian Muslim areas, the influence and prestige attached to these returning Hui Hajji was profound, particularly in isolated communities. "In this respect," Fletcher observed, "the more secluded and remote a Muslim community was from the main centers of Islamic cultural life in the Middle East, the more susceptible it was to those centers' most recent trends" (Fletcher, n.d., 7).

As a result of political events and the influence of foreign Muslim ideas, numerous new Hui organizations emerged. In 1912, one year after Sun Yat-sen was inaugurated provisional president of the Chinese Republic in Nanjing, the Chinese Muslim Federation was formed in that city. This was followed by the establishment of other Hui Muslim associations: the Chinese Muslim Mutual Progress Association (Beijing, 1912), the Chinese Muslim Educational Association (Shanghai, 1925), the Chinese Muslim Association (1925), the Chinese Muslim Young Students Association (Nanjing, 1931), the Society for the Promotion of Education among Muslims (Nanjing, 1931), and the Chinese Muslim General Association (Jinan (济南), 1934).

The Muslim periodical press flourished as never before, prompted by the many Hui intellectuals who traveled to Japan, the Middle East, and the West. Caught up in the nationalist fervor of the first half of the twentieth century, they published magazines and founded organizations, questioning their identity as never before in a process that one Hui historian, Ma Shouqian (马寿千, 1989), termed "The Hui People's New Awakening at the End of the 19th Century and Beginning of the 20th Century." Although circulation was low, there were over 100 known Muslim periodicals that were being published before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 (Löwenthal 1940, 211–50). Thirty journals were published between 1911 and 1937 in Beijing alone, prompting one author to suggest that while Chinese Islam's traditional religious center was still Linxia (Hezhou), its cultural center had shifted to Beijing (U.S. Office of Strategic Services 1944, 27).[19] As many of these Hui Hajji returned from their pilgrimages to the Middle East, they initiated several reforms, engaging themselves once again in the contested space between Islamic ideals and Chinese culture, often promoting both educational and religious reform in support of a new post-imperial China.

The Wahhabi Muslim Brotherhood

Influenced by Wahhabi ideals in the Arabian Peninsula, returning Hui reformers introduced the Ikwan Muslim Brotherhood to China—a religious movement in tune, in some cases, with China's nationalist concerns, and in others, with warlord politics. While the Muslim Brotherhood elsewhere in the Islamic world has been depicted as anti-modernist and fundamentalist, this was not true of the movement in China. "There a fundamentalist,

19 Matthew Erie (2013), a Cornell University PhD student in legal anthropology, recently filed a disseration on Islamic courts in Hezhou that documents the continued vibrancy of Islam and Muslim Chinese disputes over its correct interpretation in the city today known as Linxia.

revivalist impulse among returned pilgrims influenced by Wahhabi notions," Lipman (1994) suggests, "was transformed into a nationalist, modernist, anti-Sufi solidarity group which advocated not only Muslim unity but Chinese national strength and consciousness."

The beginnings of the Ikhwan movement in China can be traced to Ma Wanfu (马万福, 1849–1934), who returned from the Hajj in 1892 to teach in the Linxia, Dongxiang area. Eventually known as the *Yiheiwani*, the initial reformers were primarily concerned with religious scripturalist orthodoxy—so much so that they are still known as the "venerate-the-scriptures faction" (*zunjing pai* 尊经派). Seeking perhaps, in Eaton's (1984, 334–35) terms, to replace "Islamic theater" with scripture (where knowledge and recitation of the Quran takes precedence over religious performance and worship), they proscribed the veneration of saints, their tombs, and shrines, and sought to stem the growing influence of well-known individual *ahong*s and Sufi *menhuan* leaders. Advocating a purified, non-Chinese Islam, they criticized such cultural accretions as the wearing of the white mourning dress (*dai xiao* 戴孝) and the decoration of mosques with Chinese or Arabic texts. At one point, Ma Wanfu even proposed the exclusive use of Arabic and Persian in all education instead of Chinese. Following strict Wahhabi practice, *Yiheiwani* mosques are distinguished by their white walls and a preference for Arabian-style mosque architecture. This contrasts sharply with the typical old *Gedimu* mosques, whose architecture resembles Confucian temples in their sweeping roofs and symmetrical courtyards (the Huajue [化觉] Great Mosque in Xi'an being the best example).

The *Yiheiwani* also proscribed the adornment of their mosques with Arabic (and especially Chinese) Quranic texts and banners, whereas this was the most striking marker of Sufi mosques and worship centers in the northwest, whose walls were often layered with calligraphy and unique Hui-style art.

Many Muslims supported the earliest Communist calls for equity, autonomy, freedom of religion, and recognized nationality status, and were active in the early establishment of the People's Republic. They, however, became disenchanted with the PRC by growing criticisms of religious practices during several radical periods beginning in 1957. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), Muslims became the focus of both anti-religious and anti-ethnic nationalism critiques, leading to widespread persecutions, closings of mosques, and violence (including one large massacre of 1,000 Hui, following a 1975 uprising in Yunnan province). Since Deng Xiaoping's post-1978 reforms, Muslims have sought to take advantage of liberalized economic and religious policies, while keeping a watchful eye on the ever-swinging pendulum of Chinese radical politics. There are now more mosques open in

China than there were prior to 1949, and Muslims travel freely on the Hajj to Mecca and engage in cross-border trade with coreligionists in Central Asia, the Middle East, and, increasingly, Southeast Asia. It should be noted here that increasing Muslim activism in China does not necessarily entail increasing religious conservatism, or the rise of a Wahhabi-inspired Muslim tide of fundamentalism. Indeed, like the term *xinjiao* ("new teaching"), which, as explained above, was a euphemism in the last century to refer to any "new" Islamic teaching that made its way into China, the term Wahhabi in China today (especially in Xinjiang) is often merely a general term to refer to Muslims who are more conservative, and not necessarily organized into any school or sect.

Muslim Activism and Global Islam

Although the Islamic movements within the Hui have represented a long struggle of accommodation and legitimization under Chinese rule, there are nonetheless ongoing tensions. As recently as January 12, 2012, Muslims in Gansu clashed with police who destroyed a mosque, presumably in an attempt to prevent further sectarian strife within the Hui community among the many Chinese Islams described above (Dawn.com 2012). Increasing Muslim political activism on a national scale and the rapid state response indicates the growing importance Beijing places upon Muslim-related issues. In 1986 Uyghurs in Xinjiang marched through the streets of Urumqi protesting against a wide range of issues, including the environmental degradation of the Zungharian plain, nuclear testing in the Taklamakan, increased Han immigration to Xinjiang, and ethnic insults occurring at Xinjiang University. Muslims throughout China protested the publication of a Chinese book, *Sexual Customs*, in May 1989 and a children's book in October 1993 that portrayed Muslims—particularly their restriction against pork (which Mao once called "China's greatest national treasure")—in a derogatory fashion. In each case, the government quickly responded and met most of the Muslims' demands, condemning the publications, arresting the authors, and closing down the printing houses (Gladney 1994b, 268).

Islamic factional struggles continue to divide China's Muslims internally, especially as increased travel to the Middle East prompts criticism of Muslim practices at home and exposes China's Muslims to new, often politically radical, Islamic ideals. In February 1994 four Naqshbandi Sufi leaders were sentenced to long-term imprisonment for their support of internal factional disputes in the southern Ningxia Region, which led to the PLA's intervention and at least sixty deaths on both sides. As noted above, throughout the 1990s there was increasing Uyghur activism in Xinjiang, which declined

substantially in the early part of the new millennium with the government's Strike Hard campaign curtailing any organized Uyghur efforts.

Beijing has responded with increased military presence, particularly in Kashgar and Urumqi, and has stepped up diplomatic efforts with the Central Asian states and Turkey to discourage foreign support for separatist movements. It is important to note that in general Hui, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and other Muslim minorities are not sympathetic to any of these separatist actions, and it is not yet clear how much support even among the Uyghur there is for these violent acts—especially the 1996 attempt on an imam in Kashgar. At the same time, cross-border trade between Xinjiang and Central Asia has grown tremendously, especially due to the reopening in 1991 of the Eurasian Railroad, linking Urumqi and Alma Ata with markets in China and Eastern Europe. Overland travel between Xinjiang and Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kygyzstan, and Kazakhstan has also increased dramatically with the relaxation of travel restrictions consequent to Deng Xiaoping's prioritization of trade over security interests in the area. The government's policy of seeking to buy support through stimulating the local economy seems to be working at present (as income levels in Xinjiang are often far higher than those across the border), yet increased Han migration to participate in the region's lucrative oil and mining industries continues to exacerbate ethnic tensions. Muslim areas in northern and central China, however, continue to be left behind as China's rapid economic growth expands unevenly, enriching the southern coastal areas far beyond that of the interior.

While further restricting Islamic freedoms in the border regions, the state has become more keenly aware of the importance foreign Muslim governments place on China's treatment of its Muslim minorities as a factor in China's lucrative trade and military agreements. The establishment of full diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia in 1991 and the increasing military and technical trade with the Middle Eastern Muslim states enhances the economic and political salience of China's treatment of its internal Muslim minority population. The increased trans-nationalism of China's Muslims is an important factor in their ethnic expression, as well as their practiced accommodation to Chinese culture and state authority.

Hui Islamic Orders and Chinese Culture

While these Islamic associations are confusing to the non-initiate, similar to the vast array of schools of Buddhism in China, they differ in that their membership is hotly disputed in China. Unlike Middle Eastern or Central Asian Islamic orders, where one might belong to two or even three brotherhoods at once, the Hui belong to only one. Most Hui are born into

an Islamic order; only a handful convert dramatically to another school of Islam. In fact, there was only one instance of conversion I encountered in my sojourn among the Hui, though recent visitors have reported a rising number of Han conversions. I never met a Han who had converted to Islam in China without having been married to a Hui or adopted into a Hui family, though I heard of a few isolated instances. Fletcher records the conversion of twenty-eight Tibetan tribes as well as their "Living Buddha" by Ma Laichi in Xunhua (循化), Qinghai, in the mid-eighteenth century (Trippner 1961, 154–55). After the 1784 Ma Mingxin uprising, the Qing government forbade non-Muslims from converting to Islam, and this may have had some influence on the few Han conversions recorded in history. This goes against the common assumption that Islam in China was spread through proselytization and conversion. As far as I can find, Islamic preachers in China (including Ma Laichi, Ma Mingxin, Qi Jingyi, and Ma Qixi [马启西]) spent most of their time trying to convert other Muslims. Islam in China for the most part has grown biologically, through birth and intermarriage.

The tensions and conflicts that led to the rise and divisions of the Sufi *menhuan* in northwest China, and the subsequent non-Sufi reforms, are impossible to enumerate in their complexity. They give evidence, however, of the ongoing struggles that continue to make Islam meaningful to Hui Muslims. These tensions between Islamic ideals and social realities are often left unresolved. Their very dynamism derives from the questions they raise and the doubts they engender among people struggling with traditional meanings in the midst of changing social contexts. The questions of purity and legitimacy become paramount when the Hui are faced with radical internal socioeconomic and political change, and exposed to different interpretations of Islam from the outside Muslim world. These conflicts and reforms reflect an ongoing debate in China over Islamic orthodoxy, revealing an important disjunction between scripturalist or mystical interpretations.

In a similar fashion, the study of Southeast Asian Islam has often centered on the contradiction and compromise between the native culture of the indigenous Muslims and the *sharia* of orthodox Islam: the mystical and scriptural, the real and the ideal.[20] The supposed accommodation of orthodox Islamic tenets to local cultural practices has led scholars to dismiss or explain such compromise as syncretism, assimilation, and "sinification," as it has been described among the Hui. An alternative approach, and one perhaps more in tune with the interests of Hui themselves, sees this incongruence as the basis for ongoing dialectical tensions that have often led to reform movements and conflicts within Muslim communities (Eickelman

20 This distinction was most fully articulated by William Roff (1985, 8–10).

1976, 10–13). Following Max Weber (1978), one can see the wide variety of Islamic expression as reflecting processes of local world construction and programs for social conduct, whereby a major religious tradition becomes meaningful to an indigenous society.

In the competition for scarce resources, these conflicts are also prompted by and expressed in economic concerns, such as took place with the near defeat of the *Xidaotang* (西道堂) by the Khufiyya leader Ma Anliang (马 安良) in 1914. Fletcher notes that one of the criticisms of the Khufiyya was that their recitation of Sufi prayers took less time than the normal Quranic suras by the non-Sufi clergy, and therefore their imams were cheaper to hire at ritual ceremonies. He suggests that this assisted their rise in popularity, and prompted criticism from the *Gedimu* religious leaders (Fletcher, n.d., 21). The *Yiheiwani* criticized both the *Gedimus* and Sufis for only performing rituals in believers' homes for profit, and advocated the practice, "If you recite, do not eat; if you eat, do not recite" (*nian jing bu chi, chi by nian jing* 念经不吃，吃不念经). The Chinese state has generally found economic reasons for criticizing certain Islamic orders among the Hui. During the Land Reform campaigns of the 1950s, which appropriated mosque and *waqf* (Islamic endowment) holdings, they met with great resistance from the Sufi *menhuan,* which had accumulated a great deal of holdings due to their hierarchical, centralized leadership.

The tensions arising from the conflict between Chinese cultural practices and Islamic ideals have led to the rise and powerful appeal of Islamic movements among the Hui Muslims. I explored one way of looking at this tension in an earlier work, as shown in figure 4.1 (Gladney 1996, 67).[21] In China there were many attempts to reconcile Chinese culture with Islam, leading to a range of alternatives. At one extreme there are those who reject any integration of Islam with Chinese culture, such as Ma Wanfu's return to an Arabicized "pure" Islam. At the other extreme, are those leaders of the *Gedimu*, such as Hu Dengzhou (胡登州), who accepted more integration with traditional Chinese society. Likewise, the leader of the *Xidaotang*, Ma Qixi (whose Arabic name was "Isa," or "Jesus") stressed the complete compatibility of Chinese and Islamic culture, the importance of Chinese Islamic Confucian texts, the harmony of the two systems, and the reading of the Quran in Chinese (see figure 4.1).

In between, one finds various attempts at changing Chinese society to fit a Muslim world, through transformationist or militant Islam, as illustrated by the largely Naqshbandiyya-led nineteenth-century Hui uprisings.

21 This interpretive scheme is influenced by H. Richard Niebuhr's (1951) analysis of Christian social ethics.
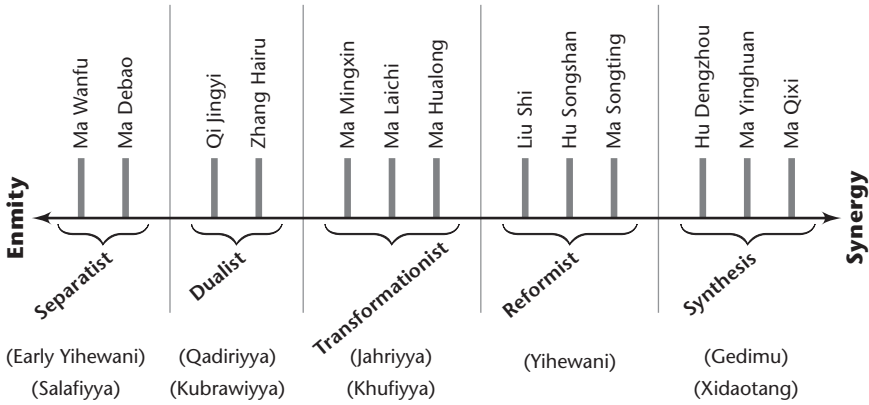
FIGURE 4.1 Islam and Chinese Culture: A Range of Alternatives
Source: Gladney 1996: 67.

The Jahriyya sought to implement an alternative vision of the world in their society, and this posed a threat to the Qing and other Hui Muslims, earning them the label of *xiejiao* ("heterodox," 邪教) and persecution by the Chinese state. By contrast, other Hui reformers have attempted throughout history to make Islam fit Chinese society, such as Liu Zhi's (刘智) monumental effort to demonstrate the Confucian morality of Islam.[22] The Qadiriyya alternative represents resolution of this tension through ascetic withdrawal from the world. Qi Jingyi advocated an inner mystical journey where the dualism of Islam and the Chinese world is absolved by grasping the oneness of Allah found inside every believer. These various approaches in Chinese Islam represent sociohistorical attempts to deal with the relationship of the world religion of Islam with the local Chinese realm. It is clear from figure 4.1 that even within China's Hui Muslims, there are many Islams.

Another way to examine this range of alternatives is to generalize the Muslim nationalities themselves (figure 4.2). In this scheme, the Uyghur can be seen to be much more resistant to accepting integration into Chinese society than other Muslims groups, in that they are the only Muslim minority in China expressing strong desires for a separate state (Uyghuristan)—although it is not at all clear that all Uyghur desire independence. At the other extreme, it could be argued that the Hui are the most integrated of all the Muslim minorities into Chinese society and culture. This is both an advantage and

22 Several recent works have begun to deeply probe the enormous influence of Liu Zhi's work on Hui Islam, and in particular, the role of Sufism in his attempt to formulate a "neo-Confucian-Islamic" synthesis (see Benite 2005; Frankel 2011; Murata 2000; Murata and others 2009).
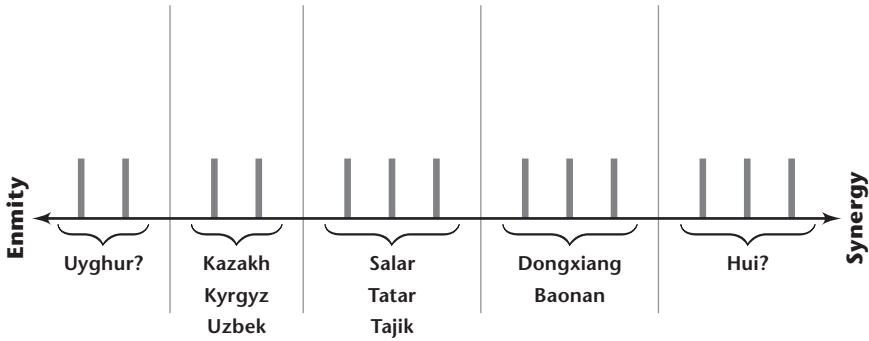
FIGURE 4.2 Muslim Minorities and Chinese Culture
Source: Author.

a disadvantage in that they often have greater access to power and resources within Chinese society, but at the same time risk either the loss of their identity or the rejection of other Muslim groups in China (for being too assimilated into Chinese society). In between there are a range of Muslim nationalities who are closer to the Uyghur in terms of resisting Chinese culture and maintaining a distinct language and identity (Uzbeks, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Tajiks) and those who are much closer to the Hui in terms of accommodation to Chinese culture (Dongxiang, Baonan). While much of these variations are due to historical interaction and locale, they offer a heuristic way of examining the challenges faced by each Muslim minority in their daily expression of identity and Islam in Chinese society. It must be clearly noted, however, that there are many exceptions to this overly generalized pattern: for example, the Uyghur who are quite integrated into Chinese society (such as Party officials and secularists) and the Hui who live their lives in strident resistance to Chinese culture (such as fundamentalist imams and rebellious youth).

Muslim Nationalism in an Age of Globalization

China is not immune from the new tide of ethnic and religious nationalism sweeping Europe, Africa, and Asia in the post–Cold War period. Much of it is clearly due to a response to globalization in terms of localization: increasing nationalism arising from the organization of the world into nation-states. No longer content to sit on the sidelines, the nations within these states are playing a greater role in the public sphere, which Jürgen Habermas (1989) suggests is the defining characteristic of civil society in the modern nation-state. In most of these nationalist movements, religion, culture, and racialization play a privileged role in defining the boundaries of the nation. In China, and perhaps much of Muslim Asia, Islam will continue to play

an important role in defining the nation, especially in countries where na-
tionality is defined by a mix of religion and ethnicity (e.g., China, Malaysia,
Indonesia, Philippines). A fourth tide of Muslim activism in China cannot
but be avoided, but it is a transregional tide that will most likely transcend
the boundaries of the contemporary nation-state, via mass media, increased
travel, and the virtuality of the Internet. From the discussion above, it is also
clear that there are a wide range of Uyghur responses to Chinese rule, not all
of them violent (see figure 4.3).

The three previous tides of Islam in China, according to Joseph Fletcher,
were precipitated by China's opening to the outside world. A new tide is now
washing across China's terrain. No matter what conservative leaders in the
government might wish, China's Muslim politics have reached a new stage
of global connectivity. If China wants to participate in the international po-
litical sphere of nation-states, this is unavoidable. Alongside China's open-
ing to the West in recent years, travel to and from the Islamic heartlands has
dramatically increased. In 1984 over 1,400 Muslims left China to go on the
Hajj. This number increased to over 2,000 in 1987 (representing a return to
pre-1949 levels) and nearly 10,000 in 2010. Several Hui students are presently
enrolled in Islamic and Arabic studies at the al-Azhar University in Egypt
(Benite 2008), as well as a large number studying in Medina, Saudi Arabia.
In September 1987 I visited the home of a Hui elder in Xi'an who had just
returned from the Hajj. He was escorted home from the airport in a proces-
sion of over a hundred taxis, all owned and operated privately by the Hui.
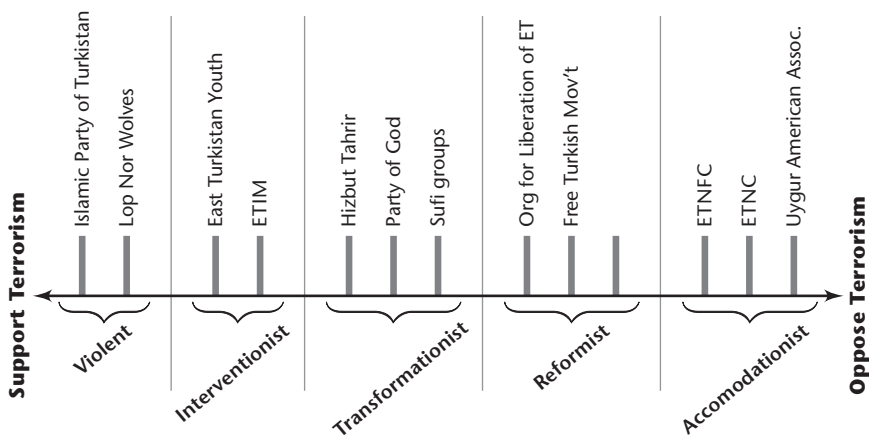His trip was financed by the local Hui, who turned over 10,000 yuan ($3,300)

FIGURE 4.3 East Turkestani Radicalism: A Range of Positions on Terrorism
Source: Author.

to the China Islamic Society in Beijing. The Islamic Society arranged his travel to Pakistan, where his visa was arranged at the Saudi Embassy (China had no formal diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia till 1991), and supplied him with $80 for use on the trip, since local currency is nonconvertible. Upon his return he traveled throughout the northwest, preaching and lecturing about his pilgrimage experiences and the need to reform Islam along Middle Eastern lines. I met him again in November 1998, and he had since travelled three times on the Hajj, with frequent business-related travel to the Middle East sponsored by local and national government organizations.

Encouraged by the Chinese state, relations between Muslims in China and the Middle East are becoming stronger and more frequent, partly from a desire to establish trading partners for energy, arms, commodities, and currency, and partly by China's traditional view of itself as a leader of the Third World. Delegations of foreign Muslims regularly travel to prominent Islamic sites in China, in a kind of state-sponsored religious tourism, and donations are encouraged. While the state hopes that private Islamic investment will assist economic development, the vast majority of grants by visiting foreign Muslims have been donated to the rebuilding of Islamic mosques, schools, and hospitals. As the Hui in China are further exposed to Islamic internationalism, and they return from studies and pilgrimages abroad, traditional Hui identities will once again be reshaped and called into question, giving rise to a fourth tide of Islam in China. Global Islam is thus localized into Hui Islam, finding its expression in a range of accommodations between Chineseness and Muslimness, as defined in each local community.

These accommodations are not unlike those made on a daily basis among other Muslim minorities in Asia. The only difference may be the increasingly postmodern contraction of time and space: accommodations that took over a millennia in China are now being required of Muslim diasporic communities in a matter of hours or days. For the Hui in China, Pakistani and Bangladeshi workers in Tokyo and Seoul, and other immigrant Muslim communities, Muslims may be becoming increasingly "unfamiliar" strangers. This does not bode well for the future integration of Muslims into the Chinese leviathan.

It is clear that Muslims in China are deeply divided about answering either of the two questions raised at the beginning of this chapter, the Andersonian question regarding giving one's life for the nation, and the post-9/11 question as to martyring oneself and others in the name of God. For the Hui, despite historical and ongoing intense, sometimes even violent, negotiations within the community over the demands of Islam and Chinese culture, they seemed to have long ago resolved the choice between God and

country. For the Uyghur, the resolution remains elusive. The accommodation achieved by Hui Muslims between the *Hui jiao/Hui min* identities in the last century, perhaps grounded in the earlier neo-Confucian synthesis of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, continues to enable them to negotiate their identity rather peacefully, and often prosperously in the secularist-modernist-socialist-capitalist Chinese state. The Uyghur have not been so successful, which is unsurprising given the relatively recent integration of the region into China proper and its continued integration today. Should the Uyghur in China and in the diaspora respond to these questions as either jihadists or secularist nationalists, the results will most likely be the same: increasingly harsh, forced integration to Chinese rule, which may have disastrous implications for the region and its neighbors. Finding a middle ground may not be so easy in an increasingly decentralized Middle Kingdom.

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