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Source: *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (November 2018), pp. 21-42

Published by: Indiana University Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/jims.3.2.03>

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# **Qingzhen from the Perspective of the Other: Consumption and Muslim Boundary-Making in Republican China, 1920–1949**

*Faizah Binte Zakaria*

**Abstract:** Studies of *halāl* (permissible) food production and consumption have often been linked to the assimilation of Muslim communities into the fabric of secular and/or non-Muslim nation-states. Much of the academic discourse on this subject has centered on the boundaries that religious dietary requirements create between an in-group of faithful adherents to the religion and an out-group of those who do not belong. Republican China (1920–1949), with its significant population of Hui and Uyghur Muslims largely concentrated in the northwestern and southeastern parts of the country, offers a new window onto this picture of socialization through commensality. The present article flips the ethnographic lens from viewing Muslim communities alone to viewing the historical perspective of outsiders who interacted and broke bread with Muslims in the Republican period, thus bringing to the surface heretofore overlooked factors that impacted the process of Muslim social boundary-making through consumption. This approach contributes to the historiography and anthropology of Islam in China by spotlighting discretionary agency and by moving away from a focus on practices of exclusivity on the part of Muslim populations or strategies of coercive repression on the part of the nation-state. This has become especially important since the rise of Communism in China, for fasting is one of the rituals of overt religiosity that

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*Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*, Vol. 3.2, pp. 21–42

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the communist state has been keen to suppress. From a comparative perspective, this article also demonstrates that gender, class asymmetries, and politics may be as crucial as religion in explaining the dining strategies of Muslim minority communities.

**Key words:** *qingzhen*, Hui, Uyghur, Han Chinese, historical ethnography, commensality, boundary-making

## Introduction

In the 1920s, the intrepid English missionaries Mildred Cable, Francesca French, and Evangeline French travelled from Tacheng<sup>1</sup> to Lake Daysan across the China-Russian border. They portrayed a delightful picture of simple hospitality among the nomadic Muslim Kazakhs.<sup>2</sup> Under a starry desert sky, shaded by the smoke of “cow-dung fire,” they sat cross-legged as their host ladled out tea from a large saucepan hanging over the flames. “We made a meal of plain boiled rice,” Cable and Francesca French wrote later, “in which our hostess and her friends were delighted to share.”<sup>3</sup> Their Kazakh hosts were not the only ones who were happy to partake of the food that these missionaries offered. Earlier in the day, their Kazakh escort’s “wizened little face expanded” at the sight of food that they had supplied for him.<sup>4</sup> He consumed “a quite undue proportion of the *mien*, which he ate with improvised chopsticks made of thick, strong, grass stems,” and proceeded to “express his gratitude by collecting a tidy little heap of cow dung for the morning camp fire.”<sup>5</sup>

This inclusive camaraderie was in marked contrast with Cable and French’s less pleasant experiences attempting to break bread with “Huei-Huei,” urban Muslims in the city of Hami, which is also in what is now the Xinjiang province of China.<sup>6</sup> In this encounter, the “constantly recurring inference made by Moslems” about their “superior cleanliness” was “a source of great irritation” to both the missionaries and their non-Muslim Chinese companions.<sup>7</sup> The Muslims in Hami constantly refused to share their kitchens with the missionaries, despite the latter’s assurances that there would be no porcine contamination. Cable and French were left with the impression that “this large Muslim clan preferred employing another kitchen rather than that contaminated by wandering Gentiles.”<sup>8</sup>

The varied experiences of Cable and the two French sisters illustrate how the practices of eating and drinking can break down as well as erect boundaries between an ethnic community and those that are perceived to be alien to them. These two social functions, seemingly at odds with one another, indicate that consuming food is both an introspective and a relational experience. Consumption is introspective in that the individual looks within oneself and toward one’s beliefs in order to decide what food to partake of, and how and with whom to share it. At the same time, making such decisions is also a relational experience, since the

choices one makes depend on what relationships one wishes to preserve. In this respect, commensality is a form of socialization.<sup>9</sup> Muslim minority communities, in China and elsewhere, often engage in a process of boundary creation—and boundary erasure—over a metaphorical dining table upon which their religiously mandated dietary constraints may serve as a stumbling block to integration within a non-Muslim majority national state.

Separate ethnographic studies by Maris Boyd Gillette (2000) and M. Christina Cesaro (2000) of consumption habits of the Hui and Uyghur minorities, argue that the issue of food choice is a means for these groups to assert their distinctiveness and resist assimilation into the Han majority, thus emphasizing the role of food in creating a divide between Muslims and non-Muslims in China.<sup>10</sup> This interpretation of the eating habits of Muslims in China is consistent with the political context of the 1990s—particularly the tension created by Uyghur unrest and separatist demands—amidst which these two anthropologists conducted their studies. In more recent years, news reports of the Chinese state forbidding its Uyghur population from fasting during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan further highlights the fact that adherence to religiously conditioned modes and means of eating may be construed as acts of political resistance.<sup>11</sup> However, such a view disregards the nuances of ethnic diversity and how it can be discursively constructed. For China in particular, society could neither be simply polarized into Muslim and non-Muslim spheres nor constituted solely in opposition to an intrusive, hegemonic state. Consequently, understanding the socialization process at work among Muslims in China requires a careful excavation of their interactions, not only with the Han Chinese but also with multiple Others.

It is here that travelers' accounts are a particularly valuable ethnographic source. As a window onto how Muslim minority communities in China interact with diverse peoples at a quotidian level, the narratives of Cable and French are among a number of sources that from a distance of more than 50 years, complicate the heretofore politicized and polarized view of eating *qingzhen*, a localized Chinese term for food consumption that is permissible in Islamic religious tradition.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, a concentrated focus on the politics of consumption often misses the social nuances embedded in the act of eating and drinking while unconsciously treating the Han Chinese, Hui Muslim and Uyghur Muslim communities as monolithic wholes. What narratives of travelers such as Cable and French provide are sources that span a rich spectrum from individual to group, to state, as well as from rich to poor. From this perspective, gustatory encounters between minority people and foreign travelers can freshly illuminate the process of boundary-making among ethnic groups.

This article will utilize the methodology of historical ethnography to address the following questions: How constant are the boundaries created between

Muslims and non-Muslims in China in daily life? What are the factors that guide how the individual Muslim in China navigates inter-community tensions in everyday life? In addressing these questions, China's Republican era provides an interesting window onto the dynamics of Muslim and non-Muslim interaction, since it was a period in which the varied ethnic and religious groups of China were seeking a new place in a transitional society. This period of transition also constituted a brief respite from two forms of hegemonic rule—imperial and communist—which dominated twentieth-century China, permitting not only a previously unprecedented level of interaction with foreigners but also a new mobility of ethnic and social groups within the country.

The sources for this article come from documents by three groups of visitors to the Xinjiang and Gansu provinces, which have large Muslim populations. They collectively encompass multiple perspectives: British missionaries spreading the gospel to ordinary Muslims, Chinese Republican politicians travelling to Muslim-majority regions of their country to canvass support during wartime, and an American diplomat navigating the high-stakes politics of Xinjiang during the waning years of the republic. By privileging the perspective of the outsider, this article flips the lens of contemporary ethnography on Muslims in China, which has hitherto approached the subject of inter-communal difference by embedding itself in local Muslim communities. By being attuned to the presence of cultural difference and expecting to find it everywhere, the external visitors presented in this article were able to self-consciously observe and articulate the dialectical nature of boundary-making, which tends to be neglected when the focus of agency in the process is trained on the Muslim community alone.

The methodological spotlight placed on the two-way construction of inter-ethnic boundaries builds on a call by Anna C. Korteweg and Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos (2013) to use an intersectional approach to ethnographic analysis, which they have successfully applied to the issue of migrant assimilation.<sup>13</sup> Various theories of boundary-making have posited useful typologies. Here I adopt the continuum approach that has been implemented fruitfully by Richard Alba (2005).<sup>14</sup> Alba defines “bright” boundaries on one end of the continuum as boundaries that allow only minorities who sacrifice their cultural distinctiveness to cross over to the majority society. At the opposing end of the continuum, “blurred” boundaries enable the majority to accommodate diversity by modifying its social institutions to include new members. Viewed along this spectrum, the notion that the level of religious piety determines assimilation between groups becomes problematic. As visitors to the region attest in the accounts that this article will examine, for Muslims in China, the choice of what to eat, how to eat, and with whom to eat was less a religious decision than the product of a mutual negotiation along a continuum of power relations that could either “brighten” or “blur” the perception of difference.

## ***Qingzhen* and Assimilation**

To start, it will be productive to examine the “bright” boundaries of tolerance of diversity and map out the parameters set by scriptural injunctions in the Qur’ān before exploring how such boundaries may be blurred through the agency of Muslims who wish to adhere to Qur’ānic prescriptions yet also seek less spiritual nourishment. The Qur’ān explicitly prohibits the consumption of “animals that die of themselves, blood, the flesh of swine, and animals which have been dedicated to other than Allah” (Q 2:173).<sup>15</sup> When put into practice, these rules have important corollaries. The first is that in order to ensure that animals have not been “dedicated to other than Allah,” many Muslims will not eat meat that has not been slaughtered by a Muslim or a “Person of the Book” (commonly interpreted as Christians and Jews). Second, early Islamic scholars, following the example of the Prophet Muḥammad, have extended the ruling against eating the flesh of swine to declare that the pig (and the dog) are ritually unclean. According to these views, utensils or vessels that have been in contact with pigs and dogs must be ritually cleansed before they can be considered clean.<sup>16</sup>

The Qur’ān also exhorts Muslims to abstain from alcohol.<sup>17</sup> Some authoritative Islamic scholars, such as those adhering to the Shāfi’ī *madhhab* (school of legal reasoning), extended the prohibition on alcohol to forbidding Muslims to sit down at a table where alcohol is served.<sup>18</sup> These restrictions, which stem from original prohibitions in the Qur’ān, demarcate clear boundaries between the eating habits of Muslims and non-Muslims. When Muslims constitute a religious minority in a nation-state, such restrictions may be used by the majority to argue that religious dietary requirements prevent the full assimilation of Muslims into the cultural fabric of the nation. This is especially prevalent in Europe, where first- or second-generation migrants form a significant part of the Muslim community, either from former colonies or through economic migration. Often, religious affiliation is most prominently distinguished by the observance of religious dietary requirements and rituals of abstention such as fasting. Peter Tammes and Peter Scholten (2017) categorize compromises in this direction as significant markers of “boundary-crossing.” In the Netherlands, for example, recent data has shown that for a majority of the second-generation Muslims in their study, eating *ḥalāl* (permissible) food was more important than going to the mosque on Friday.<sup>19</sup> However, even in countries with a native minority Muslim population such as Singapore, political leaders have voiced unease over the reluctance of the Muslim community to compromise on dietary restrictions, regarding it as an impediment to true multiculturalism.<sup>20</sup>

One might expect that China’s unique position—far from the Muslim world’s religious centers and where Muslim communities identify as strongly with Chinese ethnicity and nationality as with their religion—would make Muslims

in China less assiduous about observing religious injunctions or that they would choose to modify such injunctions according to their local context.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, in Chinese Muslim communities, Islam was often learned through a process of socialization rather than through the systematic study of theology or dogma. Chinese Muslims who wished to adhere to their religion thus had a measure of agency in deciding whether and how much to honor religious and cultural boundaries. For example, they might disregard less authoritative rulings that are not explicitly stated in the Qurʾān or choose to drink non-alcoholic beverages with non-Muslims. Or they could enter a non-Muslim restaurant and order foods that do not contain any meat products or alcohol. Such courses of action, however, require a level of religious knowledge that includes knowing the degree of authority of each prohibition—what is explicitly forbidden in scripture versus what is forbidden based on scholarly opinion. Strategies such as these are part of what Kamaludeen Nasir and Alexius Pereira (2008) have termed “defensive dining,” undertaken by the Muslim minority to better integrate themselves into a culturally diverse community.<sup>22</sup>

As with other organized religions, it is important to distinguish between Islamic practice (orthopraxy) and Islamic doctrine (orthodoxy) when assessing the social behavior of those who identify as Muslim in China.<sup>23</sup> In fact, there exists ample historical evidence of Chinese Muslims making orthopraxy local: examples include the creation of the *Han Kitab*, a collection of Chinese language texts that offer an interpretation of Islam fused with Confucianism in the early eighteenth century and the establishment of women’s mosques in the late Ming Dynasty period.<sup>24</sup> On the opposing side, however, Joseph Fletcher (1995) offers a very different argument. Examining the influence of Nasqbandiyya Sufi doctrines and beliefs in Northwest China, he states that paradoxically, “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.”<sup>25</sup> This susceptibility sometimes resulted in adherents rigidly clinging to peripheral aspects of religious practice and included such seemingly trivial issues such as whether *dhikr* (religious recitations in remembrance of God) should be voiced aloud or not.<sup>26</sup>

Fletcher’s argument resonates with the findings of Gillette and Cesaro (2000), who demonstrate, in separate studies, how some Chinese Muslim communities rigidly adhered to the minutiae of keeping *qingzhen* in the matter of food and drink. *Qingzhen* in Chinese literally means “pure and true,” terms that do not appear in the Islamic scriptures but connote an imperative to keep the community ritually pure from contamination.<sup>27</sup> While seemingly constitutive of a “bright” or strongly demarcated boundary between Muslims and non-Muslims, the following sections of this article will demonstrate that inter-ethnic connections made over meals in China rely little on scriptural rules but depend

more on a complex matrix of intervening factors. The central problematic thus shifts away from the issue of transgression implied by “defensive dining” or “boundary crossing.” Instead, we can ask: Under what circumstances do Muslims socialize through eating and when do they not do so? The finely grained accounts of foreign visitors to Muslim communities in Republican China both illuminate and complicate this question.

## Intimate Interactions with the Other

*Qingzhen* as a concept for boundary-making had not yet become fully articulated in the cities and towns of northwest China and Xinjiang in the early twentieth century. The Christian missionary Marshall Broomhall noted that Hui Muslim restaurants in these regions usually had signboards with “the representation of a water-pot surmounted by a dress hat, with the characters “Giao-men” [meaning Muslims as a sect] or “Hui Hui [meaning their ethnicity].”<sup>28</sup> Some years later in the 1920s, the three adventurous woman missionaries whose experience opened this essay also noted that Muslim inns were distinguished by these symbols. They added that Muslim inns had a reputation for cleanliness that “is not visible to the naked eye but manifests itself otherwise . . . in endless bickerings with the travelers on matters of purification connected with material or cooking utensils.”<sup>29</sup>

These women—Mildred Cable, Evangeline French, and Francesca French—crossed the Gobi Desert in 1926, by which time they had already been involved in mission work for more than a decade. Their personalities and mission trajectories were very different. Eva French was the oldest and most intrepid of the group, quick to reach out and create a rapport with the people she met, and adventurous enough to continue serving in China even after being forced to flee for her life during the Boxer Rebellion.<sup>30</sup> Her younger sister Francesca was more reserved and traditional but “the one most willing to sacrifice her comforts and interests in the service of others.”<sup>31</sup> Mildred Cable, the youngest of the group, displayed a remarkable calling for the church. Although she had once been engaged, her marriage plans did not come to fruition when her fiancé gave her the ultimatum to choose either their future together or her missionary vocation; she chose the latter.<sup>32</sup> These differences in character, personal trajectories, and motivations, however, were not visible to the people they met in China. Instead, they were simply perceived as a group of gray-haired white women, who were almost indistinguishable from each other in the way that they looked. Most importantly for their Muslim interlocutors, they were not Han Chinese, whose Otherness carried the historical baggage of conflict and violence. During the travels of these women in the Gobi Desert, their interactions with Muslim nomads started off on a different footing than those between the nomads and the Han Chinese. The economic and military might of European nations, so visible during the semi-colonized status of China in the Qing Dynasty period,



conferred a relative degree of prestige on these European ladies when compared to the Han.

The three women also ate the local food. This appeared to be out of necessity rather than solidarity with the locals, since they did not seem to enjoy much of their daily fare. On days when they were attempting to spread the gospel, Cable writes that “meals were prepared under such conditions as to allow for no tempting of the appetite. At breakfast, each one was served with a bowl of rice and small saucer of pickled turnip; the midday meal was dough strings boiled with cabbage and before we went to bed, a drink of rice-water was supplied.”<sup>33</sup> Even on an ordinary day, the use of linseed oil in local dishes spoiled the trio’s appetites; they remarked that cakes fried in such a way were “an acquired taste.”<sup>34</sup>

The women learned very quickly that in order to connect with and communicate with the “Turki” (a term they consistently applied to the Uyghurs), the proper treatment of food and utensils was essential. Mildred Cable describes how changes in the water supply in a desert oasis in Xinjiang would bring Muslims to their door because it was “well known that no unclean food is used in our kitchen and we rigorously exclude all products of the pig (except our hair brushes) from the house. All the meat we eat comes from a Muslim butcher and the beast has been slaughtered with its face towards Mecca.”<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, despite keeping to Muslim standards, they sometimes encountered barriers to interaction with Muslims, in particular during their stay in the city of Hami: “Our word was accepted that no pork, lard or swine’s flesh of any description would be used, nevertheless the members of this large Muslim clan preferred employing another kitchen than that contaminated by wandering Gentiles.”<sup>36</sup>

Cable and the French sisters interpreted their exclusion from the kitchens of Hami as a sign that local Muslims considered them intrinsically polluted. However, this impression may have been mistaken, since no Muslim hesitated to serve them food with Muslim-owned utensils. A mere hour after their arrival in Hami, for example, they “sat down to an abundant meal of rice and good Chantow bread, a dish of chopped mutton and egg-plant fried together, a plate of French beans sautéed in mutton fat with sliced cucumber . . . followed by slices of cantaloupe melon—truly a feast for the gods!”<sup>37</sup> Their purchasing power was probably the main reason why the Muslim innkeeper was so quick to provide them with a lavish meal. However, this did not explain why the trio could not similarly gain access to Muslim kitchens in this urban environment, since they had previously mixed easily with the rural nomads.

One possible explanation for the limited access that these women had to kitchens in Hami was that the size and density of the local Muslim community was a significant variable. In a “large Muslim clan” such as those in Hami, where internal disputes could arise from whether to share kitchen facilities with a non-co-religionist, the most prudent course of action might have been

to band together, to exclude outsiders in general, and thus to avoid offending other members of the clan. In a sparsely populated area like an oasis in the Gobi Desert, where an uncategorized, ambiguous Other such as the Cable-French trio were both a novelty and a possible source of advantage, the Muslim community may have been more inclined to accept their friendship without inquiring too deeply about their beliefs. The account of their stay in Hami—like the contrasting anecdotes presented at the beginning of this article—highlights the difference between rural and urban Muslims in China in terms of whom one is willing to trust and include within the boundaries of commensality. Religious food prescriptions may have provided an easy way to erect barriers when it was necessary to do so, but one's socio-economic position and location—more than one's religion—were more crucial factors in deciding whether to build new relationships and how far they could go.

Gender was another key intervening factor in drawing the boundary-lines of friendship and intimacy with Muslim Chinese. Cable and the Frenches noted that Muslim men were often the ones who policed the standards of purity, for instance checking for the presence of pork products, whereas Muslim women “are troubled by no such sophistry.”<sup>38</sup> The foreign visitors were welcomed into the women's quarters, even in the kitchens, and enjoyed conversation with “these truly lovable women.”<sup>39</sup> These Muslim women—who could also have shunned the missionaries—instead showed them hospitality by seeking common ground both in conversation and through commonly enjoyed refreshments. The social activity of tea drinking bore these missionaries into the currents of each household's inner sanctum. Children in Shaanxi and Xinjiang often approached them and “an eager little hand would draw the missionary down narrow alleys to the court where an excited woman was boiling a kettle for tea.”<sup>40</sup> Unintoxicating, uncontroversial, and hence non-threatening, tea brought together women from very different backgrounds and contributed to a convivial atmosphere for sharing without concern for permissibility. Mildred Cable called their method of drawing women to the message of Christ over these intimate conversations as “gossiping the Gospel.”<sup>41</sup> In these conversations, there appeared to be no concern about whether or not the missionaries had ever consumed pork or whether contact with the utensils of pork eaters could be contaminating. Gender instead became a common ground for blurring the boundaries of difference.

Tea was historically considered a “feminine” drink in Europe; in China too, there were gendered differences in the consumption of this beverage.<sup>42</sup> Both Muslim men and women drank tea but the context in which they did so differed. Muslim Chinese men consumed tea, not in the inner sanctums of kitchens but in teahouses or in the rooms of their houses where they received visitors; their sharing of tea was thus a formal practice, not an intimate practice as it was for women. Cable and the Frenches' sharing of the gospel over tea, which they

called “sipping the gospel,” signified how a gendered common ground helped them transcend religious differences and elide barriers that were proscribed, more often than not, by men. Even more importantly, it shows, once again, how factors other than religiosity could contribute to Muslim women’s decisions to reach out to others over food. Cable and the two French sisters were thus doubly Othered; first, they were of a different race and religion and second, they were on a mission that necessitated the maintenance of their own boundaries to protect the purity of the Gospel that they were trying to spread. The Muslim women they met were in the confines of their own homes, a protected intimate site. Nonetheless, instead of inhibiting commensality, these boundaries blurred and melded into an inclusive acceptance that left both sides changed, although unconverted.

The narratives of Cable and the French sisters bring both geographical and gendered insights to the study of boundary-making. Such factors are often lost from view if inter-religious relations are discussed only in terms of political interactions and the public sphere, which are often formally encoded and acknowledged to be part of the male domain. However, when such interactions are examined on the micro-level, the picture becomes more chaotic but we can see that boundaries not only serve to configure in-group and out-group conditions for inclusion. Rather, the configurations of boundaries are frequently negotiated—sometimes over the common consumption of a cup of tea—and often hold out the possibility of multiple affiliations. However, as the Republic of China lurched toward war in the late 1930s, group distinctions became more polarized. The next section of this article will show that, ironically, it was in seeking to unite behind a common political cause that discourses over food began to accentuate inter-religious differences and inhibit social relations.

### **Instrumental Tolerance in Wartime**

Miles away from the Gobi Desert, in an address delivered to the Muslim community of Peking in 1928, General Pai Chung-hsi, field commander of the 4th Army Corps of the National Revolutionary Army, declared that “superstition in the matter of food” was one of the many weaknesses of Chinese Muslims.<sup>43</sup> In particular, abstinence from pork and wine was “overdone” and “must be rectified.”<sup>44</sup> This speech was made soon after Kuomintang leader Chiang Kai-Shek had consolidated his control over China’s capital and drove out most Communists from the cities, tightening his grip over the urban population even as local warlords ruled autonomously in the rural areas. The “Generalissimo,” as he became known in Western media because of his military background, relied on men like General Pai to maintain his grip on political power and conduct sporadic campaigns against recalcitrant warlords. Pai’s speech deriding superstitious Muslim food habits presaged a 1930s campaign spearheaded by

Chiang and his wife Soong Mei-Ling to unify China under the neo-Confucian virtues of *lǐ* (禮/礼, “propriety”), *yì* (義/义, “righteousness”), *lián* (廉, “integrity”) and *chǐ* (恥/耻, “conscience”).<sup>45</sup> In this schema, Muslim dietary preferences seemed not only to fall outside the modernizing ethos of Sun Yat-Sen’s early Chinese Republic but also ran afoul of the Neo-Confucian values championed by the new leader Chiang Kai-Shek. Although the Muslim ethic of *qingzhen* was a mirror-image of Chiang’s New Life Movement’s promotion of cleanliness and righteousness, by virtue of being derived from Islamic tradition, it was excluded from his vision of a modernized China.

Perhaps General Pai’s audience would have been surprised to learn that Pai himself was a Muslim.<sup>46</sup> Born in 1893 as a Hui Muslim, he had been an important warlord in Guangxi province in South Central China since the mid-1920s and had a very close relationship with Chiang Kai-Shek.<sup>47</sup> As a strong believer in the Chinese Nationalist cause, in another speech that he gave in 1928, we find him exhorting Chinese Muslims to join the Chinese Nationalists wholeheartedly because without a “religious revolution,” the Muslim community was in danger of falling apart and would fail to “compete successfully with members of other races in the economic realm.”<sup>48</sup> Religious reform, to General Pai, was closely linked to ethnic assimilation and rising economic status. Pai’s reformist stance on food habits and his preoccupation with secularism reflect an ambiguous attitude toward religion that was nevertheless authentic. If piety, unwavering faith, and observance of ritual constituted one side of the religious experience of Chinese Muslims, Pai’s ambivalence and imperfect adherence to religious doctrines and norms constituted another. While secular considerations were the basis of Pai’s message to Muslims in Peking, his call for the religious reform of Chinese Islam should not be viewed as mere political window-dressing but as an example of the internal tensions that often exist within a common religious identity. Pai was promoting a model of Muslim boundary-making that placed the onus of accommodation on the Muslims themselves, in conformity with the “bright” concept of nationalistic boundary-making envisaged by the Chiang-led Chinese state.

However, Pai’s rhetoric underwent a remarkable shift during the Second World War. He was put in charge of organizing the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation, and as he traveled to a new base in Chungking in 1938, Japanese forces were making alarming advances into China’s territory.<sup>49</sup> The Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation was formed partly to counter overtures made by the Japanese to persuade Muslims in China to change their allegiance.<sup>50</sup> Pai was not the only politician who traveled around the country to mobilize Muslims. Chiang Kai Shek himself also found it imperative to seek to win the hearts and minds of Chinese Muslims in Gansu, Northwest China, which had a large Muslim population and was of great strategic importance. Because Gansu province was vulnerable to incursions by both the Japanese and

the Soviets as well as the Chinese Communists, Chiang addressed provincial delegates to the Chinese Islamic National Salvation Federation in 1939. He urged the Muslim delegates to understand that Islamic doctrines advocated saving people of other religious faiths, especially in the cause of national solidarity. According to Chiang, Muslims who opposed national unity did not properly understand Islam or the way in which the religion had been historically mixed into China's melting pot.<sup>51</sup> In this wartime environment, Chinese Muslims needed to be transformed from being superstitious, unassimilated religious Others into a crucial ingredient of Chinese society.

Subsequent to Chiang's speech, General Pai changed his political narrative to suit the tenor of the new wartime message. He wrote "A Message to All the Muslims in China," in the first issue of the Federation's newsletter, *Hui Min Yan Lun*, which praised Muslims for the great deeds that "our ancestors accomplished" and no longer criticized them for their internal religious weaknesses.<sup>52</sup> If the Chinese Muslim community was weak, it was no longer religion that was at fault; instead, Pai pointed the finger at the previous Qing Dynasty "Manchu regime" for bringing down the Muslim community.<sup>53</sup>

Food also figured prominently in this revised discourse. Nationalist criticisms of Muslim dietary restrictions were abandoned in wartime. Rather than characterize Muslim dietary restrictions as a social weakness, publications such as *Hui Min Yan Lun* made a point to mention the Chinese state's benevolent accommodation of Muslim dietary needs. For example, one report stressed that Muslim children placed in a "War-time Children's Home or the Refugee Children's Relief House in nearby cities," would be provided with a Muslim diet and taught by Muslim teachers.<sup>54</sup> Chinese Nationalist leaders seemed to believe that being assiduous rather than derisive of Muslim dietary restrictions might tip the scales in their favor by mobilizing more Muslim financial aid and soldiers. The need for such a revised political discourse reflected the continued distrust of this religious minority and the importance of food habits as a marker of religious and ethnic difference. More importantly however, the shift to accommodate rather than deride Muslim dietary preferences demonstrated a voluntary blurring of boundaries that enabled Chinese Muslims to blend into the majority population without sacrificing an important aspect of their identity. However, this voluntary blurring, unlike the interpersonal negotiations of Cable and the French sisters, were a concession that highlighted markers of difference covertly by constantly referring to them.

These political moves also prompted Chinese press reports that played up instances of Japanese insensitivity toward Muslims, especially with respect to their dietary habits. Amidst numerous reports in the *Ta Kung Pao* Press about Japanese cruelty and their nefarious plans to subjugate Muslims in 1940, one article mentioned that among Japanese iniquities was the practice of driving

away Muslim peddlers of roasted chicken from a railway station in the occupied city of Shantung. According to this report, “what one hears being peddled at the Techow (*sic.*) station at present is [only] *bian dang* [a box of Japanese-style food prepared for travelers] . . . This added much to the inconvenience of the Mohammedan traveler. However, this situation cannot be remedied until we recover all our lost territory.”<sup>55</sup> The implication was clear: only Chinese rule provided for Muslim dietary needs and unless the Japanese invaders were defeated, respect for Muslim dietary practices would never be regained. To make this assertion, the symbolic boundaries between Muslims and non-Muslims had to be re-established and reified so that they could be protected.

These examples illustrate that the Chinese Nationalist government seemed to think that the way to Muslims’ hearts was through sensitivity to their stomachs. Consumption became a lightning rod for the political process of boundary-shifting. As Han Chinese and Muslims alike expanded the range of practices and beliefs deemed acceptable by the Chinese nation and society. Being so essential to daily life, what one ate and how society facilitated one’s access to food defined one’s identity and signaled what society considered as acceptable minority behavior. That these signals changed through the course of conflict indicates the fluidity of such boundary-making. This shift in attitude was all the more remarkable, considering that prior to the war, Chiang’s New Life Movement had sought to narrow the range of acceptable beliefs, values, and ways of life along Neo-Confucian lines. But whether such boundaries expanded or contracted, their amplification by state politicians was a constant reminder that they still existed. Within this context, the boundaries set by the state around its Muslim minority population became more expansive but remained both “bright” and rigid.

On an instrumental level, it is uncertain whether Chinese Muslims themselves considered this change in rhetoric and the small measures taken to accommodate their needs significant in any way. The discourse over Muslim food habits in wartime nonetheless carried great symbolic significance; conflicts involving food might cause injustice and could potentially stir emotions along the fault-lines of difference. Ultimately, Gansu and Xinjiang provinces remained in Republican territory until the end of the war, when Muslims became embroiled in regional contestations for political influence during the waning years of the Chinese Republic. Such conflicts provided a new dimension that further complicated the polarities of boundary-making as defined by the state.

## The Diplomacy of Feasting

The dining table of the American diplomat John Hall Paxton and his wife Vincoe provide a curious backdrop to these post-war contestations, as illuminated by an

unpublished and self-authored manuscript of their service in China. The couple also kept a lively photographic account of their travels in China, with a keen eye for visual detail. Appointed as U.S. Consul to Xinjiang in 1944 after several years of foreign service in other parts of China, John Paxton crossed the same terrain that Cable and the two French sisters had traversed some twenty years earlier, taking many photographs that documented the production of the food they consumed during their journey across the desert.

Paxton's interactions with the Muslims of Xinjiang—or as he called them, the “Turki”—were shadowed by the need to tread carefully around political minefields set by the tensions between Han Chinese, Uyghurs, White Russians, and Soviets in this region. The couple arrived in Xinjiang just before the start of the unrest spearheaded by the Ili National Army, a coalition of pro-Soviet Uyghurs and White Russians that banded together against Chiang Kai-Shek's Chinese Nationalist rule. The Nationalists responded with military intervention, sending among others, Hui Muslims to quell the incipient uprising.<sup>56</sup> As U.S. Consul in a borderland tinderbox, Paxton had the unenviable task of maintaining cordial relations with all of these warring factions, and through astute diplomacy, promoting American interests.<sup>57</sup>

The Paxtons' experience of hosting and dining with the diverse peoples of this region illustrates some of the pitfalls in negotiating the “bright” and “blurred” boundaries of difference in late Republican China. The description of a dinner party in 1946 hosted by two Uyghur politicians from the “Ili Clique” serves as a good example. The two Uyghur hosts were the Deputy Secretary General of the Ili National Army in Xinjiang, a man called Abasoff (an “Ili appointee,” according to Paxton), and Seyfuddin, the regional head of the Chinese Nationalist Department of Education.<sup>58</sup> By Paxton's account, the party was a dismal failure. Not only did the hosts come very late, but dinner was not served until well beyond the expected hour. The guests, comprised of Chinese, Uyghur, Russian, and American consular officials, “chatted pleasantly but a little nervously as another hour ticked by and no sign of food was forthcoming.” One guest, the wife of General Chih-Chung, the Nationalist-appointed Chairman of the Xinjiang Provincial Government, left the party after one hour without even partaking of refreshments. When the food finally arrived, there were “several heavy meat courses with a long delay between each one and they used the interval for noisy drinking which attempted to keep up a kind of hilarity until the next dish arrived.”<sup>59</sup> On this occasion, religious differences appear to have faded into the background, as indicated by the copious consumption of alcohol by everyone involved.

The Paxtons left after four hours, while the feasting had yet to end, disgruntled at the unapologetic lack of sensitivity displayed by the hosts to their guests' habit of arriving on time and having dinner served promptly. Such

conduct suggests that the Uyghur politicians, newly ensconced in positions of power, were preoccupied with showing off and delineating the extent of their power through their choices of whom to invite, when to show up, and what food to serve. Thus, one could interpret their alleged impoliteness as less an assertion of religious difference and more a symbolic assertion of East Turkistan independence. Positioning themselves as the social and political equals of their guests, the boundaries that the Uyghur hosts drew corresponded to their political aspirations, including the meal-time snubbing of the relatives of Chinese Nationalist officials and a casual disregard for the American diplomats. This power play contrasts starkly with other interactions over food when humbler Uyghurs hosted the diplomats. During the fasting month of Ramadan, the Paxtons visited the homes of their Muslim employees, who lived in much poorer surroundings, and regarded these latter visits as altogether more congenial. Even during uncomfortable moments—for instance, Vincoe Paxton once almost vomited when she ate what she took to be “a kind of powdered sugar white candy,” which was actually a “melted lump of mutton fat mixed with flour and sugar”<sup>60</sup>—laughter, sweets, and tea helped lubricate the “chaos and weeping induced from the smoky fire.”<sup>61</sup>

When it came to hosting their own dinner parties, the Paxtons were aware that these had to be planned carefully, down to the last detail, so as to avoid inadvertently causing offense to any group. Buffets were not feasible, because “had they been tried those nearest to the table would have pulled their chairs up to the food and the others would have had to wait. Also, if guests were required to serve themselves they would not feel sure they were welcome.”<sup>62</sup> To ensure that a formal sit-down dinner with Muslim guests would be a success, the couple respected “their Moslem food habits and wished to prevent these differences from separating them.”<sup>63</sup> This included buying meat from a Muslim supplier and observing the rituals of cleanliness surrounding the preparation of pork. In a striking echo of wartime Chinese Nationalist rhetoric, the Paxtons prided themselves on being sensitive to cultural differences, unlike the other diplomats and political representatives in the region. John Paxton writes that “White Russians and Han Chinese never took Muslim sensibilities seriously, it seemed to us. They rather regarded the entire question of prohibitions among Muslims as a sort of temporary fad they hoped would soon be abandoned.”<sup>64</sup>

Although Paxton seemed to believe that only he was assiduous to the needs of Muslims, this claim is dubious at best. However, it is clear that Paxton and his wife took extra trouble to accommodate not only the needs of their Muslim guests but also Chinese and Russian officials, when the sensitivities of all three parties were likely to clash. Serving alcoholic beverages was one such contentious issue. In such a case, the couple “took into account that some



Muslims do not use tobacco and alcoholic beverages. Realizing, however, that in a community where Chinese and Russian officials made a point of official toasts, some of the Turkis would expect adherence to this custom, so we rather straddled the point. Local wine was placed before each guest as were glasses of water also. Our strictest friends we toasted in water much to their delight.”<sup>65</sup> Paxton’s diplomatic solution to this problem was rather ingenious; however, he appeared to be unaware that sitting at a table with non-Muslims drinking alcohol and using utensils that might have porcine contamination would already have been viewed by stricter orthodox Muslims as a significant compromise. The success of Paxton’s dinner parties—and by his account, they definitely were successful—depended as much on his guests’ own willingness to accommodate different political, social, and cultural interests as did his cultural balancing acts. These diplomatic dinners indicate that upper class Uyghur Muslim officials were willing—at least at some level—to soften their boundaries in order to fit in with officials and dignitaries of a different religion but from a nation-state that was politically important.

Accommodative negotiations of boundaries also took place on the part of Nationalist Hui Muslim officials, known as “Tungkan” in Xinjiang, who moved in diplomatic circles. In the Tianshan district in the city of Urumqi, the Paxtons became acquainted with a Tungkan commander, General Ma, who was known to be a very strict Muslim. Paxton wrote, “We were warned by Chinese friends that he was conspicuously meticulous in his dietary observance in order to maintain his leadership in the Muslim community.”<sup>66</sup> However, even General Ma did not refuse invitations or insist on checking whether the kitchen of his hosts suited his dietary needs. He instead solved the problem of food purity by “abstaining from any food other than bread.”<sup>67</sup> This solution seemed to help him move about in the circles of Chinese and Russian officials, who also accepted his abstinence from their food. This behavior, however, was considered unacceptable by Paxton, who suggested that General Ma “send a member of his staff to satisfy himself that our food was ritualistically clean for Muslims to eat—all meat correctly killed and bled with the appropriate prayers by a true believer and all our utensils clean from porcine contamination.” Although the kitchen inspection was duly carried out, it was at the behest of the non-Muslim host, not as a demand from the Muslim guest. Paxton was happy to report that “Ma and other Muslims, who had heard the story, freely ate what was set before them at our house . . . one inspection had proved sufficient.”<sup>68</sup> Furthermore, according to Paxton, “few Han Chinese inspired this kind of confidence. Ma apparently felt that the Chinese with no religious conceptions in their traditions, might easily neglect to bother with precautions after even the most careful single inspection that he might have taken. So, he never touched meat prepared in any other non-Muslim kitchen than ours giving an excuse that once utensils were used for pork

they would never be clean again. We were careful but the real difference was his trust in our good faith.”<sup>69</sup>

These diplomatic examples of commensality highlight interesting aspects of the dynamics of meal-sharing between Muslims and non-Muslims in Republican China. In the first place, when Muslims were disunited, as were the Uyghurs and Tungkan, or when they were dispersed among non-Muslims, as in the case of the upper-class Uyghur officials in Xinjiang, they would make few demands on their hosts. Paxton may have exaggerated the Chinese and Russian lack of concern with Muslim dietary restrictions, but it does seem clear that the onus was on the Muslims to adapt to non-Muslim traditions and not vice-versa. Furthermore, there were varying degrees of trust between Muslims and different groups of non-Muslims. Uyghurs were distrustful of food served by both the Muslim Hui and the Han Chinese, but made only a cursory inspection of the habits of prestigious non-Chinese Others. As for the Hui, they were only inclined to accept food from other Muslims, or from non-Muslims who were neither Chinese nor Russian. Non-Muslims in Xinjiang were not particularly concerned with dietary restrictions for their own consumption; rather, the main question for them was whether to accommodate the food restrictions of their guests or to flaunt their power by not doing so.

These dynamics map neatly onto the level of political friction between each community. During the period of heightened tension as a result of the ongoing Ili Rebellion, which was to culminate in a failed attempt to set up an autonomous state in East Turkestan, the indigenous Uyghurs were wary of the Chinese, both non-Muslim Han and Tungkan Muslims, who were sent to pacify the region. The Chinese and the Russians were both keen to exert power and influence over Xinjiang, but not to accommodate the needs of the inhabitants. This matrix of power relations was played out over Paxton’s dining table, demonstrating that religion was secondary to political considerations in shaping the boundaries that had developed between groups that dined together diplomatically.

## **Beyond Assimilation**

The perspective of transient foreigners visiting Chinese Muslim communities during the Republican period brings to the surface multiple variables that contributed to the calculus of daily boundary-making that Muslims in China had to negotiate with non-Muslims over meals. This period, sandwiched between the imperial era of the Qing Dynasty and the hegemonic rule of the Chinese Communist Party, represents an epoch that other studies have shown as being marked by policies of integration amidst a newly developed Chinese nationalism, the emergence of a periodical press that connected Muslim communities with Muslims in China and beyond, and projects that spoke to

struggles with dual identities such as the translation of the Qurʾān into the Chinese language.<sup>70</sup> In short, it was a period that brought up challenges not unlike those faced by Muslim minorities in other nation-states and as such, it perhaps bears greater comparative potential with respect to the question of assimilation than do analyses of the two longer periods between which Republican China is bracketed.

This fresh perspective has enabled the present article to move beyond the adversarial paradigm of nation versus religion and concentrate instead on the issue of assimilation through commensal socialization. While food, specifically the Muslim prohibition of pork, has long been viewed as an identity marker that separated Muslims from non-Muslims in China and other non-Muslim majority nation-states, distinctive consumption habits do more than just assert an identity or erect boundaries based on religion. It is tempting to look for an easy correlation between a Muslim's level of piety and adherence to Islamic fundamentals to explain the choice of diet; according to this measure, the stricter a person's adherence to religion, the higher the boundaries she draws. However, this would not be accurate. At the individual level, there is greater agency to decide how to incorporate Islamic prescriptions on food consumption in people's daily lives and the course of action one follows serves as a barometer of whom one can trust and why. At the state level, contradictory boundaries may be drawn, which are both expansive and rigid at the same time. The agency of both state and social actors may become more restricted as the number and distribution of groups involved in the decision-making process increases, as gender and class parameters come into play as well as the contexts of conflict and power relations. However, the essential importance of agency should also caution us against over-politicizing or over-generalizing the significance of religious consumption habits and how to read the boundaries they create.

The recognition of Muslim agency, however, does not imply a messy descent into a morass of discretionary action from which nothing can be inferred. Gender, class asymmetries, and political contexts emerge as major intervening factors that should be accounted for as we interpret the dining strategies of Muslim communities in Republican China. While the present study is limited by the scope and quantity of the historical sources available and lacks the direct voice of Muslims in China themselves, reading such a circumscribed archive nevertheless gives a sense of what is currently overlooked in contemporary studies of integration and boundary-making among Muslim minority communities. These are the internal cleavages within particular Muslim communities, which by virtue of their minority status tend to be treated as monolithic. It is within these dynamics that we need to understand the ways in which religious dietary requirements affect how a community partakes in the socio-cultural life of the nation.

## Endnotes

1. Tacheng is also known as Qoqek (Chochek) and is part of the Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture in Xinjiang, China. Lake Daysan is now in Kazakhstan.
2. Cable and French transliterated the term “Kazakhs” as *Qazaqs* but here I adopt the contemporary transliteration.
3. Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *Through A Jade Gate: An Account of Journeys in Kansu, Turkestan and the Gobi Desert* (London: Hodder & Staughton, 1937), 288.
4. *Ibid*, 284.
5. *Ibid*, 284–85.
6. Although Cable and French use the term “Huei-Huei” in this account, given the geographical location of the city of Hami, it is more likely that they are referring to Uyghur Muslims living in the city rather than the people of the *Hui minzu* of China today.
7. Cable and French, *Through a Jade Gate*, 229–230.
8. *Ibid*, 222.
9. See for example, Sidney W. Mintz and C. M. DuBois, “An Anthropology of Food and Eating,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31 (2002): 99–119; Alan Beardsworth and Teresa Keil, *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society* (London: Routledge, 1997).
10. Maris Boyd Gillette, *Between Mecca and Beijing: Modernization and consumption among Urban Chinese Muslims* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); and M. Christina Cesaro, “Consuming Identities: Food and Resistance among the Uyghur in contemporary Xinjiang,” *Inner Asia*, 2 (2000): 225–238.
11. Veena Ramachandran, “Redefining China’s Xinjiang Policy: Rhetoric or Reality,” *International Area Studies Review*, 20, no. 3 (2017): 280. Reports of a fasting ban in Xinjiang in 2015 and 2016 have been highlighted in major news outlets such as *Al-Jazeera* and the UK-based paper *The Independent*, which Ramachandran has noted. In recent months, reports have also emerged about Muslims in Xinjiang being forced into internment camps and to change behavior designated as “religious.” Among other things, this includes dietary and grooming habits. See Sigal Samuel, “China Isn’t Hiding Its Internment Camps Anymore,” *The Atlantic*, October 26, 2018.
12. Yukari Sai and Johan Fischer, “Muslim Food Consumption in China: Between Halal and *Qingzhen*,” in *Halal Matters: Islam, Politics and Markets in Global Perspective*, eds., Florence Bergeaud-Blackler, Johan Fischer, and John Lever (London: Routledge, 2016), 201–22.
13. Anna C. Korteweg and Triadofilos Triadafilopoulos, “Gender, Religion and Ethnicity: Intersections and Boundaries in Immigrant Integration Policy Making,” *Social Politics*, 20, no. 1 (2013): 109–136.
14. Richard Alba, “Bright vs. Blurred Boundaries: Second-generation Assimilation and Exclusion in France, Germany and the United States,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28, no. 1 (2005): 20–49.
15. Sahih International Translation. The phrase, “animals that die of themselves” refers to animals that die without being slaughtered for consumption. Available online: <https://quran.com/2/173-183>.
16. For a summary of basic principles of Muslim dietary restrictions, see M.N Riaz and M.M Chaudry, *Halal Food Production*, (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2004).
17. See for example, Q 5:90–91: “Oh you who believe, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, sacrificing on stone altars and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful.” There are also verses in the Qur’an that do not impose a blanket ban on alcohol but forbid praying while intoxicated and state that alcohol causes more harm than good; thus, it is better to abstain. The orthodox opinion of Islamic scholars is that these earlier verses

were abrogated by Q 5:90–91 above and that alcohol is wholly prohibited. A minority of scholars have opined that alcohol is permitted under certain circumstances and if consumed below the level of intoxication. Sahih International Translation. Available online: <https://quran.com/5/90-100>.

18. For the Shāfiʿī school, see Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*, trans. K. El-Helbawy, M.M. Siddiqui and S. Shukry (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 1994), 72–76.

19. Peter Tammes and Peter Scholten, “Assimilation of Ethnic Religious Minorities in the Netherlands: A Historical-Sociological Analysis of Pre-World War II Jews and Contemporary Muslims,” *Social Science History*, 41, no. 3 (2017): 477–504.

20. See Gabriele Marranci, “Defensive or Offensive Dining? Halal Dining Practices among Malay Muslim Singaporeans and their effects on Integration,” *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 23 (2012): 84–100.

21. The Chinese Muslim community should not be regarded as a monolithic whole; some Muslims identify more closely with the transnational Muslim *umma* and others are more connected to the Chinese nation-state. For assertions of a distinctive Chinese Muslim identity during the Republican period, see John Chen, “Just Like Old Friends: The Significance of Southeast Asia to Modern Chinese Islam,” *SOJOURN*, 31, no. 3 (2016): 685–742. For contemporary studies of sectarian differences, see Dru Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities and Other Subaltern Subjects* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); and Alexander Stewart, “Where is Allah? Sectarian debate, Ethnicity and Transnational Identity among the Salafis of Northwest China,” *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*, 1, no. 1 (2016): 12–27.

22. Kamaludeen Nasir and Alexius Perreira, “Defensive Dining: Notes on the Public Dining Experiences in Singapore,” *Contemporary Islam*, 2: 61–73.

23. Jonathan Lipman, “Epilogue to “Islam in China/China in Islam,” *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, 12 (2014): 144.

24. For the *Han Kitab*, see for example, Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005); and Kristian Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). For women’s mosques in China, see Maria Jaschok, *The History of Women’s Mosques in Chinese Islam: A Mosque of Their Own* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000). The Chinese term for “women’s mosque” is *qingzhen nüsi*.

25. Joseph Fletcher, “The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China,” *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia*, Beatrice Forbes ed. (London: Variorum Press, 1995), 33.

26. *Ibid.* The issue of voiced or voiceless *dhikr* led to sectarian conflicts among Sufis in the northwestern part of China during Qing rule. See Jonathan Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), 103–166. See also Hodong Kim, *The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–1877* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), 105, which alludes to the Jahri sect of Ma Mingxin that advocated voiced *dhikr*.

27. Cesaro, “Consuming Identities,” 227. Cesaro obtained her definition from *Xinjiang Minzu Cidian* (XUAR 1995: 610, 345), a dictionary that gives the history and origin of this term.

28. Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China: A Neglected Problem* (London: Morgan and Scott Ltd., 1910), 224.

29. Cable and French, *Through the Jade Gate*, 27.

30. Linda Benson, *Across China’s Gobi: The Lives of Evangeline French, Mildred Cable and Francesca French of the China Inland Mission* (Norwalk, UK: East Bridge, 2008), 21–25.

31. *Ibid.*, 26.

32. *Ibid.*, 33.

33. Cable and French, *Through a Jade Gate*, 59.
34. Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *Dispatches from North-West Kansu* (London: Philadelphia: China Inland Mission, 1925), 37–8.
35. Evangeline French, Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *Desert Journal: Letters from Central Asia*, 233–234.
36. Cable and French, *Through a Jade Gate*, 222.
37. Ibid.
38. Cable and French, *Desert Journal*, 234.
39. Ibid.
40. Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *Something Happened* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1934), 149.
41. Benson, *Across China's Gobi*, 183.
42. See Jessica Sewell, "Tea and Suffrage," *Food, Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 11.4 (2008): 487–507.
43. Gist of the address, "Nationalist Revolution and Religious Revolution," delivered by General Pai Chung Hsi, June 22, 1928, translated from the Chinese, 1. Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 34, Folder 598, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT.
44. Ibid.
45. Wennan Liu, "Redefining the Moral and Legal Roles of the State in Everyday Life: The New Life Movement in China in the Mid-1930s," *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review*, 2, no. 2 (2013): 336.
46. "Moslem Who's Who in China," Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 34, Folder 59, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT.
47. Ibid. Also mentioned in M. Rafiq Khan, *Islam in China* (New Delhi: National Academy, 1963), 17.
48. "National Revolution and Religious Revolution," 2.
49. The formation of this federation was part of the New Life Movement's wartime efforts. See Federica Ferlanti, "The New Life Movement at War: Wartime Mobilisation and State Control in Chongqing and Chengdu, 1938–42," *European Journal of East Asia Studies*, 11, no. 2 (2013): 187–212.
50. "Translation of 'People's Weekly' Vol. 13, 233, March 12, 1939." Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 35, Folder 612, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT. See also: Mi Shoujiang and You Jia, *Islam in China*, trans. Min Chang (China Intercontinental Press, 2008), 133–137, on Japanese overtures to the Muslim community.
51. "Remarks by Generalissimo Chiang at the Tea Reception Given in Honor of the Muslim Provincial Delegates," Oct 15, 1939, Chungking. Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 35, Folder 612, Yale University Library Manuscript and Archives, New Haven, CT.
52. "A Message to All Muslims in China," Jan. 15, 1929, Chungking. Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 35, Folder 612, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT.
53. Ibid.
54. "Translation from 'Hui Min Yan Lun' Semi-monthly," Vol. I, No. 3, Feb. 15 1939, Chungking. Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 35, Folder 612, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT.
55. Translated summary of the article, "The Will to Resist on the Part of Muslims in North China," by Er Li, published in installments in the *Ta Kung Pao* Press, May 26–June 3, 1940, 6. Lyman Hoover Papers, Box 35, Folder 612, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT.

56. For causes and outcomes of the Ili rebellion, see Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Muslim Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944–1949* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1990). The Ili Movement is also known as the East Turkistan Independence Movement.

57. For background on the political context of Xinjiang in 1949, see Gardner Bovington, *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 32–67; and David Brophy, *Uyghur Nation: Reform and Revolution on the Russia-China Frontier* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 53–85.

58. John H. Paxton, *Consul to Sinkiang*, unpublished manuscript, 133 in John Paxton Hall Papers, Series III, Box 6, Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives, New Haven, CT. It was not clear from Paxton's account who appointed the invited officials, given the fluid political situation in Xinjiang at the time.

59. *Ibid.*, 133.

60. *Ibid.*, 207.

61. *Ibid.*, 208.

62. *Ibid.*, 122.

63. *Ibid.*, 123–124.

64. *Ibid.*, 268.

65. *Ibid.*, 123–124.

66. *Ibid.*, 204.

67. *Ibid.*

68. *Ibid.*, 205.

69. *Ibid.*

70. For an overview of such developments, see Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 167–77. For struggles between religious and national conceptions of identity in China, see Masumi Matsumoto, "Rationalizing Patriotism among Muslim Chinese: The Impact of the Middle East on the *Yuehua* Journal," *Intellectuals in the Modern Islamic World: Transmission, Transformation and Communication*, eds., Stéphane A. Dudoignon, Komatsu Hisao and Kosugi Yasushi (New York: Routledge, 2006), 117–42. For the Qur'an translation project in the Republican period, see Stefan Henning, "God's Translator: Qur'an Translation and the Struggle over a Written National Language in 1930s China," *Modern China*, 4, no. 6 (2015): 631–55.