

# Under Crescent and Full Moons : Contradiction and Coherence of Muslims in Beijing 1906-1913

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# 博士論文（要約）

**Under Crescent and Full Moons:**

**Contradiction and Coherence of Muslims in Beijing**

**1906–1913**

（新月と満月の下で：北京のムスリムの矛盾と一貫性 1906–1913）

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# 本論文の構成

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## 各章の内容

※本論文の Conclusion より転載

The discussions in each chapter were as follows:

Chapter 1, “Locating Beijing Muslims in a Historical Context,” presented an overview of the history of Islam and Muslims in Beijing from the mid-7th century, when Islam was reportedly first introduced to China, through the successive Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, Qing, Republican, and PRC regimes. The early 20th century was a turbulent period for Chinese-speaking Muslims in Beijing during which they experienced drastic political and social changes and experimented with innovations in their communities. This period also saw the emergence of a Muslim media, which became a platform for the Muslim elite to discuss religious, social, political, and cultural issues. Muslim students studying in Japan published one of the earliest Muslim periodicals. They had lofty ambitions to learn from the success of the Meiji Restoration in Japan. Ironically, it was in this period that Japanese Pan-Asianists and military officers began to approach Chinese-speaking Muslims in order to develop a nation-wide Muslim network while advancing into Asia. The Japanese dispatched a Russian-Tatar Muslim collaborator to China named Abdürreşid İbrahim. His observations of local Muslim communities in China during his journey tell us unknown aspects of the lives of Chinese-speaking Muslims at the time.

Chapter 2, “Negotiating *Minzu* and *Zongjiao*,” has demonstrated how the Muslim elite attempted to negotiate the new concepts of *minzu* and *zongjiao*, in reaction to the experience of modernization and the change of the regime, which was promoting the “Five Races under One Union” policy. Although many Chinese intellectuals and politicians were indifferent to Chinese-speaking Muslims who did not have their own territories, some members of the Muslim elite participated in the new regime’s ethnic policy as the representatives of *Huizu*, which originally referred to Turkic Muslims living in Xinjiang. However, this invited harsh criticism from other

Muslims who regarded Chinese-speaking Muslims not as an ethnic group but as Han believers of Islam. Thus, the Muslims' views of Huizu were varied and these differences almost split the Muslim community apart in Beijing.

Chapter 3, "Educational Reform, Reformists and Conservatives, and the Ottoman and Russian Empires," explored the actual conditions and historical significance of the educational reform initiated by Chinese-speaking Muslims in Beijing, as well as in Sichuan, Jiangsu, Shanghai, and Yunnan. Previous research on Muslims' educational reform in the early 20th century highly regarded the efforts of reformists and emphasized the historical significance of this movement. However, this chapter has revealed that the Muslim elite who promoted educational reform actually tended to be radical in their own differing views about education reform. Furthermore, I have shown that foreign Muslim teachers taught Chinese Muslims, and that some Muslims were displeased with Wang Kuan for trying to build an economic relationship with the Ottoman Empire. The Muslim elite in charge of the educational reform had common goals of saving poor Muslims, but they could not compromise with each other due to the different opinions about how to improve Muslims' financial situations.

Chapter 4, "Cutting off the Queue for Faith, Preserving the Queue for Face," investigated the controversy among the Muslim elite over whether the queue hairstyle, the Manchu traditional hairstyle for men imposed on Chinese people under the Qing rule, was un-Islamic. I have shown that unlike non-Muslim Chinese men who cut their braids because of an anti-Manchu sentiment and nationalistic feelings, some Muslims cut off their queues *because of their faith*. Others tried to preserve their queues. These people's opposition was so intense that a young Muslim scholar abandoned cutting off his queue to avoid conflict among Muslims and to *save his face*. Chinese-speaking Muslims in Beijing and Tianjin also became involved in the modernization of traditional clothing through their experiences of the Xinhai Revolution and experiments in queue-cutting or its preservation.

Chapter 5, "Legends, Migration Memories, and Bloodline" demonstrated that folklore

reflecting Muslim *xilai* (“coming from the west”) consciousness has been widely transmitted over generations despite criticism that it was not based on historical fact. This myth, at the same time, was recognized as reliable history by some Muslims and used as evidence that Chinese-speaking Muslims were the descendants of foreigners, with a different history and bloodline from the Han. Having foreign roots was tied to personal value and social status, and such *xilai* consciousness continued to exist even when the family members stopped practicing Islam. The legends, which have been considered *wrong* and contrary according to the history of Islam became *longstanding* traditions among Muslims and have helped them maintain their pride and sense of belonging to the Islamic world.

Chapter 6, “Ḥalāl Problems and the *Qingzhen* Consciousness” has shown the importance of Muslims’ dietary customs in examining their self-understanding. Historically, Chinese-speaking Muslims have developed unique gastronomic cultures, which have even attracted non-Muslims, while they have been plagued by ḥalāl issues and religious insult incidents for a long time. Many Muslims felt anger about the never-ending conflicts with non-Muslims over dietary customs. Such frustration, conversely, elevated their pride at being more hygienic than non-Muslims who, statistically, would have been Han Chinese. It was over this high awareness of hygiene, particularly with respect to dietary life, that Muslims strongly and emotionally appealed that they were not *Han*, but *Hui*. Thus, this chapter illuminated how Muslims’ dietary lives influenced the distinction they made between *Han* and *Hui* in early 20th-century Beijing.

This dissertation has elucidated Chinese-speaking Muslims’ daily practices and the diversity in self-understanding in early 20th-century Beijing, a time period when the Muslim elite struggled to elevate the social status of Muslims in the country in relation to their non-Muslim neighbors, as well as Muslims in Xinjiang and foreign countries. Through this, we have now bridged a historiographical gap in the Islamic history of China and provided an overview of the history of Chinese-speaking Muslims. Understanding shifts in the self-understanding of Chinese-speaking Muslims, who were the major target of the CCP’s early ethnic policy, generates insights into the historical background of ethnic and religious issues in modern China. In addition, my

research has illuminated the political, intellectual, and economic interactions across modern Eurasia by linking Chinese, Eurasian, and Islamic history. In the early 20th century, Chinese-speaking Muslims were strongly affected by the ethnic theories and nationalistic trends in China, Japan, and Europe and by the Islamic reform movements in the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Presenting history from a global perspective by focusing on the broad, flexible networks of people from different cultural backgrounds constitutes a breakthrough in humanities research, which is often compartmentalized into narrow specialties.

As the first full-scale research of the social history of Chinese-speaking Muslims in Beijing in the early 20th century, we can summarize this project with two key points.

First, Chinese-speaking Muslims' interpretations of Islam and actual deeds that looked contradictory to the teachings of Islam were coherent to themselves, and they attempted to render these contradictory deeds coherent in the Islamic context. Among the main chapters, Chapters 2–5 have illuminated that, although Chinese-speaking Muslims' self-understanding was vague and fluid. They had, in many cases, common motivations for maintaining stability within the Islamic communities. Some Muslim elites had ambiguous attitudes about various debates such as, whether Chinese-speaking Muslims were a separate ethnic group or not (Chapter 2), or deciding whether to cut off the queue-hairstyle for faith or to preserve it for face (Chapter 4). By adopting less firm stances, they tried to avoid conflicts among Muslims. Even though some Muslims' behaviors looked un-Islamic, the Muslim elite attempted to save the impoverished Muslims by promoting radical educational reform despite severe criticism (Chapter 3), and ordinary Muslims kept their pride of being in the bloodline of foreign Muslims by transmitting legends dismissed as groundless by historians (Chapter 5). In other words, it was Chinese-speaking Muslims' ambivalent practices of Islam and ambiguous self-understanding that partly contributed to the maintenance of the Islamic communities. Chapter 6, in contrast, considered the painstaking coherence of their self-understanding with respect to their dietary customs. It also revealed how

Muslims' pride in their hygiene and anger at insults to Islam were important to comprehending their self-understanding.

Thus, this dissertation proposed a new approach in order to depict "alternatives histories" of a Muslim minority whose history was not adequately studied, by examining the contradictory, unstable, ambiguous, whimsical, and emotional nature of human beings, taking into account pride, face, emotion, and individual preference. In this way, Muslim minority studies can contribute to the development of how to depict "alternative histories," vividly, from a new angle. In the introduction of the dissertation, I argued that the framework of contradiction and coherence is helpful in investigating the ambivalent practices of Islam as norms and lifestyle of a Muslim, and emphasized that Islam covers all human activities. However, this framework is not, of course, limited to Muslims, although Muslims, in particular, those who live in non-Muslim dominant societies, have such a tendency. This framework will mitigate the penchant in historical studies to fall into the illusion of linear and teleological history, and help us deepen our understanding about the complexity of human beings and the choices they make.

Needless to say, Muslims' ambiguous self-understanding reflected other groups' vague understandings of Chinese-speaking Muslims. Manchus, Chinese intellectuals and politicians, non-Muslim neighbors, Christian missionaries, foreign Muslims, and Japanese Pan-Asianists all tried to use Chinese-speaking Muslims for various purposes, but were, in many cases, ignorant of the situation of Islam in China and indifferent to what the Chinese-speaking Muslims were thinking. Due to these circumstances, the Muslim elite had an ambiguous and incoherent self-understanding during the late Qing and early Republican period. In other words, the early 20th century can be situated in the modern history of China as a period when people were not urged to strictly identify in terms of self and other, unlike the decades after 1920s when people were mobilized for nationalism and forced to identify, explicitly, who they were.