

# TRANSITION SHOCK AS TOOL OF INTEGRATION: APPLYING BERRY'S MODEL OF ACCULTURATION ON SINO- MUSLIMS

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## Abstract

*This paper aims to apply the recent approaches of intercultural interactions between minority-majority groups upon the historical acculturative phases of Sino-Muslims. Muslims in China departed their ghettos during Yuan/Mongol reign (1279-1368A.D) and got acquainted with Chinese culture at larger scale hence we contend that it was the period of 'transition shock' for them, to apply Alder's phrase; as they were not only familiarized with the Chinese society but also revisited their new identity amidst a new people thus underwent a process of change revising their 'self-understanding'. This cultural shock later propelled them to 'integration' during Ming (1368-1644A.D) thus served as a tool of their integration in China. Taking the Berry's model of acculturation, we suggest the early Mongol's was a period of 'contact' between the two cultures i.e. Islam and China whereas late Mongol and early Ming was characterized with 'conflict' and finally Ming age was the period of 'adaptation'..*

**Keywords:** cultural transition; integration; adaptation; cultural shock as tool of integration; minority majority interrelationship

## Introduction

Religion has been part and parcel of the lives of Chinese people as means but never the prime goal of their life orientations. Therefore Daoism, Buddhism and Confucianism simultaneously served the mundane purposes and performed metaphysical functions in the lives of Chinese populace. Islam has always been a religion of minority in China. It never asked for the imperial patronage nor did it try to proselytize people en masse so its history represents a case unlike the historical account of other religious traditions being practiced in China. Although the axiom that imperial propensity is determinant of

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historical pursuit of any religion applies here as well because in the monarchical societies, no social phenomena are shaped beyond the sovereign's influence. So, Muslims in China moved from the obligatory seclusion in Tang-Song China to the dispersion in the whole China as representatives of Yuan and finally ended up acculturating in the mainstream Chinese society, at least apparently, in Ming-Qing China. This pursuit of settlement and acculturation in China was significantly, if not solely, governed by the state policies. Apart from the state intervention, naturally the encounters between the Chinese majority and the Muslims (who came as foreign traders initially and settled in China gradually) in their daily lives and mutual influences also gave birth to new traits in the newly established Muslim community in China. Sometimes these new traits were evolved to be conciliatory and accommodative towards the majority and sometimes these served to safeguard and preserve the Muslim values and culture. So, the history of Muslims in China is a dialectical process between adaptation to the Chinese culture (not only material but also epistemological and philosophical) and retention of essentially Islamic religious traits.

It is a fact well-known to everyone engaged with the history of Muslims in China that each local Muslim community is distinct in its adaptational behavior towards their host majority society. No general analysis or description is possible in this regard if the standards of precision are to be met. And this is why all the analysts of Islam and Muslims in China made generalized statements while concluding their research recording an array of responses of different Muslim communities towards the phenomena of Sinicization. This piece of research is focused on the Muslim community of Xi'an and thus meant to examine the historical interrelationship of Muslims of Xi'an with the Chinese state and local non-Muslim population called Han henceforth. And the Muslims will be called Hui as this research engages with Hui Muslims solely excluding all other Muslim minority groups settled in Xi'an.

### **Conceptual Framework and Literature Review**

We live in an age marked with globalization and intercultural communication where cross-cultural interactions and their impacts on individual and communal lives are talk of the town. With ever-growing progression in means of communication and transportation, people and societies are influencing each other more vigorously than ever. This intercultural interface has brought about significant changes in the behaviors and social patterns of people particularly the immigrants and settlers. Numerous models have been presented to analyze the patterns and consequences of acculturation and adaptation in an alien cultural atmosphere.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed view of literature on acculturation and its associated patterns, please see Paul N Lakey, "Acculturation: A Review of the Literature," *Intercultural Communication Studies* 12(2), (2003); John W Berry, "Acculturation as Varieties of Adaptation,"

Acculturation is defined as a multidirectional cultural change process triggered by intercultural contact which produces changes in attitudes, norms, behaviors, knowledge, and identity. It is suggested that when people are confronted with a culturally unfamiliar atmosphere, they experience a kind of 'cultural shock' or 'transition shock'.<sup>2</sup> This transition shock is characterized with a conscious awareness of their self with contrast to the new cultural paradigms leading to a sense of disorientation/alienation in the beginning and then familiarization with the new culture resulting into the learning of new cultural traits and embarking on creating a new identity later. The new identity often emerges as a result of bilateral process i.e. retention of native cultural traits and adaptation to new social norms.

The concept of cultural shock has been more extensively elaborated and applied in social psychology recently and the immigrant youth as well as adults predominantly in American and European social contexts.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, Berry's model of acculturation has been applied in both Asian and American social contexts in last two decades.<sup>4</sup> With respect to China, recently much attention has been paid to the study of Chinese Diaspora in the global age and the emergence of new identities, cultural fluidity and trans-nationalism as well as the majority-minority group relationships between Chinese and Others

Acculturation: Theory, models and some new findings (1980); "Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation," *Applied psychology* 46( 1), 1997; "Acculturation: Living Successfully in Two Cultures," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29(6) (2005); Amado M Padilla, Acculturation, Theory, Models, and Some New Findings, vol. 39 (Westview Pr, 1980); Colleen Ward and Arzu Rana-Deuba, "Acculturation and Adaptation Revisited," *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 30(4), (1999); Floyd W Rudmin, "Critical History of the Acculturation Psychology of Assimilation, Separation, Integration, and Marginalization," *Review of general psychology* 7(1), (2003); Young Yun Kim, *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation*, Sage, 2001; Larry Samovar, Richard Porter, and Edwin McDaniel, *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, (Cengage Learning, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> For the illustration of the core concepts of 'cultural shock' and 'transition shock', please see Peter S Adler, "Culture Shock and the Cross-Cultural Learning Experience," Luce, Louise FiberX Smith, Elise C. Eds. *FW toward Internationalism W Readings in Cross J Cultural Communication* (1987).

<sup>3</sup> Janet Bennett, "Transition Shock: Putting Culture Shock in Perspective," *International and intercultural communication annual* 4 (1977); Claudia Feichtinger and Gerhard Fink, "The Collective Culture Shock in Transition Countries-Theoretical and Empirical Implications," *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 19(6), (1998); Paul Pedersen, *The Five Stages of Culture Shock: Critical Incidents around the World* (ABC-CLIO, 1994); Colleen A Ward, Stephen Bochner, and Adrian Furnham, *The Psychology of Culture Shock*, (Psychology Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Yuri Jang et al., "A Bidimensional Model of Acculturation for Korean American Older Adults," *Journal of Aging Studies* 21(3), (2007); Seth J Schwartz and Byron L Zamboanga, "Testing Berry's Model of Acculturation: A Confirmatory Latent Class Approach," *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology* 14(4) (2008).

taking Chinese people as minority group.<sup>5</sup> This paper adds to this trend in a novel way taking Chinese in their homeland as a majority group investigating their relationship with Muslim minority in mainland China and the impact of these intercultural actions upon the minority group acculturative behaviors and identity.

### Theory and Locale of Research

Considering the aforementioned impact of ‘transition shock’ on the acculturating communities, we hereby contend that it can serve as a tool of acculturation or adaptation to the new culture. We also propose that this process of acculturation is not exclusively a modern phenomenon rather the societies and individuals in the past also have been experiencing the same phases of adaptation whenever an ethnic group migrated to a different society or region. It is invincibly true that phenomenon of migration and acculturation was not as pervasive in the times of yore as in our day but it was undoubtedly extant. Having stated this, we suggest that the models and theories of acculturation, being empirically tested and studied quantitatively in the social scientific research, can be applied by the same token to analyse the historical process of intercultural contacts and its consequences.

Muslims came to China in 8th century A.D in small groups and it was a sort of Muslim Diaspora after the fall of Baghdad caliphate at the hands of Yuan that a substantial wave of Muslims entered China. With this, the already extant Muslim community of China got strengthened and departed their ghettos for the socio-economic purposes consequently getting acquainted with Chinese culture and society during Yuan reign. Therefore Mongol age was the period of ‘transition shock’ for Muslims in China, to borrow Alder’s term. He defines it as a process in which one experiences ‘profound learning, self-understanding and change’ while interacting with a new culture.<sup>6</sup> Mongol age marks the preliminary stages of this transition while the fruits of this cultural communication ripened during Ming reign. Taking the adaptational model of Berry into consideration, we see that he views acculturation as a social process sub-divided into three phases i.e. contact, conflict and adaptation. The contact

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<sup>5</sup> Ang, Ien. "Beyond Chinese groupism: Chinese Australians between assimilation, multiculturalism and diaspora." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(7), (2014): 1184-1196; Gomez, Edmund Terence, and Gregor Benton, eds. *Belonging to the Nation: Generational Change, Identity and the Chinese Diaspora*. Routledge, 2016; Liu, Hong. "Beyond co-ethnicity: The politics of differentiating and integrating new immigrants in Singapore." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(7), (2014): 1225-1238; Marsden, Anna. "Chinese descendants in Italy: Emergence, role and uncertain identity." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(7), (2014): 1239-1252; Nyíri, Pál. "Training for transnationalism: Chinese children in Hungary." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(7), (2014): 1253-1263; Zhou, Min. "Segmented assimilation and socio-economic integration of Chinese immigrant children in the USA." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(7), (2014): 1172-1183.

<sup>6</sup> Adler, Peter S. "The transitional experience: An alternative view of culture shock." *Journal of humanistic psychology*, (1975).

between two cultural spheres is the focal point of the whole phenomenon according to his theory therefore; the nature, frequency as well as intention and length of contact are the prime determinants of the extent and kind of adaptational behavior of the acculturating communities. We propose that the Muslims encountered a 'cultural shock' in Yuan age and were not only familiarized with the Chinese society but also revisited their new identity amidst a new people and culture thus underwent a process of change and revised their 'self-understanding'. This transition shock later propelled them to 'integration' during Ming thus served as a tool of their acculturation. Hence, we hypothesize here that 'transition shock' served as a tool of integration of Muslims in China and contrary to what Lipman proposes, we suggest that Mongol reign by all means served to pave the way of mixing and localization of Muslims in the Chinese society.

### Methodology

This research employs the approach of historiography primarily as it traces the historical patterns of Muslims in Mongol China and analyzes them in the paradigm of acculturation thus contextualizing and reconstructing the phenomena of past Muslim practices in the light of contemporary framework of intercultural interactions. The sociopsychological approach is used as an aid in order to categorize the responses of Chinese Muslims to the emerging sociopolitical currents of the Chinese society.

### A Discussion and Analysis

This paper engages with an extensive collection of literature in English and Chinese languages regarding the integration of Muslims in Yuan and Ming China. We see a sharp contrast in the opinions of foreign experts and local Chinese authors regarding the acculturative trends of Muslims in Mongol reign. The former propose that since Muslims enjoyed a prestigious status under Yuan dynasty, they had no social pressures to acculturate in the mainstream Han society hence they tended to maintain their cultural segregation and aboriginal identity.<sup>7</sup> Unlike the foreign scholarships, contemporary local historiographers tend to agree upon the notion that Mongol age was positively a prelude to the integration of Muslims in China.<sup>8</sup> They

<sup>7</sup> Lipman, "Familiar Strangers: A Muslim History in China."; Raphael Israeli, *Islam in China: Religion, Ethnicity, Culture, and Politics*, (Lexington Books, 2002); Donald Leslie, *Islam in Traditional China: A Short History to 1800*, (Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1986). Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China : A Neglected Problem* (London; Philadelphia [etc.]: Morgan & Scott, ltd. ; China inland mission, 1910).

<sup>8</sup> YANG Gui-ping, "On Social and Cultural Context of Han-Kitab: A Perspective from Ritual Transformation of Hui Muslims During Yuan and Ming Dynasty," *Journal of Hui Muslim Minority Studies* 3 (2012). LI Chong, "Hundred Years' Study and Summary on National Policy in the Mongolia-Yuan Dynasty [J]," *Journal of Xinzhou Teachers University* 6 (2007); Ata Malik Juwaini and Rashid al-Din, "Muslim Merchants in Mongol Yuan China," *The East Asian Mediterranean: Maritime Crossroads of Culture, Commerce and Human Migration* 6 (2008). XU Li-li, "Nationalization of Central Asian

suggested that exposure of Muslims to Chinese culture and society during Yuan caused consciousness changes and resultantly they integrated in Ming more conveniently. They endorse our hypothesis saying that Yuan played the role of prologue to the integration of Muslims in Chinese society in later periods; the economic, educational, religious and nationalization policies of Mongol emperors remained crucial in development of a strand of Islamic tradition exclusive to China.

### Phases of Acculturation

Acculturation, as referred earlier, comprises of three phases i.e. contact, conflict and adaptation; we see all three stages reflected in the history of Sino-Muslims in Yuan and Ming. It is worthy to be noted that these divisions are not like watertight compartments segregated from each other with marked boundaries rather they are constituted of individual human behaviors thus lack absolute coherence and reserve space for individual deviations and specific contextual divergences.

### Contact

On the basis of general outlook of Muslims' life patterns in China, we can classify the period from the inception of Islam in Tang dynasty to Late Mongol as the phase of contact between the Muslims and Chinese society. Muslims came to China in 8th century A.D as ambassadors and traders predominantly. Since the purpose of their arrival was diplomatic/economic and not missionary, the state felt no threat so they encountered no hardships or suppression and received an impartial treatment. Like other foreigners, they were made to live in the enclaves reserved for the foreigners/'outsiders'. Their mandatory seclusion in the ghettos hindered the probability of frequent contact with the host Chinese culture. Their interaction with local people was business-oriented and otherwise they stayed segregated socially and linguistically. The situation changed considerably when Mongols occupied China bringing along with them a new array of immigrant Muslim troops and

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Nationalities in the Mongolian-Yuan Period," *Journal of Lanzhou University (Social Sciences)* 1 (2002); Ma Jianchun, "The Features of the Education among the Huihui's in the Yuan Dynasty," *Ethno-national Studies* 1 (2002). CHEN Min-hua, "National Conditions, Psychology and Policy—Several Thoughts on Islamic Policy in the Period of Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasty," *Journal of Hui Muslim Minority Studies* 2 (2007); Ma Tian-bo and Ma Jian-fu, "The Cultural Consciousness Change of the East Migrating Huihui During Yuan Dynasty [J]," *NW Ethno-National Studies* 3 (2006). MA Tian-bo, "A Review of the Being Assimilated Muslims by Han People in Yuan Dynasty," *Nationalities Research in Qinghai* 4 (2009); Ren Yimin, "On the Religious Policy of the Yuan Dynasty," *Journal of Literature, History & Philosophy* 4 (2007). GAO Tie-tai, "The Discussion of Religious Administration Organ in Yuan Dynasty," *Journal of Tangshan Teachers College* 4 (2010); Li Zhankui, "A Renewed Research into the Reasons Behind the Superior Status of Muslims in Yuan Dynasty," *NW Ethno-National Studies* 1 (2008).

<sup>8</sup> Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

artisans from the Central Asian territories after the fall of Baghdad caliphate.<sup>9</sup> With this begins a new chapter of Muslim history in China; there occurred a paradoxical transition in their status which endorsed them high official responsibilities but lowered their status in the eyes of local Chinese. Muslims started interacting with their host Chinese society and headed towards creating a new identity however this very *mélange* turned out to be a cause of hatred between them and the local Han majority.

Mongols ruled over more than half of the world in the Middle Ages and in 1279 they conquered China as well. Since Mongols ruled Eurasia, Central Asia and beyond, their bureaucracy and militia were truly multiethnic and multicultural. With the commencement of Yuan dynasty, this multiethnic administrative system flowed into China as well altering the previously xenophobic disposition of the Chinese state and society. Chinese social order used to deem foreigners as barbarians and uncivilized thus of inferior status; this mindset was reflected in their behavior towards foreigners placing them in separate ghettos outside the city premises not allowing them to intermix or intermarry with local people.<sup>10</sup> In Yuan dynasty, there was a huge wave of Central Asian Muslims entering China as soldiers or artisans and scholars because the whole territory under the Muslim caliphate was conquered by the Mongols with their skilled persons/artisans recruited in the army to accompany them to China.<sup>11</sup> So, Yuan dynasty, quite like other non-Chinese dynasties of China, produced a rich cultural diversity in the empire. The Mongols' widespread West Asian, Central Asian and even European contacts and expeditions resulted into huge opportunities of cultural exchange.<sup>12</sup> Religious tolerance was as characteristic of Yuan empire as all the major religions coexisted with peace and without discernment. Broomhall quoted many statements of Qublai khan from travelogue of Marco polo which testifies that Mongol exhibited a great religious tolerance and allowed religious freedom to followers of all faiths and traditions. Once, mentioning Jesus, Mohammed (P.B.U.H), Moses and Buddha, Qublai Khan said, "I do honor and show respect to all the four, and invoke to my aid whichever amongst them is in truth supreme in Heaven."<sup>13</sup>

The multicultural, multiethnic and religiously liberal behavior of Mongol emperors provided Muslims a favorable atmosphere for interacting with the majority culture with the constraint of seclusion in ghettos withdrawn.

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<sup>9</sup> Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, *The Cambridge History of China: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Yung-Ho Chang, *The Development of Chinese Islam : During the T'ang and Song Dynasties (618-1276 A.D.)* (1999).

<sup>11</sup> David O Morgan, "Who Ran the Mongol Empire?," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland (New Series)* 114(2), (1982).

<sup>12</sup> Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (Harvard University Press, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Broomhall, *Islam in China : A Neglected Problem..*p.52

Although Confucian governmental practices and examinations based on the Classics were retained by the Mongols in order to pacify and please Han society yet the Chinese social hierarchy took a new shape under the Yuan rule. The populace was divided into four main classes: Mongols, Se Mu ren (people of various categories, often mistranslated as “men of colored eyes”, including Muslims now called Huihui and other foreigners), Hanren (North Chinese) and Nanren (South Chinese).<sup>14</sup> The status of Semuren including Muslims was above the Chinese, inferior to only Mongols themselves. Chinese resented Mongols as oppressors and usurpers and Mongols also cognized the fact that the empire ultimately belongs to Han Chinese and if given any chance, local Chinese would not spare it to regain the throne. This is why they were not ready to rely on Chinese for the administrative and financial matters and Semuren were granted high official positions. Marco Polo reported that many Muslims were appointed as officials and high ranked administrators during the Mongol period particularly in the reign of Qublai Khan.<sup>15</sup> Kenneth even stated that China was ruled by Mongols and their foreign allies as their colony. It might be an overgeneralization but apparently all the important posts were specified for the Muslims.<sup>16</sup> They became shiboshi (trade commissioners in the ports), and they were also allowed to be darughaci (commissioner or local governor), the posts Chinese were supposed to be shorn of.

Muslims were actively in contact with their coreligionists within and outside China in Yuan age as they were enjoying free trade, privileged travelling and administrative status in the government. They needed to learn Chinese language and understand Han ways of behavior in order to deal with the Han community for administrative purposes. In this age, Muslims built mosques and schools, special Muslim Hostels for travelling Muslim traders. Within two or three generations, the Muslims under the Yuan learnt and mastered Chinese language to the extent that Muslim names can be found in the Confucian literati of the time. So, Yuan is the age of gradual identifying of Muslims with Chinese culture, language and customs but with a sense of supremacy over Chinese. This process of understanding the host culture was not instilled by Chinese majority rather chosen by the minority owing to the practical and material needs. Lipman assumes that if Muslim integration into the Chinese society started in Song, it was ceased or retarded in Yuan and though Muslims became ordinary and familiar then but they were equally ‘antagonistic’ and different in the eyes of Chinese. This claim is contentious as the circumstances of Muslims indicate that their integration took a new twirl and proceeded in disguise instead of cessation. We will elaborate this argument afterwards.

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<sup>14</sup> Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties*.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen G Haw, *Marco Polo's China: A Venetian in the Realm of Kubilai Khan* (Routledge London: New York, 2006).

<sup>16</sup> Kenneth Pletcher, *The History of China*, (The Rosen Publishing Group, 2010).



Yuan dynasty was benevolent towards its Muslim subjects and its outcome was twofold i.e. the rapid growth of Muslim population in Muslim majority provinces including Shaanxi and the scattering of Muslims throughout China. Although they dispersed in the whole China to fill all the areas, locally the Muslims were concentrated in their ghettos in the form of urban enclaves or independent villages with a central mosque and market. The imperial edicts are found which were issued to protect the mosques in Southern Shaanxi in the early 13th century by Mongols.

Muslims maintained their style of living in their separate communities as we see Ibn e Batuta<sup>17</sup> and Marco Polo bearing testimony to this practice in 13th century A.D. Muslim communities comprised of Arabs, Persians, newly immigrated Central Asian and Ueigur and Turk Muslims and were bound together with the ties of Islamic creed and laws; thus their religion was their shared identity and their foreign origins and collective political status under the umbrella of Semuren were the possible cornerstones of their social cohesion. Their dependence upon a mosque as an essential communal institution and their abstinence from pork made them more intertwined to each other to base independent Muslim neighborhoods distant from the rest of the population. These neighborhoods were allowed to decide their controversies under Islamic law but obviously under the monitoring of state.

In Tang and Song, it was obligatory but in Mongol reign it almost became habitual and customary to live separately; their status as Semuren in Yuan made Muslims think as a minority not only ethnically different from Han Chinese but also superior to them. This sense of superiority did not hinder the process of integration rather changed its intentions and modes only. Before the Muslims were trying to be a part of their host society in order to remove the tag of alienation and barbarism from them but now they had been already granted the status above the local population on the basis of ethnic difference. So, this very cultural difference and ethnic distinction which caused their estrangement in Chinese society before became a rewarding identity for them in Yuan. But that does not causally necessitate that they stopped identifying with Chinese language and culture. Being appointed on high official posts and actively involved in the trade activities travelling all across China from Southern seashores to Northern frontiers, the Semuren were inevitably interacting with Chinese society in its entirety. What confuses many historians of Islam in China is the seclusion of Muslims in their ethnic enclaves and it makes them assume that such a phenomenon is a sufficient indicator of the Muslims' refusal to integration in Yuan. But they must not neglect that being increasingly involved in the administrative and official activities, Muslims were simultaneously taking part in the Chinese politics, getting well-versed in Chinese classics and literature and getting aware of Chinese customs and

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<sup>17</sup> Ross E Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century* (Univ of California Press, 2012).

systems through close personal observation. During Yuan, the highest posts were banned to Chinese and the system of examination to be a part of bureaucracy was ceased. As D.O. Morgan says, "Could it be that the Mongols, fearful of the notorious Chinese capacity for assimilating foreign conquerors, were anxious lest the Chinese bureaucrats should completely take over, and the ruling elite of Mongols be wholly dependent on their subjects?"<sup>18</sup> And all these actions were definitely paving the way for their integration into Chinese society which we see in Ming.

As theorized by Berry, the consequences of the phenomena of contact between acculturating community and the host majority are primarily dependent upon its nature, frequency, purpose and length. If the nature of contact is pleasant, it will result into good relationship and development of positive atmosphere for the integration of minority and vice versa. In this case, we see that Muslims contacted with Chinese from a higher profile; when a minority gets power and prestige by virtue of privilege over the host majority, it generates abhorrence among the majority and that happened. Nature of contact played an ambivalent role here; assisting Muslims in familiarizing with the host culture but creating a sense of detestation in the ambiance of Chinese society for Muslims at the same time. The frequency of contact increased considerably in Yuan as Muslims were immediate assistants of Mongols and they had to interact with Chinese populace from grass root level to the imperial court. The purpose of contact too underwent a significant shift in Mongol age in twofold ways. Firstly Muslims no more remained sojourners or foreign traders so purpose or length of contact was not hasty or temporary any longer rather determined by a sense of permanent settlement and adjustment in Chinese society. Secondly, the interface between Chinese and Muslim communities was not unilateral (oriented from Muslims to Chinese) any more rather Chinese people too were bound to interact with Semuren officials for their economic affairs etc. Hence, it would be appropriate to classify Mongol reign as a phase of contact between Muslims and Chinese communities and as a result Muslims became an inevitable, ever-present and economically established stratum of Chinese society by the end of Yuan.

In Northwestern China, an important shift in the occupational trends of Muslims was from trade and military professions to the agriculture. This change provided them with another economic resource as well as tied them with the land they were residing. As traders they were potential travelers but as farmers they possessed lands and became permanent inhabitants of the land. In the 14th century by the end of Mongol rule in China, the Muslims totaled about 4,000,000, more than any other minority in China.

### **Conflict**

When two communities belonging to different cultural orientations come into contact with each other, conflicts transpire inevitably both at individual

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<sup>18</sup> Morgan, "*Who Ran the Mongol Empire?*." p.132

and social levels. And the probability of conflict multiplies when the contact takes place in the state of affairs narrated above, therefore historical period of late Mongol and early Ming can be characterized as the phase of conflict between Muslims and Chinese. The status of Muslims as Semu in Yuan had enduring as well as discernible impact on the later attitude of Chinese state and society towards Muslims in the Ming. The state's inclination towards assimilation of the minorities and ethnic groups into the mainstream Chinese culture emerged in the Ming dynasty replacing the foreign Yuan policies. The change in policies may be attributed to the fact that in Tang and Song, the state was quite confident of their culture and they never doubted that any of the foreign nations could ever replace them and rule the Han majority. But after they experienced subjugation to Yuan, it became quite natural for the Ming to enforce the assimilation of the minorities. May be this is why Ming was so strict in its acculturative policies that the state stipulated the ethnic groups not to intermarry and change their names in order to break their strength and dissolve their identity. Ming emperors had a seemingly paradoxical rationale behind their attempts to acculturate the barbarians i.e. they feared 'others' and wanted to diminish them by scattering and disseminating them into Chinese society and thus depriving them from their identity and on the other hand they were convinced of the civilizing power of Chinese culture and wished to make the uncultured ethnic minorities a part of civilized society. Ming policies can be rightly understood as a U turn from multiethnic empire to a conservative model of state exclusive of the barbarians and foreigners.<sup>19</sup> It was a matter of insult for Han Chinese to be controlled by uncivilized barbarians and Muslims were responsible for this crime so they had to face the consequences once the Mongol empire was over.

Leslie quotes a statement from Tao Zongyi a writer of 1366 A.D (at the end of the Yuan) expressing the detestation and odium against Muslims in lay Chinese society : “[At a Muslim wedding, the building collapsed.] Their [Muslim] clothes and headgear are covered with dust, their elephant noses are now flat, their cat's eyes no longer shining...The cry “Allah” is not to be heard any more. Alas! The tree has fallen, and the monkey grandchildren of the monkey hu [i.e., foreigners] are dispersed.”<sup>20</sup> This statement is just one from many others, a literature produced at the end of Yuan to express the hatred local Chinese developed in their hearts during their subjugation to Muslim officials in Yuan. Such resented attitude would cause attempts to crush the unique identity of Muslims or to force them either to assimilate or to extinguish.

Despite the fact that Ming state was liberal enough to let the minorities practice their religion and the emperors issued the edicts to deal with Huihui with justice and equality, the local Han gentry and regional officials were

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<sup>19</sup>Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties*.

<sup>20</sup>Leslie, *The Integration of Religious Minorities in China: The Case of Chinese Muslims*.p.10

prejudiced against Muslims. Thus, Muslims had to face severe punishments, harassment and unjust attitude from Han magistrates in case they had to appear in the court for any disputed matter. What happened to a Muslim family of Shaanxi can serve as an instance of the discrimination Muslims had to bear in the Ming China after parting with their Mongol patrons. Lipman quotes that A Muslim who belonged to a noble and honest family of Shaanxi had to appear before the local magistrate as he had a clash with a Han. The magistrate declared the Muslim to be guilty and sent his troop to arrest him. Muslim man got offended and took refuge in the mountains. He was afraid for his life because the Muslims were dealt with inequity and undue harshness when found guilty of a crime as compared to the other Chinese. Finally a local man of high repute Kang Lang stepped into the matter and asked the Muslim fellow to calm down. And he surrendered saying to Kang Lang, "You, sir, know our oppression, so I bind myself [for punishment at your disposal]. If it had been the governor, I would simply have been killed."<sup>21</sup> This remark of the Muslim prisoner gives a clear glimpse of the social situation of Shaanxi in which Muslims were living. Xin,<sup>22</sup> a local author suggests that Ming reign affected the legal positions of Muslims adversely; their political rights were weakened, marital and civil rights were limited and economic rights declined. He also posits that Islamic law was incompatible to Ming's legislation therefore there was encounter and conflict between both.

### **Adaptation**

The integrative pressures from Ming and the abhorrence from Chinese laity resulted into a period of conflict between minority and majority society but sooner it was replaced with a thrust of adaptation to the host culture. Muslims found it inevitable to accommodate and reconcile to the socio-cultural norms of Chinese society and this process was augmented by the imperial policies of acculturation. It is necessary to note that the process of adaptation was more mandatory than discretionary. Before Ming, Muslims were free to choose between integration and separation, between marrying a Muslim and a Han woman, between religious and Chinese education, between retaining their native language and mastering Chinese lingua franca but with new policies of Ming, they were bound to shed off their cultural boundaries and intermix with Han Chinese. The Imperial edict issued by Hongwu Emperor prohibited Mongols and Muslims from intermarrying within their ethnic communities and ordered them to marry Chinese women.<sup>23</sup> So, they had to integrate and acculturate though materially as they married Chinese women

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<sup>21</sup> Lipman, "*Familiar Strangers: A Muslim History in China.*" p.40

<sup>22</sup> IANG Xin, "Legal Position of Muslims in Ming Dynasty—Influence of Legal Elements on Spreading and Development of Islam in Ming Dynasty," *Social Sciences in Ningxia* 5 (2010).

<sup>23</sup> Ge Zhuang, "Islam and Muslim in the Society of the Ming Dynasty (Summary)[J]," *Studes In World Religions* 1 (2002).

but after making them converted to Islam thus safeguarding their religious values. They adopted Chinese names and surnames but retained their Muslim names within their community; their children spoke Chinese and learnt classics but they were provided with religious education in Persian and Arabic, the lingua franca of Muslims. Despite these practices of acculturation and integration, the lineages were strictly preserved and the original ancestral lines of Chinese and immigrant integrating ethnic minorities were safeguarded for discriminating between Han and non-Han.<sup>24</sup>

Despite their integrative and assimilative policies Ming emperors were quite tolerant towards the religions. In the vein of their precursors, Ming also tended to oppose or resist only those religions which might challenge their authority or intrude state affairs. Islam has been taken akin to Confucianism by the Ming emperors and we find its evidence in many of the mosque inscriptions erected in Ming era. A monument erected in the old mosque of Xian dating from the 25th year of the emperor Hung-Wu of Ming dynasty records the decree of the emperor that by the imperial orders the mosque in Xi'an was being rebuilt and the Muslims were allowed to repair their mosques to save them for falling into ruins and they were free to travel and trade in all districts, prefectures and provinces and were free to pass from customs without any hindrance.

In 1335, Islam was recognized by the Emperor's declaration as Qingzhen Jiao i.e. 'the Pure and True Religion', a term still used to refer to Islam.<sup>25</sup> An imperial inscription from Ming age says, "I hereby give you my imperial decree in order to guard your residence. Officials, civil or military, or anyone, are not to offend or insult you. Anyone who offends or insults you against my imperial order will be punished as a criminal".<sup>26</sup> This favorable attitude of Ming emperors regarding the practice of Islam helped indigenization of Islam in China and localization of its adherents. These inscribed steles are the icons of adaptation of Muslims to the Chinese society as their statements emphatically highlight the analogy between Islam and Confucianism. Moreover, the change in very name of Islam as Qingzhen Jiao is a unique instance in the history of Muslim minorities as this nominal change was not superimposed rather Sino-Muslims embraced it wholeheartedly. With this shift, Islam naturally espoused Confucian flavor and Chinese whiff.

Ming is considered to be a crucial phase in the cultural history of Muslims in China and to borrow the well-known phrase of Leslie; they became 'Chinese Muslims' from 'Muslims in China'. They adopted Chinese material

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<sup>24</sup> David M Robinson, "Images of Subject Mongols under the Ming Dynasty," *Late Imperial China* 25(1), (2004).

<sup>25</sup> LJ Newby, "'the Pure and True Religion' in China," *Third World Quarterly* 10(2), (1988).

<sup>26</sup> Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, "'the Marrano Emperor': The Mysterious, Intimate, Bond between Zhu Yuanzhang and His Muslims," in *Long Live the Emperor!: Uses of the Ming Founder across Six Centuries of East Asian History*, ed. Sarah Schneewind (Society for Ming Studies, 2008): 286

culture and Confucian social norms to greater or smaller extent but one must be aware of the fact that they did not become Chinese with Muslim faith, the way Buddhists were. They retained their essential religious values and some distinct socio-cultural traits and thus remained an ethnic minority in China.

Whatsoever the stimulus may be, the results of Ming acculturative policies were desirable. The Chinese wives and mothers switched the language of home from Arabic and Persian to Chinese and accelerated the intimacy of Muslims to the Chinese soil as their next generations belonged to a mixed ethnicity. Given that we know of schools established for the children of foreigners so that they might participate in imperial examination since Song, this practice became recurrent in Ming and one finds Chinese Muslims continued to be represented in significant numbers in the commercial, military and bureaucratic elites.<sup>27</sup> They served the Chinese empire as officials and administrators considering China to be their homeland. Their Muslimness was merged and fused into Chinese culture and instead of replacing one with the other or letting one fade its true colors, they created a new identity known as Huihui. This Huihui culture was a unique instance of Islam in China, peculiar to Chinese soil, embedded in both Chinese and Islamic civilization, possessing double identity associated with both their religion and their motherland China. They created a new dynamic pattern for their lives whose soul was breathed by Islam and whose body was ornamented with Chinese culture. Thus they managed to live in a way that was their own and which equally legitimated their Muslim origins and Chinese present. This unique culture demonstrated its outgrowths in religious as well as educational ways i.e. *jiaofang* and *jingtang jiaoyu*, the two unprecedented developments of Huihui during Ming.<sup>28</sup>

Ming aided and enhanced the process of integration through the policies of isolating minority populations from their native lands. So, the Muslims lost cultural contacts with the main Muslim world and had to confine themselves to what they already inherited and what they were learning from their Chinese mentors in prevalent educational system. In the Yuan dynasty, the Muslim population was characterized with great dispersion and small concentration so when Ming dynasty took over and shifted her attention from trade to agriculture, Hui lost the opportunity of extended travelling and the contacts between Muslim communities of different regions reduced a great deal. There were connections between Muslim communities of different provinces of China but not as frequent as these were in Mongol. So, this state of affairs pushed Muslims to interact with their Han neighbors at the local level for social and economic purposes. This intermingling of Muslims with local people made them adopt Chinese language and their native languages started dwindling gradually.

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<sup>27</sup>Xiao-rong HE and Jing CUI, "Ming Dynasty's Fundamental Policy on Islam and the Residents Distribution Believing in Islam," *Heilongjiang National Series* 4 (2013).

<sup>28</sup>Shoujiang You Jia Mi, *Islam in China* (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2004).

What preserved the Muslim religious identity in times of constant pressure towards integration was the cohesive social structure they maintained and established through the local mosques. The mosque education helped to keep the Islamic education and Muslims' native languages alive though at a restricted and limited level. The clustered communities of Muslims continued to retain their religious practices under the guidance of local religious focal persons and thus though acculturating materially and outwardly, they retained their distinct religious characteristics within their neighborhoods. The centrality of mosque in a Muslim congregation and the influential role of religious scholars in the form of Ahong or Khateeb were the features which distinguished a Muslim neighborhood from a typical Han locality. The role of mosques became much more diversified in Ming as the Muslim population grew, their problems and needs multiplied as well and locally it were the mosques which served as community centers for them. Their local leadership seated at the mosque was responsible for their education, their economic and public welfare, sorting out their civil, religious and social problems so mosques became an indispensable part of Huihui communities in Ming. This role was strengthened with the development of jiaofang; a system of triple party administration comprising of Ahong, Khateeb and Muaddin. It was a creation of Chinese Islam, a practice rarely found in the Muslim world elsewhere; an outcome of historical development of Islam in Chinese circumstances. Since it was neither a body controlled by state with representatives at central or local levels nor the Muslim community was coherent and organized enough to organize it trans-locally throughout China, jiaofang were independent and exclusive to each other, not subordinate or related to each other. But they shared the centrality of mosque as their seating place and organized a community that covered religious, political, economic, cultural and civil affairs and social activities of the local Muslim neighborhood surrounding the mosque. In short, the mosque was the nucleus of the jiaofang, and the indispensable stipulation for its dawn and survival.

Thus it is evident that during Ming Muslims were localized entirely, developing their religious, educational and linguistic patterns in an exclusively Chinese context and producing a unique instance of Islamic tradition specific to Chinese territory. This was to lay the foundation of Hui culture; a way of living particular to Muslims of China. Huihui was the name of a people who managed to balance their identity both as true and loyal subjects to Chinese dynasty and as a sincere Muslim simultaneously.

## **Conclusion**

This paper concludes that human nature corresponds to the external socio-cultural stimuli in identical ways therefore the theories employed in the contemporary social psychology and sociology are equally capable to analyse the historical human behavioral phenomena. Applying Berry's model of acculturation upon the integration pursuit of Chinese Muslims in Mongol (1279-1368A.D) and Ming (1386-1644 A.D) reigns, we see that they followed

the patterns of contact, conflict and adaptation quite comparable to the acculturative patterns of today's immigrant communities. The only difference lies herein is that the process was comparatively plodding and slow and it took them centuries in switching the phases. The *raison d'être* is obviously the fast pace of this global and interconnected world where the process of acculturation is hastened by multidimensional modes of communication and multiple means of influence. In pre-modern times, the resources of intercommunication were limited and few therefore what is accomplished within two generations today, was carried out in centuries' duration then. So, we see the span of localization of Muslims on China encompassing their contact, conflict and adaptation extended to four hundred years approximately.

It is interesting to note that the process of Muslims' acculturation in China was triggered by a non-Chinese dynasty and in Mongol age they were brought into contact with the Chinese society at large were not this familiarity with Chinese social norms, Muslims' adaptation in China would have impeded a great deal. The transition in the status and context of Muslims served as a shock for their consciousness and made them revisit their identity and determine their new orientations serving as a contrivance of their acculturation in the host society. The frequent contact between Chinese and Muslims in Mongol age played paradoxical role i.e. it helped dissemination of Muslims in China but simultaneously generated sentiments of detestation for them among the Chinese people. The Chinese abhorrence resulted into an atmosphere of conflict but the mechanism of conflict operated in a way aligned to the incorporation of Muslims in the Chinese society rather than their extermination. Hence began the phase of adaptation, boosted by the Ming integrative policies and accomplished by the Muslims' compliance to adapt to their host culture.

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