

2023 Re-envisioning China Ethnography (RCE) Workshop

斷裂後的再延續：  
現代中國回穆斯林研究的多樣性視野

The Next Move: How to Face the Multi-aspect of  
Disruption about Hui Muslims in Modern China

Department of Ethnology, National Chengchi University

Taipei, Taiwan

The first conference room, College of Social Sciences  
13<sup>th</sup> floor, Southern Wing, General Building of Colleges, NCCU

9<sup>th</sup> January 2023

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### The Next Move: How to Face the Multi-aspects of Disruption about Hui Muslims in Modern China

9<sup>th</sup> January 2023, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan  
The first conference room, College of Social Sciences  
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|------------------------------------|---|
| 9:00-9:30                          | Registration  |
| 9:30-9:40                          | Opening and Introduction  |
| 9:40-12:00                         | Section 1<br>Focusing the Specific Issues on Modern History   |
| Moderator<br><b>Chang Chung-fu</b> | Presenters<br><b>Unno Noriko</b> ,<br>The Xinhai Revolution and Sino-Muslims in North China<br><br><b>Aaron Glasserman</b> ,<br>Organizing Dots and Lines: Eastern Hui and the Adaptation of the CCP's Nationalities Work in the Revolutionary Era<br><br><b>Tommaso Previato</b><br>Sino-Muslim Elites as Mobilizing Agents: Gender, Nation-Building, and Frontier Politics at the Time of the Red Army's Western Expedition |
| 12:00-13:00                        | Lunch   |
| 13:00-14:40                        | Section 2<br>Disruption and Transformation in the Northwestern Corner   |
| Moderator<br><b>Unno Noriko</b>    | Presenters<br><b>Amtul Shaheen</b><br>Recovery and Nostalgia after the 'Disruption' of a Women's Mosque in Northwestern China<br><br><b>Chang Chung Fu</b><br>Disruption of Faith: <i>Anti-Christian Evangelism Sentiment</i> among Hui Muslims and the Unusual Case in Contemporary Northwestern China   |
| 14:40-15:00                        | Coffee Break  |

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|---|--|
| 15:00-16:40                                   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Section 3</b><br/> <b>Comparative Studies of Diasporic Diversity</b></p>   |
| <p>Moderator<br/> <b>Aaron Glasserman</b></p> | <p>Presenters<br/> <b>Hung Tak Wai</b><br/> Prayer in the Eye of the Storm: Oral Histories of Macau's Multi-ethnic Sinophone Muslims</p> <p><b>Chen Wei Chen</b><br/> Fieldwork and Comparative Research of Muslims in Central and Northern Thailand</p> |
| 16:40-17:30                                   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Round Table Discussion</b><br/> <b>Next Move to the Studies of Islam in China</b></p>  |
| <b>Dinner</b>                                 |  |

## Moderators and Presenters (alphabetic order of names)

### Moderators:

**Aaron Glasserman**

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Paul and Marcia Wythes Center on Contemporary China, Princeton University, USA

**Chang Chung Fu (張中復)** (organizer of workshop)

Associate Professor, Department of Ethnology, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

**Unno Noriko (海野典子)**

Assistant Professor, Waseda University

### Presenters:

**Aaron Glasserman**

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Paul and Marcia Wythes Center on Contemporary China, Princeton University, USA

**Amtul Shaheen**

Pre-Doc Research Associate and Lecturer, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Cologne, Germany

**Chang Chung Fu (張中復)**

Associate Professor, Department of Ethnology, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

**Chen Wei Chen (陳韋辰)**

Doctoral Student, Department of Ethnology, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

**Hung Tak Wai (孔德維)**

Research Fellow, King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Tommaso Previato**

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan

**Unno Noriko (海野典子)**

Assistant Professor, Waseda University, Japan

## Abstracts of presenters

(alphabetic order of names)

### **Organizing Dots and Lines: Eastern Hui and the Adaptation of the CCP's Nationalities Work in the Revolutionary Era**

Aaron Glasserman

#### Abstract

Although ethnic governance in the People's Republic of China is often portrayed as a matter of controlling "minority nationalities" in the country's western region, the ethnic affairs bureaucracy operates in every province. The origins of "nationalities work" as a discrete domain of governance can be traced to the Chinese Communist Party's efforts to mobilize scattered Hui communities in the eastern provinces of Shandong and Hebei in the 1930s-40s. Thanks to the initiative of Hui Communists, local Party leaders came to understand that Hui were not simply scattered, but interconnected. They adapted and replicated organizational techniques to exploit Hui networks for gathering intelligence, smuggling resources, and penetrating enemy-controlled cities. This history offers an instructive case of adaptive governance in the revolutionary period and the role of ethnic minority cadres in policy entrepreneurship. It also underscores the importance of the Party's experience in eastern China in the study of Chinese ethnic politics.

## **Recovery and Nostalgia after the ‘Disruption’ of a Women’s Mosque in Northwestern China**

Amtul Shaheen

### Abstract

In 2018, I embarked on a journey to northwestern China, Gansu province, to undertake ethnographic fieldwork at a women’s mosque. I was keen to know, in what ways the Muslim women of this mosque use discourses of authenticity and tradition to legitimize the practice of women’s mosques against the power structure of the atheist state and other local Islamic sects. Little did I know, that just one day before my arrival, this mosque, which was first built in 1956 by a small community of Muslims from Henan (mainly from Sangpo and Mengzhou) who fled the Japanese invasion in 1937-38, had been torn down. What then followed was a research of six months trying to understand the several historical and contemporary stages of disruptions (the Japanese invasion in 1937-38 and the subsequent migration to northwestern China; the shutdown of the mosque during the Cultural Revolution; and the recent demolition of the mosque as part of the government’s policy of ‘Sinicizing Islam’) and the subsequent forms of recovery the community experienced, as well as the nostalgic memories of different generations attributed to the history of the women’s mosque.

# **Disruption of Faith: Anti-Christian Evangelism Sentiment among Hui Muslims and the Unusual Case in Contemporary Northwestern China**

Chang Chung Fu (張中復)

## Abstract

China of today has seen a gradual spread of Christianity and conversion of Chinese from Buddhists or Taoists into Christians. Alongside with such trend, there is another ambiguous endeavor for the same purpose; that is, Christian evangelization among Hui Muslims (Sino-Muslims, Sinophone Muslims) with a large and widely distributed population amidst the Han majority. Although Christianity and Islam share quasi-monotheistic origin, “evangelizing Christianity to Muslims” (回宣) has not been fruitful or successful, even stirring up anti-*Christian evangelism* sentiment in provinces of Northwest China like Qinghai, Gansu and Ningxia. For centuries, Hui Muslims in these areas have been practicing the so-called “conservative Islam” and “Islamic plural sectarianism”; and conversion to Christianity is difficult if not impossible. This paper traces the emergence of such anti-*Christian evangelism* sentiment among the Muslims, with focus not only on the religious and socio-cultural aspects, but also the existence of a consolidated identity of Muslim ethnic minority of their own.

# **Fieldwork and Comparative Research of Muslims in Central and Northern Thailand**

Chen Wei Chen (陳韋辰)

## Abstract

My research broadly focusing on history, religion and identity politics in Nong Chok district, Bangkok(Thailand). According to the perspective of ethnogenesis, the Muslims in Nong Chok are predominantly descended from Malay Muslims in modern-day southern Thailand. The reason for their migration was mainly due to the war and the political situation, in the 19th century, Siamese forces quelled revolts in Kedah and Patani and transported Malay captives to Bangkok, where they were forced to work on canal construction and reforestation. As a comparison, Yunnanese Hui Muslims migrated to northern Thailand to escape political turmoil in China and later fled to Myanmar in the late 19th or early 20<sup>th</sup>. However, according to fieldwork, it was found that Malay Muslim descendants in Nong Chok no longer speak Malay and do not identify themselves as a “Malay”, but Yunnanese Hui Muslim descendants in Chiang Rai still using Yunnanese and identify themselves as a “Yunnanese”. This presentation is based on the initial research of my doctoral study.



## **Prayer in the Eye of the Storm: Oral Histories of Macau's Multi-ethnic Sinophone Muslims**

Hung Tak Wai (孔德維)

### Abstract

Although being the centre of international commerce of Asia since five centuries ago, Macau has been rarely settled by Muslims, who were one of the major players of the maritime trade even before the globalization era. Some might suspect the absence of Muslim population in Macau might be a consequence of the Catholic Portuguese colonial experience, but the European reign, unexpectedly, was the reason that Islam was brought to the city. Today, Muslim population in Macau is around 10,000. The community has around several hundred Muslims who have been settling in the city for generations, most of them were descendants of Hui Muslim from China and believers with South Asian heritage. The rest of the community, a very major part of it, are foreign labours from Southeast Asia, many of them serving as domestic worker in private households. The history of Sinophone Muslims settled outside of China proper has attracted more academic attention in the past few years.<sup>2</sup> Yet this focus has been on Sinophone Muslims who hail from China, but it is noteworthy that the term could also encompass those with discernibly non-Chinese ethnic or cultural identities. This study highlights the complexities entangled with this term through a narration of the history of Sinophone Muslims in Macau, the former Portuguese colony in Southern China. Many members of this small community, and who came from across Indian Ocean as well China proper, spoke a variety of Sinitic-languages, most notably Cantonese and Mandarin. The study makes use of various sources including ethnographic fieldwork and secondary literatures in narrating the twentieth century story of Macau's diverse Sinophone Muslim community.

# **Sino-Muslim Elites as Mobilizing Agents: Gender, Nation-Building, and Frontier Politics at the Time of the Red Army's Western Expedition**

Tommaso Previato

## Abstract

This presentation is about the engagement of northwestern Muslim élites in China's nation-building, and interrogates whether and to what extent these élites had the ability to (i) mobilize the masses, and to (ii) navigate the changes brought about by Nationalist (KMT) and Communist (CCP) projects of nation-building in ways that could benefit themselves or the community they belonged to and represented. It will do so by casting light on one of the most precarious moments of Chinese modern history – that is the western expedition of an ill-fated branch of the Red Army whose women and children were captured and distributed among KMT-backed Muslim warlords in Qinghai, thereby becoming Muslims themselves.

## **The Xinhai Revolution and Sino-Muslims in North China**

Unno Noriko ( 海野典子 )

### Abstract

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, China experienced dramatic upheavals amid foreign aggression, revolution and political fragmentation, and modernization, urbanization, and globalization. These events have mainly been viewed through the eyes of the Qing court, urban reformist elites, and Chinese revolutionaries. But how did ethnic and religious minorities respond to these seismic changes? How did they experience the collapse of the Qing Empire, China's last dynasty, the 1911 Xinhai Revolution, and the birth of the first republican regime in Asia? This talk answers these questions by focusing on Sino-Muslims, roughly equivalent to today's Hui people in the People's Republic of China, who were one of the largest minority groups in the Qing capital of Beijing and the nearby city of Tianjin. It argues that, through their myriad interactions with the burgeoning Chinese press, the spread of modern education, Chinese nationalism and pan-Islamism, as well as Western and Japanese imperialism, Sino-Muslims influenced local Chinese society, nation-building processes, and international relations in ways that previously have gone unnoticed. A full appreciation of the process of modern Chinese nation-making cannot afford to overlook the experience and contributions of Sino-Muslims.