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## Making *Adhān* or Knocking *Bangzi*: Sonic Expressions of *Jahriyyah* Group in Contemporary China<sup>1</sup>

### Laungan Azan menggunakan Ketukan *Bangzi*: Ekspresi Sonic Tarikat Jahriyyah di China Kontemporer

Ma Qiang\*, and Ma Xinguo\*\*

#### Abstract

*Bangzi* is a kind of wooden clappers. It was once used by watchmen for time announcement and for indicating danger during emergencies. *Jahriyyah*, a distinguished Islamic Sufi group in China, was officially labelled as a heterodox Islamic faction because of its rebellion against the government. The rebellion was ignited by a religious dispute between the Huasi faction (a Sufi group of the Hufiyyah order) during the Qianlong period of the Manchu-led Qing dynasty. Due to its stigmatization as a “New Faction” during this rebellion, *Jahriyyah*’s religious activities were conducted secretly. Knocking *bangzi* instead of the traditional human voice for the call to prayer has become a tradition for *Jahriyyah*, and the current adherents consider such tradition as “orthodox”, and are therefore reluctant to change it. This paper explores *Jahriyyah*’s conception of their sonic heritage and suggests that two contextualized dimensions should be taken into account when interpreting the transformation and expression of Islamic factions in China today: first, the political impact of post-Mao policies; and second, the impact of the post-*shaykh*, or post-factional, era.

**Keywords:** *Jahriyyah*, *Adhān*, Islam; Adjustment, Transformation.

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### Abstrak

*Bangzi* merupakan sebuah blok kayu. Ia pernah digunakan oleh pengawas sebagai alat pengumuman dan sebagai alat amaran bahaya semasa kecemasan. *Jahriyyah*, merupakan tarekat Sufi Islam yang terkenal di China, telah dilabel secara rasmi sebagai puak faksi Islam heterodoks kerana pemberontakannya terhadap kerajaan. Pemberontakan itu disebabkan oleh perselisihan agama antara puak *Huasi* (kumpulan Sufi di bawah gerakan *Hufiyyah*) pada zaman pemerintahan Maharaja *Qianlong* daripada dinasti *Qing* yang dipimpin oleh *Manchu*. Kerana stigmatisasinya sebagai "Faksi Baru" semasa pemberontakan ini, kegiatan keagamaan *Jahriyyah* telah dijalankan secara sembunyi. Memukul *bangzi* sebagai cara menggantikan azan telah menjadi tradisi tarekat *Jahriyyah* dimana para pengikut sekarang menganggap tradisi tersebut merupakan amalan "ortodoks", dan enggan menukarnya dengan amalan lain. Makalah ini menerangkan konsepsi *Jahriyyah* tentang warisan sonik mereka dan mencadangkan bahawa dua dimensi kontekstualisasi harus diambil kira apabila menafsirkan transformasi dan ekspresi puak Islam di China hari ini: pertama, kesan politik dasar post-Mao; dan kedua, kesan post-shaykh, atau post-faksi, era.

**Kata Kunci:** *Jahriyyah*, Azan, Islam, Pemandahan, Transformasi

### Introduction

Islamic Sufi groups' transformation within the context of social reform in China over the past 40 years has drawn increasing academic attention. Many scholars focus on the domestic Chinese Muslim migrants and international immigrants in China, such as international urban Muslim communities in Guangzhou and Yiwu. Other scholars explore Islamic education, new Islamic thought and movements, different Islamic groups in China, etc. Scholars in sociology, anthropology, political science, comparative religion and some other related disciplines have explored these topics respectively.

This paper takes *Jahriyyah*, the biggest and the most influential Sufi group, as a lens through which to look at the transformation of Islamic factions in contemporary China.<sup>2</sup> It analyses the hierarchical system and characteristics of this group as well as some recent dynamics of

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<sup>2</sup> Most of materials of this paper comes from the several important references that related with *Jahriyyah* and our personal familiarity of this group since Ma Qiang was brought up within this community. The principle reference books include: Anonym, *A Brief History of Jahriyyah*, in Zhou Xiefan ed., *Qingzhen Dadian (Great Classics on Islam in China)*, Vol. 19, Hefei: Huangshan Shushe, 2005, pp. 576-685. Guan Liye, *Re Shi Ha Er (Rashha)*, Yang Wanbao, Ma Xuekai, Zhang Chengzhi trans., Shanghai: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 1993. Ya'aqūb, *Zheherenye Liyi (Rituals of Jahriyyah)*, informal publication, circulated among *Jahriyyah* communities, 2003. Zhan Ye, *Man Na Gei Bu (Manāqib)*, East Mosque of Yinchuan, informal publication, circulated among *Jahriyyah* communities, publishing date unknown.

social change. The paper also uses this case study (which is based on years of fieldwork in a range of different Muslim communities all over China) to provide an overview of the causes of such transformations not only within the Jahriyyah, but also amongst the Islamic groups in China as a whole.

### 1. Historical transformation of *Jahriyyah's* organization

The origins of Jahriyyah are traced back to the Sunni Naqshabandiyyah Sufi order and they follow Hanafiyyah school of Islamic law. It emerged in China during the Qianlong period (1735-1796) of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912). Ma Mingxin, whose Muslim name is Wiqāyatullah, is the founder of Jahriyyah. He performed Hājj during his teenage years. He began to advocate his interpretation of Islam when he returned to China approximately in the year 1740, after more than a decade of study in Yemen and Mecca.<sup>3</sup>

At the very beginning of Jahriyyah history, Ma Mingxin's followers mainly lived in China's northwestern provinces, including present day Gansu, Ningxia and Qinghai. Later, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Jahriyyah adherents were largely involved in a number of disputes with the Huasi faction, a sub-group of the Huffiyah Sufi order, and fought against the Qing dynasty in several rebellions. Ever since those revolts, Jahriyyah communities changed both geographically and demographically. Today, it is the largest among more than forty Sufi sub-groups in China. As for geographical distribution, most Jahriyyah adherents are concentrated in Ningxia, Gansu and Qinghai province. But they can also be found in Xinjiang, Yunnan, Guizhou, Jilin and Shandong provinces. A small number of them are also scattered among other parts of China and Central Asia.

The Jahriyyah claim that their "chain of succession" (*silsila*) follows the principle of "Seven Outsider and Eight Insider" (里七外八), which means the succession of Jahriyyah *shaykhs* was transmitted by seven teachers on the Arabian Peninsula and then continued by eight teachers in China. Such a lineage is said to have been conveyed by Arabian *shaykhs* to the founder of Jahriyyah in China, Ma Mingxin, who got *'ijāza* (authorization) from his teacher when he studied in the *Shadhiliyyah Markaz* (Islamic religious school) in Yemen. The history of Jah-

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<sup>3</sup> Ma Tong, *Zhongguo Yisilanjiaopai Yu Menhuan Zhidu Shilue* (A Brief History of Chinas Islamic Schools and Menhuan System), Yinchuan: Ningxia People's Press, 2000, pp. 273-289.

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riyyah is both well recorded by Jahriyyah adherents such as Ma Xuezhi<sup>4</sup> and detailed by academic explorations of Fletcher and Lipman.<sup>5</sup>

Jahriyyah followers prefer to address their eight *shaykhs* as “Great Grandfathers” (太爷). It is a typical Chinese title used to express respect for their spiritual achievements and historical contributions. The whole *silsila* history can be summarized as “Two Surnames, Three Families” (两姓三家), and can be divided into two lineages: one family originating from Guanchuan; and the other originating from Lingzhou. Two surnames refer to Ma and Mu, and the three families are Ma Mingxin’s, Mu Xianzhang’s and Ma Datian’s descendants. Guanchuan, a small village of Huining County, Gansu Province, is the hometown of Ma Mingxin. Ma’s descendants have evolved into Shagou (the *Jahriyyah Markaz* center in Xiji County, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region) and Beishan (the Jahriyyah center in Zhangjiachuan County, Gansu Province) lineages. Lingzhou, a historical and former name of present day Wuzhong city, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, is the hometown of Ma Datian, the third *shaykh* of the Jahriyyah. Ma Datian’s descendants superseded his succession and developed together with the antecedent Sufi lineage.

Starting from Ma Yuanzhang’s time, the Guanchuan lineage split into Shagou and Zhangjiachuan factions. While the center of the Lingzhou lineage was established by Ma Jinxi, the sibling of the sixth Jahriyyah *shaykh*, Ma Jincheng, located in Banqiao township, Wuzhong City. Thus, Jahriyyah has developed into three parallel saintly lineages (*menhuan*) which consist of Shagou, Beishan and Banqiao.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ma Xuezhi, *A Brief History of Jahriyyah*, Ma Zhongjie, Wang Youhua, Su Dunli selected translation in 1980, in Zhou Xiefan ed., *Qingzhen Dadian* (Great Classics on Islam in China), Vol. 19, Hefei: Huangshan Shushe, 2005, pp. 529-575. Also translated by Ma Yi, Wang Shengjun, Ke Fuyin, Hai Wenxue, Published by North Great Mosque of Xiji County, 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Fletcher, Joseph. Central Asian Sufism and Ma Ming-Hsin’s New Teaching, in Ch’ien Chieh-hsien ed., *Proceedings of the Fourth East Asian Altaistic Conference*, Taipei: National Taiwan University, 1975, pp. 75-96. Fletcher, Joseph. The Naqshbandiyya in Northwest China, in Beatrice Forbes Manz ed., *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia*, Aldershot: Variorum, 1995, pp. XI, 1-20. Translated into Chinese by Zhao Qiudi, published in *Qinghai Journal of Ethnology*, 2012, pp. 88-100. Lipman, Jonathan. *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China*, University of Washington Press, 1997, pp. 85-87.

<sup>6</sup> Wang Shutai, *Guanglie Daozong Shiji Jishi* (Records of the Achievements of Ma Yuanzhang), Hong Kong: Tianma Book Press, 2011.

Table 1. Shagou Lineage

Seq.	Chinese Name	Muslim Name	Title in Chinese	Title in Arabic	Dates of Birth and Death
1	Ma Mingxin	Muhammad Jawfi	Dao Zu Tai Ye	Wiqāyatullah	1719-1781
2	Mu Xianzhang	Muhammad Rabbani	Ping Liang Tai Ye	Imāmul‘ālam	1754-1812
3	Ma Datian	Muhammad Jalāl	Chuan Chang Tai Ye	Qutubul‘ālam	1757-1817
4	Ma Yide	Muhammad Şufiyy	Si Yue Ba Tai Ye	Haqīqillah	1780-1849
5	Ma Hualong	Muhammad ‘īmān	Shi San Tai Ye	Ṭabī‘utullah Saydulshuḥdā’i	1805-1871
6	Ma Jincheng	Muhammad Şuddiq	Bian Liang Tai Ye	Hilāluldīn	1860-1890
7	Ma Yuanzhang	Muhammad Nuwr	Sha Gou Tai Ye	Suddīqullah	1853-1920
8	Ma Zhengwu	Muhammad Jāmi‘a	Xi Tan Tai Ye	Abudulkhālāq	1894-1960

Sources: Anonym, “A Brief History of Jahriyyah”, in Zhou Xiefan ed., *Qingzhen Dadian* (Great Classics on Islam in China), Vol. 19, Hefei: Huangshan Shushe, 2005, pp. 576-685. Ma Yi et al. eds., *The History of Jahriyyah* orthodoxy, informal publication, written around in 1990s.

Table 2. Banqiao Lineage

Seq	Chinese Name	Muslim Name	Title in Chinese	Title in Arabic	Dates of Birth and Death
1-5	ditto	ditto	ditto	ditto	ditto
6	Ma Jincheng	Muhammad Şuddiq	Bian Liang Tai Ye	Hilāluldīn	1860-1890
	Ma Jinxi		Ban Qiao Er Tai Ye	Fiṭratullah	1867-1940
7	Ma Teng'ai		Shi Tai Ye	Qudratullah	1921-1991
8	Ma Guoquan		Ben Guang Yin Ye	Nuşuratullah	1942-

Source: Banqiao Daotang (Banqiao Sufi Markaz), *History of Jahriyyah*, informal publication, 2011.

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The Beishan lineage became an independent faction after Ma Yuanzhang's death. Ma Yuanchao, his third younger brother, transported his corpse from Shagou to Zhangjiachuan where Ma Yuanzhang stayed for years to revive the Jahriyyah secretly. Actually, Jahriyyah adherents in Zhangjiachuan refer to Ma Yuanchao as the "Third Tai Ye" (三太爷), a title that acknowledges his religious status in Jahriyyah history as a *shaykh* after his brother Ma Yuanzhang. His authority was transmitted to his son Ma Zhongyong, who otherwise never mentioned that he was the responsible *ahaykh* when he was alive and instead addressed himself as the "doorkeeper of the religious teaching" (教门的看门人) .

Among the three families, Mu Xianzhang originated from the Qadīm tradition. Ma Mingxin and Ma Datian's descendants constituted the three most influential factions. Shagou is the biggest one among them in terms of population, distribution, systematic organization, as well as in terms of possessions of teaching centres and *qubba'ah*. Since the *silsila* recorded that the authority ceased after the eighth *shaykh*, Ma Zhengwu's generation in Shagou was the first faction that entered post-*shaykh* era. This critical detail indicates that the Sufi adherents today are isolated from the traditional ways in selecting their leader through comparing the ability of a *shaykh* in presenting *karāmāt* (legends). Sufi advocates of the orthodox *shaykh* era, including Arabian, Central Asian and South Asian propagators and domestic Islamists, began to spread their inherited *tarīqāt* (Sufi paths or orders) to make innovation among Chinese Muslims after the latter made a Hajj trip and stayed in the heartland of Islam from a couple of months up to several years. Comparing with the past, such connections and activities have become more convenient and obtainable in the present. Modernized transportation, media, and social connections all have changed the way of life. For more and more literate people today, being "Sufi" means to keep a conventional way of life and develop personal spirituality by means of imitating a former *shaykh's* enlightenment. For the adherents of Islamic factions, following the conventional customs is regarded as an indication of obedience to membership and identity in certain groups. Obtaining and maintaining membership means to keep traditions that they have inherited from their ancestors even though some are imprinted with Han Chinese characteristics. The authority of hierarchy was challenged both by descendants of the same lineage and by some ambitious Jahriyyah adherents. In consequence, Xindianzi, Chenjiagou,<sup>7</sup> and Zhou faction<sup>8</sup> as well as other sub-groups

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<sup>7</sup> Those two places locate in Xiji County of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.



emerged one after another in the past 40 years. These sub-groups are typically small-scale, yet some might originate from the Guanchuan lineage. Others are irrelevant to “Two Surname, Three Families” at all. The consequence of the post-*shaykh* era is essential to understanding and analysing the sonic expression of Jahriyyah in contemporary China.

## 2. Heritages of Jahriyyah

Compared with other Islamic groups, Jahriyyah’s characteristics are manifested in the following aspects:

### 2.1 Worship-related rituals

**Vocal Sufi *Dhikr* after worship.** This refers specifically to chanting *dhikr* after *Ṣalāt al-Fajr* (the first prayer before dawn) and *Ṣalāt al-‘Aṣr* (afternoon prayer). Most of the chanted verses are selected from the Qur’ān. The hymns are chanted congregationally following the leading imam within the Sufi circle.

**Reciting certain chapters of the Qur’ān.** This involves reciting Chapter 36, *Ṣurat Ya-Sin*, after *dhikr* of *Ṣalāt al-Fajr* and Chapter 67, *Ṣurat Al-Mulk*, after *Ṣalāt al-‘Ishā’* (evening prayer). These Qur’ānic chapters must be recited verse by verse continuously among the participants in the procession.

**Practice of *Jum‘ah* prayer (Friday congregational worship).** For *Jum‘ah* prayer, most Islamic groups in China pray six *rak‘āt* (units of worship) which consists of four *Sunna* (supererogatory) *rak‘āt* and two compulsory *rak‘āt*. They then practice ten *rak‘āt* of *Ṣalāt al-Zuhr* (noon prayer) separately after that. Jahriyyah adherents, on the other hand, pray an additional four *rak‘āt* of (*wājib*) obligatory *Ṣalāt* after congregational prayer because they insist that compulsory prayer cannot be practiced simultaneously with *Jum‘ah* prayer.

**Reading certain chapters of the Qur’ān during prayer.** Jahriyyah have certain chapters of the Qur’ān that they recite during prayer after *Sūrat Al-Fātiḥa*. It is different from other Islamic schools in China, for example, *Ikhwān* and *Salafīyyah*, each of which insist that reading verses of the Qur’ān during prayer should not be prescribed.

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<sup>8</sup> Most of its followers concentrate in Panxi and Talang villages in Yunnan Province of Southwestern China.

Table 3. Chapter Number Reciting during Prayer by *Jahriyyah*

Name of Ṣalāt	Persian name used by Hui	Former Sun-nah	Fard	Latter Sun-nah	Wājib
Ṣalāt al-Fajr	Bāmdād	108,112	94,110	/	/
Ṣalāt al-Zuhr	Pīshīn	99,100,101,102	95,112	107,111	/
Ṣalāt al-‘Aṣr	Dīgar	/	103,108	/	/
Ṣalāt al-Maghrib	Shāmu	/	113,114	103,110	/
Ṣalāt al-‘Ishā’	Hufutan	/	105,106	113,114	97,109,112
Ṣalāt al-Jum’a	Zhumā	99,100,101,102	95,112	/	94,95,103,105
Ṣalāt al-‘Eīd	Eīd	/	/	/	95,112

**Source:** *Za Xue*, manuscript, written in 1980s; Ya‘aqūb, *Zheherenye Liyi* (Rituals of *Jahriyyah*), informal publication circulated among the *Jahriyyah* communities, 2003.

## 2.2 Special scriptures

**Za xue.** *Za xue* (Diverse Studies) is a religious guide book for *Jahriyyah* that explains the performance of their Islamic rituals. Abiding by the teaching of *Za xue*, *Jahriyyah* typified their prayer manner and chanting words. The contents of *Za xue* include teaching prayer words for ablution, worship, *dhikr*, *khutbah* (Friday and ‘Eīd sermon), *tawba* (repentance to Allah), *barā’at* (praying to Allah to forgive human sins and asking for the best guidance or reward in the eight month of the Islamic calendar, i.e., *Sha’ban*), fasting, *Eīd* procedure, *nikāḥ* (wedding attestation), visiting the dead and *janāzah* (funeral), slaughtering animals, picking Muslim names, preparing ‘amal (righteous works), etc. The text of *Za xue* is written both in Persian and Arabic.

**Madā’ih.** This is the most significant hymn inherited by *Jahriyyah* that is chanted in all sorts of commemorative occasions. For example, it is chanted during death anniversaries of *shaykhs* and their adherents’, wedding ceremonies, construction or renovation of mosques, graduation of students from mosque education, welcoming *Hājj* (pil-

grims) by their households, and other occasions. Jahriyyah call such activity *'amal*, namely religious *'ibādāt* (worship) of Allah.

**Mukhammas.** This is a poetic hymn chanted by Jahriyyah after every night prayer. According to the manuscript of Ma Yuanzhang, *Mukhammas* contained 173 pages during the Republican era. It included one page of hymn at the beginning, seven pages of invocation after that and two pages of invocation at the end of the manuscript. The main body is composed of 163 pages. Jahriyyah followers read five pages daily, thereby finishing it in thirty-three days. However, there would be 3 pages left at the last day. As soon as finishing reading it on the thirty-third day, an ending ceremony is held in the mosque and this chanting will be continued from the first five pages of the main body on the next day. It should be mentioned that Jahriyyah mosques all over China chant the same verses every night. If chanting is missed for various reasons, the followers of Jahriyyah calculate the pages that should be read at night when they have opportunity to continue chanting it.

### 2.3 Special practices

**Dā'ir (circle).** It is strongly emphasized to perform *dhikr* and *Madā'ih* kneeling closely with each other and making a cycle. Jahriyyah abide by this ritual seriously during reading the Qur'ān and chanting hymns, which is always accompanied by shaking heads for certain hymns to indicate positive or negative attitudes.

**Fruit Dish.** This is exquisitely prepared by the host family or in some cases by mosque followers. It consists of five, seven or nine kinds of fruit put on small dishes. The Fruit Dish should be served to the imam and mullah after chanting hymns in *'amal* before main dishes are offered. The Jahriyyah adherents believe that it is more than enough to serve such simple food during the *'amal* service for the poor.

**Six-corner cap.** The six-corner cap is not worn by all of the Jahriyyah followers daily. They, however, consider this cap as a symbol of their unique identity and prefer to wear it at least in the important religious services and events. For many senior Jahriyyah followers, wearing the six-corner cap rather than wearing the more common white round Muslim cap during worship connotes a very special feeling. It may shape a communal identity which is rooted from the very beginning of Jahriyyah history in China. The six-corner cap is believed to have been adopted firstly by Ma Mingxin and represented the oneness of Allah and six articles of faith in Islam.

**Greeting and ending hymn.** This is a very popular hymn com-

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posed of three paragraphs, each paragraph beginning with “*Allahumma*” (“O great God!”). It is chanted vocally by both hosts and guests in congregational ceremonies, such as celebrating the graduation of students from the mosque, inviting a new imam to the community, greeting the return of Hājj pilgrims, and celebrating the completion of prayer hall construction to indicate the greeting, opening or ending activities during the ceremony.

**Lifecycle rituals.** *Jahriyyah* customs also contain some specific features which are not associated with religious piety, but rather form a part of their daily rituals. These are things like mourning dress, which includes a two-cornered white cap, robe, and covering shoes with white cloths for the lineal descents of the dead. The family members cry to accept people’s condolence at the entrance of their house wearing mourning apparels, take penalty rituals before *janāzah*,<sup>9</sup> and abide by every seven-days commemoration until one month, forty days, and one-year commemorative activities.

### 3. Transformation of *Jahriyyah* group today

#### Organization and operation

The organization and historical development of *Jahriyyah* can be understood in two parallel sequential shapes. In the orthodox *shaykh*-dominated era, all religious activities of adherents were authorized by the *shaykh*, that is, they were directed and guided by *the shaykh*. With the expansion of the adherents geographically, the *shaykh* selected specific individuals to be responsible for religious issues in different *Jahriyyah* locations. The individuals were called *raʿīs* (agent) and took charge of local religious affairs, such as designating imams to mosques and taking charge of most important congregational ceremonies. In the post-*shaykh* era, religious authority shifted to the *shaykh*’s descendants. Although these leaders still have authority in such activities as collecting donations to construct *qubbaʿah*, mosque, and teaching centres, etc., most of them are not responsible for religious practices. Their authority is decentralized and scattered among religious centers such as *qubbaʿah* and central mosques in local areas. The new authorities are mostly those who have serviced the *Jahriyyah* in different centers for years with favourable contribution, reputation, and influence in the group.

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<sup>9</sup> The prayer practiced by the male attendants representing the dead to ask forgiveness of Allah.

**Authority system in orthodox *Shaykh* era:**

*Shaykh*→*Ra'īs*→Community→Adherents.

**Authority system in post-*Shaykh* era:**

*Shaykh's* descendants→Responsible persons of *Qubba'ah* and religious centers→Community→Adherents.

In the orthodox *shaykh* era, the *shaykhs'* authority was founded upon their religious charisma and legends that were narrated by the adherents. Being the spiritual and social leader, the *shaykhs* gave social and spiritual guidance to their adherents. The Sufi group had strong solidarity and integration under the guidance of the highest *murshid*, whose instructions would rapidly become the actions of all disciples. Any kind of reforms or innovations of religious rituals had to get permission of the *shaykh*, who was actually an expert in interpreting doctrine, as well as being responsible for daily rituals and supervising his disciples directly.

**Appointment of Imams**

Appointment of an imam to each mosque is still authorized by the contemporary leaders of the Jahriyyah group. But after nomination to the mosque, a local religious office will inspect the recommended imam to examine whether he is eligible for getting a government certificate. In some remote rural villages, such inspection is nothing but a routine: records are made without a strict demand for qualifications. Local elders advise and recommend the candidates, but the power to make the decision is controlled by the contemporary religious leader. The leader can assign a different imam to different communities according to their scholarly attainment, experience, age, and relationship with the leaders, in addition to considering the proportion, economy and importance of the community.

**Mosque-based education**

Since China began to implement the Reform and Opening Up policy in the late 1970s, most rural communities of the Jahriyyah experienced rapid revival in 1980s. But things changed in the 1990s when the Chinese government promoted a nine-year compulsory education system. Since nearly all school-age children have to attend government schools, mosque-based education all over China, and in rural areas in particular, has confronted serious challenges. Consequently, Islamic education among the Jahriyyah communities also began to shrink dramatically. It mainly depends on the two charitable schools (义学) located in Xi Tan

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Daotang and Honglefu Daotang respectively. The number of students varies from 300 to 500 each year. Most of them are primary school and middle school graduates who cannot continue their study for various reasons. Like the situation of Arabic schools throughout China, *Jahriyyah* charitable schools are also poorly equipped in terms of facilities, teachers, materials and techniques. The *Jahriyyah* rituals and the interpretation of doctrines from a *Jahriyyah* perspective are what students mostly learn there today.

#### **Migration and diaspora**

Population mobility has affected in most *Jahriyyah* rural communities since 1990 and developed dramatically after 2000. A series of rural reform policies like the Land Contracting System, Return the Grain Plots to Forestry, and the concentration of educational resources in urban areas resulted in frequent population flow from villages to cities. With governmental relocations of remote villagers in flatlands near Yinchuan and Wuzhong cities, *Jahriyyah* communities in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region experienced dramatic changes. Some formerly homogeneous *Jahriyyah* communities have syncretised into multi-factional new enclaves, and even new mosques have been constructed within the locations of the diaspora.

#### **Connection and communication within Muslim communities**

*Jahriyyah* maintains intimate relationships within groups which can be reflected clearly in funerals, commemorating activities, construction or renovation of mosques, welcoming a new imam in the community, supporting mosque-based education, and promoting marriage within the group.<sup>10</sup> For large-scale or congregational ceremonies such as funerals, all of the communities around are invited as long as they belong to the *Jahriyyah* order. The responsible imams in the same area become familiar with each other through participating in these ceremonies.

However, exchange and communication with other Islamic groups is also observable in the process of modernization. Along with the improvement in living conditions and transportation over the past forty years, the migration of *Jahriyyah* people has expanded dramatically and has transcended the original locations. It is normal to see the followers of other Islamic orders participate in the ceremonies of *Jahriyyah* households because inter-groups marriage, friendship, collegial and other re-

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<sup>10</sup> Although out-group engagement is not forbidden.

relationships constructed in the society as a common occurrence. This kind of inter-group communication also takes place in the Islamic study activities among students in the mosque. Some bright Jahriyyah students prefer to follow famous imams of other groups, such as Ikhwān or Qadīm imams, to enlarge the scope of their Islamic knowledge. Those who follow imams in new migrant locations and in urban mosques surrounded by multi-factions become more familiar with rituals of other factions. Inter-factional connections are also motivated and organized by local religious affairs offices from organizing activities like Qur‘ān-reading competitions, sermon competitions, courses on religion and religious policy, travel activities, etc.

#### 4. Analysis: Between knocking *Bangzi* and calling *Adhān*

*Adhān* is the Islamic call to prayer, recited by the *mu’adhin* in a mosque shortly before each prayer to remind Muslims of the worship time. According to Islamic law, it is *Sunnah* or by-obligatory practice to make *adhān* before prayer, especially the congregational one. *Adhān* should be made loudly so that Muslims living nearby can hear and come for congregational prayer. Before loudspeakers came into use, *adhān* was uttered on a *minārat*. Most Hui Muslims today prefer to use loudspeakers as long as the local government allows this and their non-Muslim neighbours would not complain.

Knocking *bangzi* instead of making *adhān* on a *minārat* probably began to be practiced after Jahriyyah’s Su Forty-three (苏四十三) uprising in 1781, during the Qianlong period. Many restrictions were put into practice by the Qing court because of disputes between the Jahriyyah and Huasi faction of the Huffiyah order. Su’s rebellion instigated the government policy toward Islam as a whole. Many conventional religious activities were prohibited from then on, with particular restriction on the Jahriyyah because they were labelled as a “New Faction” at that time. As the traditional way to announce prayer time was prohibited, knocking *bangzi* became customary. Such religious practice was criticized by the government in 1958 in the name of “Democratic Reform of Anti-feudal Religious System,” and was discontinued completely during the Cultural Revolution. When the Chinese government allowed religious activities after 1978, knocking *bangzi* to announce the time for prayer was revived among Jahriyyah communities. With the rapid development of urbanization in China since the 1990s, knocking *bangzi* became impossible because its soft echo can’t go very far. When many Muslim communities make *adhān* with loudspeakers, almost all Jahriyyah mosques have aban-

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done knocking *bangzi* in the new century. But the difference lies in that they make *adhān* without loudspeakers at the time when the imam and his students are about to enter the prayer hall, whereas other factions do it about thirty minutes before the prayer, with loudspeakers. In some cases, reading *Madā'ih* instead of making *adhān* became a common way to announce the prayer time. This indicates that Jahriyyah has also begun to make changes within their religious traditions accordingly. The controversial issue is how to keep Jahriyyah's characteristics and make progress simultaneously. Reading *Madā'ih* instead of making *adhān* with a loudspeaker, although it looks a little bit strange to non-Jahriyyah adherents, can be termed as an innovation in the era of modernization, which to some extent is a kind of compromise.

The structures of original communities are also confronted with transformation due to people's migration, urbanization, and communication. Da Gengzi, once a rural Jahriyyah community in Jahriyyah's heartland of Xiji County, now has become an urban mosque because of urbanization. As a result, the adherents of Da Gengzi mosque were once mostly rural villagers but now have become urban residents. New inhabitants living around the mosque also come from a variety of backgrounds. Since some Muslim inhabitants select the nearest mosque to pray, the adherents of Da Gengzi mosque, particularly at Friday prayer, come from diversified factions as well.

Another change is the great recession of religious life in the rural Jahriyyah communities, which is typical among other Islamic factions. Studying, working and making money outside the villages have resulted in the decrease of population and erosion of rituals. When we visited some of the villages in Xiji County, some old residents told us that even digging tombs for the dead has become difficult in their villages, especially in summer, and congregational prayer is difficult to organize because all the male adults migrate outside to make money. As mosques become more beautiful and better equipped, the number of adherents is decreasing. Moreover, mosque-based education has almost stopped, except for a few female villagers who study elementary knowledge of Islam occasionally during winter vacation.

There are many differences between the contents of the Jahriyyah *Za xue* and that of other factions. A peculiar phenomenon deserving specific discussion is that only Qadīm and Jahriyyah have compiled *Za xue* to teach their adherents the systematic knowledge of practicing Islam in China. Most of other factions compiled the textbooks with references to their *Za xue*. *Za xue* has textualized Jahriyyah's ritual and prompted the



process of ritualization in their daily religious life, and therefore also intensified people's identification with the rituals. As a consequence, some Jahriyyah followers are still reluctant to adopt *tajwīd* (standard elocution) in reading the Qur'ān and other scriptures. They emphasize wearing white mourning dress, and praise the former *shaykhs*' merits and greatness in exhortations of Friday prayer, but fail to elaborate the doctrine to ordinary Muslims. In a funeral ceremony we participated in in Xiji County, some of attendants in the penalty ceremony could not even utter out the short and simple words for the ritual, but nevertheless kneeled among the people waiting for donations from the family of the dead. This instance shows the deficiency of the basic Islamic teaching among Jahriyyah adherents.

In the era when orthodox *shaykhs* controlled religious authority, the whole group was led by the religious professionals appointed or ordained by the *shaykh*. Thus, the solidarity and integration of the group were enhanced by communal connections. In the post-*shaykh* era, on the other hand, the loyalty of adherents to a Sufi group is transferred to different successors and *qubba'ah*. Loyalty to parallel, multi-spot centres replaced the vertical loyalty to the *shaykh*. The interpretation of each activity presented by Jahriyyah groups has been ritualized, localized and fragmented over generations. Any innovation is rejected by the adherents unless it is supported by the contemporary leaders. When asked about the rejection of using a loudspeaker to make *adhān*, many Jahriyyah adherents responded that "it isn't our custom", "we still abide by our old tradition", or "we don't have permission from our master". So it can be observed that the Jahriyyah has adopted some innovations, such as using modern instruments like loudspeakers, microphones, and decoration of mosques, etc. in their daily religious activities. But when confronting interpretation and innovation in the domain of religious customs, they still present themselves conservatively. Reading *Madā'ih* with loudspeakers that replaced knocking *bangzi* to announce prayer time is a graphic expression of such ambiguity and compromise.

For many adherents today, insisting on Jahriyyah teaching means to practice Jahriyyah rituals according to the teaching of Islamic doctrine and exhortation of all *shaykhs*, to visit and donate to the *qubba'ah*, to follow the descendants of *shaykhs*, and to practice Islam with the guidance of *Za xue*. Any innovation would be questioned and even rejected and might stir up controversy within the group. With such ritualized activities, they rigidified the boundaries against other Islamic factions

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throughout China in order to enhance their own communal identity. And they are also compelled to make some adjustments to acculturate into the society in which they find themselves today.

### **5. Conclusion**

What Jahriyyah are confronting today is not unique. Their case doesn't only explain their experience of the interior and exterior influences, but also sheds light on the changing adaptations of Islam in contemporary China as a whole. The Islam of Hui Muslims became distinctively Sinicized during the Ming dynasty (1368-1644). In addition, some traditional Muslims began to practice Sufi rituals since Sufi groups emerged in China during the early Qing dynasty. The religious customs of each faction absorbed diversified elements contextually, and to some extent were stereotyped both by their own members as well as by others. The way to understand the transformation of Islamic groups in China today is dependent on the analysis of their own history and the changes in the whole Chinese society.

So far as this study is concerned, Islam in China is confronting with two "post" eras. One is the post-Mao era which encompasses all of Chinese society. This era is characterised by some form of religious freedom alongside certain restrictions. The development of religion must follow the official religious policy of the atheist state and contribute to ethnic solidarity. This kind of policy framework in the post-Mao era presupposes that the development of religion is still in the exploratory phase and, therefore, requires constant negotiation with the state. It also requires Muslims to maintain an adequate way of presenting their Islamic culture to a society where the majority are non-Muslim and atheism is the mainstream ideology.

If the post-Mao era is mainly related to the relationship between Jahriyyah and state power, the post-*shaykh* era is principally concerned with the Jahriyyah adherents and the religious authority. With the end of the orthodox *shaykh* era, to whom they should be loyal is a serious question that every Jahriyyah adherent asks. Especially in the post-Mao era, while the interaction of the whole society become more and more intimate, the Jahriyyah also have various connections with other Islamic factions in China and get information from the outside Islamic world. Without tuition of the *shaykh*, how does a Sufi group with a long history continue its succession? So far as this paper finds, the ritualized religious activities and the clustered Jahriyyah communities are playing pivotal roles in maintaining the group's characteristics. Loyalty to the ritualized

activities and Jahriyyah ceremonies would be an inevitable choice for most the adherents in this post-*shaykh* era.

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