

Kokas misses the opportunity to extend the analysis to a more theoretically productive dimension that could have problematized the monopolistic rule of the data-driven digital economy.

Empirically, the absence of any discussion of methodology is a main limitation of the book. A brief introduction to the adopted methods for data collection and interpretation could make the argument more convincing. Readers might need to search for more robust sources and nuanced evidence about the actual purposes, processes and outcomes of data trafficking.

Amid the replicated Cold War rhetoric that chimes with refurbished “China threat” varieties in both popular and academic discourses, US–China tech relations have been easily framed as a frontier of confrontation between two conceptually incompatible systems. Nevertheless, as the book has already demonstrated that a wide range of globally interconnected industries are potential targets for data trafficking, it might be problematic to approach data governance and sovereignty as a zero-sum game between two economically powerful countries. The ongoing contestation between poorly regulated transnational data flows and sovereign concerns crystallizes the continuous conflict between territorial boundaries and the de-territorialized impulse of capital accumulation. What is needed to confront the peril of transnational data governance is moving beyond outmoded methodological nationalism and essentialist forms of binary oppositions that neglect the ruthless expansion of digital capitalism as a global condition, of which both China and the US are crucial parts. Caricaturing China as an existential threat to the interests of the US and the globe could be rather counterproductive when tackling the challenge of data governance that has been besieged by the logic of capital.

doi:10.1017/S0305741022001886

## Pure and True: The Everyday Politics of Ethnicity for China’s Hui Muslims

David R. Stroup. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2022. 268 pp. \$30.00 (pbk). ISBN 9780295749839

Guangtian Ha

Haverford College, Haverford, USA  
Email: [gha@haverford.edu](mailto:gha@haverford.edu)

Every once in a while, one comes across a book that presents, in addition to new information and thought-provoking theorization, a precious opportunity for contemplating the great distance one’s field has travelled. In the 1980s, among elite Hui Muslim scholars of Beijing, there was in wide circulation a popular couplet, the second part of which – pardon the present author’s forgetfulness regarding the first part – said 誰也聰明不過小杜磊 (*shei ye congming bu guo xiao Dulei*), “no one is smarter than the little Dru,” referring, endearingly, to the late anthropologist Dru C. Gladney, whose *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People’s Republic* (Harvard University Press, 1991) remains a landmark work in the study of Muslims in China. Remarkable for its multi-sited fieldwork – in the Oxen Street neighbourhood at the heart of Beijing, the Na Homestead in Ningxia, the rural town of Changying on the outskirts of Beijing, and Chendai in Fujian – and powerful argument, Gladney’s book opened up new avenues when research on ethno-religious Muslim minorities in China was just about to pick up pace after the Cultural Revolution.



David Stroup's new book *Pure and True: The Everyday Politics of Ethnicity for China's Hui Muslims* hearkens back to that classic in more ways than one. It is also based on solid fieldwork at four sites across China: Beijing, Jinan (Shandong), Xining (Qinghai) and Yinchuan (Ningxia). Unlike Gladney, however, Stroup's main focus is on *urban* Hui communities, thus lending more weight to such city-specific issues impacting contemporary Hui as urban development projects, demolition of old neighbourhoods and the displacement or breakup of traditional Hui enclaves. Like Gladney, too, Stroup is keenly aware of the great diversities among the Hui in language and sectarian affiliation; and yet again, unlike Gladney, who was more interested in examining the Chinese state's intervention in constructing the modern Hui identity, Stroup draws attention to the dynamic *everyday* practices where ethnicity and religion are negotiated, disputed, refashioned and re-inhabited.

Worthy of note as well is the fact that Stroup chooses not to organize the chapters according to the location of each community in question; rather his approach is to concentrate in each chapter on one specific aspect of Hui Muslim life – Han–Hui interactions (chapter one), marriage preferences (chapter two), use of language (chapter three), practices of consumption (chapter four) and ritual performances (chapter five) – and in the concluding chapter and the epilogue bring all the threads together to provide an updated account of the ramifications of the “People’s War on Terror” among Hui Muslims. In so doing he also manages to link the Hui to the current plight of their Uyghur co-religionists. This superb authorial decision entails a key effect: while readers are reminded of the many divisions and differences within Hui Muslims, they are also made to see the considerable commonalities among them across geographical locations. While religion appears not to occupy an essential place in Stroup’s richly crafted ethnography, his efforts at fleshing out the shared misfortune between Hui and Uyghurs – with the Hui as of now still in a considerably better situation than Uyghurs and other non-Sinophone Muslims – bring to the fore the oft-neglected trans-ethnic nature of ethno-religious politics in China. This is a commendable undertaking, and in doing this Stroup is carrying Gladney’s unfinished work to a new height.

At times Stroup’s ethnography offers fascinating examples probably worthy of more nuanced readings. In chapter one “God is a Drug,” for instance, he cites one encounter where his Hui informant drew his attention to a graffiti painted on the wall of a house in a suburban village outside Jinan. The graffiti in question reads 认主毒一 (*ren zhu du yi*), thus substituting the character 独 (*du*) in the common Hui expression 认主独一: the meaning then shifts from “worshipping the *only* One God” to “worshipping the *Venomous* One” (p. 32). No doubt the outcome of a malicious intent, the substitution is nonetheless rather ingenious and indicates the slanderer’s impressive knowledge of Islam’s core doctrine. Ethnic antagonism and conflict can as well be where knowledge is produced and mutual understanding nurtured, however unintentionally or reluctantly.

*Pure and True* is written in lucid prose and can thus be easily incorporated into undergraduate and postgraduate course syllabi on China, Islam, ethno-nationalism or politics of religion. Stroup’s accessible ethnographic descriptions and clear analyses render the book an essential reference for both general readers and established academics. It is also a beautiful tribute to the late Dru Gladney, who left us on 17 March 2022.

doi:10.1017/S0305741023000061