

THE NATIONAL VILLAGE AND THE NATIONALITIES IN VILLAGE: THE IDENTITY OF HUI NATIONALITY AND EVOLUTION OF RESIDENTIAL SPACE IN XIZHOU ANCIENT TOWN, YUNNAN PROVINCE (1147)

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Abstract. This paper attempts to use the methods of oral history and morphological analysis to sort out the development of residents of Hui nationality in Xizhou Ancient Town since the late of the Qing Dynasty and explore its role in the evolution of the Xizhou Ancient Town. Then to summarize the relationship between national identity and the spatial form of daily life through the combination of the two aspects. Taking the lives of the Bai and Hui people in Xizhou under the background of tourism as a slice, this paper also makes considerations and critique on the impact of the cognitive way based on national identity on the traditional towns and villages in Yunnan.

Keywords: national identify, public space, dwellings, traditional town

1. Introduction

China's Yunnan province is home to 26 ethnic minorities, making it one of the provinces with the highest concentration of ethnic minorities. Therefore, ethnic identity is often the starting point for the perception of specific towns and villages. This way of perception not only affects the identity of local residents but also indirectly influences the construction of public spaces and dwellings, and is constantly modified and reinforced by the development of tourism in the present.

The ancient town of Xizhou, located between the Cang Mountains and the Erhai Lake, the core of Dali culture in Yunnan, is a national historical and cultural town. According to the ethnic identification work from 1949 to 1954, most of the residents of Xizhou were classified as Bai, and Xizhou has become a traditional Bai village, with its houses, customs and clothing labeled as Bai. The houses, customs and clothing are all labeled as Bai. However, on the north side of the town, there are Hui residents who make up about 10% of the population of Xizhou. They have been involved in all socio-economic activities in Xizhou since the late Qing Dynasty and have played an important role in the history of the area. In the context of their long-term mixing with the Bai, the Hui residents have maintained their own social and cultural characteristics, including their beliefs and religious activities, on the one hand, but on the other hand, they have

changed implicitly in the context of the modernization of the country and the domination of the Bai elite in the society. These changes reflect the hesitations and oscillations of Hui residents between their own history and the current socio-economic situation regarding their identity and the range of lifestyles attached to it.



Figure 1. Location of Yunnan Province

2. The Historical Origin of The Hui Nationality in Yunnan

After the ethnic identification work in 1949-1954, Dali was changed from Dali Prefecture to Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture in 1956. The word "Bai" in the administrative name directly indicates the conclusion of the ethnic identification work in Dali. Thus, the close connection between "Dali" and "Bai" has become an official fact. In recent years, tourism, which has become the backbone of Dali's economy, has not only brought a thriving merchandise economy to the region, but also a large number of tourists from other provinces. In the tourists' perspective, Dali is gradually equated with the Bai culture. This *ethnic-regional* cognitive model from the outside also influences the identity of Bai and non-Bai residents in Dali and the transformation of their living environment. This paper discusses how this change in perception has manifested itself in the case of the Hui people of Xizhou, and how it has affected the layout, planning, and housing of settlements.

The ethnic name of the Hui nationality is the first point of entry to understand its development process. The term "Hui-Hui" first appeared in the Northern Song Dynasty

in Shen Kuo's *Mengxi Bitan*. Although this term is similar to the current name of Hui nationality, at that time it did not refer to the Hui of today, but to the "Uighur" who lived in the Hexi Corridor and the north and south of the Tianshan Mountains. They were the ancestors of the Uyghurs of today's Xinjiang. The term *Hui-Hui* mentioned several times in the Southern Song Dynasty's "A Brief History of the Black Tartars" by Peng Daya and Xu Ting, is also not the Hui nationality of today, but refers to the various ethnic groups, regions and countries in the east and west of the Onion Ridge that believe in Islam.^[1] It can be seen that the term Hui-Hui in the early days implied the geographical scope of the people, rather than a clear ethnic concept.

This situation changed with the unification of the Yuan Dynasty. The Mongol army's conquest across Europe and Asia made the Arabs and Persians in Central and West Asia the target of the Mongol army's plunder, and the plundered people followed the army's migration. According to their type of labor, the plundered people were called Hui-Hui army, Hui-Hui artisans and Hui-Hui merchants, etc.^[2] As a result, the term *Hui-Hui* was divorced from its association with a specific geographic region, and became a reference to a fixed group of people. As the Mongolian army fought against the Dali, "Hui-Hui" were stationed and settled in Yunnan, and participated in the writing of Yunnan's history since the Yuan Dynasty. On the other hand, due to the original religious background of Central and West Asia, Islam has gradually been accepted as the mainstream faith within the "Muslim" community. By the early Ming Dynasty, the Hui nationality had developed into a stable and independent nationality,^[1] and had the same meaning as "Islamists". The Islamic faith has also become one of the most distinctive features of the "Hui-Hui" nationality.

3. Xizhou and Hui Nationality

Since the Yuan Dynasty, the Hui nationality have developed into a distribution of "large scattered and small concentrated" in Yunnan.^[3] Dali is an important area for the "small concentration" of Hui nationality in western Yunnan.



Figure 2. Location of Dali and the Erhai Lake

The cantonment of the “Hui-Hui army” during the Yuan Dynasty was mainly along the transportation routes. After the unification of Yunnan and the establishment of the provincial government, the construction of the "Zhanchi" was strengthened to expand and improve the transportation in the region. Dali, "leaning on the west of the point cang, east of the Er water, the mountains and rivers in the shape of victory, majestic in the southern service"^[4], extended in all directions in the western Yunnan, is also an important trade and commerce in successive dynasties, the cantonment of soldiers to choke the location. Its strategic significance is the foundation of the ancestors of Hui nationality settlement in the area. In addition, the Jimi policy of Yuan Dynasty made the original Dali State retain its power in Dali area. In order to check and balance the political families of Meng and Duan in Xizhou, Sai Dianchi^[6], who was a Pingzhang administrator, dispatched his eldest son Nasulading to Xizhou on the eve of the move of the Central Secretariat from Dali to Kunming, and stationed troops at the northern and southern ends of Xizhou for control^[7]. This initiative established a strong link between Xizhou and its surrounding area, and the Hui nationality.



Figure 3. Aerial view of Xizhou Ancient Town

During the process of overthrowing the Mongo empire and the governance of Yunnan, the Ming dynasty made two large armies into Yunnan. ^[8] But due to the continuation of the post-war strategy of transport construction and military cantonment, and the belief in Islam of the leading generals, ^[9] the population of Hui nationality in western Yunnan increased rather than decreased, and the absorption effect of the original Hui nationality settlements was strengthened. Xizhou was no exception.

The Qing Dynasty's strategy of ruling the Hui nationality in the southwest went through a change from loose to tight, and the frequent Hui nationality rebellions in northwest Gansu and other areas were a direct factor in the tightening of Hui policy in the southwest. ^[10] In addition, the policy of bureaucratisation of native officers in Yunnan carried out by Ertai (鄂尔泰) in 1726 led to a great reduction in the power of the Tusi in Yunnan, and a great change in the local power structure. The accumulation of conflicts led to the outbreak of the Dali-centered Hui rebellion in 1856, which is known as the "Du Wenxiu Uprising of Hui Nationality". Although the uprising ultimately failed, the Hui rebellion briefly took control of most of western Yunnan, ^[11] with Dali as its core, and

established a regional regime in the city between 1856 and 1872. The Hui population was drastically reduced by the Qing siege. Just 18 kilometers from Dali, Xizhou played an important role before the uprising and after the establishment of the regime, and the Hui nationality and Islamic culture continued to influence the inhabitants of Xizhou, and was reflected in the development of the town and its architecture.

4. Distribution of Hui Nationality Around Xizhou

Xizhou is located in the backland of the Dali Dam, is an important trade town on the west coast of the Erhai Lake since the Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China, and is an important transit area for merchants from southern Yunnan to Tibetan areas. Thus, Xizhou has become an important place for population and cultural exchange. The Dragon's Head Pass and Dragon's Tail Pass at the two ends of the Dali Dam area control the entry and exit of merchants and goods. And beyond the two gates, Eryuan and Weishan are the largest areas of Hui nationality settlement in the Dali region. Weishan, known as Menghua in the Qing Dynasty, was the starting point for the establishment of the Nanzhao regime. Now Weishan is Hui autonomous county. In contrast, Eryuan County is located in the upper basin of the Er Sea, is a typical river alluvial plain, very suitable for settlement. In Eryuan County, 65% of the Hui are concentrated in the villages of Shibang, Jieming and Sanmei, all of which are located in the northern part of the Cang Mountain Range. So from the perspective of the dam area as a whole, Xizhou falls right in between the Hui settlements.

Looking at the relationship between Xizhou and Hui settlements from within the dam area on a village-by-village basis, the same conclusion was come. There are Hui settlements to the south and north of Xizhou. Before the Hui Uprising, there were three large Hui settlements in the southern part of Xizhou, namely Shangzuoyi, Moyong and Koryozhuang. The ones that still exist today are Sosok-eup and Korijo. It is located one kilometer south of Xizhou, and was named "Keli" because of its proximity to Xizhou and its historical name of "Dali City", which later evolved into "Keli". The village was once a place where Tang Chunpei, the governor of Dali Prefecture, and Lin Tingxi, the Winding Road, held a regimental training program against the Muslim uprising, but the village no longer exists because it was severely damaged after the defeat of Du Wenxiu's Muslim uprising.

Xizhou to the north of the distribution of E used, Meiba and on the three Hui villages, all along the G214 (West - View Line) on both sides of the distribution, which is the highest altitude is located in the Cang Mountain Cang Longfeng peak foothills on the Xingzhuang, the village still stands in the mosque, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 4. Mosque of Shangxingzhuang Village

Although the location of Hui villages today will be different compared to before the uprising, under the influence of the Hui uprising at the end of the Qing Dynasty and the siege and post-war migration of the Hui by the Qing army, this does not affect the fact that Hsi Chau and Hui have coexisted spatially for a long time. Our study of the evolution of the layout of the ancient town of Xizhou cannot be separated from this perspective of coexistence.

5. Boundary and Inner Boundary of Xizhou

The area between Cang Mountain and the Erhai Lake is called Haixi by the locals because it is located on the western shore of the Erhai Lake. The Haixi dam is long and narrow from north to south, and the 18 streams flowing down from the snowy top of Cang Mountain divide it into 19 flat dams. Due to the importance of water sources, most of the villages in the hinterland of the Haixi region are distributed along both sides of these 18 streams, while the side of the villages not facing the streams is often surrounded by cultivated land.

From an administrative point of view, the border between the town and the village of Xizhou is the official boundary^[12]; from the tourist's point of view, Xizhou is a "special town" made up of many attractions; and from the perspective of a tourism development company, "Xizhou" means the area within the administrative boundary where maximum benefits can be achieved. So how do the White and Hui residents living within the above-mentioned boundaries view the boundaries of their own environment?

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, Xizhou is a historical and cultural town within the Bai Autonomous Prefecture, and "Bai" is the identity of most of the residents of Xizhou, as well as a cultural label and a promotional gimmick for Xizhou as a "special town". The Bai is like a supreme concept that encompasses all aspects of Xizhou, from its inhabitants to its material life, into a holistic order that appears to have only external boundaries. The establishment of the "fortress gate" and the widening of the outer road have strengthened the whole. On the other hand, according to the Dali Statistical

Yearbook (2022 edition), Dali City, of which Xizhou is a part, has 18,924 Hui inhabitants^[13], the largest number among the county-level administrative units in Dali Prefecture. For the Hui residents of Xizhou, where is the boundary they perceive? Therefore, this paper proposes the concept of "inner boundary" to point out that there is a division between the White and Hui settlements within Hsi Chau, and that the "inner boundary" has been adjusted, weakened or strengthened at different historical periods.

6. Layout Expansion of Xizhou Ancient Town

In the ancient town of Xizhou, there is an east-west road called Qingzhen Road, which roughly outlines the scope of the Hui settlement: north of the road is the Xizhou Mosque as the core of the Hui residential area, and most of the streets along the south side are Hui homes, but the closer to the city street the more white residents. So where did this road come from? And what role did it play in the layout of the ancient town of Xizhou? The author obtained the following materials through visits to the Hui residents of Xizhou and a survey of Xizhou historical documents.

The *Survey of the Social History of the Hui People in Yunnan* contains an account of a posthumous account by Imam Ma Yuwen of Shangxingzhuang:

*Passed the Xizhou again, Hui and Han people lived together, but there are hundreds of Hui families, also divided into two mosques, one belongs to the Family Zhang, the other belongs to Family Ma, both under the Shaanxi School, after the failure (Du Wenxiu Muslim Uprising), Mosque of Family Zhang turned into a temple of Wealth God, that is, the existing temple.*⁰

A similar passage is recorded in the *Cultural History of Dali Xizhou*:

*Xiuzhou City, the former garrison place of Shishang Street and the place called Houhe evolved into the Hui residents. On the eve of the Xianfeng Incident, there were hundreds of Hui families, each family Zhang and family Ma had a mosque.*⁰

The two records corroborate each other, and it seems that a preliminary conclusion can be drawn: the ancient town of Xizhou today had two mosques before the defeat of the Du Wenxiu uprising in the late Qing Dynasty, and because the Hui follow the tradition of gathering in the center of the mosque, the ancient town of Xizhou's Hui settlement should be concentrated in the vicinity of the city's Upper Street. But where exactly are these two mosques located?

The location of the mosque of family Zhang mosque can be confirmed through conversations with Zhang Xuelian, a resident of Caiyun Street in Xizhou (southeast of Baocheng House), and with the descendants of the Yang Yunheng family at No. 22 Shiping Street.

Conversation with Zhang Seulian (hereinafter referred to as Zhang) (excerpt):

Author: Was this mansion handed down to you from your ancestors?

Zhang: Yes, but I only occupy three rooms on this side (three rooms in the north room).

Author: Are all the residents here now surnamed Zhang?

Zhang: No, the opposite surname is Sun.

Author: Are you a Hui nationality?

Zhang: Yes. The Hui nationality is very bumpy in Xizhou. My grandfather was sent to work in a mine in Chuxiong when he was young, and later ran back, but there is no more Hui land in Xizhou. Then he and some other Muslims asked the Yan family lord for land to build a house and a mosque.

Author: Is this the current mosque?

Zhang: Yes. It used to be a mud flat. No one farmed there. The Yan family lord was okay and gave the land to my grandfather.

Author: Was there a mosque before this?

Zhang: According to my grandfather, the old mosque was turned into the hall of the God of Wealth.

Author: Where is the hall of God of wealth?

Zhang: The hall of the God of wealth was demolished, in the parking lot. You see the stage, together with that senior center.

Author: Is the family tree still there?

Zhang: There was a family tree, but it was taken to Guizhou by my uncle.

(End)

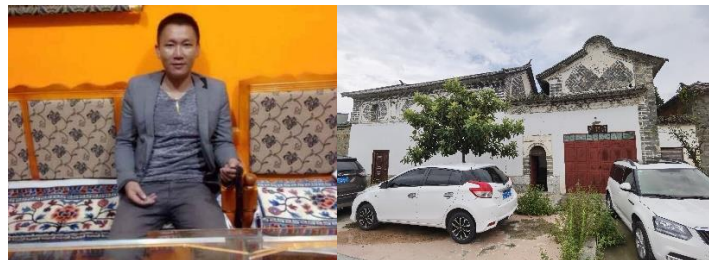


Figure 5. Zhang Xulian and his courtyard in Xizhou Ancient Town

Conversation with descendants of the Yang Yunheng family (hereinafter referred to as Yang) (excerpt):

Author: I heard that there used to be a temple next to your house?

Yang: Yes, it was a hall of the God of Wealth, which was later torn down.

Author: Will the land remain empty after the demolition?

Yang: This land has been converted into a grain depot, which is a place to store and manage grain.

(End)

Through these two interviews, it is basically possible to determine the authenticity and specific location of the Zhang's Mosque as recorded in the "Historical Examination of the Culture of Dali Xizhou" and the "Survey of the Social History of the Hui in Yunnan. By comparing the location of Zhang's mosque today and in the past, we can clearly know: the new mosque than the original temple to the northwest direction. It was the inauguration of the new mosque that created the "inner boundary" of Xizhou, separating the White and Muslim communities, which later developed into the Halal Road. The layout of Xizhou Ancient Town has thus been expanded.

7. The Generating Process of Inner Boundary

If we make a simple investigation on the construction time of mosques in Hui settlements around Xizhou, we will find a fact: the peak period of mosque construction and reconstruction was around 1910-1920.

Table 1. Mosques in Hui villages around Xizhou

Kelizhuang Village	2.4km to Xizhou Village	1908 (Rebuilt)
Sanmei Village	27.9km to Xizhou Village	1908 (Built)
Shangxinzhuang Village	5.3km to Xizhou Village	1921 (Rebuilt)
E'lang Village	3.3km to Xizhou Village	1886 (Built)

Why does this happen? According to the statement of the history of Xizhou before and after Du Wenxiu's uprising, we can know that during this period, the Hui people in Dali area experienced the process from the establishment of an independent regional regime to the collapse of it, and the Hui residents suffered the massacre and displacement after the failure of the uprising. Most of the Hui residents' original means of production, such as houses and land, were distributed as *property forfeited* to local gentry and officials in charge of youth league training who had done good work in suppressing the uprising^[16], and *Excluding the Hui People* became politically correct. From Zhang Xulian's

grandfather's work experience in Chuxiong, we can know that Xizhou residents, who were at the center of the Hui regime, could not escape the fate of being "excluded". Therefore, the relationship between Bai and Hui also experienced a process from coexistence to mutual exclusion. The demolition and renovation of the mosque also confirmed such a transformation of the relationship.

However, from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, frequent social revolution and the entry of western colonial forces made the Qing government gradually lose its control over the southwest region, greatly loosening the original social order and policies, making it possible for the Hui people to return to their hometowns. Therefore, there was a small upsurge of striving for land, building mosques and housing on their native land.^[17]

This process of "reconstruction" has invariably reinforced the Hui people's sense of their own ethnic identity, and their loyalty to the Islamic faith has forced them to behave in a very different way from other ethnic groups in their actual productive lives. Historical and religious factors made the reconstruction of the mosque and the houses surrounding it inevitable, and this mentality was projected into the construction of the village, resulting in the "inner boundary" of Xizhou.

8. Caravan Career and The Breakthrough of "Inner Boundary"

From the *War-Ready* cavalries to the displaced *Rebels* finally to the expatriates returning to one's homeland, the Muslims in the Dali region are constantly positioning themselves in their social roles through the perception of their own identity.

There is a proverb in Yunnan folklore: "Pendulum barbarian fields, Han Chinese land, Hui sons drive horses to do business". A large number of Hui people who returned to their hometowns did not have land to cultivate as horse helpers, and this situation is very common in the Dali area. A 1951 survey report of Weishan Yongjian Township showed that there were more than 100 horse gangs in 15 Hui villages in Yongjian Township, with more than 5,000 mules and horses. Before the founding of the People's Republic of China, more than 190 of the 380 households in Yong Sheng village Huihuideng were completely operating horse gang transportation, accounting for about 50%.⁰

The Hui people of Xizhou do horse transport, in addition to the advantages of geographical location there are several key factors: One, Xi Chau in the late Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China during the rise of the "four families" are the main business content of the sale and resale of goods in other places, so the absolute demand for the horse gang; two, the horse gang transport long distances, so the members of the horse gang is generally outside the year; Second, the horse gang transport long distances, so the horse gang members are generally wandering outside all year round. And the Hui of Xizhou have almost no land

to cultivate at the early stage of returning to their hometown, and the land cannot bring any stable income to the Hui, so the horse gang transportation in turn provides an opportunity for the independence of the Hui; Third, the Islamic faith does not have idol worship, the Hui can perform pilgrimage at any time during the process of transportation, and some Hui take the opportunity to reach the holy land of Mecca to perform the hajj by horse gang transportation out.⁰

As a result of these major factors, the Hui of Xizhou became synonymous with the horse gang, finding their new social niche in the late Qing and Republican eras. At the same time, they also broke through the "inner boundaries" between the internal and the white inhabitants of Xizhou in the course of their operations.

Returning Hui usually lived on the outskirts of their original village sites, which made it easier for the gangs to travel. The long history of horsemen's transport provided enough experience for some families to grow into merchants, which laid the foundation for the integration of the elite Hui into the Bai community of Xizhou.

From the distribution of Hui houses in Xizhou, we can see that there are also large houses belonging to the Hui in the Bai settlements south of Shishang Street and Shiping Street. Among them, Ma Wansheng's house on Shi Shang Street and Ma Xingpu's house on Caiyun Street are the most remarkable.

Ma Wansheng was born in 1869 and worked in a brick kiln in Binchuan from the age of 12 to 18. After the defeat of the Du Wenxiu uprising, he was forced to leave his original residence in Xizhou and flee to Dachongxiang in Zhoucheng. After returning to Xizhou, he relied on the business of horse gang transportation to and from the Dali-Heqing route, mainly dealing with earthen paper, white cotton paper and burning money paper in Songgui Town, Heqing County. After accumulating a certain amount of wealth, a mansion was built on the present site in 1897, 1920 and 1946 respectively. A courtyard was enclosed on the east side as a stable.

And Ma Xingpu, who built the mansion on the southeast side of Baocheng House, mainly operated the copper business in Lijiang during the Republican period and opened his own workshop to export copper to Tibet and resell Tibetan herbs to Dali for sale. Through his early horse gang business, he gradually became one of the models of merchants in Xizhou and built his own mansion while establishing his own business name "Li Xing Chang".

As we can see from the above examples of Hui horsemen and merchants, the stable social environment provided new opportunities for the Hui to coexist with other ethnic groups. In the commercial trade, the Hui were deeply involved in the tea and horse trade and transportation in western Yunnan as the main force of the Xizhou horse gang. For themselves and the other residents of Xizhou, Hui identity was no longer equated with

displaced returnees, a marginal role in the settlement, but gradually became the "horse pot head" who independently assumed an important social division of labor. Even as the wealth and social status of the elite Hui merchants increased, Hui culture gained a higher level of recognition in Xizhou society. While dissolving the inner boundaries of Xizhou, the culture of the Bai, Hui, and Han peoples was combined to form the "Xizhou Culture" as a whole.

9. Rethinking Identity of Nationality and the Emergence of New Residential Groupings

On the north side of Xizhou, in the area adjacent to the mosque, there is a cluster of residences built in the early 1990s. In this area, each household is of the same layout and size, forming several rows of rows of houses. Through interviews, we learned that this area is still used as a Hui settlement, and that in the early 1990s, in order to solve the housing problem in the core area of Xizhou ancient town, the government concentrated on building these two-story, L-shaped houses for Hui residents only. The selection of homes was decided by lottery, and no group selection or sale was allowed.

The emergence of this group reinforced the border between the White and Hui communities, and in the context of Xizhou ancient town's near transformation into a *theme park of Bai cultural*, it gradually became a marginal building that neither belonged to the White culture nor had Hui characteristics. The core building, the Xizhou Bai residential complex, which is the antithesis of such marginal architecture, has become a popular attraction for tourists and has become the supreme form of Xizhou society and a benchmark for marginal architecture to emulate and transform, with the "new tradition" of Xizhou being shaped in tourism. The "new tradition" of Xizhou has been shaped by tourism, and the "inner boundary" has become clear again.

In this context, the division of life and social production of the Hui residents is once again integrated into the development of tourism. They participate in the restaurant and souvenir business by renting stores in the Ancient Town or converting residential rooms into stores, shaping themselves as well as the bustling streets of Xizhou.

In terms of religious life, although the Hui residents remain faithful to the Islamic faith, in the context of tourism development, tourists are introduced to the mosques, the public attributes of the public space are further opened up, and Islam is transformed from a necessity of religious life to a manifestation of ritual.



Figure 6. Hui People's Wedding in Xizhou Ancient Town

10. Conclusion

Although the post-1954 ethnic identification work and the *ethnic-regional* cognition strengthened under its influence have, to some extent, demystified the multi-ethnic mix in the southwest, this approach has simplified the rich connotations and complexities of the cognitive objects. This approach simplifies the rich connotation and complex historical details of the cognitive object. At the same time, in villages such as Xizhou, where tourism is the mainstay, there are profound influences on how local residents perceive their ethnic identity, which will eventually be reflected in the ethnic distribution of the settlement. At the same time, this perception tries to shape the village into a cultural unity with internal order and clear external boundaries, which inadvertently conceals the problem of "internal boundaries". The tensions created by the complex relationships within a community, large or small, often drive its own development. It is true that the communities in which different ethnic groups are located always show some characteristics of their own, but such characteristics need to be understood in the context of the relationships between different ethnic groups or groups within the community.

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