

# Another Version of Intergroup Contact: How Does Unidirectional Exposure to Foreign Cultures Affect One's Opinion of Foreign Countries?

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## Abstract

This article attempts to study how unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures affects one's opinion of foreign countries. According to the "contact hypothesis," face-to-face interpersonal contact helps to reduce prejudice and discrimination against outgroup members. However, the intergroup contact effect is conditioned by the situation and the focus of contact. I argue that unidirectional cultural contact can be a better alternative and categorize it into two types. First, group-specific exposure to a foreign culture is associated with decategorization that strengthens affinity with the outgroup and deemphasizes between-group differences. Second, generalized exposure to foreign cultures contributes to recategorization through which a common identity is constructed and ingroup members become more cosmopolitan. Both approaches are hypothesized to lead to a favorable attitude toward foreign countries. Based on cross-national data from the AsiaBarometer Survey, this study lends empirical support to the positive effects of group-specific exposure and generalized exposure. In particular, I use whether having a cable TV as an instrument and confirm the robustness of the above causal inferences.

## Keywords

contact hypothesis, intergroup relation, foreign culture, decategorization, recategorization

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## Introduction

In 2016, a Chinese web drama *Addicted* was very popular not merely in mainland China but across East Asia. Numerous fans in Indonesia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, and even in Argentina, Italy, and other countries outside Asia established online and offline fan clubs. This Chinese drama has been with English, Korean, Spanish, Thai, and other subtitles by fans from different countries. One of the main actors Timmy Xu soon became a superstar and has held two Asia tours in Thailand and South Korea. Some overseas fans started to learn Chinese, opened Sina Weibo accounts (a Chinese microblog akin to Twitter), and traveled to China to see their idols. Although the drama ended several years ago, its popularity is still growing. Does the success of *Addicted* redound to China's image in East Asia? Does intercultural contact make one more pro-outsider? In this article, I attempt to examine the influence of unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures on individual attitudes toward foreign countries.

On the basis of the "contact hypothesis" that intergroup contact reduces prejudice, I put forth two kinds of unidirectional cultural contact: group-specific exposure to a foreign culture and generalized exposure to foreign cultures. On the one hand, group-specific exposure centers on the culture of a specific country. Greater exposure arouses liking, improves information and knowledge about the target, and deemphasizes between-group divergence through decategorization, all of which can lead to a more favorable perception of the contacted foreign nation. On the other hand, the positive effect of group-specific exposure can be generalized to other uncontacted foreign nations. Apart from the above functions, generalized exposure to foreign cultures plays a more fundamental role in recategorization.

Specifically, it promotes empathy and perspective taking, constructs a shared identity beyond extant group categories, and socializes individuals to be more tolerant and cosmopolitan. In brief, group-specific exposure as well as generalized exposure is expected to result in a pro-outsider attitude. By use of the data drawn from the 2007 AsiaBarometer Survey, the statistical analyses in this study lend credence to both hypotheses.

My research contributes to the existing literature in three aspects. First, I point out the deficiencies and weaknesses of direct, face-to-face intergroup contact. Conditional upon the situation and the focus of contact, interpersonal contact does not necessarily reduce prejudice or discrimination; sometimes it may even exacerbate intergroup negativity. Instead, I argue that indirect, unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures is a more effective way to ameliorate intergroup relations while avoiding the limitations of direct contact. Second, given the potential endogeneity problem of reverse causality, I employ whether having a cable TV in one's house as an instrument of cultural exposure. The instrumental variable approach further confirms that the causal effect of intercultural contact on one's opinion of foreign countries is largely robust. Third, as a complement to previous research overwhelmingly focusing on individuals or groups in the West, I take citizens and nations in East Asia as examples to help check and extend the scope and generalizability of the "contact hypothesis."

The remaining sections are organized as follows. First, by reference to the extant literature, I analyze the limitations of direct intergroup contact and illustrate the advantages of indirect unidirectional cultural contact. Next, I elaborate on the effects of group-specific exposure and generalized exposure and bring forth the research hypotheses. After that, I explain the operationalization of the relevant variables, present the statistical models, and test

the hypotheses with data from the 2007 AsiaBarometer Survey. The paper ends with the conclusion and discussion of my theoretical framework and empirical findings.

## **Ingroup Bias and Intergroup Contact**

Ingroup bias is the “tendency to favor the ingroup over the outgroup in evaluations and behavior,” which is “a remarkably omnipresent feature of intergroup relation” (Tajfel and Turner 1979: 38). A series of social psychology studies have substantiated this ingroup favoritism during the process of cross-group interaction (Billig and Tajfel 1973; Brewer 1979; Eller and Abrams 2003, 2004; Hamilton and Bishop 1976; Maras and Brown 1996; Mullen, Brown, and Smith 1992; Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Billig 1974; Turner 1975, 1981; Wilder 1981). As Tajfel and Turner conclude (1979: 38), the “mere perception of belonging to two distinct groups—that is social categorization per se—is sufficient to trigger intergroup discrimination favoring the ingroup.” Given ingroup bias resulting from self-perceived between-group difference, prejudice and discrimination against outgroups seem to be spontaneous and prevalent (Gaertner and Dovidio 2000; Otten and Moskowitz 2000). In terms of interstate interaction, for example, national identification by itself is a strong predictor of chauvinism and xenophobia (Brown, Vivian, and Hewstone 1999). “National cohesion may express itself as external aggression” (Fukuyama 2014: 186).

However, ingroup bias is not inevitable and can be overcome by intergroup contact. According to the “contact hypothesis,” interpersonal contact between different groups reduces intergroup negativity and cultivates a more favorable attitude toward outgroup members (Allport 1954; Pettigrew 1998). A variety of experimental, cross-sectional,

longitudinal, and meta-analytic studies have lent empirical support to the contact hypothesis (Amir 1969; Brown and Hewstone 2005; Brown et al. 2007; Cook 1984; Harrington and Miller 1992; Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 2002; Jackson 1993; Patchen 1999; Pettigrew 1971, 1986, 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp 2000, 2006; Shook and Fazio 2008).

On the other hand, there is research also showing mixed and conflicting results of intergroup contact (Laurence 2011; Stephan and Stephan 1992). For instance, some scholars find that intergroup contact engenders more prejudice (Amir 1976; Butler and Wilson 1978; Condra and Linardi 2019; Gerard and Miller 1975; Mitchell 1968; O'Driscoll, Hague, and Ohsako 1983; Ray 1980, 1983; Schaefer 1975; Schofield 1979; Stephan and Stephan 2000). Opposite to the contact hypothesis, intergroup contact sometimes does not breed friendship but arouses animosity between different nations and civilizations (Huntington 1993, 1996; Suh and Smith 2008). As Waltz (1979: 103) put it, "Nationally as internationally, contact generates conflict and at times issues in violence." Higher degrees of cross-group contact in this increasingly interdependent era seem to aggravate discrimination and intensify nationalism (Machida 2012). "Globalized we all may be but this doesn't make us cosmopolitans" (Woodward, Skrbis, and Bean 2008: 210).

The negative contact effects stated above imply that interpersonal contact between ingroups and outgroups is not a panacea for reducing prejudice. Whether the contact hypothesis takes anticipated effect hinges on at least two main aspects—the situation and the focus of contact. First, the situation of contact should be cooperative instead of competitive. According to Allport (1954), the positive impact of intergroup contact will diminish if there is

a competitive relationship between groups.<sup>2</sup> Given intense intergroup competition, contact may reinforce the members' feelings of anxiety and/or threat, which obstructs the development of a positive orientation toward outgroups (Pettigrew and Tropp 2011; Plant 2004; Plant and Devine 2003; Stephan and Stephan 1985; Tropp 2003). Second, the focus of contact had better be related to culture. In comparison to political and economic topics, culture appears to be more neutral and less threatening during interpersonal communication. Through principal component factor analysis, Stephan and Stephan (1992) find that there are two dimensions regarding intergroup contact. Further regression analysis shows that only contact at cultural events, such as movies, parties, and outings, significantly decreases intergroup negativity. On the contrary, the other contact is viewed as threatening and is associated with increased suspicion and anxiety. In consequence, whether direct interpersonal contact between groups can reduce prejudice or not largely depends on the situation and the focus of contact.

## **Effect of Unidirectional Exposure to Foreign Cultures**

I define unidirectional exposure as a one-way, indirect intergroup contact centering on foreign cultures. Reading foreign books, watching foreign television (TV) programs, and listening to foreign songs are cases in point. According to Mutz and Goldman (2010), books, TVs, and the Internet are among the most primary avenues through which ingroup members learn about outgroups. Distinct from the above-mentioned interpersonal contact, one does not need to be engaged in a direct, face-to-face interaction with an outgroup member in real life. Some

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<sup>2</sup> Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998) also propose other crucial contact situations such as equal status between the groups, common goals, opportunities for personal acquaintance between the groups, and supportive norms by authorities.

studies have confirmed that indirect contact, as direct contact, redounds to a favorable attitude toward outgroups too: having an ingroup friend who simultaneously has an outgroup friend (Pettigrew et al. 2007), observing an ingroup member interacting with an outgroup member (Brown and Paterson 2016), and watching TV shows or reading stories that portray positive between-group exchanges (Cameron and Rutland 2006; Schiappa, Gregg, and Hewes 2005).

I argue that unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures can considerably overcome the shortcomings of direct intergroup contact and that it should be a more effective way to facilitate intergroup friendship. First of all, unidirectional exposure evades the competitive situation of interpersonal contact. In fact, an individual can, to a large extent, freely choose the time and the place of such indirect contact, in lieu of an actual talk with an outgroup member. As the level of uncertainty during indirect contact declines, individuals are less likely to experience anxiety or stress, compared to those who are directly confronted with unknown outgroup members.

What is more, cultural contact, which is more neutral than other contact, helps to alleviate a sense of threat when in the face of outgroups. Culture is a “historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (Geertz 1973: 89). Due to such features of culture, Nye (1990) points out the significance of “soft power.” Differing from hard power growing out of a state’s military, political, and economic capability, soft power arises from the attractiveness and popularity of the state’s culture, without coercion or force (Nye 1990,

2004). The odds are that cultural exchanges between different states may mitigate hostility and misperception prevalent in the fields of politics and military. More important, intercultural activities can function as a source of shared meaning and collective identity for different groups (Bruner 1996; Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952). Active participation in intercultural activities is generally correlated with a reduction of intergroup prejudice (Brannon and Walton 2013).

Another limitation of person-to-person contact is the high cost and requirement. For instance, frequently traveling abroad and directly communicating with a foreigner are costly for ordinary citizens given various travel expenses and sometimes a good command of at least one foreign language. Thus, for most of the ingroup members, the opportunities for direct interpersonal contact with outgroup members are limited. In contrast, unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures, such as watching foreign movies online or in local cinemas with subtitles or dubbing, is more convenient and less expensive.

In sum, the above three benefits of unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures can greatly avoid the drawbacks of direct intergroup contact (i.e., competitive situation, noncultural/threatening focus, and high cost). Furthermore, I contend that there are two kinds of unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures—group-specific exposure and generalized exposure—that affect one's opinion of foreign countries mainly through two different mechanisms—decategorization and recategorization.

### *Group-Specific Exposure to a Foreign Culture and Decategorization*

Group-specific exposure means that the target of intercultural contact is a specific outgroup.



Correspondingly, an ingroup member's opinion is also based on the indirectly contacted outgroup. I argue that the underlying function of group-specific cultural exposure lies in the deemphasis on divergence and the emphasis on similarity in terms of group/national identity, namely, decategorization. Group-specific exposure provides information and knowledge, which renders ingroup members familiar with the culture of an outgroup. Given more certainty and familiarity with a foreign culture, individuals tend to express more liking, minimize negative stereotyping, and reduce discrimination against the contacted foreign country via decategorization.

To begin with, group-specific exposure to a foreign culture can be regarded as a kind of “mere exposure effect” that subtly boosts one's liking for the targeted foreign nation. Some scholars propose that repeated exposure to a stimulus (e.g., words and symbols) makes an individual unconsciously shape a unique preference for the stimulus—that is—the mere exposure effect (James 1890; Maslow 1937; Zajonc 1968). The reason for the mere exposure effect on one's attitude is the reduction of uncertainty. People are prone to those with certainty and credibility by comparison to other novel things. Many social science studies have empirically supported this positive exposure effect (Bornstein 1989; Harmon-Jones and Allen 2001; Harrison 1969; Lee 2001; Moreland and Zajonc 1976; Saegert, Swap, and Zajonc 1973; Zajonc and Rajecki 1969). Owing to the rapid development of science and technology nowadays, more and more people around the world “are exposed to other cultures on a daily basis without crossing borders on a regular basis, simply through the variety of communication media (including satellite broadcasting, radio, and other forms of communication)” (Roudometof 2005: 121). Hence, it is conceivable that citizens have more

and more chances to learn about some foreign cultures. The frequent exposure to a foreign culture ought to decrease one's uncertainty and suspicion of the contacted foreign country while enhancing a much warmer between-group feeling over time.

In addition, as suggested by some researchers (Davidson and Thomson 1980; Myrdal 1944; Stephan and Stephan 1984; Williams 1947), prejudice toward outgroup members and foreigners is largely a result of ignorance. Devoid of information and knowledge about outgroups, ingroup members can "easily exaggerate the degree of difference between groups, and readily misunderstand the grounds for it" (Allport 1954: 19). In consequence, greater exposure to a foreign culture is supposed to gradually eliminate negative outgroup stereotypes and improve intergroup relations. Some studies have shown that more familiarity with an outgroup is associated with a more positive evaluation by ingroup members (Brewer and Campbell 1976; Kawakami et al. 2000; Linley, Reilly, and Goldsmith 2012; McClelland and Linnander 2006; Nesdale and Todd 2000; Page, Rabinovich, and Tully 2008). For example, interaction and cooperation between students of different races in schools can provide a wealth of information about the other group (that may otherwise be unavailable). Such interracial/intercultural contact promotes mutual understanding and undermines stereotyping caused by ignorance and lack of knowledge about outgroups (Brewer and Kramer 1985; Kramer 2004). On the basis of a series of experiments, Ahler and Sood (2018) find that the participants, when faced with correct information about the partisan outgroup, tend to hold less partisan animus and feel less socially distant from the outgroup members. Increased accurate information helps partisans reduce misperceptions and alleviate hostility toward the opposing party. It can be expected that, with the cumulation of knowledge through

exposure to a foreign culture, individuals will be less likely to hold a prejudiced and stereotypic image of the contacted foreign country.

The most fundamental influence of group-specific exposure to a foreign culture consists in a process of decategorization—deemphasizing the initial awareness of between-group distinctions (Wilder 1986). People from different groups who have direct contact are more likely to share similar interests and values (Byrne 1971). Intergroup contact can “reduce the salience of category distinctions and promote opportunities to get to know outgroup members as individual persons thereby disarming the forces of categorization” (Dovidio, Gaertner, and Kawakami 2003: 11). On account of decategorization, ingroup members are inclined to hold a more positive attitude toward contacted outgroup members (Bettencourt et al. 1992; Marcus-Newhall et al. 1993). In a similar vein, I contend that greater information and familiarity via unidirectional cultural exposure can also give rise to a sense of affinity and similarity toward the outgroup, which in the long run will narrow the gap caused by different group identities. As ingroup bias originates from the perception of otherness and divergence, decategorization can appreciably reduce such bias by lessening the identity-based boundary and emphasizing the commonness between the ingroup and the outgroup. Knowing more about a foreign culture thus mitigates the negative us-versus-them categorization and makes ingroup members more pro-outsider. To summarize, I hypothesize the effect of group-specific unidirectional cultural contact as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** All else being equal, individuals with greater group-specific exposure to a foreign culture are more likely to hold a favorable opinion of the (contacted) foreign country.

### *Generalized Exposure to Foreign Cultures and Recategorization*

In addition to better knowledge and information via group-specific exposure to a foreign culture, I argue that there exists a generalized exposure as well, through which one's world outlook becomes less parochial and more cosmopolitan. Generalized exposure does not concentrate on one specific foreign culture but, in principle, covers all foreign cultures, which can make an individual more open-minded and tolerant of diversity, nonuniformity, and generalized others. Differentiated from the aforementioned decategorization, the transformation of worldview is a process of recategorization of group identity, in respect of not only the contacted group but also other uncontacted groups.

Generalized exposure is predicated upon group-specific exposure. When the breadth and depth of unidirectional cultural contact are great enough, in other words, when an individual has a substantial knowledge and familiarity of foreign cultures, an affective other than cognitive effects will dominate. Long-term and positive cross-group contact "enables one to empathize with and take the perspective of the outgroup" (Pettigrew et al. 2007: 413). Growing empathy and perspective taking in turn make one hold a more favorable intergroup attitude (Pettigrew and Tropp 2008; Vescio, Sechrist, and Paolucci 2003). This positive effect can likewise be extended to uncontacted or unknown outgroups, which is called the "secondary transfer effect" (Eller and Abrams 2004; Nesdale and Todd 2000; Pettigrew 1997, 2009; Van Laar et al. 2005). Put simply, less prejudice against one group (as the result of intergroup contact) can be generalized to a third noncontacted group. In this case, knowledge and information do not play a role as vital in generalized exposure as they do in group-specific exposure. What matters more is the extension of empathy and perspective

taking.

With the lapse of time, empathy and perspective taking via exposure to foreign cultures can further lead one to recategorization, a reestablishment of an inclusive category beyond the self-versus-other boundary (Crisp and Hewstone 2007; Gaertner and Dovidio 2000; Gaertner et al. 1993; Perdue et al. 1990). For all the existence of intergroup differences, intercultural contact helps individuals redraw and reconstruct group boundaries so that an outgroup can be subsumed into a superordinate category (Gaertner et al. 1993; Turner 1981). In this way, the forces of categorization can be “redirected toward the reduction, if not the elimination, of intergroup bias” (Dovidio et al. 2005: 247). Highlighting a united American identity over a partisan identity, for instance, can effectively lessen partisan/ideological conflict between Republicans and Democrats (Levendusky 2018). Based on a comparative analysis in 21 European states, Verhaegen, Hooghe, and Meeusen (2013) conclude that students who know more about the European Union and its member states have a stronger feeling of European identity. Similarly, Keating (2016) finds a positive relationship between students’ participation in cross-cultural European activities and their sense of European identity. Across a range of related studies, there is consistent evidence that the level of ingroup bias can be lowered by recategorizing a common “circle of inclusion” (Gaertner and Dovidio 2000; Gaertner et al. 1993). The malleability of categorization offers an opportunity to alter “the way people think about members of ingroups and outgroups, and consequently about the nature of intergroup relations” (Dovidio et al. 2005: 247). Benefiting from generalized exposure to other cultures, two previously distinct groups may gradually share a common identity and hold more favorable intergroup attitudes.

Although both result in a decrease of prejudice and an increase of pro-outsider opinion, the logic of recategorization (via generalized exposure) and that of decategorization (via group-specific exposure) are not the same. Specifically, recategorization differs from decategorization in that the former does not deemphasize between-group divergence as the latter; neither does it encourage one to intentionally forget or reject the ingroup identity. “Formation of a common identity does not necessarily require groups to forsake their ethnic identities. It is possible for members to conceive of themselves as holding a ‘dual identity’ in which both subgroup and superordinate groups are salient simultaneously” (Houlette et al. 2004: 37). Distinction based on group/national identity still exists and is considered to be critical, but we reconstruct a higher-level shared identity or common understanding beyond the original category. There is “no necessary contradiction between feelings of loyalty and commitment to particular cultures and openness toward difference and otherness” (Roudometof 2005: 122). In a word, we seek for commonality while maintaining each other’s particularity.

In this highly globalized era, recategorization is embodied by the transformation from a localistic worldview to a cosmopolitan worldview. Locals are inward-oriented and liable to ingroup bias, which is closely connected with ethnocentrism. According to Roudometof (2005: 122), ethnocentrism is “a quality that should be conceptually linked to locals, who are expected to adopt the viewpoint of unconditional support for one’s country, putting one’s country first and protecting national interest irrespective of whether their own position is morally superior or not.” People who are ethnocentric tend to see ingroups as virtuous and superior while outgroups as immoral and inferior, see selves as strong while others as weak,

and see own standards of value as universal and intrinsically true while downgrading outgroup values (LeVine and Campbell 1972). Conversely, cosmopolitanism is “a willingness to engage with the other. It entails an intellectual and aesthetic openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity” (Held 1996: 103).

According to Bayram (2017b: S138), a cosmopolitan identity is characterized by a strong attachment to the world community, which “captures the part of an individual’s self that transcends national boundaries and is tied to the international community as a whole.”

Generally, cosmopolitans “share an open and tolerant worldview that is not bound by national categories but is based on an awareness of our increasing economic, political, and cultural interconnectedness, which they perceive as enriching rather than threatening” (Mau, Mewes, and Zimmermann 2008: 5). An inclusive identification with the world community, namely, a global social identity, can motivate international cooperation that transcends parochial interests (Buchan et al. 2011). Using a survey of German parliamentarians, Bayram (2017a) finds that politicians with a greater cosmopolitan identification with Europe are more supportive of compliance with European Union law and are less sensitive to the compliance costs. Again, for clarity, cosmopolitanism is not tantamount to the negation of national identity. Both cosmopolitans and locals can be patriots (Appiah 1996; Viroli 1995).<sup>3</sup> The major distinction between them is that cosmopolitans, who are “open to learning about different cultures, interacting and developing bonds with people of different backgrounds,” advocate cultural diversity, multiplicity, hybridity, and inclusivity (Pichler 2009: 708).

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<sup>3</sup> Patriotism and nationalism are conceptually distinguished in this article. Patriotism is one’s affection for and/or pride in his/her nation, while nationalism involves a set of beliefs about the “superiority of one’s nation compared to others and the importance of promoting the interests of one’s own nation above all others” (Esses et al. 2005: 321). Put simply, patriotism, compared with nationalism, is a more benign form of national attachment.

The cosmopolitan perspective, which derives from intercultural contact, can reduce ingroup favoritism and increase outward openness toward outgroups in general, including those with whom one has never had contact before (Pettigrew 1998; Pettigrew et al. 2011). Some studies have shown that interaction with classmates and schoolmates of different cultural, racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds in schools significantly enhances one's tolerance of cross-group diversity (Pascarella et al. 1996). Analogously, increasing transnationalization and globalization nowadays, featured mainly by more exposure to various foreign cultures, can make people more cosmopolitan as well (Hannerz 1990; Kwok-Bun 2002; Robertson 1992; Tarrow 2005). Based on a representative survey of German citizens, Mau, Mewes, and Zimmermann (2008) find that respondents with border-crossing experiences and transnational social relations are more likely to adopt cosmopolitan attitudes. In short, generalized exposure to foreign cultures is expected to bring about more positive images of foreign countries as "self and other relations are mediated through an orientation toward world consciousness" (Delanty 2012: 341).

**Hypothesis 2:** All else being equal, individuals with greater generalized exposure to foreign cultures are more likely to hold a favorable opinion of foreign countries.

## **Data and Measurement**

The data are drawn from the 2007 AsiaBarometer Survey (ABS) covering six countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. The ABS is a comparative survey in Asia and focuses on daily lives of ordinary citizens and their attitudes toward families, societies, nations, and other socioeconomic and sociopolitical issues. The



AsiaBarometer Project conducted face-to-face surveys and employed standardized methods designed around a common research framework. In every country, a nationwide survey of adults between 20 and 69 years old was carried out by random sampling.<sup>4</sup> Since the present research on the contact hypothesis predominantly centers on individuals and groups in the West while overlooking other nations and cultures, data in Asia, as a complement, can test the scope and generalizability of intercultural contact effect. Besides, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures are very popular in East Asia. For instance, among the name list of the *LikeTCCAsia*, a website famous for the annual ranking of the 100 most handsome/beautiful faces in Asia, the vast majority are stars, celebrities, and entertainers from China, Japan, and South Korea. The wide attractiveness of the three countries' popular cultures implies that people in other Asian countries may relatively be familiar with and fond of these foreign cultures, so that there exists a sufficient variation of cultural exposure (i.e., the key explanatory variable). Additionally, in 2007, the interstate relations in East Asia were primarily harmonious and stable. Sovereignty disputes, such as that between China and the Philippines over the South China Sea, were not salient at that time.

### *Key Explanatory Variable*

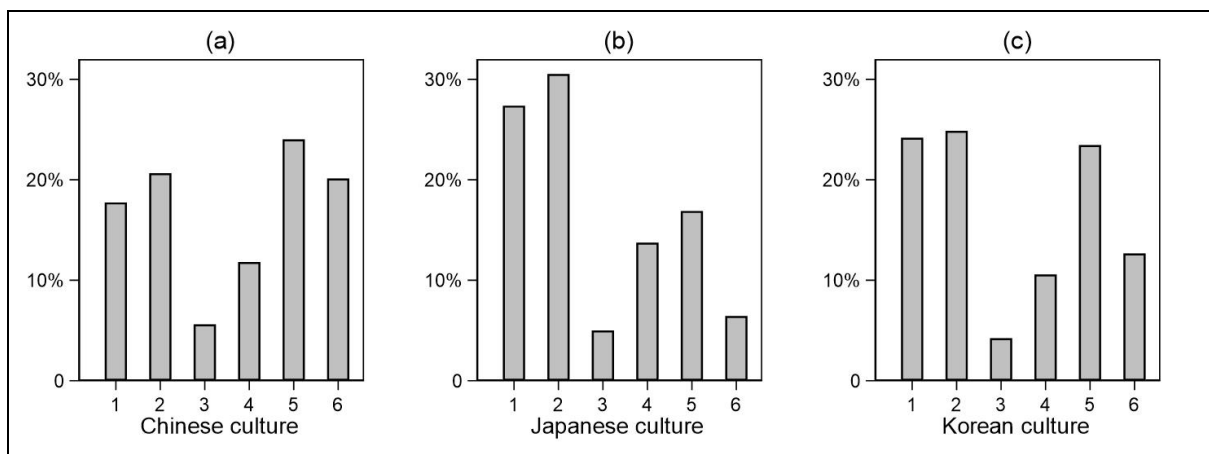
In the first place, regarding group-specific exposure to a foreign culture, I utilize the exposure

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<sup>4</sup> Data analyzed in this article were collected by the AsiaBarometer Project (2007). AsiaBarometer is a registered trademark of Takashi Inoguchi, President of the University of Niigata Prefecture, Japan, and Director of the AsiaBarometer Project. The AsiaBarometer Project is not responsible for interpretation or inference based on the data analysis in this article. I appreciate the assistance in providing data by the institute and individual stated above. Data application and information on AsiaBarometer are available online from <http://www.asiabarometer.org/>. The postal address of AsiaBarometer: The AsiaBarometer Project, University of Niigata Prefecture, Tokyo Satellite, Koyosha KS Building 9th Floor, 1-17-8 Nishikata, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0024, Japan. The email address of AsiaBarometer: [info@asiabarometer.org](mailto:info@asiabarometer.org).

Because the survey questions on opinion of foreign countries (i.e., the dependent variable) were not asked in Myanmar, I exclude the observations in that country.

to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures as examples (respectively corresponding to one's opinion of China, Japan, and South Korea). To be specific, they are tapped sequentially by Questions 4c, 4a, and 4b, "How often are you exposed to TV programs, movies, and animation, produced in the following countries (i.e., China, Japan, and South Korea)?" I reverse the original six-point scale as follows: 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=several times a year, 4=several times a month, 5=several times a week, and 6=almost everyday. As revealed in Figures 1(a) to 1(c), there is a large variation concerning the frequency of cultural exposure. Take exposure to Chinese culture for instance. Approximately 38 percent of the respondents are seldom or never exposed to Chinese culture, whereas more than 40 percent of the respondents watch Chinese TV programs, movies, or animation several times a week or almost everyday.



**Figure 1(a)-(c).** Frequency of exposure to Chinese culture, Japanese culture, and Korean culture.

*Notes:* 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=several times a year, 4=several times a month, 5=several times a week, and 6=almost everyday. "Do not know" is excluded.

*Source:* AsiaBarometer 2007, Question 4.

Moreover, I use the weighted sum of exposure to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures to operationalize generalized exposure to foreign cultures, through exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Although it may not perfectly capture one's actual exposure to foreign cultures, this additive scale covering three different countries, to a large degree, approximates the real

value. EFA is typically formulated for continuous responses. Given polytomously scored items, I employ the polychoric correlation matrix in lieu of the conventional Bravais-Pearson correlation matrix (Kolenikov and Angeles 2009). The result of EFA based on the principal-factor method suggests that there exists only one factor whose eigenvalue is bigger than one. The factor loadings, displayed in Table 1, range from 0.72 to 0.79. The three items are incorporated into one scale in which they are roughly equally weighted. The standardized Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient (also called the generalized Spearman-Brown formula) is about 0.78, so the internal consistency reliability of this three-item scale is relatively good.<sup>5</sup> The overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is 0.71, indicating that the three items are sufficient to warrant an EFA.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 1.** Factor analysis of generalized exposure to foreign cultures items (principal-factor method).

	Factor loadings (pattern matrix)	Uniqueness	KMO
Exposure to Chinese culture	0.736	0.458	0.726
Exposure to Japanese culture	0.722	0.479	0.741
Exposure to Korean culture	0.788	0.379	0.679

*Notes:* Based on polychoric correlation matrix. Eigenvalue=1.683. Standardized Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =0.781. Overall KMO=0.713. KMO: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy.

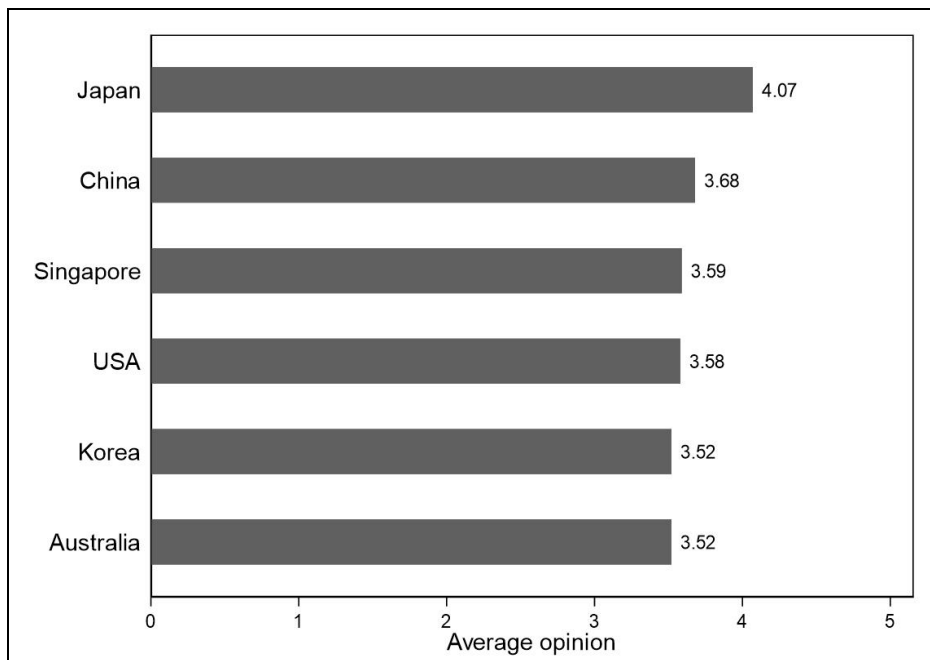
### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable of interest is one's opinion of foreign countries, and I use that of China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Singapore, and the United States in East Asia as examples. The former three correspond separately to group-specific exposure to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures, while the latter three correspond to generalized exposure to

<sup>5</sup> According to Bartolucci, Bacci, and Gnaldi (2015), a test is considered reliable when the standardized Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is larger than 0.7. The standardized coefficient is preferred to the raw coefficient in that it relies solely on correlations instead of variances/covariances.

<sup>6</sup> According to Kaiser (1974), a KMO below 0.5 is considered unacceptable. Small values denote that the included items have very little in common. An acceptable KMO is supposed to range from 0.5 to 1 where a larger number suggests a better sampling adequacy.

foreign cultures.<sup>7</sup> The data are obtained respectively from Questions 27c, 27e, 27l, 27a, 27k and 27n in the 2007 ABS, “Do you think the following countries (i.e., China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Singapore, and the United States) have a good influence or a bad influence on your country? Please select the response closest to your opinion for each country listed.” The response is based on a five-point scale from 1 “good” to 5 “bad.” For ease of explication, I reverse and recode the scale as follows: 1=bad opinion, 2=rather bad opinion, 3=neither good nor bad opinion, 4=rather good opinion, and 5=good opinion.



**Figure 2.** Average public opinion of China, Japan, Korea, Australia, Singapore, and the USA.

*Notes:* 1=bad, 2=rather bad, 3=neither, 4=rather good, and 5=good. “Do not know” is excluded.

*Source:* AsiaBarometer 2007, Question 27.

In Southeast Asia, public attitudes toward these foreign countries are basically positive (the modes of which are all “rather good opinion”). At the national level (see Figure 2), there also exists a considerable variation with respect to the aggregate opinion of foreign countries,

<sup>7</sup> I use opinions of Australia, Singapore, and the United States rather than China, Japan, and South Korea when testing the second hypothesis, for generalized cultural exposure in theory is not necessarily linked with a particular country. In more detail, regardless of a known or unknown culture, greater generalized exposure is expected to make one more cosmopolitan, and thus he/she tends to hold a more favorable attitude toward foreign countries (which need not correspond to any specific contacted culture). For instance, if an individual is frequently exposed to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures, then based on Hypothesis 2, he/she is more likely to view Australia, Singapore, and the United States more favorably.

where Japan and China, for example, are evaluated more favorably than Korea and Australia.

A table (including respondents per country, means, and standard deviations) about Asian public opinion of China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Singapore, and the United States is provided in the appendix.

### *Control Variable*

To present a more fully specified model, I also add a set of control variables widely adopted in relevant public opinion research, such as social trust (Kaltenthaler and Miller 2013; Li, Wang, and Chen 2016), national pride (Baker 2005; Keating 2016; Linley, Reilly, and Goldsmith 2012; Mayda and Rokrik 2005; Nelson and Carlson 2012; Pandya 2010), traditionalism (Chu, Kang, and Huang 2015; Hurwitz and Peffley 1990), level of religiosity (Blaydes and Linzer 2012), and some socioeconomic/demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, level of education, employment status, and household income). Data on all these determinants are obtained from the 2007 ABS. Table A2 of the appendix reports the summary statistics.

### **Model and Analysis**

As individuals are nested within countries, it is conceivable that citizens in one country are more homogeneous than those in another country, with regard to attitudes toward foreign countries. To correct for the within-cluster correlation, I use fixed-effects models by adding country dummies where cluster-specific intercepts are treated as fixed. In this case, all between-cluster variability is explained by the fixed-intercepts and the estimations become

much more robust, by comparison with random-effects or mixed-effects models. Given ordinal outcomes, ordered probit models with country-fixed effects are employed.

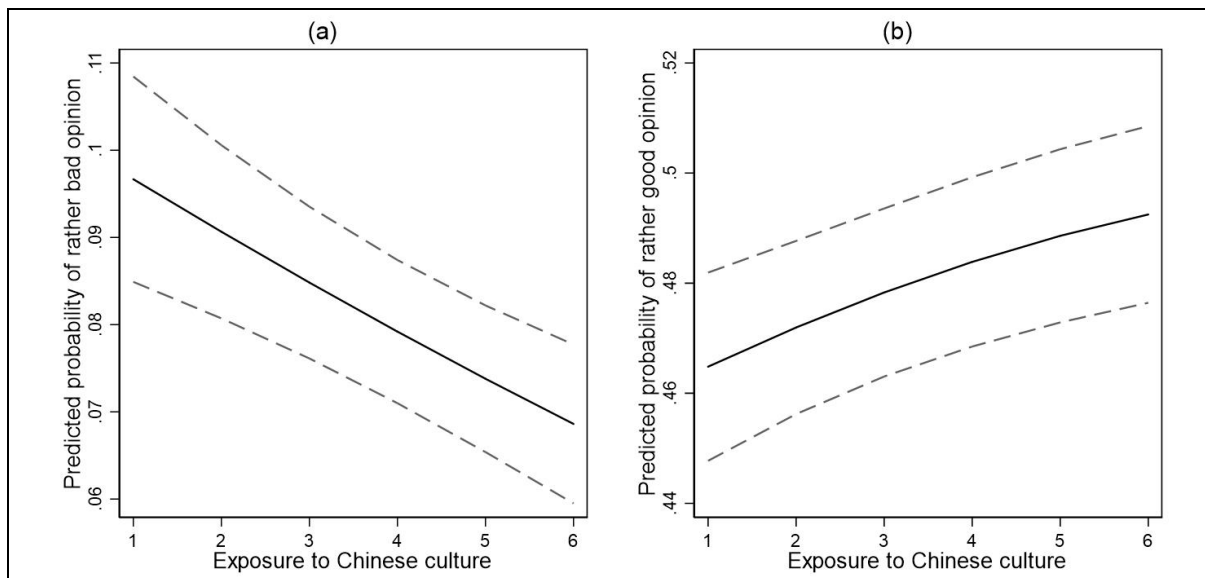
**Table 2.** Effect of group-specific exposure to foreign culture on opinion of foreign country.

	China	Japan	South Korea
Group-specific exposure	0.05* (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)	0.04* (0.01)
Social trust	-0.09* (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)
National pride	0.02 (0.04)	0.10* (0.04)	0.12* (0.04)
Traditionalism	0.10* (0.02)	0.08* (0.02)	0.12* (0.02)
Level of religiosity	0.03 (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)
Male	0.04 (0.04)	0.14* (0.04)	0.08* (0.04)
Employment status	-0.00 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.04)
Household income	0.02 (0.02)	0.05* (0.03)	0.11* (0.02)
Level of education	-0.01 (0.02)	0.06* (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
$\tau_1$	-2.10* (0.21)	-1.79* (0.21)	-1.02* (0.20)
$\tau_2$	-1.43* (0.20)	-0.93* (0.21)	-0.21 (0.20)
$\tau_3$	-0.59* (0.20)	-0.04 (0.21)	0.98* (0.20)
$\tau_4$	0.81* (0.20)	1.28* (0.21)	2.32* (0.20)
Likelihood-ratio $\chi^2$	332.26*	577.54*	234.44*

*Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. For all variables, missing values are excluded.<sup>8</sup> See Table A2 in the appendix for summary statistics. Country dummies are controlled for but omitted for space constraints. Dataset includes 4,113 respondents in 6 countries. \*  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed).

*Source:* AsiaBarometer 2007.

<sup>8</sup> In addition to listwise deletion, I also employ multiple imputation (assuming missing at random) and rerun the regressions. The two results are approximately the same. Therefore, missing values in some variables only lead to fewer degrees of freedom and a reduced sample of the original data. There are no systematic biased estimates after excluding observations with missing values.



**Figure 3(a).** Predicted probability of a rather bad opinion of China given exposure to Chinese culture.

**Figure 3(b).** Predicted probability of a rather good opinion of China given exposure to Chinese culture.

*Notes:* 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=several times a year, 4=several times a month, 5=several times a week, and 6=almost everyday. The solid line represents the predicted probability, while the dashed line indicates the 95% confidence interval. The figures are based on the regression model in Table 2.

The regression results regarding group-specific cultural exposure are presented in Table 2.

Group-specific exposure to Chinese culture, Japanese culture, and Korean culture is positively associated with opinion of China, Japan, and South Korea, respectively. The positive association is statistically significant at the 0.05 level throughout the three models, which offers evidence to Hypothesis 1. All else being equal, greater exposure to a foreign culture can lead to a more favorable attitude toward the foreign country. Take those who have a rather bad and a rather good opinion of China (see Figures 3(a) and 3(b)). Holding other variables constant, the predicted probability of a rather bad opinion of China changes from 0.097 (given no exposure to Chinese culture) to 0.069 (given exposure to Chinese culture almost everyday), a decrease of about 2.8 percentage points. In contrast, the probability of a rather good opinion of China changes from 0.465 (given no exposure to Chinese culture) to 0.492 (given exposure to Chinese culture almost everyday), an increase of about 2.7

percentage points.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 3.** Effect of generalized exposure to foreign cultures on opinion of foreign country.

	Australia	Singapore	United States
Generalized exposure	0.03* (0.01)	0.04* (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)
Social trust	-0.11* (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.09* (0.05)
National pride	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.09* (0.04)	-0.10* (0.04)
Traditionalism	0.14* (0.02)	0.07* (0.02)	0.08* (0.02)
Level of religiosity	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)
Male	0.01 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.04)
Employment status	0.03 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Household income	0.03 (0.02)	0.04 (0.02)	-0.07* (0.02)
Level of education	0.04* (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00* (0.00)
$\tau_1$	-1.97* (0.21)	-2.29* (0.21)	-2.30* (0.21)
$\tau_2$	-1.31* (0.20)	-1.55* (0.20)	-1.58* (0.21)
$\tau_3$	-0.10 (0.20)	-0.46* (0.20)	-0.87* (0.20)
$\tau_4$	1.23* (0.20)	0.98* (0.20)	0.28 (0.20)
Likelihood-ratio $\chi^2$	560.13*	221.35*	1517.77*

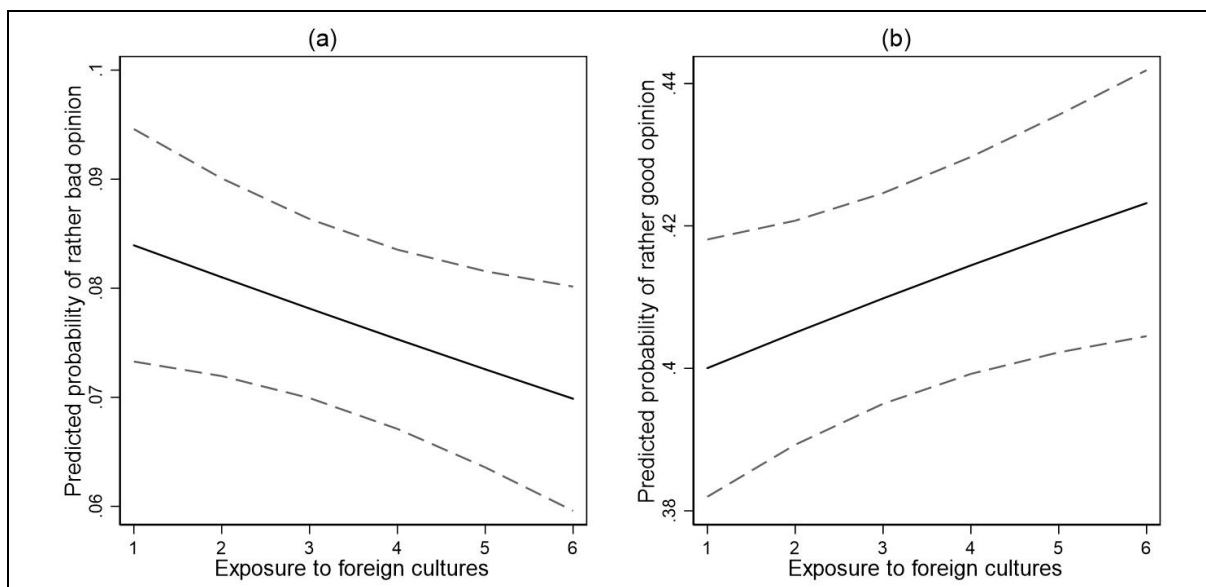
*Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. Country dummies are controlled for but omitted for space constraints. Dataset includes 4,113 respondents in 6 countries. \*  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed).

Table 3 displays the regression results concerning generalized exposure to foreign cultures. Supportive of Hypothesis 2, the effect of generalized cultural exposure is consistently positive and statistically significant at the 0.05 level, regardless of attitudes

<sup>9</sup> For fear of the “incidental parameters problem” when adding country dummies in nonlinear models, I also employ random-effects (random-intercepts) models as a robustness check. The fixed-effects models and the random-effects models provide estimates similar in magnitude and in statistical significance. Hence, the incidental parameters problem is not obvious in this case.



toward Australia, Singapore, or the United States. All else being equal, greater generalized exposure to foreign cultures can result in a more favorable perception of foreign nations. Take those who have a rather bad and a rather good opinion of Australia (see Figures 4(a) and 4(b)). Holding other variables constant, the predicted probability of a rather bad opinion of Australia changes from 0.084 (given no exposure to foreign cultures) to 0.070 (given exposure to foreign cultures almost everyday), a decrease of about 1.4 percentage points. Contrarily, the probability of a rather good opinion of Australia changes from 0.400 (given no exposure to foreign cultures) to 0.423 (given exposure to foreign cultures almost everyday), an increase of about 2.3 percentage points. In summary, according to Tables 2 and 3, with the increase of either group-specific cultural exposure or generalized cultural exposure, one's opinion of foreign countries will become more favorable, in line with the two hypotheses about unidirectional cultural contact.



**Figure 4(a).** Predicted probability of a rather bad opinion of Australia given exposure to foreign cultures.

**Figure 4(b).** Predicted probability of a rather good opinion of Australia given exposure to foreign cultures.

*Notes:* 1=never, 2=seldom, 3=several times a year, 4=several times a month, 5=several times a week, and 6=almost everyday. The solid line represents the predicted probability, while the dashed line indicates the 95% confidence interval. The figures are based on the regression model in Table 3.

### *Robustness Checks*

As other cross-sectional research about intergroup contact, the causal inferences in this article are potentially subject to reverse causality, particularly with respect to the causal effect of group-specific cultural exposure on individual attitudes toward the contacted country.<sup>10</sup> For example, people who dislike China are probably less likely to be interested in Chinese culture, whereas those who like China tend to learn more about Chinese culture. As Pettigrew (2009: 61) puts it, “Single surveys have no direct means of removing this source of bias. This factor can be substantial in nonlongitudinal data, and the usual means of controlling for a range of social location variables proves to be an insufficient means of ruling out the prior prejudice bias.” Perhaps it is not exposure to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean culture that gives rise to a positive image of China, Japan, and Korea. Rather, pro-China, pro-Japan, and pro-Korea people may be fonder of watching Chinese, Japanese, and Korean TV series, movies, and cartoons. Given reverse causality, the key explanatory variable (i.e., group-specific cultural exposure) will be endogenous and the prior statistical analyses will be (upwardly) biased.

In order to deal with this endogeneity problem, I utilize whether having a cable TV in one’s house as an instrument and check the robustness of the above inferences through an instrumental variable (IV) approach.<sup>11</sup> As a valid IV, both “instrumental relevance” and “instrumental exogeneity” are required. On the one hand, I argue that having a TV in the house should be positively correlated with one’s exposure to foreign cultures. As noted in the

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<sup>10</sup> The causal effect of generalized cultural exposure is less likely to be subject to reverse causality. According to Hypothesis 2, individual attitudes toward a foreign country need not correspond to that country’s culture. Hence, one’s opinion of Australia, Singapore, or the United States, in principle, should not reversely affect one’s exposure to Chinese, Japanese, or Korean culture.

<sup>11</sup> The IV is a binary variable (1=having a cable TV; 0=otherwise) based on Question 1-7 in the survey.

previous section, TVs (in addition to books, radios, and networks) are one of the most popular media worldwide where ingroup members learn information about outgroups (Mutz and Goldman 2010). By watching foreign TV programs, citizens can be better informed of foreign cultures. In comparison to traveling abroad, watching TV is a much cheaper and more convenient way to know about foreign issues. Conceivably, TVs play an important role in facilitating the popularity of Chinese dramas, Japanese animation, and Korean movies in East Asia. Therefore, possessing a TV is expected to have a positive correlation with one's exposure to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean cultures like various TV series and variety shows.

On the other hand, I contend that owning a cable TV should not directly influence a person's perception of a foreign nation. There are several possible reasons for having a TV or not. First, one's family may be too poor to purchase a TV set, but it does not mean that the poor are more xenophobic. According to the earlier statistical analyses (see Tables 2 and 3), household income has no significant association with one's opinion of China, Australia, and Singapore, but it is negatively associated with the image of the United States. Throughout the six countries, only the cases of Japan and South Korea show a significantly positive association. Overall, there is no evidence demonstrating a solid and consistent linkage between income and evaluation of outgroups.<sup>12</sup> Second, some people may prefer other media, such as radios, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet, to obtain news and information. Since different media are in large part interchangeable, those who do not own a TV may feel unnecessary to have one, given other options like having a personal computer already. The choice between diverse media (e.g., watching a drama via TV, mobile phone, or computer) is

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<sup>12</sup> The correlation coefficient of having a TV and household income is about 0.13.

unlikely to be correlated with one's opinion of foreign countries. Third, some latent factors, related to personality traits, are unable to be controlled for based on the survey. For example, one's inherent propensity to be localistic/parochial and one's intrinsic interest in foreign cultures/news can influence the dependent variable, but it is implausible that these omitted unobserved factors simultaneously influence one's having a TV or not and confound the exogeneity of the instrument. Generally speaking, the prime purpose for an individual to buy a TV set is to have access to local news more than outgroup information. Even nativistic and localistic people, who are uninterested in foreign news or programs, can still have a TV and only watch local news or programs. Consequently, having a cable TV in one's house ought to be uncorrelated with other determinants of the dependent variable, which conforms to the "exclusion restriction" (Angrist and Pischke 2018). In other words, it is the IV, owning a TV, that affects exposure to a foreign culture, which in turn affects opinion of the contacted foreign country.

**Table 4.** IV-oprobit regression analysis of opinion of China, Japan, and South Korea.

	China	Japan	South Korea
<i>First stage</i>			
TV in house	0.68* (0.06)	0.34* (0.06)	0.35* (0.06)
<i>F</i>	112.34*	33.09*	29.98*
<i>Second stage</i>			
Group-specific exposure	0.30* (0.04)	0.34* (0.09)	0.33* (0.08)
Social trust	-0.08* (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)
National pride	0.01 (0.03)	0.08* (0.04)	0.10* (0.03)
Traditionalism	0.09* (0.02)	0.07* (0.02)	0.10* (0.02)
Level of religiosity	0.02 (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Male	0.04	0.12*	0.07*

**Table 4.** IV-oprobit regression analysis of opinion of China, Japan, and South Korea.

	China	Japan	South Korea
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Employment status	0.00	-0.00	-0.05
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Household income	0.00	0.04	0.08*
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Level of education	-0.02	0.05*	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Age	-0.00	0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
$\tau_1$	-0.98*	-0.68	0.09
	(0.31)	(0.45)	(0.38)
$\tau_2$	-0.39	0.06	0.76*
	(0.28)	(0.37)	(0.31)
$\tau_3$	0.36	0.82*	1.75*
	(0.26)	(0.30)	(0.23)
$\tau_4$	1.59*	1.94*	2.86*
	(0.22)	(0.22)	(0.17)
Wald $\chi^2$	809.17*	1138.39*	537.22*

*Notes:* Standard errors in parentheses. Country dummies are controlled for but omitted for space constraints. Dataset includes 4,113 respondents in 6 countries. \*  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed).

Table 4 reports the regression results of the ordered probit models with IV (IV-oprobit).<sup>13</sup>

In the first stage, having a TV, as expected, is significantly and positively associated with group-specific cultural exposure. The  $F$ -statistics are all over 10, so there are no weak instrument problems and the requirement of instrumental relevance is met (Stock, Wright, and Yogo 2002). In the second stage, exposure to Chinese culture, Japanese culture, and Korean culture still has a significantly positive impact on one's opinion of China, Japan, and South Korea respectively, despite some numerical differences on estimated coefficients and standard errors. To compare the ordered probit models against the IV-oprobit models more substantively, I take the average marginal effects of a rather bad opinion and a rather good opinion of China for instances. Holding other variables constant, the predicted probability of

<sup>13</sup> IV-oprobit regression models are based on the `cmp.ado` programs for Stata (Roodman 2011).

a rather bad opinion of China changes from 0.190 (given no exposure to Chinese culture) to 0.028 (given exposure to Chinese culture almost everyday), a decrease of about 16.2 percentage points (11 times larger than the marginal effect in ordered probit). In contrast, the probability of a rather good opinion of China changes from 0.282 (given no exposure to Chinese culture) to 0.414 (given exposure to Chinese culture almost everyday), an increase of about 13.2 percentage points (5 times larger than the marginal effect in ordered probit). Obviously, the average marginal effect of exposure to Chinese culture based on IV-oprobit is much greater than that based on ordered probit. Since reverse causality generally leads to an upward bias, the increased estimates implies that the impact of measurement error, which causes attenuation bias, is perhaps much stronger than that of reverse causality.<sup>14</sup> In light of the self-reported nature of public opinion surveys, the measurement of many unobserved factors like preferences, attitudes, values, emotions, and beliefs is considerably subjective and some errors may seem to be inevitable.

Because the regression coefficients are not directly interpretable in the above nonlinear models, I employ generalized method of moments (GMM) and IV-GMM for further comparison. Although treating an ordinal outcome variable as interval is sub-optimal, it facilitates and simplifies explanation in this case.<sup>15</sup> As displayed in Table 6, the causal effects

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<sup>14</sup> Another explanation is that some omitted variables, negatively associated with both the key explanatory variable and the dependent variable, can confound the association. As stated above, some inherent personality traits, such as one's propensity to be localistic, may cause a downward bias. However, other personality traits like extroversion may also cause an upward bias. Extraverted people tend to have much larger communication networks than introverts (Mondak et al. 2010). Extraverts are "more expressive and more likely to come into contact with a vast array of people" (Webster 2018: 130). It is plausible that people who are outgoing are keen on intercultural contact and are pro-outsider. Due to conflicting influences, it is difficult to infer the actual direction of omitted variable bias.

<sup>15</sup> Given ordinal outcome variables, the errors are neither normal nor homoskedastic. Additionally, the cutpoints are not equally spaced. Under such circumstances, ordinary least squares (OLS) can provide incorrect results (Long 1997). By contrast, GMM relies on more liberal assumptions regarding the distributions of the error terms. In general, GMM estimators are suitable for conditions where the errors are not independent and identically distributed (Baum, Schaffer, and Stillman 2003). Therefore, I employ GMM in lieu of OLS.

of group-specific cultural exposure based on IV-GMM are far stronger than those based on GMM, aside from the unchanged positive signs and statistical significance across China, Japan, and South Korea. The estimated coefficient of exposure to Chinese culture, for example, changes from 0.06 to 0.33, an increase of about 450%. Similar to the comparison between ordered probit and IV-oprobit, GMM tends to underestimate the causal effects vis-à-vis IV-GMM (given both instrumental relevance and instrumental exogeneity). Again, all first-stage  $F$ -statistics are above 10, no concern about weak instrument problems. To sum up, given a valid instrument, the IV approaches confirm the significant causal effect of group-specific exposure to a foreign culture on one's opinion of the contacted foreign country. After ruling out the potential endogeneity problems, the positive impact of unidirectional cultural contact tends to be even stronger.

**Table 5.** GMM and IV-GMM examining the effect of group-specific cultural exposure.

	<i>China</i>		<i>Japan</i>		<i>South Korea</i>	
	GMM	IV-GMM	GMM	IV-GMM	GMM	IV-GMM
<i>First stage</i>						
TV in house		0.69* (0.06)		0.28* (0.06)		0.32* (0.07)
$F$		124.20*		21.15*		24.70*
<i>Second stage</i>						
Group-specific exposure	0.06* (0.01)	0.33* (0.05)	0.06* (0.01)	0.45* (0.14)	0.06* (0.01)	0.40* (0.12)
Social trust	-0.09* (0.04)	0.02 (0.05)	-0.09* (0.04)	-0.03 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.04)	0.09 (0.07)
National pride	0.06 (0.03)	0.13* (0.04)	0.08* (0.03)	0.03 (0.04)	0.08* (0.03)	0.03 (0.04)
Traditionalism	0.10* (0.02)	0.16* (0.02)	0.06* (0.02)	0.09* (0.02)	0.09* (0.02)	0.10* (0.02)
Level of religiosity	-0.05* (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.06* (0.02)
Male	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.04)	0.12* (0.03)	0.10* (0.04)	0.09* (0.03)	0.19* (0.05)
Employment status	0.05 (0.03)	0.06 (0.04)	-0.00 (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.04)

**Table 5.** GMM and IV-GMM examining the effect of group-specific cultural exposure.

	<i>China</i>		<i>Japan</i>		<i>South Korea</i>	
	GMM	IV-GMM	GMM	IV-GMM	GMM	IV-GMM
Household income	0.05*	0.08*	-0.07*	-0.04	0.03	0.11*
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)
Level of education	0.01	-0.01	0.05*	-0.03	0.01	-0.08*
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.01)	(0.04)
Age	0.00	0.00*	-0.00	0.01*	-0.00*	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	3.03*	1.35*	3.34*	2.28*	2.78*	1.48*
	(0.17)	(0.39)	(0.15)	(0.41)	(0.15)	(0.49)

*Notes:* Robust standard errors in parentheses. All dependent variables are treated as interval instead of ordinal. Instrumental variable is whether having a cable TV in one's house. \*  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed).

## Conclusion and Discussion

In this article, I put forward and shed light on the effects of unidirectional exposure to foreign cultures on public attitudes toward foreign countries, on the basis of the contact hypothesis.

Direct, face-to-face contact does not necessarily lead to positive intergroup attitudes. Whether intergroup contact reduces prejudice or not depends on the situation and the focus of contact.

In addition, the high costs of interpersonal contact with outgroup members and foreigners tremendously limit the opportunities for ordinary citizens. I argue that unidirectional cultural contact is a better alternative which can avoid the deficiencies of interpersonal contact while decreasing ingroup bias. To be detailed, unidirectional cultural contact reduces the threshold of intergroup contact, evades a competitive atmosphere triggering anxiety, and focuses on cultural fields that are more neutral and less threatening.

More specifically, there are two types of unidirectional cultural contact. On the one hand, the positive effect of group-specific exposure to a foreign culture can be considered as a mere exposure effect improving certainty. Benefiting from more information and knowledge about a foreign culture, individuals feel much closer toward the contacted country and the once



negative stereotype diminishes. Through the process of decategorization, ingroup members tend to deemphasize between-group differences and reduce discrimination against the outgroup, which gives rise to a more pro-outsider opinion. On the other hand, the effect of group-specific exposure can be extended to other noncontacted countries, leading to a generalized exposure effect. Growing exposure to various foreign cultures promotes empathy and perspective taking, so individuals gradually become tolerant and open toward cultural diversity. Over time, the cumulation of unidirectional cultural contact helps one recategorize self-other identity and reconstruct a common identity beyond the existing group categories. Recategorization is embodied by a cosmopolitan worldview in this globalized and interconnected era. As a result, citizens who are often exposed to foreign cultures are more likely to support multiculturalism and pluralism, have lower levels of ingroup bias, and view foreign countries favorably. Drawing upon data from the 2007 ABS, my research lends empirical support to both group-specific and generalized cultural exposure effects.

Using whether having a cable TV in one's house as an instrument, the IV methods in this study greatly avoid the endogeneity problems in general and reverse causality in particular. However, to fundamentally exclude the confounding impacts of reverse causality and some unobserved factors, longitudinal and experimental research outperforms the one using only cross-sectional data. According to some extant literature on the contact hypothesis, although both pathways may exist, the more significant effect is that of contact lowering intergroup negativity (Butler and Wilson 1978; Irish 1952; Pettigrew 1997; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006; Pettigrew et al. 2007; Powers and Ellison 1995; Wilson 1996). More importantly, several longitudinal studies have shown that it is contact that results in a pro-outsider attitude not

vice versa; the reverse causality is not statistically significant (Brown et al. 2007; Stephan and Rosenfield 1978). By and large, the conclusions in this article are consistent with the above literature, but future research, especially those employing experiments and panel data, can try to examine my hypotheses more rigorously.

This study also provides implications and suggestions for some real-world problems. First, recent years have witnessed a new trend of anti-globalization and anti-foreign public opinion, for instance, the border wall dispute between the United States and Mexico, the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, and the rise of right-wing populist forces in many European states. Facilitating indirect intercultural contact, such as exposure to foreign movies, musics, and dramas, may be one of the effective ways to reduce intergroup prejudice, improve tolerance of ethnic/racial diversity, and protect the liberal world order from extreme nationalism/populism. Second, on condition that a country attempts to enhance its international image, culture, as a soft power, can play a crucial role. The United States is a case in point. It is not merely a political, economic, and military superpower but also a cultural superpower. Hollywood, Disney, McDonald's, Starbucks, Facebook, YouTube, Apple, Google, Microsoft, Cable News Network (CNN), and National Basketball Association (NBA)—to list only a few—are so world-renowned and popular that even citizens outside the West are usually exposed to them. Although the power of culture seems to be subtler, its long-term influence over global public opinion should not be neglected.

## Appendix

**Table A1.** Cross-national opinion of China, Japan, Korea, Australia, Singapore, and the USA.

	Respondent	China	Japan	Korea	Australia	Singapore	USA
Malaysia	644	3.79 (0.79)	3.95 (0.80)	3.50 (0.85)	3.48 (0.88)	3.63 (0.93)	2.73 (1.20)
Indonesia	617	3.28 (1.12)	3.93 (0.98)	3.44 (0.98)	2.88 (1.21)	3.76 (1.02)	2.60 (1.26)
Philippines	733	3.53 (1.04)	4.06 (0.76)	3.56 (0.89)	3.92 (0.80)	3.75 (0.82)	4.24 (0.77)
Thailand	886	3.76 (0.75)	3.73 (0.76)	3.30 (0.71)	3.40 (0.70)	3.32 (0.78)	3.67 (0.90)
Cambodia	762	3.64 (0.96)	4.51 (0.79)	3.77 (0.93)	3.62 (0.84)	3.51 (0.80)	4.40 (0.80)
Laos	471	4.17 (0.91)	4.32 (0.77)	3.56 (0.86)	3.83 (0.80)	3.67 (0.82)	3.54 (1.17)
Total	4,113	3.68 (0.96)	4.07 (0.85)	3.52 (0.88)	3.52 (0.93)	3.59 (0.88)	3.58 (1.22)

*Notes:* Regarding opinion of each state, the first number is means and the one below is standard deviations (in parentheses). “Do not know” is excluded.

*Source:* AsiaBarometer 2007.

**Table A2.** Summary statistics.

	Observation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max.
Opinion of China	4,113	3.68	0.96	1	5
Opinion of Japan	4,113	4.07	0.85	1	5
Opinion of South Korea	4,113	3.52	0.88	1	5
Opinion of Australia	4,113	3.52	0.93	1	5
Opinion of Singapore	4,113	3.59	0.88	1	5
Opinion of the USA	4,113	3.58	1.22	1	5
Exposure to Chinese culture	4,113	3.64	1.84	1	6
Exposure to Japanese culture	4,113	2.82	1.66	1	6
Exposure to Korean culture	4,113	3.22	1.83	1	6
Having TV in house	4,113	0.26	0.44	0	1
Social trust	4,113	0.16	0.37	0	1
National pride	4,113	3.83	0.46	1	4
Traditionalism	4,113	2.09	0.88	1	3
Level of religiosity	4,113	3.91	1.32	1	5
Male	4,113	0.49	0.50	0	1
Employment status	4,113	0.67	0.47	0	1
Household income	4,113	2.05	0.78	1	3
Level of education	4,113	2.80	1.05	1	5
Age	4,113	37.48	12.42	20	69

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