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Title	The good old days and a better tomorrow: Historical representations and future imaginations of China during the 2008 Olympic Games
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Source	Asian Journal of Social Psychology, v. 13, (2), 2010, p. 118-127
Version	Published Version
DOI	10.1111/j.1467-839X.2010.01307.x
Publisher	Blackwell Publishing Ltd
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The good old days and a better tomorrow: Historical representations and future imaginations of China during the 2008 Olympic Games

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Based on the stereotype content model, we examined Mainland and Hong Kong Chinese' historical representations and future imaginations of China during the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Among Mainland Chinese, China's unprecedented economic growth and the resulted value competition led to the expectation of a more competent China in the future (*vs* now; a 'better tomorrow effect') and a perception of a warmer and more moral China in the past (*vs* now; the 'good old days effect'). As the Olympics proceeded, the perceived compatibility of competence and warmth/morality increased and the good old days effect diminished. Hong Kong Chinese, who also witnessed China's growth but did not directly experience the cultural implications of globalization in Mainland China, displayed the better tomorrow effect only.

Key words: better tomorrow effect, globalization, good old days effect, ingroup perception, Olympic Games, social change.

Introduction

People in a developing country undergoing rapid globalization often experience the social and cultural changes in their country as a mixed blessing (Chiu & Hong, 2006). Industrialization and modernization promise improvements in the peoples' standard of living and promotion of their country to the league of higher income countries. However, the importation of global, capitalist culture and its attendant values (e.g. instrumental rationality, materialism) may be seen as a threat to the country's local values, causing apprehension about the possible erosion of the core values and practices in the country (Chiu, 2007a; Chiu & Cheng, 2007).

According to the stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), people organize their perceptions of groups along two major dimensions: competence and warmth. The perceived competence of a target group is related to its status relative to that of the ingroup: groups with higher relative status are perceived to be more

competent; and the perceived warmth of the target group is related to the extent of its competition with the ingroup: groups that compete fiercely with the ingroup are perceived to be cold (not warm).

Although the stereotype content model was developed to explain intergroup perceptions, we contend that the model can be extended to understand temporal changes in perceptions of the ingroup. For a country that is expected to gain in status as a result of economic growth, its citizens will expect the country to be more competent in the future than now. Likewise, when people perceive that as a result of economic growth, its attendant values (e.g. materialism) have dominated the society and undermined the country's core values, people would perceive their country to be warmer in the past than it is now. We term these perceptual phenomena—the tendencies to attribute greater warmth to the past (*vs* now) and greater competence to the future (*vs* now)—the 'good old days effect' and a 'better tomorrow effect', respectively.

No known studies have examined the good old days and better tomorrow effects, despite their theoretical and practical significance. These effects are theoretically significant because they extend the explanatory scope of the stereotype content model from intergroup perceptions to dynamic shifts of ingroup perceptions and, hence, engage the model in the explanation of the effects of social changes on group perceptions. Aside from capturing the ambivalence toward globalization that people in developing countries often

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The authors made equal contributions to this research project. Received 19 June 2009; accepted 2 September 2009.

experience, the good old days and better tomorrow effects are important for predicting popular support for social and economic changes in the society. People's historical representations and future imaginations of their country are important drivers of their reactions to the social, economic and political reforms in the country (Huang, 2007; Huang, Liu, & Chang, 2004; Liu & Hilton, 2005). Individuals with more positive future imaginations of their country (those who believe in a better tomorrow) are more likely to embrace progressive reforms and engage in the country's modernization effort, whereas those with strong nostalgic indulgence in the country's past tend to resist reforms that would cause further erosions of the country's core values. A healthy dialogue of these two forces is crucial for maintaining sustainable growth in the country (Chiu, 2007a; see also Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Lal, 2000).

The proposed good old days and better tomorrow effects are related to Kashima *et al.*'s (2009) folk theory of social change. Kashima and colleagues found that people generally expect societies to follow a natural course of development: from traditional communities in which people engage in communal sharing to modern societies in which people relate to each other in transactional relationships. Thus, people often view traditional communities as high in warmth but low in competence and view modern societies as high in competence but low in warmth. Although many people apply this lay theory to anticipate the effect of modernization on societal development, it is still unclear how individuals' direct experiences with social change in their own country may impact their perceptions of the country's development on the dimensions of warmth and competence, and how significant international events may affect such perceptions. The present research seeks to fill this gap.

Good old days and better tomorrow effects

The primary objective of the present research is to examine the good old days and better tomorrow effects in China, a country that has been undergoing rapid social and economic reforms since the late 1970s (US Central Intelligence Agency, 2009). During this period, China has changed from a centrally planned economic system to a market-oriented economy. Starting from the late 1970s, reforms began with the phasing out of collectivized agriculture and were expanded to include the gradual liberalization of prices, fiscal decentralization, increased autonomy for state enterprises, a diversified banking system, the development of stock markets, the rapid growth of the private sector, and the opening to foreign trade and investment. In terms of economic growth, China has been a major beneficiary of globalization. Its annual inflows of foreign direct investment rose to nearly \$84 billion in 2007, and the country has

enjoyed a more than tenfold increase in GDP since 1978. In 2008, China emerged as the second-largest economy in the world after the USA. (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2009).

However, China has also paid heavy social and cultural prices for its economic achievements. The economic transformation has caused severe loss of arable land, and has aggravated relative deprivation and lowered the social status of the farming population, which constitutes the numerical majority in China (for related observations, see also Lee, Ottati, & Guo, 2002; Yu & Seligman, 2002). The economic transformation is also accompanied by rapid spread of materialism and an increased amount of corruption and other economic crimes. These developments undermine the core values of egalitarianism, probity, and self-sacrifice of the People's Republic. Containing social strife and reducing corruption and other economic crimes are among the top national priorities in China's public governance.

To examine the effects of these social changes on the Chinese people's historical representations and future imaginations of their country, in 2008, 30 years after China started its historical economic reforms, we conducted an online survey of Mainland Chinese young adults' perceptions of their country. Given the projected future success of China as a global economic power and the perceived competition between economic growth and the local values of egalitarianism, probity, and self-sacrifice, we expected to find significant good old days and better tomorrow effects. That is, we expected the participants to attribute a higher level of competence to China's future (*vs* its present) and a higher level of warmth to China's past (*vs* its present).

For comparison, we also surveyed a matched sample of Hong Kong Chinese. Hong Kong provided an interesting comparison because it was a British colony before 1997 and remained a special administrative region with its own market economic system after 1997. That is, Hong Kong did not experience the transformation from a state economy into a market-oriented economy. Moreover, due to its colonial past, the level of identification with Chinese culture in Hong Kong is lower than that in China, although most Hong Kong people are ethnic Chinese (Wan, Chiu, Peng, & Tam, 2007). Nonetheless, Hong Kong also witnesses the growth in China's economic might and recognizes its huge economic potentials. Thus, Hong Kong would provide an interesting alternative perspective on the impact of China's economic and social changes.

Because Hong Kong Chinese are aware of China's growth and future potentials, we hypothesize that Hong Kong Chinese will project a better tomorrow for China. That is, similar to Mainland Chinese, Hong Kong Chinese will also attribute an increased level of competence to China's future (*vs* now). However, Hong Kong people do not personally experience the competition between the global and local

values in Mainland China, and it is unlikely that Hong Kong Chinese would indulge in China's good old days. Thus, we hypothesize that Hong Kong participants will not attribute higher levels of warmth to China's past (*vs* now).

Effect of the Olympic Games

The year 2008 marks the 30th anniversary of China's economic reforms. In August of the same year, China hosted the Summer Olympics in Beijing. This event confers an opportunity for the Chinese people to raise their confidence in their country as a civilized host of a major international event. For example, during the Games, the Chinese people could take pride in the glamour of the Bird's Nest and the Water Cube, Beijing's metropolitan image after a major facelift, the impressive opening and closing ceremonies, the 51 gold medals won by the Chinese Olympic Team, and the peaceful conclusion of Games despite the internal political tension in China during the Games. As the Chinese people lived through these experiences, they might have changed their image of China from a country that gets rich quickly to a competent, civilized and gracious host of international events.

More importantly, the official marketing materials of the Olympics, commercial advertisements, news reports of the competitions as well as the opening and closing ceremonies, and other media were rich in images that artfully blended and harmonized symbols of Chinese culture, modernity, and athletic strength. Continuous exposure to these images during the Olympics might have eased the perceived competition between economic growth, modernity and Chinese traditions and, hence, led to the expectation that China could flourish in both competence and warmth as it continues to grow in the future. With such expectations, the Chinese people would expect that China could become more competent and warmer in the future. That is, China's economic progress would not always have a negative impact on its warmth. Therefore, China's warmth in the present would not necessarily be lower than that in the past or higher than that in the future. Such expectations should then be accompanied by an attenuated good old days effect.

The above analysis leads to two hypothesized effects of the Olympics. That is, as the Olympic Games proceeded, we would expect: (i) an increasingly positive correlation between competence and warmth; and (ii) a reduced good old days effect. To test these hypotheses, we conducted the present study throughout the Olympic Games in Mainland China and Hong Kong.

Effect of the cultural identification

Finally, according to the social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), people who identify more strongly with their

country's culture would be more optimistic about their country's future. In addition, people who identify more strongly with their culture should also evaluate its past traditions more favourably. Therefore, in the present investigation, we also measured participants' levels of identification with Chinese culture. We hypothesize that stronger levels of Chinese cultural identification would be associated with both a greater tendency to evaluate China's past favourably (e.g. a stronger good old days effect) as well as a greater tendency to evaluate China's future favourably (e.g. a stronger better tomorrow effect).

Method

Participants

The Olympic Games were held between 8 August and 21 August, 2008. Between August 5 and August 25 of 2008, we conducted a survey of 1297 participants. Among the participants, 671 resided in Mainland China (349 men; mean age = 23.55 years, $SD = 3.26$) and 626 (264 men; mean age = 20.79 years, $SD = 1.88$) lived in Hong Kong.¹ Among the Mainland participants, 62.9% lived in Beijing, 12.7% lived in Shanghai, and 22.5% lived in other major cities in China. The remaining 2% lived in a small town (1.9%) or a village (0.1%). Beginning the survey shortly before and ending it shortly after the Olympics allowed us to track the change in historical representations and future imagination throughout the Olympic Games, and test the hypotheses regarding the effects of the Olympics.

To recruit research participants, in July 2008, we sent out email invitations to students in several universities in Mainland China and Hong Kong to invite them to participate in a 'marketing survey'. An incentive was offered to the participants to complete the survey. In Mainland China, those who completed the survey were entered into a lottery to win Olympics souvenirs. In Hong Kong, the incentive was a cash compensation of HK\$50. Interested students sent email replies to a research assistant, who assigned the participants to complete an online survey on a randomly selected day from 5 August to 25 August. Forty-three to 88 participants ($M = 61.76$, $SD = 12.76$, evenly distributed between the Mainland and Hong Kong samples) completed the survey on each day during the survey period.

Measures

The survey consisted of measures of perceptions of Chinese and American consumer brands, beliefs about globalization, identification with Chinese culture, and perceptions of China's past and future. In the present article, we focus on the measures of Chinese cultural identification and perceptions of China's past and future.

We measured identification with Chinese culture by the Wan *et al.* (2007) cultural identification measure. The measure consisted of five items (e.g. 'Chinese culture is very important to my identity', 'I identify with Chinese culture'). Respondents indicated their extent of agreement with each statement on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neutral, 5 = strongly agree). The reliability of the measure was 0.90 for the Mainland sample and 0.91 for the Hong Kong sample.

After the participants had completed the cultural identification measure, they were asked to recall what China was like 20 years ago (1988) and what China would be like 10 years later (2018). Next, the participants rated their historical representations and future imaginations of China on nine descriptors. These descriptors are marker items of the three major dimensions in the revised stereotype content model (Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007). Fiske *et al.* (2002) have identified two major dimensions of group perceptions: competence and warmth. Later, Leach *et al.* (2007) added morality as a third dimension to the model. The marker items are 'competent', 'able' and 'intelligent' for the dimension of competence, 'likable', 'friendly' and 'kind' for the dimension of warmth, and 'honest', 'reliable' and 'sincere' for the dimension of morality. The participants rated their images of China in 1988 and 2018 on each of the nine descriptors, using a scale that ranged from -3 (much worse than now) to 0 (almost the same as now) and 3 (much better than now).

We chose the year 1988 because most participants were young adults at the time when they completed the questionnaire. It would be difficult for them to form vivid images of China before 1988. The year of 1988 was the year before the Tiananmen Square Incident. By then, China had gone through a decade of economic reforms. We chose the year 2018 because with the rapid socioeconomic changes in China, the participants might find it difficult to imagine what China would be like in the more distant future. Most participants were born shortly after 1988 and might not know what happened in the year 1988. Nonetheless, what our measures intended to measure were the participants' subjective perceptions of China's changes after 1988. Because all participants had witnessed the transformations of China as they grew up and had knowledge of how China has changed since 1988, we surmised that they should be able to form subjective representations of China's history. Likewise, none of the participants knew what would happen in China in 2018. Nonetheless, they should be able to construct subjective representations of China based on their experiences with China's social change.

The reliabilities of the ratings on the three dimensions were all above 0.75. Therefore, we took the mean of items of the respective dimensions to form measures of perceived competence in 1988 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.92$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.78$) and in 2018 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.93$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.76$), perceived warmth in

1988 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.91$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.81$) and in 2018 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.95$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.79$), as well as perceived morality in 1988 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.97$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.89$) and in 2018 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.98$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.85$). Because of high correlations between the perceived warmth measures and the perceived morality measures ($r_{\text{Mainland-1988}} = 0.75$, $r_{\text{Mainland-2018}} = 0.91$, $r_{\text{Hongkong-1988}} = 0.75$, $r_{\text{Hongkong-2018}} = 0.72$), we took the mean of the perceived warmth and perceived morality in the respective years to form a measure of perceived warmth/morality for 1988 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.95$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.90$) and for 2018 ($\alpha_{\text{Mainland}} = 0.98$; $\alpha_{\text{Hongkong}} = 0.89$). The correlations between the perceived warmth/morality measures and the perceived competence measures were small to moderate (r s ranged from -0.05 to 0.44), confirming the previous finding (Fiske *et al.*, 2002) that warmth/morality and competence are relatively independent dimensions of group perceptions.

Results

To test the good old day and better tomorrow hypotheses among Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese, we fitted a Dimension (Competence or Warmth/Morality) \times Year (1988 or 2018) \times Sample (Mainland or Hong Kong) \times Cultural Identification (mean-centred) \times Data Collection Date (mean-centred) General Linear Model (GLM) to the evaluations of China in 1988 and 2018 on perceived competence and warmth/morality. In this model, Dimension and Year were within-subjects factors and sample was a between-subjects factor. Cultural identification and data collection date were continuous variables and were mean centred. The data collection dates were coded as Day 1 for 5 August, Day 2 for 6 August, to Day 21 for 25 August.

We obtained the following significant effects in this analysis: (1) The main effect of dimension: $F(1, 1285) = 56.84$, $p < 0.001$, $h^2_p = 0.042$; (2) the main effect of year, $F(1, 1285) = 419.68$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2_p = 0.246$; (3) the main effect of sample, $F(1, 1285) = 218.15$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2_p = 0.145$; (4) the main effect of cultural identification, $F(1, 1285) = 76.28$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2_p = 0.056$; (5) the interaction of sample and cultural identification, $F(1, 1285) = 9.42$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2_p = 0.007$; (6) the interaction of year and sample, $F(1, 1285) = 100.86$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2_p = 0.073$; (7) the interaction of year and cultural identification, $F(1, 1285) = 4.61$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2_p = 0.004$; (8) the interaction of dimension and year, $F(1, 1285) = 543.75$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2_p = 0.297$; (9) the interaction of dimension, year and sample, $F(1, 1285) = 8.45$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2_p = 0.007$; and (10) the interaction of dimension, year and data collection date, $F(1, 1285) = 3.83$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2_p = 0.003$. The remaining effects were not significant. We organized these significant results by: (i) the good old days and better tomorrow effects; (ii) the Olympics effect; and (iii) the effects of cultural identification.

Good old days and a better tomorrow

We obtained significant main effects of year and dimensions. The participants evaluated China's future ($M = 1.05$, $SD = 0.98$) more favourably than they did China's past ($M = 0.05$, $SD = 1.25$); they also evaluated China's competence ($M = 0.65$, $SD = 0.94$) more favourably than they did China's warmth and morality ($M = 0.40$, $SD = 1.02$). Because the predicted interaction of time and dimension was significant, we interpreted the main effects of year and dimension in the context of their interaction.

As shown in Figure 1a, there were significant good old days and better tomorrow effects. As predicted, the participants attributed a higher level of warmth/morality to China's past (the good old days effect) and a higher level of competence to China's future (the better tomorrow effect). Specifically, participants perceived that China was warmer/more moral in 1988 than now [$M = 0.45$, $SD = 1.58$, $t(1292) = 10.24$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$] and that China would be more competent in 2018 than now [$M = 1.60$, $SD = 1.01$, $t(1292) = 56.68$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$]. Besides, they perceived that China was less competent in 1988 than now [$M = -0.29$, $SD = 1.57$, $t(1292) = -6.74$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$] and expected China's warmth/morality to be higher in 2018 than now [$M = 0.35$, $SD = 1.37$, $t(1292) = 9.13$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$].

The interaction of year and dimension was further qualified by the interaction of year, dimension, and sample, which is illustrated in Figure 1b,c. This interaction indicates that only Mainland participants exhibited the good old days effect. They perceived China to be warmer and more moral in 1988 than now [$M = 1.00$, $SD = 1.51$; $t(667) = 17.05$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$]. Interestingly, they also expected China to become warmer and more moral in 2018 than now [$M = 0.62$, $SD = 1.55$, $t(667) = 10.30$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$], although the projected warmth and morality in 2018 was still lower than that in 1988, $t(677) = -4.71$, $p < 0.001$. To them, the lost warmth and morality could not be fully recovered in the near future. In contrast, Hong Kong participants perceived that China in 1988 was less warm and moral than now [$M = -0.13$, $SD = 1.44$, $t(624) = -2.34$, $p < 0.05$ for $H_0: M = 0$], although they did not expect the level of warmth and morality to rise in the next 10 years [$M = 0.06$, $SD = 1.08$, $t(624) = 1.39$, ns for $H_0: M = 0$]. This result indicates the absence of the good old days effect among Hong Kong Chinese.

The better tomorrow effect was significant among both Mainland and Hong Kong Chinese. Mainland Chinese expected that China would be more competent in 2018 than now [$M = 1.70$, $SD = 1.07$, $t(667) = 41.10$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$], and in 1988 [$M = 0.33$, $SD = 1.63$, $t(667) = 5.17$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$]. Likewise, Hong

Kong participants perceived that China would be more competent in 2018 than now [$M = 1.49$, $SD = 0.94$, $t(624) = 39.62$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$] and in 1988 [$M = -0.96$, $SD = 1.19$, $t(624) = -20.04$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$]. In other words, both Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese saw China's competence to be on a rising trajectory since 1988 and expected the trajectory to continue into 2018.

In summary, although both Mainland Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese expected a better, more competent China in the future, they have different views on China's past. The Mainland participants, who had direct experiences with the social and cultural impacts of globalization on China in the last 20 years, perceived that these changes have caused deterioration in China's warmth and morality. Although they remained hopeful that 10 years from now China's warmth/morality would exceed its current level, the country's warmth and morality would still be lower than its 1988 level. To them, China has lost its warmth/morality in the good old days and this cannot be fully recovered in the next 10 years. In contrast, from the perspective of Hong Kong participants, who did not have direct experiences with the social and cultural impacts of globalization on China, China's economic transformation has increased the country's competence as well as its warmth and morality.

Effects of the Olympic Games

The interaction of dimension, year and data collection date was significant, indicating that the advancement of the Olympic Games significantly moderated the good old days and better tomorrow effects. To understand the nature of this interaction, we regressed each of the four evaluation measures on the date of data collection and obtained the predicted values on the first and the last day of data collection. The results are illustrated in Figure 2. Perceptions of China's warmth/morality, which is central to the good old day effects, changed over the 3-week data collection period, whereas perceptions of China's competence remained unchanged. Evaluation of China's warmth/morality in 2018 significantly increased over the data collection period [$B = 0.02$, $t(1291) = 2.40$, $p < 0.05$]. These results are consistent with our hypothesis. The positive slope relating warmth/morality in 2018 and date of data collection indicated that, as the Games proceeded, participants had increasing expectancy that China would grow in warmth/morality. This suggests that experience with the Olympics might have promoted the imagination that China could flourish in both competence and morality as the country continues to develop.

Moreover, we conducted analyses to verify our assumption that the Olympics promoted the expectation that China could flourish in both competence and warmth as it continues to grow in the future, leading to a more positive corre-

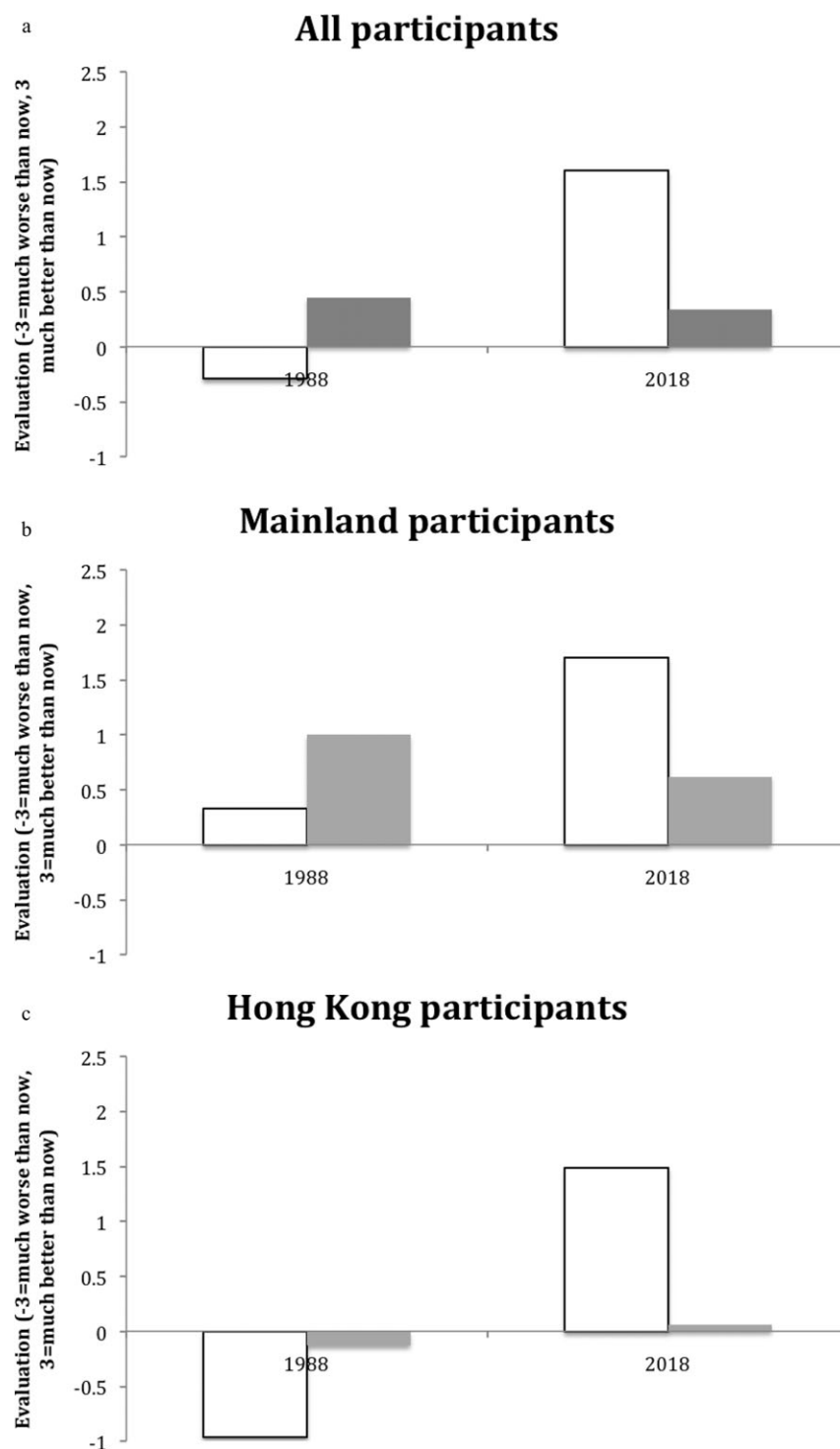


Figure 1 Evaluation of China's competence and warmth/morality in 1988 and 2018: Group differences. □, competence; ■, warmth/morality.

lation between the dimensions of competence and warmth/morality. We recoded date of data collection into the first, second, and third week of data collection and computed the correlations between past and future competence and past and future warmth/morality. To control for the effect of response set, for each pair of variables (e.g. past compe-

tence and past warmth/morality), we controlled for the effects of the remaining two variables (future competence and future warmth/morality). Table 1 shows the partial correlations between the competence and warmth/morality measures for each week of data collection for Mainland and Hong Kong participants. In both samples, the correlations

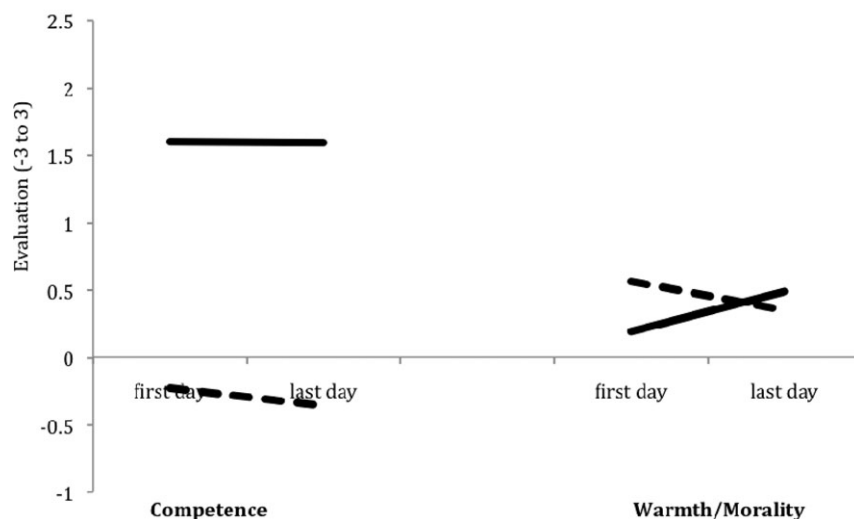


Figure 2 Evaluation of China's competence and warmth/morality in 1988 and 2018 as a function of data collection date. ----, 1988; —, 2018.

Table 1 Partial correlations between competence and future warmth/morality in the first, second, and third week of data collection

	First week (5–11 August)	Second week (12–18 August)	Third week (19–25 August)
Mainland participants			
Past competence and past warmth/morality	–0.05	–0.07	–0.12
Future competence and future warmth/morality	0.33*	0.51*	0.38*
Past competence and future warmth/morality	0.12	0.17*	0.15*
Future competence and past warmth/morality	0.04	0.10	0.13*
Hong Kong participants			
Past competence and past warmth/morality	0.23*	0.13	0.31*
Future competence and future warmth/morality	0.21*	0.15*	0.29*
Past competence and future warmth/morality	0.09	0.12	0.21*
Future competence and past warmth/morality	0.05	0.08	0.20*

* $p < 0.05$. Entries are partial correlations between a pair of variables controlled for the remaining two variables.

between past competence and future warmth/morality and that between future competence and past warmth/morality were significant and positive in the last week of data collection (19–25 August), although they were not significant in the first week of data collection (5–11 August).

Moreover, as the Olympics progressed, participants were more hopeful that China would achieve the level of warmth/morality as in the 'good old days.' As shown in Figure 2, on the last day of data collection, the expected level of warmth/morality in 2018 matched that in 1988. There was also a non-significant trend that as the Games progressed, the participants made increasingly less favourable evaluation of China's warmth/morality in 1988 [$B = -0.01$, $t(1291) = -1.50$, $p = 0.13$]. Together, the results showed that the Olympics had weakened the good old days effect.

Cultural identification effects

Before reporting the results relating to our main hypotheses, we examined whether any of the independent variables had an effect on cultural identification. A Date \times Sample \times Age GLM fitted to cultural identification revealed a significant sample effect: As expected, Mainland participants showed higher cultural identification ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.71$) than Hong Kong participants ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 0.82$), $F(1, 1286) = 241.66$, $p < 0.001$. No other effects were significant, indicating the mean level of cultural identification did not change as the Games proceeded, $F < 1$, *ns*. Thus, although the Olympics might have increased participants' confidence in the future, it had no impact on cultural identification. This result, however, does not preclude the possibility that the Olympics had an effect

on the participants' levels of national identification (Li *et al.*, this issue of the Journal).

The main effect of cultural identification on the perception of China was significant. To understand the nature of this effect, we computed a measure of the overall evaluation of China by taking the mean of the evaluations of China in 1998 and 2018 on competence and warmth/morality. The correlation between Chinese cultural identification and overall evaluation of China was 0.39 ($p < 0.001$; r s between cultural identification and evaluations of China in 1988 and 2018 on two dimensions ranged from 0.21 to 0.25, all p s < 0.001). Consistent with social identification theories (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), participants with stronger Chinese cultural identification evaluated China's future more favourably. In addition, participants who identified more with Chinese culture also displayed a stronger good old days effect; they gave more favourable evaluations of China's past.

The main effect of cultural identification was qualified by a significant interaction of cultural identification and year. The effect of cultural identification was stronger for evaluation of China's past than for evaluation of China's future. Simple regression analysis results showed that an increase in cultural identification by one standard deviation increased overall evaluation of China's past by 0.39, $t(1291) = 11.90$, $p < 0.001$, as compared to an increase of 0.26 in overall evaluation of China's future, $t(1291) = 9.85$, $p < 0.001$. Moreover, the interaction of cultural identification and sample was significant.

The effect of cultural identification on overall evaluation of China was stronger among Mainland participants than among Hong Kong participants. Simple regression analysis results revealed that an increase in cultural identification by one standard deviation increased overall evaluation of China by 0.26 among Mainland participants, $t(666) = 6.26$, $p < 0.001$, as compared to an increase of 0.13 among Hong Kong participants, $t(624) = 5.97$, $p < 0.001$.

Other findings

There was a main effect of sample: The Mainland participants ($M = 0.92$, $SD = 0.87$) had more favourable overall evaluation of China than did the Hong Kong participants ($M = 0.14$, $SD = 0.53$). This result is consistent with higher levels of cultural identification among the Mainland participants.

The interaction of sample and year was also significant. The Mainland participants perceived China in 1988 and 2018 to be better than now [$M_{1988} = 0.64$, $SD = 1.14$, $t(667) = 14.39$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$, and $M_{2018} = 1.21$, $SD = 1.10$, $t(667) = 28.38$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$]. However, Hong Kong participants perceived that China in 1988 was worse than now [$M = -0.59$, $SD = 1.02$, $t(624) = -14.42$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$] and that China in

2018 would be better than now [$M = 0.87$, $SD = 0.80$, $t(624) = 27.13$, $p < 0.001$ for $H_0: M = 0$]. This result is also consistent with the hypothesis that only Mainland participants would display the good old days effect.

Discussion

Consistent with our proposed extension of the stereotype content model (Fiske *et al.*, 2002), China's increased international status as a result of its recent economic success has contributed to our participants' optimistic projections of China's future economic achievements, leading to the attribution of higher levels of competence to China in the future than now. We refer to this perceptual phenomenon as the better tomorrow effect. At the same time, the perceived erosion of values that define the country's moral landscape before the onset of China's historical economic transformation in the late 1970s, as well as the proliferation of materialistic and selfish practices in contemporary China, might have evoked feelings of competition between the country's economic growth and its core values, contributing to the participants' attributing higher levels of warmth and morality to China in 1988 than now. We refer to this latter phenomenon as the good old days effect. Our results show that because both Mainland and Hong Kong Chinese have witnessed the rapid economic growth in China, both groups display the better tomorrow effect. However, only Mainland Chinese have directly experienced the social and cultural changes that accompany China's economic growth. Therefore, only Mainland Chinese display the good old days effect.

This finding suggests that, in China, a developing country that has benefited most from globalization, people may have mixed feelings about globalization. Globalization can lead to economic growth, rise in income and wealth, and increased accessibility of consumer goods at affordable prices and, hence, contribute to improvements in quality of life and elevation of the country's international status. However, globalization and its attendant emphasis on materialistic consumption and selfish maximization may evoke anxiety about the erosion of core local values (Chiu, 2007a; Chiu & Cheng, 2007; Chiu & Hong, 2006). Consistent with our results, recent research (e.g. Fu & Chiu, 2007) has shown that in response to these mixed feelings, people in Asian developing countries may be relatively receptive to the global values, knowledge and practices that would enhance their countries' economic growth (e.g. emphasis on creativity and instrumental rationality, science and technology, scientific management). However, people in these countries may resist the global values (particularly those from the West) that would undermine their countries' core values (e.g. democracy vs respect for authority, self-assertiveness vs modesty, individual rights vs social harmony).

Our results are also consistent with other social scientists' observations on the cultural implications of globalization. For example, Lal (2000) makes a distinction between the material and the cosmological beliefs in a culture. Material beliefs pertain to ways of making a living or beliefs about the material world, particularly the economy. By contrast, cosmological beliefs define the purpose and meaning of life and an individual's relationship to others. Lal believes that although the material beliefs in the global culture will gain popularity as a country is integrated into the global market, cosmological beliefs in local cultures are relatively resistant to the influence of globalization. Inglehart and Baker's (2000) detailed analyses of longitudinal survey data from 65 societies lend credence to this view. Specifically, Inglehart and Baker (2000) found that economic development is accompanied by increased adherence to values that emphasize secularism and rationality, which may reflect increased reliance on science and instrumental rationality for guiding economic activities. However, the broad knowledge tradition (e.g. Confucianism) that defines personhood and sociality in a society leaves an imprint on values, which endures despite the erosive effects of globalization.

Although we believe that the processes we describe in the present article are general processes that characterize psychological reactions to globalization in most developing countries, given that we have collected data from China only, we need to replicate our results in other developing countries. In addition, because we used online surveys to collect data, most Mainland participants in our study resided in big cities in China. It would be interesting to replicate our results in a rural population in China. A recent study (Chen & Chiu, 2010) showed that rural residents (*vs* urbanites) have stronger identification with Chinese culture. Because Chinese cultural identification is correlated with stronger good old days and better tomorrow effects, rural residents may be more likely than urbanites to display these effects. However, the same study also found that, in China, the perceived tension between traditional values and global values is more intense in urban cities than in rural towns. Thus, it is also possible that the good old days and better tomorrow effects would be more pronounced among urban (*vs* rural) residents in China. A new study that includes a rural sample is needed to decide between these competing hypotheses.

As hypothesized, the good old days effect diminished as the Olympics proceeded. During the Olympics, the Chinese people were constantly exposed to the glamorous images of the Bird's Nest and the Water Cube, the impressive performances at the opening and closing ceremonies, daily news reports of China's success in winning medals, and other positive news. These images might have significantly increased the Chinese people's confidence in their country. In addition, during the Olympics, the Chinese people were

also constantly exposed to advertising images that featured creative blending of local culture, modernity, and athletic strength. Continuous exposure to these images during the Olympics might have eased the perceived competition between economic growth, modernity and local values and, hence, led to: (i) the expectation that economic growth and development of the country's warmth and morality can occur (instead of competing) together; and the (ii) attenuation of the good old days effect. This result also suggests that direct experiences with international events such as the Olympics could change people's folk theory of social change (i.e. the belief that economic development would universally and invariably undermine the perceived warmth of a society; Kashima *et al.* 2009). Given these promising results, in future research, it would be interesting to examine whether hosting similar international events (e.g. World Expo) would have the same effects.

It is interesting to note that the level of projected future competence did not increase over the Olympics. This is probably due to a ceiling effect. Before the Olympics, China experienced very rapid economic growth, and projected future competence was high even before the Olympics. Thus, China's success in the Olympics might not have much incremental impact on the projected competence of China.

In summary, the rapid economic and social changes in China have created many novel and important psychological phenomena. These phenomena illustrate the dynamic unfolding of people's psychological responses to their changing economic and social milieus, and could inspire construction of new theories or conceptual expansions of current theories (Chiu, 2007b). We hope that our research can inspire future systematic investigations into the social psychology of globalization in Asia and beyond.

Acknowledgements

The research reported in this article was funded by research grants awarded by the National Science Foundation (Award Number: BCS-0743119) and the Nanyang Technological University to Chi-yue Chiu.

End note

1. We ran additional analyses to explore the age effect. Results showed that age did not predict the good old days' and better tomorrow effect, or moderate the results reported in the present article.

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