

Is Globalization Undermining the “Clash of Civilizations”?
A Test of Huntington among the Publics of Greater Asia and the
Pacific

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Abstract

Samuel Huntington's influential 'clash of civilizations' hypothesis (Huntington (1992, 1997)) has been widely debated, but empirical tests of his ideas have been rarely undertaken at the micro-level among comparative publics (e.g., Norris and Inglehart (2002, 2004); Carlson and Listhaug (2006)). In this paper, we bring new evidence to bear, focusing on attitudes in the 'cauldron of civilizations': Greater Asia and the Pacific. Using the AsiaBarometer, a cross-national, multilingual survey project that includes over 33,000 respondents in 31 Asian Pacific countries, we examine the extent to which publics identify with the core states of their civilization and the factors that may influence those perceptions. We give attention to the role of globalization and Westernization (operationalized as English skill), and whether they may be subsumed by religiosity and nationalism as Huntington suggests. Our evidence affirms the faultlines between the West, China and Islam identified by Huntington as the areas of potential conflict. At the same time, we find important exceptions to the 'clash' framework as a whole, particularly within Sinic societies and the role of 'lone countries', Japan and Russia, in their expected alignment with China and the West, respectively. Generally, we find that attitudes toward core states are not zero-sum: peripheral state publics often see rival core states as mutually good influences. Specifying an individual-level model to account for competing effects, interactions and standard control factors, we find that, *ceteris paribus*, increases in an individual's overall exposure to foreign cultures leads to a more positive assessment of the United States, China and Russia. Greater facility in English also contributes to better perceptions of US influence among Asian Muslims (and Japanese impressions of China), although the same does not hold for Chinese, where foreign exposure, standard of living and education have stronger impact.

Keywords: civilizations; globalization; public opinion; Asia

‘It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural...The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future. (Huntington (1992), 22).’ So began Samuel Huntington in one of the more provocative, cited and debated assertions in international affairs of the last two decades. Yet, despite the voluminous discussion that the ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis has generated, and the deeper investigations it has prompted into the role of values, ethnicity and religion, questions remain: not merely whether, post 9/11, Huntington was prescient or hyperbolic about imminent conflict among Islam and the West (Ajami (2008)) but whether there is an empirical basis for claims about the immutability and growing differences among the major world ‘civilizations.’ For Huntington, ‘clashes’ are not merely inclined to occur between states and within international institutions, but would be driven ‘at the micro level’ among publics through strengthened ethno-religious identities, revived traditional cultures, based on fundamentally distinct values (Huntington (1997), 125-130). It is from this basis that Huntington dismissed the prospects of a ‘universal civilization’ borne from modernization; rather, the post-Cold War world should recognize their irreconcilable differences, build international institutions around a multicivilizational order and take steps to mitigate future conflicts.

To date, most empirical responses to Huntington have deployed aggregate data to test claims about the inevitability of state-level conflict between civilizations (e.g., Russett, Oneal and Cox (2000); Henderson and Tucker (2001); Chiozza (2002); Roeder (2003); Tuscisny (2004); Henderson (2005); Gartzke and Gleditsch (2006); Neumayer and Plumper (2009); Ellis (2010)). With the exception of work by Inglehart (e.g., Norris and Inglehart (2002, 2004); Inglehart and Welzel (2005), which we will discuss below, many of the micro-level hypotheses and suppositions remain untested at the individual level. Our purpose in this paper is to address two fundamental to the ‘clash’ argument in the realm of micropolitics: first, to consider whether publics, as Huntington claimed, align cognitively around the core and peripheral member states of their civilization and; second, whether Westernization and modernization (as distinct concepts) affect the perceptions of non-member states outside the civilization. While social-psychological theories have long played an important role in the study of conflict (e.g., Kelman (1997)), the literature remains vague on the linkage between international conflict and the influence of public opinion (e.g., Levy (1988)), particularly with regard to the role of mass attitudes on interstate divergence. The important question of whether citizens reveal in-group and out-group tenden-

cies within a cultural/civilizational framework has, until recently, been constrained by a paucity of cross-national data; with advances in comparative survey research (Heath, Fisher and Smith (2005); Norris (2008)), such investigations are becoming increasingly possible.

Our focus is on attitudes in the ‘cauldron of civilizations’, the Asian Pacific. A region suffering from undercoverage in previous survey-based analyses, the area is perhaps more worthy today of the distinction than it was when Huntington labeled it such nearly two decades ago. Home to 3 in every 5 of the world’s citizens, six of the ten most spoken languages and seven of the world’s nine civilizations, it also features some of the globe’s most enduring faultlines and exigent rivalries. Our analysis, based on surveys conducted in 30 Asian societies and the United States, is well positioned to address the questions Huntington lays out in his framework.

1 The ‘Clash’ at the Micro-Level: Expectations for Asian/Pacific Public Opinion

The ‘clash of civilizations’ framework is predicated on the following assertions, each of which can be written as testable hypotheses:

- H1. Publics will affiliate more strongly with the core state within their civilization, due to tradition and kinship in spirituality and religion. Hence, Western states will more strongly affiliate with the US; Sinic countries with China; Hindu and Buddhist countries with India.
- H1a. The lack of a core Islamic state, Huntington concedes, makes affiliation susceptible to a variety of influences. However, we expect Islamic citizens to assign more positive influence to other Islamic states than those of other civilizations, with Iran emerging as the state that elicits the sharpest distinctions among civilizational publics.
- H1b. The positions of Russia and Japan as ‘lone countries’ and unique civilizations suggests that they will be outliers in terms of their perceptions and thus will not show any clear affinities toward any out-civilization core states.
- H1c. Huntington contends that a “Confucian-Islamic connection” is developing as a counterweight to Western strategic and political dominance, as manifest in arms transfers and the resistance to democratic and human rights reforms (1997: 186-198, 239). As such, we would expect to find, between these two civilizations, evidence of mutual affinity.

A key element of his prediction for a civilization-based alignment to world politics is Huntington's assertion that globalization and Westernization, rather than creating the basis for a Naipaulian 'universal civilization', reinforces the ties of ethnicity, religion and nation that are inclined to lead toward inter-cultural conflict. Arguing that Westernization initially promotes modernization, Huntington contends that

in the latter phases...it promotes de-Westernization and the resurgence of indigenous cultures in two ways. At the societal level, modernization enhances the economic, military and political power of the society as a whole and encourages the people of that society to have confidence in their culture and to become culturally assertive. At the individual level, modernization generates feelings of alienation and anomie as traditional bonds and social relations are broken and leads to crises of identity to which religion provides an answer (1997: 76).

As such, we would expect, assuming the faultlines predicated on such a civilizational order, that

- H2a. Perceptions of out-civilization core states, *ceteris paribus*, will worsen as religiosity increases.
- H2b. Perceptions of out-civilization core states, *ceteris paribus*, will worsen as nationalism increases.
- H2c. Perceptions of out-civilization core states, *ceteris paribus*, will worsen as individual-level modernization increases, defined as rising standards of living and higher levels of education.

Finally, noting that "global communications are one of the most important contemporary manifestations of Western power," Huntington contends that such dominance is instead 'a major source of resentment and hostility of non-Western peoples against the West' (59). And where he emphasizes that the West's most widely used cultural product, English, is "the world's way of communicating interculturally, just as the Christian calendar is the world's way of tracking time," its use "presupposes the existence of separate cultures".

It is a tool for communication not a source of identity and community. Because a Japanese banker and an Indonesian banker talk to each other in English does not mean that either one of them is being Anglofied or Westernized (1997: 61).

Thus, we can delineate two final expectations:

H3a. Exposure to foreign cultures will either result in worsened perceptions of out-civilization core states or have no influence.

H3b. Westernization will have no influence on the perceptions of out-civilization core states.

1.1 Model Specification

At the individual level, we expect that the probability of citizen $_i$, within a given country $_j$, will perceive the influence of external state $_k$

$$\Pr(\text{state influence}_k = m \mid x_{ij} = F(\tau_m - x\beta) - F(\tau_{m-1} - x\beta))$$

will be explained by

$$x\beta = \beta_1(\text{religiosity})$$

as well as nationalism, globalization and Westernization

$$\beta_2(\text{nationalism}) + \beta_3(\text{globalization}) + \beta_4(\text{Westernization})$$

which renders a full model with a set of controls and interactions as

$$\begin{aligned} x\beta = & \beta_1(\text{religiosity}) + \beta_2(\text{nationalism}) + \beta_3(\text{globalization}) + \\ & \beta_4(\text{Westernization}) + \beta_5(\text{living standard}) + \\ & \beta_6(\text{age}) + \beta_7(\text{education}) + \beta_8(\text{gender}) + \\ & \beta_9(\text{foreign exposure* Westernization}) + \\ & \beta_{10}(\text{Westernization*education} + \beta_{11}(\text{nationalism*religiosity}) \end{aligned}$$

2 Data and Method

The paper employs data from the AsiaBarometer pooled from the project's four waves in 2005 and 2008. Led by Takashi Inoguchi, the AsiaBarometer sought at its inception to provide a counterweight to Western biases in comparative opinion research and scholarly reliance upon

American or European based measures constructed in Indo-European languages (Inoguchi and Fujii (2009)). Beginning in 2003 with fieldwork in Japan, China, India, South Korea and various countries in Southeast Asia, each successive wave of the AsiaBarometer has seen an expansion of scope and territorial coverage. In 2005, the predominantly Islamic states of the former Soviet Union (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) were surveyed along with Pakistan, Afghanistan, Maldives, Nepal, Mongolia and Bangladesh; in 2006, Japan, China and South Korea were again included along with Vietnam, Singapore and Taiwan; Laos and Cambodia were among the new countries added to the 2007 wave, while the 2008 wave expanded to cover Australia, Russia and the United States.¹ Taken together, the four year pooled dataset includes the attitudes of 11 Islamic societies; 7 Buddhist societies, 5 Sinic societies and 4 Western societies, along with India and Nepal among Hindu societies – a well-rounded mixture of the seven civilizations (Table 1). The surveys were administered face-to-face in the country’s predominant languages, using stratified, multistage random sampling to determine household and respondent eligibility. In some developing countries, the sampling frame was biased toward urban centers and quotas were set to meet the age and gender profile of the country as indicated in its national census. Fieldwork reports providing the methodological details of each survey are available at www.asiabarometer.org/en/surveys.

[Insert Table 1 here]

2.1 Measures

The dependent variable, *state influence*, is an item that asks, “Do you think the following countries have a good influence or a bad influence on your country?” China, Japan and the United States were tested in all four waves; India was tested in 2005, 2007 and 2008; Russia in 2006, 2007 and 2008; Iran in 2005 and 2006. Respondents were asked to assess influence on a 5 point scale, ranging from “Bad influence” to “Good influence”, with a neutral option “Neither good nor bad influence” in the middle.

Along with controls for standard of living (“How would you describe your standard of living?” (1=low; 5=high), education (1=low, 3=high), gender (1=male) and age (summarized

¹To the best of our knowledge, this study represents the first time that Bhutan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Cambodia and Laos have been included in a cross-national, comparative social survey project.

in Table 2), there are four independent variables of interest. Globalization, operationalized as *foreign exposure*, is based on a 6 point additive index developed from a battery of items that ask whether

- “A member of [Rs] family or a relative lives in another country.”
- “[R has] traveled abroad at least three times in the past three years, on holiday or for business purposes.”
- “[R] has foreign friends in his home country”
- “[R] often watch[es] foreign-produced programs on TV”
- “[R] often communicate[s] with people in other countries via the internet or email”
- “[Rs] job involved contact with organizations or people in other countries.”

[Insert Table 2 here]

The second, *Westernization*, is operationalized as the respondent’s self-reported level of English skill (“How well do you speak English?” (1=not at all; 4=fluent). *Nationalism* is measured in the AsiaBarometer in two ways: a standard question used in other studies that asks whether R is “proud” of her/his nationality; a second asks whether R can “recite the national anthem [of her/his country] by heart.” Tests of the “proud” measure, which relies on the willingness of self-expression to capture the degree of national attachment, rendered less consistent results – due, perhaps to the problem of cross-national measurement equivalence (e.g., King, Murray, Salomon and Tandon (2004); Heath, Martin and Spreckelsen (2009); Medina, Smith and Long (2009); Davidov (2009)). As such, our model opts for the “recite” measure, which relies on the behavioral aspects of national belonging. Similarly, we employ a behavioral measure of *religiosity* a question that asks the respondent “How often do you pray or meditate?” (1=never; 4=every day).

Our findings proceed in two parts. We begin with a descriptive analysis of country-level means and bivariate relationships among our variables of interest. We then move to the findings from the individual-level model.

3 Country-Level Findings

3.1 Perceptions of Core States

Table 3 displays the means, standard errors and standard deviations for each of the core states in our analysis. Reading the table from left to right, we see that Islamic publics overall see Japan, Russia and China as those having the most positive influence; India and Iran are also seen as “good” influences. The United States is closer to the neutral position ($\bar{x}=3.12$) with attitudes more widely dispersed ($\sigma=1.22$) than for the other combinations in the analysis. Pakistanis are more inclined than Islamic countries on the whole to see the US, India and Russia as “bad” influences and China and Iran as “good” influences. Hindu publics see Japan and the US the most positively, with China and Russia nearly as influential. Residents in Buddhist states see most of the core states as a “good” influence, save Iran toward which they appear neutral. The opinions among Sinic publics appear to differ from those of Chinese. Where Chinese see Japan and the US as having a “bad” influence, other countries in this civilization grouping are more neutral or positive toward the two. Chinese are also more inclined to see Iran as a “good” influence, though their perceptions overall are more neutral than Islamic perceptions of Chinese influence. The Orthodox (Russian) civilization sees the US as a “bad” influence and appears more neutral toward China and India. Americans differ from the other Western civilization countries and appear to have similar views to Japanese, in that both are more inclined to see China and Russia as a “bad” influence and appear neutral toward India.

[Insert Table 3 here]

With the means analysis suggesting potential faultlines between the US and China, Russia and Islam (as well as between Japan and China), and some evidence emerging of a potential Islamic/Chinese relationship, we undertook a series of simple regressions to examine whether core state attitudes are zero-sum: that is, whether seeing China, Iran and Russia as a “good” influence alone predicts perceptions of the United States as “bad” influence. In only one of the instances was the relationship in the expected negative direction: Sinic perceptions of the US vis-a-vis Iran ($p < .001$). Plotting the means at the country-level reveals China as an outlier (Figure 1a); thus, when China is removed from the analysis, the relationship vanishes ($p = .914$). Runs for the effects of perceptions of China on perceptions of the US are instead in the positive direction, attaining acceptable significance levels at $p < .05$ among Islamic and

Sinic civilizations (which do not include China). Similarly, among Islamic publics, the more Iran and China are seen as “positive” influences, the more the US is seen as a “positive” influence. The coefficient for Sinic perceptions of Russian influence is negative, but not significant. When Chinese are removed from the analysis, the relationship is positive and statistically significant. Among the citizens of other Asian countries, positive perceptions of China significantly predict positive perceptions of Japan (plot omitted).

[Insert Figure 1 here]

3.2 Religiosity, Nationalism and Globalization among Asian/Pacific Publics

As a first step toward multivariate analysis, we plot the means of our independent variables of interest. Figure 2 indicates noteworthy differences between civilizations. Hindus and Muslims show the highest levels of religiosity; Russians and Sinic publics the lowest. At the same time, Sinic publics show the highest level of nationalism. Islamic and Russian society, by contrast, have lower levels of nationalism. Levels of foreign exposure and English facility remain relatively low across much of Asia when compared to the Western countries in the analysis.

[Insert Figure 2 here]

Figure 3 displays the potentially complex mosaic of religion, nationalism and foreign exposure at the country-level. With the exception of Singapore, the Sinic civilization (shown in green) is characterized by low religiosity and higher levels of nationalism. China, as we noted before, appears as the outlying case and, as indicated by its small circle, reveals lower levels of foreign exposure among its citizens than in Taiwan, Vietnam or South Korea. Generally, each of the countries in the upper left quadrant of the plot, which include Japan and Thailand, have lower levels of foreign exposure, making Singapore stand out for its apparent cosmopolitanism. Islamic publics, by contrast, are more diverse. Where Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, like Russia, exhibit low levels religious or national practice, citizens in Maldives, Malaysia, Indonesia and Bangladesh reveal high levels of both. Afghans appear to be strong worshippers, but weak nationalists. Pakistanis lean toward faith over country as Uzbeks lie somewhere in the middle. Like many Sinic countries, many Islamic citizens have little interaction with the world. The Singaporean exception for Asian Islam would be Maldives, followed in degree by Malaysia and Uzbekistan.

[Insert Figure 3 here]

Figure 3 also reveals something about core states. Where China and Russia lie at opposite poles of nationalism, but are similarly low in terms of religiosity, Indians are high on both measures. Americans, who appear similar to the more globally engaged Buddhist publics and Singapore on these measures, are notably more nationalistic and religious than their Westernized counterparts in Australia. Filipinos appear to combine strong nationalism with strong faith, placing them alongside other Southeast Asian Muslims and Indians.

In Figure 4 we shift the country-level analysis back toward perceptions of the core states. The first set of plots shows how religiosity may influence perceptions of the US (4a), China (4b) and Iran (4c), with the markers again weighted by foreign exposure. What is noteworthy here is how religiosity in Sinic and Islamic societies appear to differ. Where increases in religiosity among Sinic countries appear to improve the perceptions of both the US and China, they appear to have the opposite effect in perceptions of Iran. Higher levels of religious practice by Islamic publics, by contrast, appear to bolster views of Iran and China. In the case of the US, they have no apparent impact, although the exceptional cases of Afghanistan and the Maldives may be influential.

[Insert Figure 4 here]

Figure 5 suggests that nationalism among Asian Islamic publics may also depress perceptions of the United States. Where Indonesians and Malaysians, like the Chinese, appear to couple strong nationalism with a lower regard for the US, the Russian public sees the US more as a bad influence in the face of its low nationalistic sentiment (5a). Each of these countries, however, is characterized by lower levels of foreign exposure. Similarly, Sinic publics reveal consistently high levels of nationalism, but their opinions of US vary widely. Singaporeans and Taiwanese are strong nationals and see the American influence as a positive one. Chinese are strong nationals, but see the American influence negatively. The plot of Chinese influence reveals similar patterns among Sinic publics (5b). Among the more nationalist Islamic publics, including Bangladesh, Malaysia and Indonesia, Chinese influence is more highly regarded. Yet, those with lower levels of nationalism also regard Chinese influence as positive, exemplified by the Pakistani, Afghan and Tajikistan citizens. The notable distinction in the plot of Iranian influence is China which, as a highly nationalistic society, regards Iranian influence more positively than its Sinic neighbors (5c).

[Insert Figure 5 here]

In Figure 6, we display the effect of foreign exposure directly on the dependent variables, with the markers weighted by our Westernization measure: English skill. It is here that the contrasts between the three competing core states become more evident. Increases in foreign exposure appear to boost positive perceptions of American and Chinese influence, particularly among Sinic societies. The larger circles toward the upper quadrant of the plot appear that English skill may play a further role. Among Islamic publics, the effect of foreign exposure appears to be limited with regard to perceptions of the US; with regard to China and Iran, higher levels of foreign exposure, on the whole, may lead to *lower* perceptions.

[Insert Figure 6 here]

4 Individual Level Findings

The individual-level model was run with perceptions of the US, China, Iran, Russia and Japan serving as the dependent variables. Variant models were specified to measure effects of the independent variables of interest within the civilization groupings, religious groups (to account for multi-religious societies) and the countries revealed above as potential faultlines. With the perceptions of the United States model, separate runs were undertaken for Islamic countries, self-identified Muslims, Sinic countries, and individual countries, including China, Russia, Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan. With the China model, separate runs were undertaken for Islamic countries, self-identified Muslims, Sinic countries and Russia, the US and Japan. With the Iran model, separate runs were undertaken for Islamic countries, self-identified Muslims, Sinic countries, self-identified Christians, China and Pakistan. With the Russia model, separate runs were undertaken for Islamic countries, Muslims, Christians, China, Japan and the United States. With the Japan model, separate runs were undertaken for Sinic countries, China and Russia.

The full tables of results are available upon request. Our presentation of the findings proceeds with a discussion of the effects of the civilization grouping, followed by the effects of the independent variables of interest.

4.1 Effect of Civilization Grouping on Perceptions of Core States

Figure 7 displays the effects of civilization on the dependent variables. The bars represent, *ceteris paribus*, the odds of having a more positive view of the core state vis-a-vis the refer-

ence group which, in each case, was selected as the Huntington-defined strongest adversary (Huntington (1997), 245).² In the case of the US, the evidence supports some of Huntington's expectations. The odds of seeing the US as a good influence increase by nearly 210 percent for Western countries than for the Islamic civilization (the reference group). The odds for Buddhists (161%), Japanese (147%) and Sinic (98%) are also notably higher.

[Insert Figure 7 here]

In the case of Iran, the evidence is also supportive. Other countries within the Islamic grouping are 149% more likely to have a better view of Iran's influence than those in "Western Asia" (the American public was omitted; it was not asked about Iranian influence.) What is notable here is that, among the other civilizations tested, only Sinic countries were positive and significant at the $p < .01$ level. Similarly, Islamic countries constitute the only grouping, relative to the West, to see a significant increase in odds of having a more positive view of China's influence.

The exceptions to Huntington are threefold. First, Orthodox perceptions of the US and Western perceptions of Russia are significantly lower than the respective reference groups, as the means analysis suggested. Second, the perceptions of other Sinic countries towards Chinese influence do not differ significantly from those in the West. Third, Japanese perceptions of China and Sinic perceptions of Japan are significantly lower than the expectations of the respective reference groups.

4.2 The Effects of Religiosity and Nationalism

Ceteris paribus, the impact of religiosity on perceptions of the United States differs across Sinic and Islamic societies: for the former, the effects are positive, but weak; for the latter, they are negative and, in the case of Malaysia and Pakistan, strong (Figures 8d and 8e). For Indonesians (8c) and the cross-national sample of Muslims, the z-test for the religiosity coefficient meets the significance standard of $p < .05$. Among Muslims, the nationalism coefficient is, however, positive, although its effects are mitigated by religiosity, as suggested by the negative sign on the interaction term, nationalism*religiosity ($p < .01$) (8b). Among Chinese, the interaction is also negative and significant (8a).

²In the case of Russia, we opted for Islam, rather than Japan, although both could have served as antagonists in the Huntingtonian scheme.

[Insert Figure 8 here]

Neither nationalism nor religiosity play any significant role in perceptions of China, but the effects of religiosity are positive and significant in the case of Asian Muslim and Pakistani perceptions of Iran (Figures 9a and b). The nationalism*religiosity term is positive and significant in the case of Chinese perceptions of Iran (Figure 9c). Nationalism and religiosity are both positive in Russian perceptions of the United States (Figure 8f) and Indian perceptions of Pakistan (plots omitted); in the Russian model, the coefficient for the nationalism*religiosity term is negative and the z test is significant at $p < .05$ (plot omitted). Among Pakistanis, religiosity has a statistically significant negative effect on perceptions of India (plot omitted).

[Insert Figure 9 here]

4.3 The Effects of Globalization and Westernization

The findings reveal that foreign exposure has positive effects on perceptions of the United States. For Sinic countries, China (Figure 10a), Russia (10h) and Pakistan (10d), its effect is significant at $p < .05$ or lower. For Islamic countries as a whole and Muslims, the positive effect of foreign exposure is impacted by its interaction with English skill (10c). English skill is positive and significant among Islamic countries and self-identified Muslims. The impact of foreign exposure is not positive across-the-board for Islamic Asians. Among Indonesians, foreign exposure has a *negative* influence (10e).

Foreign exposure also has a positive effect on Sinic and American perceptions of China (Figure 10b). The interaction term, education*English, however, is positive and the z-test statistic is significant at $p < .001$. Among Muslims, the coefficient for English is positive and the z test statistic is significant at $p < .001$ (plot omitted). In the Japanese model, the coefficient for English is positive and the z test statistic meets the baseline standard of significance at $p < .05$ (plot omitted).

Foreign exposure does not have meaningful effects on perceptions of Iran. Only in one instance is there an impact: among Asian Islamic publics, the effect was negative. Among Asian Christians, the English coefficient is negative (Figure 10f). Among Muslims, the interactive term, education*English, is positive and significant, although neither of the z-test statistics for its constitutive terms meet the $p < .05$ standard.

Foreign exposure boosts American, Chinese and Muslim perceptions of Russia (Figures 10h

and 10i). Among Japanese and Christians, foreign exposure has no significant impact. For Christians, the English coefficient is negative; the corresponding z test is significant at $p < .001$.

[Insert Figure 10 here]

4.4 The Effects of Control Factors: Standard of Living and Education

Of the control factors included in our model, two emerged as important in core state perceptions: Rs self-reported standard of living and education. Increases in living standard leads to more positive perceptions of American influence among Asian Muslims, including Pakistanis, Russians, as well as among Sinic countries as a whole. Among Malaysians, however, the effect of increased living standard is negative. Gains in standard of living have no effect on Chinese perceptions of the United States, but they do have a positive effect on Chinese perceptions of Japan. The perceptions of Japan held by Sinic countries and Russia are also positively influenced by standard of living. The positive effect of living standard is also significant in Asian Muslim and Sinic perceptions of China and Asian Muslim perceptions of Iran. Standard of living has a significant impact on the Indian-Pakistani relationship, with both publics having more positive perceptions of one another as their living standards increase.

Along with boosting Chinese perceptions of American influence, education plays a role in other cross-cultural and cross-national perceptions. Among Muslims and Pakistanis, education is *negative* in the model predicting US perceptions. Similarly, education has a reductive effect on American perceptions of China, although it significantly boosts the perceptions of China among other Sinic countries. Education's only significant effect on perceptions of Iran is negative, in the case of Asian Christians. Russian perceptions of Japan are boosted by education.

5 Discussion

This paper has revealed the following regarding the 'clash of civilizations' framework.

1. Evidence exists at the micro-level of faultlines between the United States and China, the United States and Russia and the United States and several Islamic states in the Asian Pacific – the most prominent being Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan. The faultline, as Huntington suggested, can be attributed in part to religiosity. The broader conflict between Asian Muslims, China and the United States is not based on religiosity alone, but its interaction with nationalism. The same interaction that has a reductive effect

on American influence has a positive effect on Iranian influence. Levels of nationalism, while high in China, remains low overall in much of the Asian Islamic world. Indonesia, Malaysia and Maldives are the exceptions.

2. Perceptions of core-state influence do not manifest as a zero-sum game between publics. In other words, although a civilization may identify with a core state, in doing so its citizens do not necessarily perceive out-civilization core states as imminent threats. Of the five faultlines that we identified, only the slope of US and Russia showed such a negative, zero-sum effect; yet as a lone predictor of perceptions of American influence, perceptions of Russian influence are statistically insignificant at the country-level. Some Islamic publics of Asia, with Pakistan, see both Iran and America as either neutral or good influences; in terms of the United States and China, only Pakistan and Malaysia appear to clearly favor the latter. Taiwan and Mongolia, at the same time, lean toward the United States. Islamic publics in Asia appear neutral in the case of India and Pakistan; similarly, peripheral states in the Sinic world identify with China without perceiving Japan as a bad influence. South Koreans are the lone exception.
3. Our key finding is that foreign exposure has a positive impact on most of these faultlines. Americans and Chinese as well as Americans and Russians show an increase in positive perceptions of one another as their common, everyday interaction with foreigners, foreign products and culture increases. Chinese perceptions of Russian publics, a minor faultline in the Huntington scheme, also improve with foreign exposure.
4. In the case of Asian Islamic perceptions of the West, the effects of foreign exposure vary. Muslims, overall, show gains in perceptions of the United States with greater foreign exposure, but that effect is predicated on the interaction between foreign exposure and Westernization – English language skill. Since higher education has a depressing effect on Muslim perceptions of the US, but English ability a boosting effect, the result suggests that better perceptions may be the result of applied, as opposed to academic, Westernization: in other words, engagement in business transactions or casual cultural interactions – for example, those that take place online. Foreign exposure can also generate a backlash effect in some Islamic states: as we saw, Indonesian perceptions of the US significantly diminish as they become more globally engaged.
5. The United States, China and Japan also benefit from higher standards of living. Muslim

impressions of American influence increase as living standard goes up, but their impressions of Iranian and Chinese influence also experiences the same positive effect. Similarly, non-Chinese Sinic perceptions increase for all three core states with higher living standards. The positive effects for both Indian perceptions of Pakistan (undertaken in a separate run) and Pakistani perceptions of India would seem to suggest that development and fairer income distribution may aid in bridging this divide.

6. The analysis, taken on the whole, has exposed some of the misplaced assumptions of the ‘clash of civilizations’ framework – at least as it would apply to the Asian Pacific region. Although the American/Islamic and American/Chinese faultlines are evident, and some affinities between Islam and China may be emergent, other predicted alignments – between Russia and the West, between China and her ‘tributaries’ as well as Japan – appear, to the Asian observer, simplistic. Where we have presented evidence that the Russian/American divide may be bridgeable through foreign exposure, or perhaps greater Russian nationalism (also positive and significant) and religiosity, the divisions within the Chinese sphere of influence are more complex. Rising levels of education and living standards may buffer the independent tendencies of Taiwanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Singaporeans, but Japanese/Chinese perceptions appear to be less mutable. In the Japanese model of China, only one factor in the model emerges as positive and significant: English skill. Similarly, among Chinese, only standard of living significantly improves perceptions of Japan. Putting aside the burdens of teaching English to Japanese, or raising Chinese incomes, the potential basis for alignment would seem to rest on notions of economic integration and the idea of ‘Asian values.’ The fact that foreign exposure was insignificant in both countries perceptions of one another, however, suggests that economic inter-dependency can continue to co-exist with cultural distinctiveness and political rivalry. Park (2010), for example, demonstrates how Chinese and Japanese public values differ in terms of their attachments to the multiple dimensions of Confucianism.

Ultimately, Huntington’s expectations about the deterministic influence of nationalism and religiosity on inter-state conflict are overstated. Globalization appears to play a role in boosting interstate perceptions; English, moreover, appears to play a mediating role between civilizations that seem *prima facie* destined to ‘clash’. This is, of course, not to endorse the grandiose ideal presented in the ‘universal civilization’ thesis refuted by Huntington, but to suggest that there,

in fact, may be a middle ground between war and utopia – one that can be found in the everyday cultural exchanges being made increasingly possible by an interconnected society. English may, in and of itself, may be “a tool for communication [than] a source of identity and community” but our work suggests that Huntington underestimates its potential. The Japanese banker and Indonesian (or Chinese) businessman who communicate in English are not necessarily Westernized, as Huntington argues, but they are engaging interculturally in a way that may ultimately mitigate their broader feelings of ‘us and them.’

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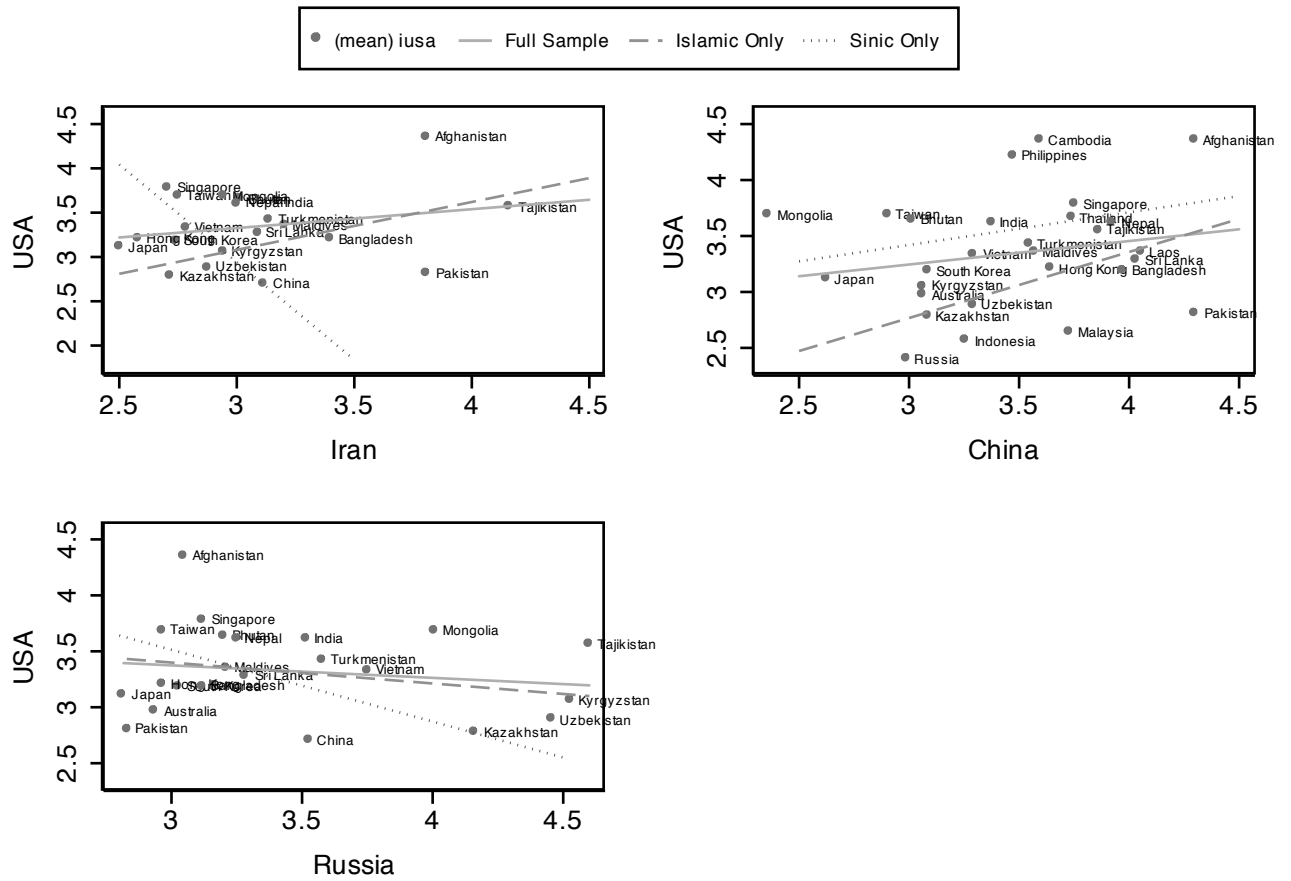


Figure 1: Scatterplots of State-Level Perceptions of USA Influence x Iranian, Chinese and Russia Influence

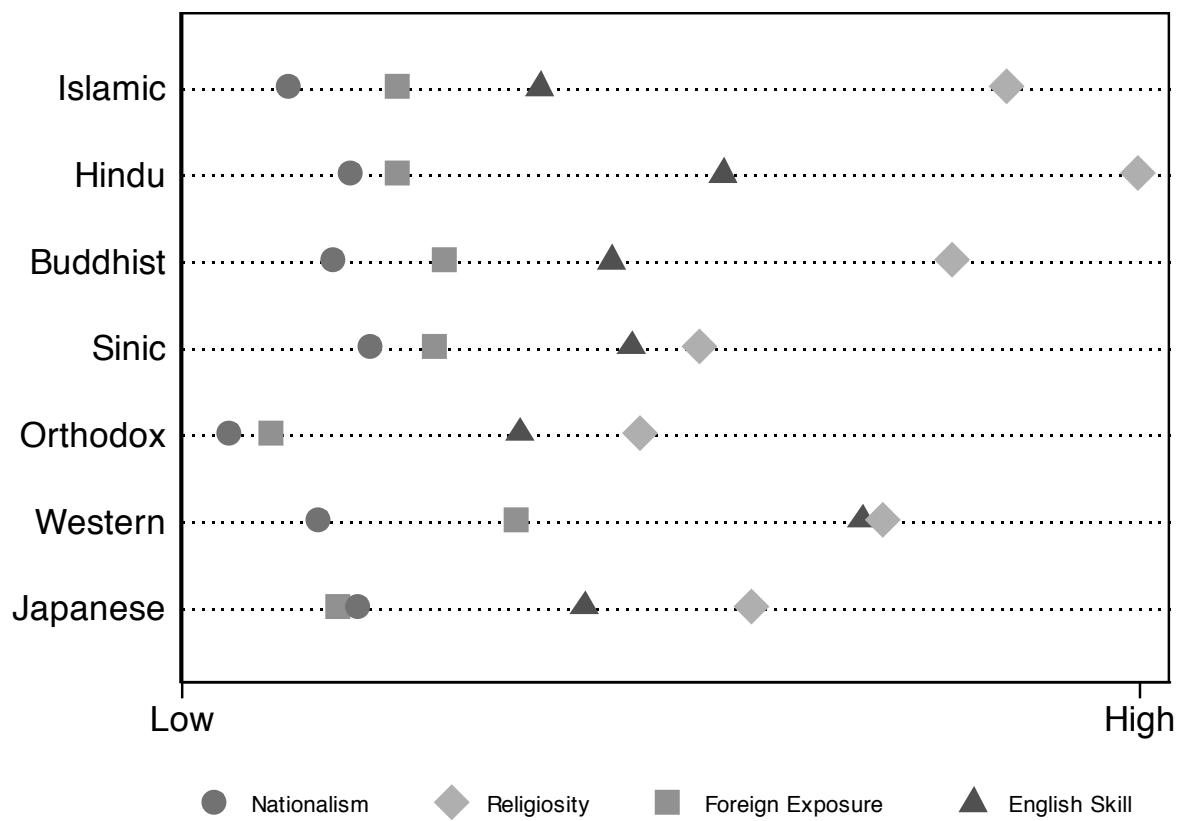


Figure 2: Mean Levels of Nationalism, Religiosity, Foreign Exposure and English Skill, by Civilization

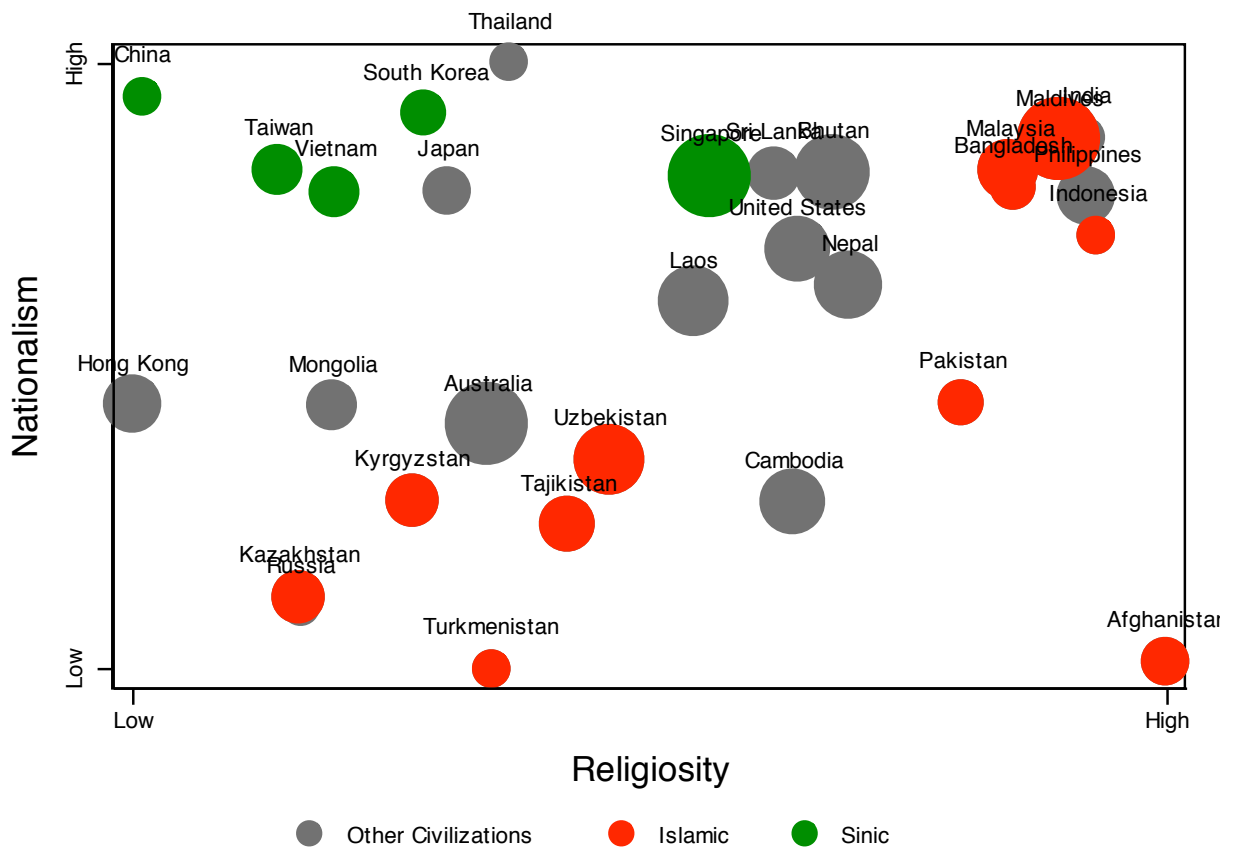


Figure 3: Scatterplot of Nationalism x Religiosity, weighted by Level of Foreign Exposure

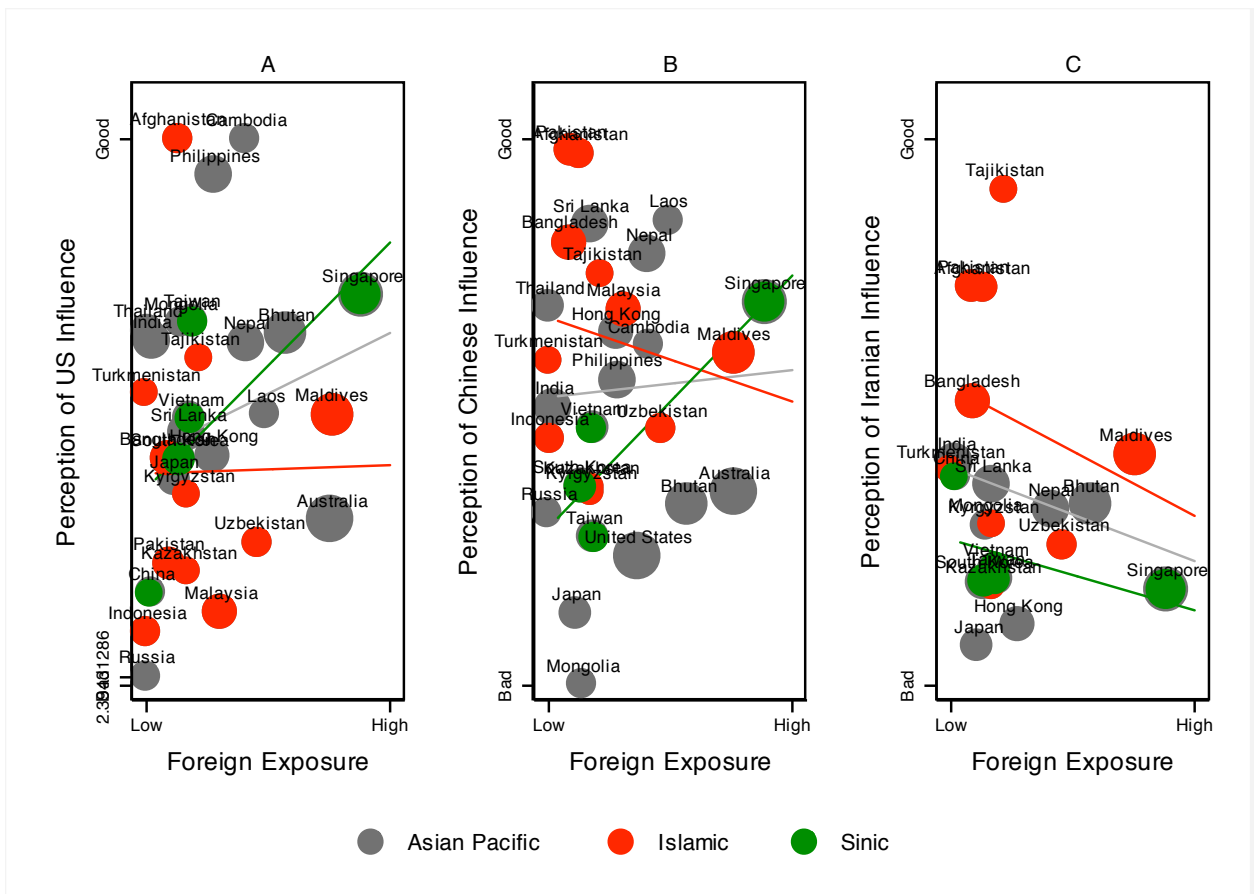


Figure 6: Scatterplots Showing Country-level Effect of Foreign Exposure on Perceptions of the US (a), China (b) and Iran (c), weighted by Level of English Skill

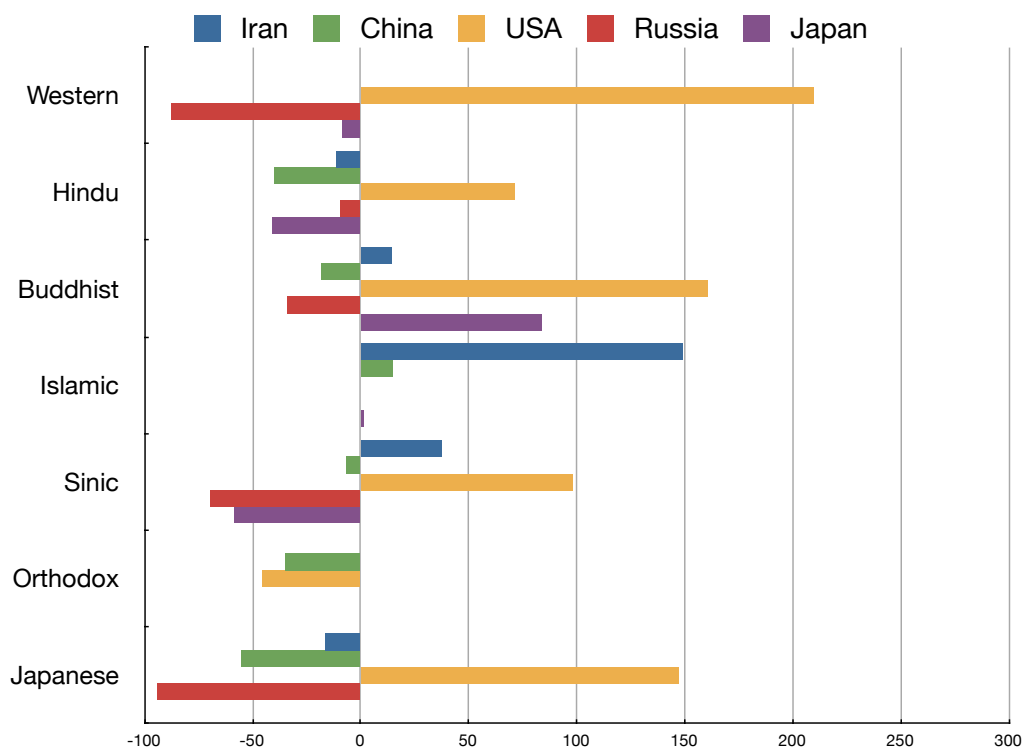


Figure 7: Percent Change in Odds of Seeing Core States as a “Good” Influence, by Civilization, vis-a-vis the Reference Group (Islamic for the US and Russia, Western for China and Iran, Orthodox for Japan), with other factors held at their means.

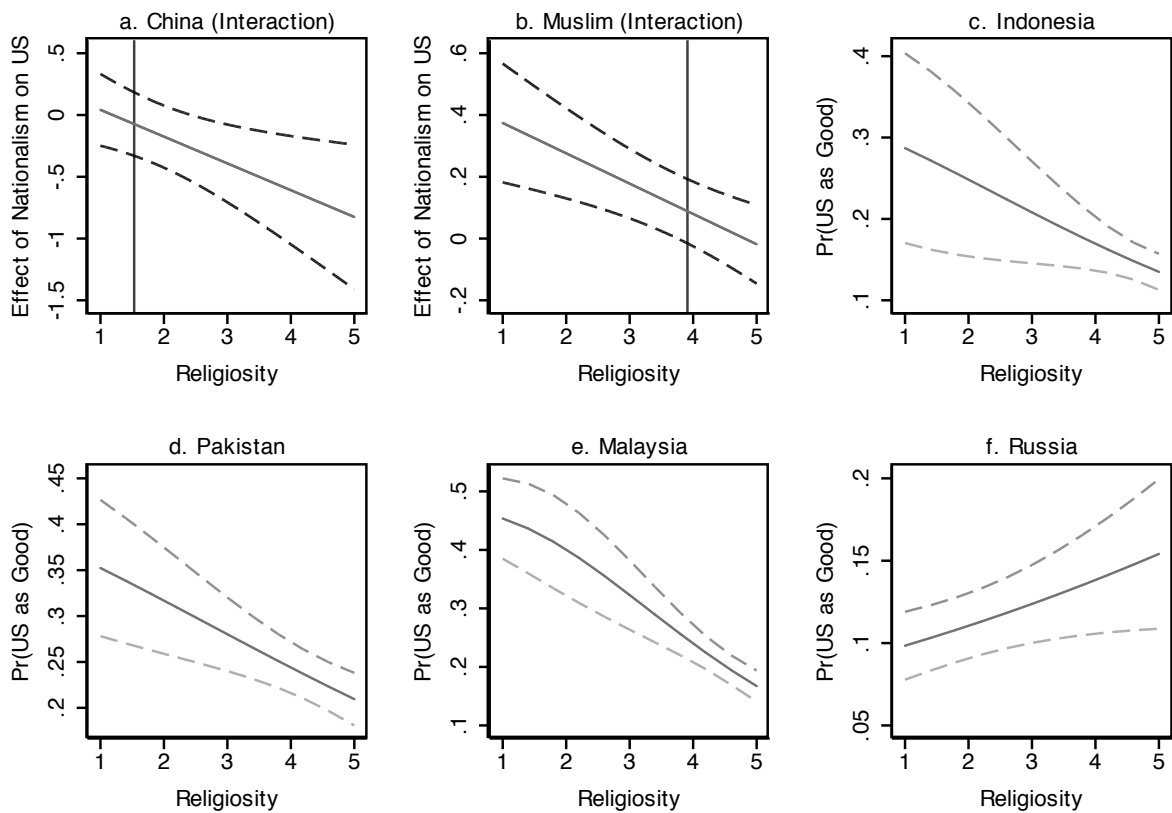


Figure 8: Illustrations of the Direct and Interactive Effects of Religiosity on Chinese (a), Muslim (b), Indonesian (c), Pakistani (d), Malaysian (e) and Russian (f) perceptions of the US, with other factors held at their means. Graphs (a) and (b) generated by `grinter` utility for Stata authored by Boehmke (2008)

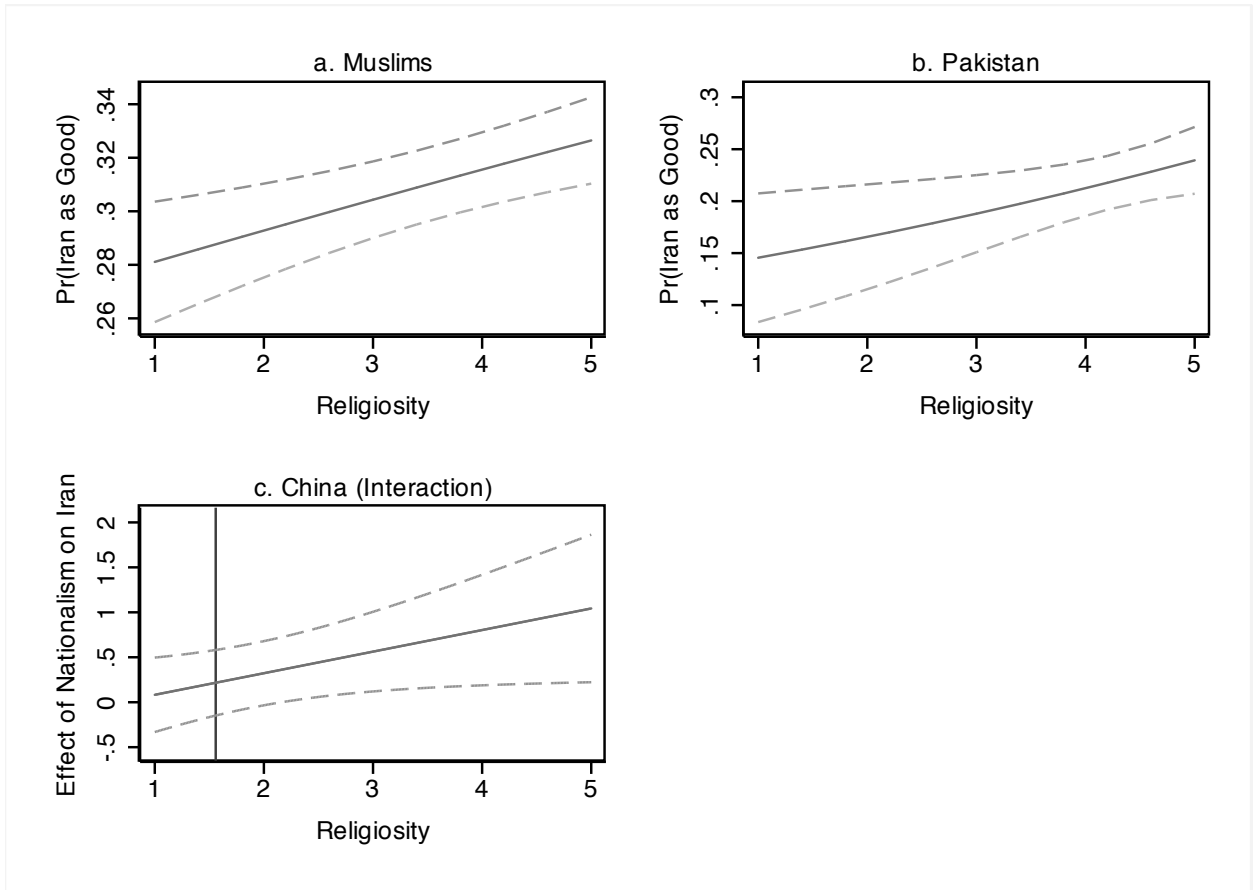


Figure 9: Illustrations of the Direct and Interactive Effects of Religiosity on Muslim (a), Pakistani (b) and Chinese (c) perceptions of Iran, with other factors held at their means. Graphs (a) and (b) generated by grinter utility for Stata authored by Boehmke (2008)

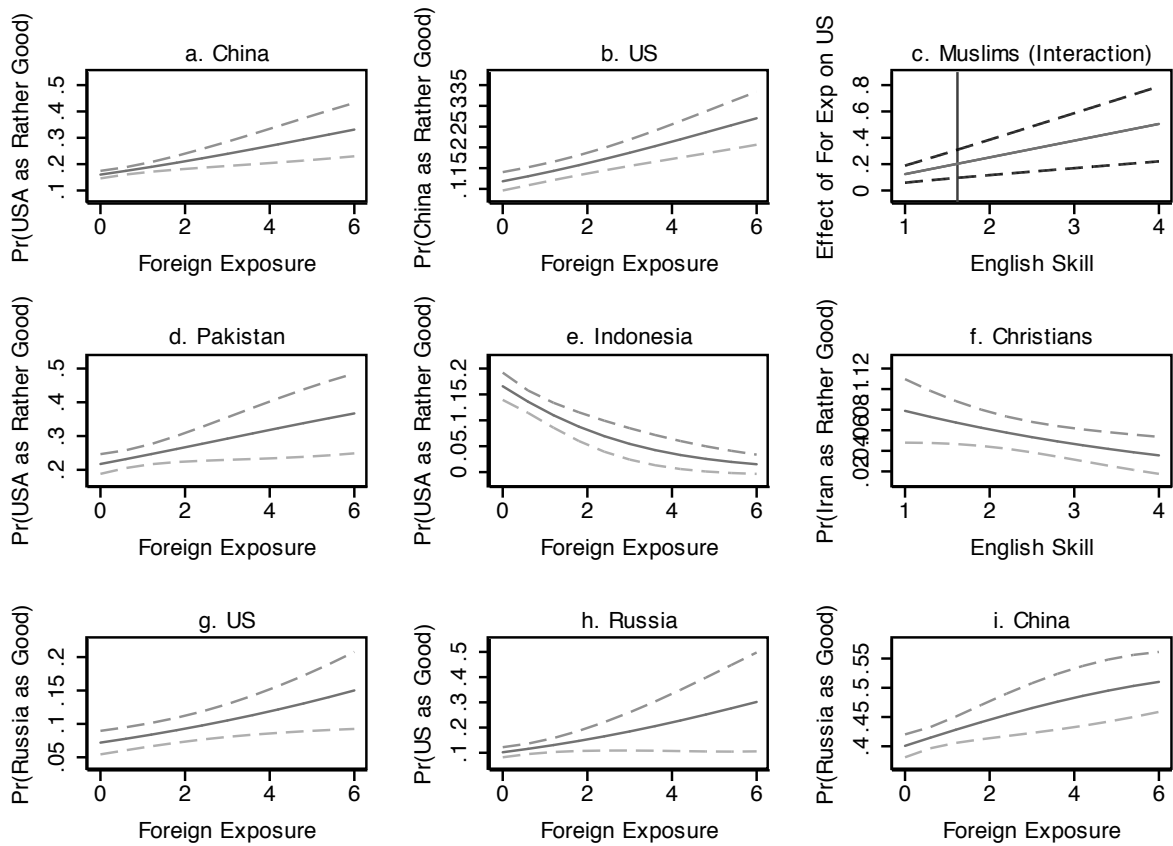


Figure 10: Illustrations of the Direct and Interactive Effects of Foreign Exposure and English on Chinese (a), Muslim (c), Pakistani (d), Indonesian (e) and Russian (h) Perceptions of the US, American perceptions of China (b), Russia (g), Asian Christian perceptions of Iran (f) and Chinese perceptions of Russia (i), with other factors held at their means. Dashed lines represent 95% confidence interval. Graph (c) generated by grinter utility for Stata authored by Boehmke (2008)

		Year	N
<i>Buddhist</i>	Bhutan	2005	801
	Cambodia	2007	1,012
	Laos	2007	1,000
	Mongolia	2005	800
	Myanmar	2007	1,000
	Sri Lanka	2005	813
	Thailand	2007	1,000
<i>Hindu</i>	India	2005	1,238
	India	2008	1,052
	Nepal	2005	800
<i>Islamic</i>	Afghanistan	2005	874
	Bangladesh	2005	1,008
	Indonesia	2007	1,000
	Kazakhstan	2005	800
	Kyrgyzstan	2005	800
	Malaysia	2007	1,000
	Maldives	2005	821
	Pakistan	2005	1,086
	Tajikistan	2005	800
	Turkmenistan	2005	800
	Uzbekistan	2005	800
<i>Japanese</i>	Japan	2006	1,003
	Japan	2008	1,012
<i>Orthodox</i>	Russia	2008	1,055
<i>Sinic</i>	China	2006	2,000
	China	2008	1,000
	Singapore	2006	1,038
	South Korea	2006	1,023
	Taiwan	2006	1,006
	Vietnam	2006	1,000
<i>Western</i>	Australia	2008	1,000
	Hong Kong	2006	1,000
	Philippines	2007	1,000
	United States	2008	1,002

Table 1: Country Coverage of AsiaBarometer and Civilizational Categorization, based on Huntington (1997), 26-7.

	<i>Obs</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
<i>Dependent Variables</i>					
Influence: USA	31442	3.278481	1.122525	1	5
Influence: China	29444	3.411051	1.052506	1	5
Influence: Iran	20311	3.0675	0.8540591	1	5
Influence: Russia	25377	3.377901	0.9266087	1	5
Influence: India	24142	3.282702	0.8567879	1	5
Influence: Japan	30429	3.537119	1.023025	1	5
<i>Independent Variables</i>					
<i>Civilization dummies</i>					
Western	33444	0.1196627	0.3245716	0	1
Islamic	33444	0.2926982	0.4550079	0	1
Hindu	33444	0.0923933	0.2895846	0	1
Buddhist	33444	0.1921421	0.39399	0	1
Sinic	33444	0.2113085	0.4082428	0	1
Orthodox	33444	0.0315453	0.1747887	0	1
Japanese	33444	0.06025	0.2379529	0	1
Development	33444	0.7494554	0.1473748	0.352	0.97
Religiosity	32983	3.234303	1.663213	1	5
Foreign Exposure	33444	1.01199	1.201149	0	6
Westernization	32779	1.985143	1.030497	1	4
Nationalism	32444	0.6637283	0.4724404	0	1
Standard of Living	33289	2.994713	0.7551607	1	5
Age	33444	39.17925	13.02918	20	69
Education	33335	1.99238	0.8152353	1	3
Gender	33444	0.4856177	0.4998006	0	1

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Variables in the Analysis

	USA			China			Iran			India			Russia			Japan		
	Mean/ SE/ SD	95L	95U	Mean/ SE/ SD	95L	95U	Mean/ SE/ SD	95L	95U	Mean/ SE/ SD	95L	95U	Mean/ SE/ SD	95L	95U	Mean/ SE/ SD	95L	95U
	Islamic	3.12 0.01 1.22	3.10	3.14	3.66 0.01 1.05	3.64	3.68	3.36 0.01 0.99	3.34	3.39	3.39 0.01 0.99	3.37	3.41	3.67 0.01 1.12	3.64	3.69	3.74 0.01 0.89	3.72
<i>Pakistan</i>	2.81 0.03 1.12	2.74	2.87	4.30 0.02 0.82	4.26	4.35	3.81 0.03 0.86	3.76	3.86	2.78 0.03 1.02	2.72	2.84	2.83 0.02 0.87	2.78	2.88	3.76 0.03 0.83	3.71	3.81
Hindu	3.61 0.02 0.99	3.58	3.65	3.52 0.02 0.99	3.48	3.55	3.10 0.02 0.73	3.07	3.13	3.30 0.04 1.06	3.23	3.38	3.44 0.02 0.93	3.41	3.48	3.72 0.02 0.89	3.69	3.75
<i>India</i>	3.61 0.02 1.03	3.57	3.65	3.38 0.02 1.03	3.33	3.41	3.16 0.03 0.89	3.12	3.22				3.51 0.02 1.02	3.47	3.56	3.61 0.02 0.92	3.57	3.65
Buddhist	3.67 0.01 1.00	3.64	3.70	3.50 0.01 1.09	3.48	3.53	3.02 0.01 0.53	3.00	3.04	3.89 0.02 0.98	3.85	3.93	3.50 0.02 0.78	3.47	3.53	4.00 0.01 0.88	3.98	4.02
Sinic	3.16 0.01 1.06	3.13	3.18	3.26 0.02 0.99	3.23	3.29	2.87 0.01 0.69	2.85	2.89	3.13 0.01 0.68	3.12	3.15	3.35 0.01 0.76	3.33	3.36	2.90 0.01 1.14	2.87	2.92
<i>China</i>	2.70 0.02 1.00	2.66	2.73				3.12 0.01 0.60	3.09	3.15	3.03 0.01 0.72	3.00	3.06	3.52 0.01 0.76	3.50	3.55	2.28 0.02 1.00	2.24	2.31
Orthodox	2.39 0.03 0.95	2.34	2.45	2.99 0.03 0.82	2.94	3.04				3.15 0.02 0.56	3.12	3.19				3.29 0.02 0.74	3.25	3.34
Western	3.46 0.02 1.04	3.42	3.50	3.25 0.02 0.96	3.22	3.28	2.58 0.02 0.66	2.54	2.62	3.00 0.01 0.65	2.98	3.02	2.91 0.01 0.60	2.89	2.93	3.47 0.01 0.86	3.45	3.50
<i>USA</i>				2.83 0.03 0.92	2.78	2.89				3.00 0.02 0.71	2.96	3.05	2.83 0.02 0.68	2.79	2.87	3.43 0.02 0.85	3.38	3.48
Japanese	3.11 0.02 0.94	3.06	3.15	2.62 0.02 0.91	2.58	2.66	2.50 0.02 0.78	2.46	2.55	3.15 0.01 0.54	3.13	3.17	2.82 0.01 0.60	2.79	2.84			
<i>Kruskal-Wallis</i>																		
df	6			6			5			6			5			5		
χ^2	1838.57			2049.43			1663.39			1491.64			2246.83			3474.85		
p	0.0001			0.0001			0.0001			0.0001			0.0001			0.0001		
N	31442			29444			20311			24142			25377			30429		

Table 3: Mean Perceptions of Core State Influence, Standard Errors and Standard Deviations By Civilization