Toward a Psychological Science of Globalization

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A psychological perspective has been largely absent in the multidisciplinary discourse surrounding globalization. In this commentary, we highlight the unique contributions that the articles in this special issue have made in advancing a new psychological science of globalization. We discuss the critical role that psychological theory plays in understanding reactions to globalization, and in turn, how globalization research provides a new context that challenges, refines, and extends psychological theory. We offer suggestions as to how psychology can take an active role in the future of globalization research, in particular in specifying the psychological dimensions on which globalization is construed (e.g., morality, power) and the implications these construals have for reactions to globalization. Building on research discussed in this special issue on psychological dynamics involved in responses to globalization, we offer some observations on factors that might play a role in positive and negative reactions to globalization.

Contributors to this volume have collectively paved the way for a new frontier in the study of globalization, adding a long overdue neglected dimension: The psychological dimension. Globalization, the rapid diffusion of economic, political, and cultural practices across national borders has a long past, with trade flourishing among people of different cultures as early as the 2nd century BC along the Silk Road that stretched from Rome to China (Elisseeff, 2000). Nevertheless, while globalization is not a new phenomenon, it has increased in unprecedented proportions in recent decades (Steger, 2009). Indeed, it is hard to find a phenomenon that has received more widespread discourse inside and outside the walls of academe. There is the *economic* dimension of globalization; the *political* dimension; the *sociological* dimension; the *technological* dimension, the *environmental* dimension; and the *marketing* dimension, all of which seek to capture the complex elephant

that is globalization (Lecher & Boli, 2008; Steger, 2009). Now, finally, with this special issue on the Social Psychology of Globalization we at last have the beginnings of a *psychological dimension* to add to the cacophony of intellectual voices on a topic that is arguably one of the most important revolutionary trends in the history of mankind (Giddens, 2010).

While other disciplines have been busy debating, explaining, and predicting the future of globalization and its invariably positive and negative impacts, psychology has been largely left out of this intellectual discourse (cf. Arnett, 2002). On the one hand, mainstream psychology has ignored globalization, being largely been preoccupied with research on Western samples (Arnett, 2008), people who have been described as "the WEIRDest people in the world" (*W*estern, *E*ducated, *I*ndustrialized, *R*ich, and *D*emocratic; Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; p. 61). On the other hand, cultural, cross-cultural, and indigenous psychologies— while championing the importance of culture—have tended to focus on how individuals are impacted by the cultures in which they are embedded, and have been much less concerned with how the global context affects human behavior. And while other disciplines implicitly make assumptions about psychological reactions in discussing the social consequences of globalization and policies for managing it (Lecher & Boli, 2008; Steger, 2009), there has been a paucity of psychological research to back them up. The result is a series academic lacuna on the psychological underpinnings of globalization that risks not only having an incomplete understanding of the phenomenon but also one that is potentially misleading.

This special issue begins to address this void, and marshals in a new psychological science of globalization. The collection of articles draws upon existing psychological theory, employs a diverse set of methods, and samples a wide range of cultures, to address such fundamental questions as: How do people make meaning of globalization—how it is perceived and experienced—similarly and differently across cultures? Are there universals in how people construe globalization? What might explain unique cultural construals and responses to globalization (Chiu, Gries, & Torelli, 2011; Kashima et al., 2011)? What are the dynamics of psychological reactions to globalization? What conditions foster exclusionary and ethnocentric reactions to globalization and a "closing of the mind" toward globalization? What conditions foster inclusionary processes, those that facilitate integrative thinking and an opening of the mind which can result in learning, creativity, and cross-border intercultural effectiveness (Cheng, Leung, & Wu, 2011; Gries, Crowson, & Cai, 2011; Morris, Mok, & Mor, 2011; Norasakkunkit & Uchida, 2011; Rockstuhl, Seiler, Ang, van Dyne, & Anne, 2011; Tong, Hui, Kwan, & Peng, 2011; Torelli, Chiu, Tam, Au, & Keh, 2011)? Above all, these articles get at what has been missing in the globalization literature— what is going on "inside the head" in understanding, experiencing, and reacting to globalization.

In this commentary, we take a bird's eye view of the special issue and highlight the unique contributions that the authors have made in advancing a new psychological science of globalization. We discuss the critical role that psychological theory plays in understanding reactions to globalization, and in turn, how globalization research provides a new context that challenges, refines, and extends psychological theory. Drawing on the insights from the volume, we also discuss a number of important areas for future research, including specifying additional dimensions on which globalization is construed—particularly with respect to the psychology of power, status, and morality—and the implications of these psychological dimensions for reactions to globalization. And building on a foundation set forth on psychological dynamics involved in responses to globalization, we offer some observations on factors that might play a role in positive and negative reactions to globalization.

The Two-Way Street: How Psychological Theory Informs Globalization Research and How Globalization Research Informs Psychological Theory

The articles collectively offer numerous insightful analyses that not only expand globalization research in other disciplines but also expand and refine existing psychological theory. For example, psychology has long been argued to be a discipline of meaning (Kashima & Gelfand, in press), and many have advanced lay theories on a wide range of psychological phenomena (e.g., Chiu, Hong, & Dweck, 1997; Dweck, 1999; Furnham & Rees, 1988; Hong, Levy, & Chiu, 2001; Heider, 1958; Malle, 2010; Kruglanski, 1989; Sternberg, 1985; Wegener & Petty, 1998). This volume also makes clear that individuals across the globe also hold *lay theories about globalization* with important implications for the types of experiences and reactions to this phenomenon. Yang et al.'s (2011) impressive cluster analysis, for example, illustrated for the first time that people in different samples conceptualize the elements of globalization in very similar ways, involving global business enterprises/brands, information technology, geographic mobility, global disasters, and international trade regulators. Kashima et al. (2011) likewise showed that people in many societies also have lay theories about the trajectories of globalization; whether it is PRC, Japan, or Australia, people generally think that development levels have increased from the past to the present and expect them to continue increasing into the future. In addition to identifying universal aspects of lay theories of globalization, the articles also highlight how the specific circumstances of cultures entering the global market can result in notable differences in how people make meaning of globalization. For example, both Yang et al. (2011) and Kashima et al. (2011) describe how the unique cultural histories of Australia and Pacific Rim countries affect their folk theories about globalization and lay theories of social change, and Norasakkunkit & Uchida (2011) further illustrate that the way in which globalization is experienced varies dramatically

even within any particular society. In all, the articles not only make a contribution to the interdisciplinary study of globalization by revealing that individuals hold lay theories about this trend, they also expand the psychological literature on lay theories that has yet to be applied to globalization.

The collection of articles in this volume illustrate that psychological theory provides important insight into when people have positive (inclusionary) versus negative (exclusionary) reactions to globalization. While economists, sociologists, and political scientists have long debated about the positive and negative impacts of globalization at a macro level (Giddens, 2010; Lecher & Boli, 2008; Steger, 2009), there has been little attention paid to how and when individuals experience globalization as an enhancement versus a threat. This volume illustrates how psychology adds another important voice to this interdisciplinary debate. For example, consistent with a long tradition of research on social categorization, the articles show that globalization can trigger an "us versus them" negative mentality when people view the juxtaposition of highly iconic representations of different groups (Chiu et al., 2011; Tong et al., 2011). Yet social psychology, with its penchant for studying how the power of the situation can dramatically affect social perception, can be fruitfully applied to understand *when* individuals react negatively to such social categorizations. For example, a key insight gleaned from these articles is that exposure to another foreign culture does not in and of itself cause negative outcomes. Torelli et al. (2011) showed that negative effects did not occur when Americans were exposed to just Chinese people or Chinese were exposed to just Americans; defensive processes only occurred when they were exposed to the two cultures simultaneously. Likewise, Tong et al. (2011) found that categorization in and of itself does not invariably lead to negative reactions. Rather, the effects of a categorization mindset were particularly strong when individuals perceive the two different cultural groups as highly dissimilar and also highly identify with their own local culture. Morris et al. (2011) similarly illustrate that people who typically have "exclusionary attitudes" (i.e., who do not identify with foreign cultures), are not necessarily threatened by foreign cultures per se, but the mixing of cultures that triggers the need for epistemic certainty and security. Interestingly, on the flip side, others have shown that under certain conditions, cultural mixing can have highly positive effects. In Cheng et al.'s (2011) article, creativity was sparked not simply when viewing a different group; it was the mixing that mattered for the generation of new ideas that pave the way for innovation. This research makes important contributions to the interdisciplinary study of globalization by illustrating how subtle differences in how people categorize other cultures vis-à-vis their own has a dramatic effect on their reactions. And in turn, this research also makes important contributions to basic psychological theory on social categorization by expanding the focus on "my group" versus "their group" to explore the psychological consequences of an exciting new paradigm on "cultural mixing" involving the direct juxtaposition of symbols of one group with another.

Yet another example of the "two-way" street of globalization and psychology research is in research that uses psychological theory to understand the factors that facilitate or inhibit cross-cultural understanding. For example, Gries et al. (2011) fruitfully applied intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954) to understand American's attitudes toward other governments and their citizens, with important implications for public policy debates. At the same time, the article challenges age-old assumptions that increased contact, when rewarding, improves intergroup attitudes. To the contrary, Gries et al. find that that in some cases increased contact through media exposure and objective knowledge of another group actually caused more "negative" reactions (e.g., toward Chinese governments), resulting in recommendations for much tougher foreign policies toward China. Indeed, based on the other articles in this volume (e.g., Morris et al., 2011; Torelli et al. 2011), we might speculate that these effects would be even more pronounced for individuals that are high on local identification, have high uncertainty, have mortality salience, and/or perceive the two cultures as highly dissimilar. More generally, this work illustrates that classic theories in psychology are critical for understanding international relations, and at the same time, the psychological theories need to be refined and expanded when applied to the globalization context.

Hidden Psychological Dimensions of Globalization

While the articles in this special issue are diverse in their content, a key theme that cuts across the articles is that people make meaning—they socially construct—issues of globalization and pave the way for additional research on the hidden psychological dimensions underling globalization. For example, scholars in numerous disciplines have debated whether globalization invariably reflects modernization, westernization, or Americanization, with hotly contested economic, political, cultural and ethical implications. Articles in this volume provide a much needed psychological perspective on this debate. Yang et al. (2011) show for the first time that people can clearly distinguish between globalization with modernization and westernization. At the same time, they also illustrate that there might be wide variability in how globalization is conceptualized. Indeed, a close look at the data illustrate that perceived associations between globalization and westernization and Americanization ranged widely in the four regions studied. Future research is needed to explain and predict variability in these construals, and to examine the conditions under which individuals conflate globalization with Americanization and with what consequence. For example, to the extent that individuals, conflate globalization psychologically with westernization or Americanization does this promote more exclusionary reactions and more negative views of American citizens and its government? Moreover, drawing on other articles in this volume, might such exclusionary reactions be exacerbated when individuals perceive their country as very dissimilar and/or identify highly with their local

culture (cf. Tong et al., 2011) and/or have high degrees of mortality salience (cf. Torelli et al., 2011)?

Likewise, while Yang et al. illustrated the issues that people most strongly associate with globalization (i.e., international trade, global consumption, technology, human mobility), future research with even broader sampling across different countries, socioeconomic groups, ages, and occupations might very well reveal additional meaningful dimensions, and/or differences in how people weigh different dimensions in defining globalization. For example, might the list of concepts that were identified as related to globalization by Yang et al. (2011) look different if individuals who hold more negative views of the phenomenon (e.g., members of Al Qaeda, the Taliban, anti-globalization activists) were sampled? Taking the dynamic perspective advanced in this volume, how individual and/or situational differences affect the specific globalization issues that are activated, the way they are categorized, and/or the weights people place on them is an exciting frontier in the psychological science of globalization.

Research in this volume has also begun to unearth implicit dimensions on which people evaluate globalization issues, pioneering an important area for future research. Yang et al. (2011), for example, showed that people across the four regions they studied perceive globalization as increasing competence and to some degree warmth, and have generally favorable evaluations of many globalization issues. This work provides a "rosy" view of evaluations of globalization, and future research is needed to examine the psychological factors that might cause more dour implicit evaluations. Do experiences with threat, need for closure, mortality salience, or cultural tightness (discussed below) affect the degree to which people see globalization as reflecting competence and warmth (or a lack thereof)? How do individuals' lay theories of social change (i.e., where one's country has been and where it is going; Kashima et al., 2011), affect their evaluation of the competence and warmth of their own and other societies, as well as their attitudes toward different globalization issues?

Future research is also needed to unearth other underlying psychological dimensions on which globalization is evaluated. One interesting psychological candidate in is that of morality. Moral foundations theory (Haidt, 2008; Haidt & Graham, 2007) in particular can be fruitfully applied to a psychological science of globalization. Haidt and Graham identified five fundamental moral values that relevant for the study of globalization including the morality of *care* (protecting others from harm), the morality of *fairness* (justice, treating others equally), the morality of the *ingroup* (loyalty to one's group, nation), the morality of *authority* (respect for tradition), and the morality of *purity* (avoiding contamination from things, foods, actions). Drawing on this work, we would suspect that there could be underlying "moral conflict" about different dimensions of globalization. For example, some might see unbridled geographic mobility (e.g., immigration) as violating morality of ingroup, tradition, or purity, whereas others might see it

through the lens of a morality of fairness and justice. Other dimensions of globalization identified by Yang et al. (2011), whether it is global business enterprises, information technology, global disasters, or international trade, might likewise be imbued with very different moral foundations across the globe. As well, the conditions under which "cultural mixing" (Chiu et al., 2011; Morris et al., 2011; Torelli et al., 2011) violates fundamental moral and sacred values has important implications for exclusionary reactions, and in the extreme, for conflict and the support for violence (Ginges, Atran, Medin, & Shikaki, 2007). For example, the moral outrage of many Muslims in Saudi Arabia as Americans set up military bases in their Islamic holy land during the Iraqi-Kuwait conflict (see Morris et al., 2011). These and other accounts of "taboo tradeoffs" (Tetlock, Kristel, Elson, Green, & Lerner, 2000) illustrate the critical importance of studying the moral foundations of globalization.

Power is also another important psychological dimension that individuals use to construe globalization. Throughout history, the drive for obtaining status and power has been thought of as a fundamental motivator of human behavior (e.g., Adler, 1966; Frieze & Boneva, 2001; Kipnis, 1976; McClelland, 1975, 1987; Winter, 1973). As the philosopher Hobbes (1651) put it simply: "I put for a general [sic] inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseath only in Death" (p. 161). To have power is to have control over resources, to have the ability to influence others' behavior, and to be able to act on your own volition (see Dahl, 1957; Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003). Relatedly, status is related to the position that one holds within a social network or hierarchy and the respect that an individual is conferred to by others (Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Sell, Lovaglia, Mannix, Samuelson, & Wilson, 2004). Power and status are major dimensions upon which humans evaluate themselves and others (Osgood, May, & Miron, 1975; Galinsky et al., 2003), and globalization should be of no exception. To what extent does cultural mixing make one feel less powerful and have lower status, creating "status conflicts" (Bendersky & Hays, in press) across cultural groups vis-a-vis globalization? Does the cultural mixing of Starbucks and the Great Wall, the juxtaposition of Chinese and American brands, or the merging of two different countries activate threats to one's status or power? As well, how might power and status be implicated in folk theories about the historical trends of one's society (Kashima et al., 2011)? Put differently, to what extent do individuals, through narratives and other cultural products that have been passed down, assess the degree to which their societies have more or less power or status, and what implication does this have for their reactions to cultural mixing and ultimately exclusionary or inclusionary processes (Chiu et al., 2011)? While many articles in this volume discuss the notion that globalization might elicit threats—whether to one's cultural identity, to maintaining categories, or to maintaining an economic advantage (Morris et al., 2011)—we suspect that power and status threats are important to add to this "psychological mix."

Psychological Dynamics and Globalization: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The articles in this volume illustrate an irony in reactions to globalization. On the one hand, globalization increases one's exposure to multiple cultures and can result in heightened perspective taking—and opening of the cultural mind—and associated positive consequences such as creativity (Chiu et al., 2011; Cheng, et al., 2011; Leung & Chiu, 2010; Maddux & Galinsky, 2009; Maddux, Leung, Chiu, & Galinsky, 2009). On the other hand, exposure to multiple cultures can also produce diametrically opposite results—the closing of the cultural mind, low perspective taking, and high ethnocentrism. Articles in this volume make great strides in charting out the conditions under which such inclusionary versus exclusionary reactions are exacerbated or attenuated. For example, we now know that factors that predict exclusionary reactions include existential anxiety (Torelli et al., 2011) and identification with one's local culture (Tong et al., 2011), and we would add other likely candidates such as cognitive load (Gilbert & Hixon, 1991; Sweller, 1988), need for closure (Kruglanski, Webster & Klem, 1993), political conservativism (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003), low relational and residential mobility (Oishi, 2010; Schug, Yuki, & Maddux, 2010, Schug, Yuki, Horikawa, & Yakemura, 2009), and cultural tightness (Gelfand et al., 2011). By contrast, factors that predict positive reactions include need for cognition (Torelli et al., 2011), identification with a foreign culture (Morris et al., 2011), multicultural experiences (Maddux & Galinsky, 2009; Maddux et al., 2009), cultural intelligence (Rockstuhl, et al., 2011) and perhaps factors such as general trust, high relational and residential mobility (Schug et al., 2009; 2010), and cultural looseness (Gelfand et al., 2011). By charting out the contextual and psychological processes that activate positive versus negative reactions to globalization, this volume helps to explain and predict when globalization will produce positive or negative responses.

A important principle identified across the articles is that while cultural mixing causes exclusionary reactions when one strongly identifies with one's own culture or when one faces existential threats (e.g., mortality salience), it can be reduced when the perceiver is motivated to engage in thoughtful elaboration about cultural complexities (Chiu et al., 2011; Cheng et al., 2011; Torelli et al., 2011). This analysis opens the exciting possibility of looking at interactions among other factors that might simultaneously foster attachment to one's group and the motivation to engage with others and their impact on reactions to globalization.

For example, many articles touched upon the role of identification with one's own culture (Tong et al., 2011; Torelli et al., 2011) versus the role of identification with a foreign culture (Morris et al, 2011), yet adopting a foreign or global identity needs not mean sacrificing one's local or cultural identity. Accordingly, we can consider the benefits of accepting global influence while simultaneously protecting one's local, cultural identities. Indeed, our own research (Lyons, Lun, & Gelfand, 2010, 2011) suggests that having either a global *or* a local identity

activated in isolation might not be ideal for psychological reactions to globalization; rather, having both identities activated produces more positive responses because it enhances feelings of both inclusion and distinctiveness. More specifically, we theorized that although adopting a shared identity can reduce intergroup bias by decreasing the salience of subgroup differences (Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989), social identity research lends theoretical support also to the benefit of maintaining *both* cultural/subgroup and shared identities. According to optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991), individuals experience tension between the need for group inclusiveness and the need for distinctiveness. In this view, while adopting a shared global identity fulfills the need for inclusiveness, and can reduce intergroup bias by decreasing the salience of subgroup differences (Gaertner, Dovidio, Nier, Ward, & Banker, 1999), it can at the same time deny an individual the distinct identity offered by one's subgroup national identity in intercultural contexts. Research has indeed shown that such conditions can lead individuals to identify more strongly with their subgroup and result in even more intergroup bias than when only subgroup identities are activated (cf. Hornsey & Hogg, 2000).

Accordingly, we theorized that if an individual adopts a shared identity while holding onto a subgroup identity, both the need for inclusiveness and the need for distinctiveness can be fulfilled, resulting in more inclusionary responses to outgroups (Lyons, et al., 2010, 2011). Data collected in the field and in the laboratory support this general notion. Using data from the 2005 World Values Survey, Americans who were high on both global and national identities were more trusting of people of other nationalities than those who were high on one identity or the other, or low on both, and this effect was also found in other samples including China, Australia, Indonesia, and Morocco. Moreover, high dual global-national identification predicted other measures of openness in other countries. For example, in Indonesia, high global-national identification predicted willingness to be neighbors with immigrants/foreign workers and people of a different race. In Lebanon, high global-national identification predicted willingness to be neighbors with Americans and support for inclusive attitudes within Lebanon itself (Lyons, Lun, & Gelfand, 2010). Other experimental research in which we primed shared and cultural identities also illustrated more cooperative reactions to outgroups when both subgroup and global identity were made salient. This suggests that one way to promote inclusionary reactions to globalization is to not only to uphold a global mindset, but also to simultaneously make concerted efforts to protect local, cultural identities. Under these conditions, individuals have the confidence to assert their local interests while being motivated to cooperate on a larger, global level.

While we have discussed how the interplay of having a high cultural and high global identification can produce positive responses to globalization, it is also interesting to speculate on the effects of just the opposite condition—having a low cultural identity and a low global orientation—and its impact on responses to

globalization. Such individuals do not identify with either identity and can be described having "identity confusion" (Arnett, 2002; see also Berry, 1970 for related work). As Arnett (2002) aptly put, for these individuals, "the images, values, and opportunities they perceive as being part of the global culture undermine their belief in the value of local culture practices. At the same time, the ways of the global culture seem out of reach to them, too foreign to everything they know from their direct experience. Rather than being bicultural, they may experience themselves as excluded from both their local culture and global culture, truly belonging to neither" (p. 778). Having low cultural and low global identification may put people at risk for anomie, social isolation, and health problems. Indeed, the insightful analysis by Norasakkunkit and Uchida (2011) in this volume of the NEETs population in Japan (i.e., not in employment, education, or training) is a case in point. Constituting hundreds of thousands of people in the population, NEETs face little prospects of securing desirable employment and participating in the global workforce, and have become marginalized from society. According to their data, they ultimately also lose their own cultural identity and become "cultural deviants" who differ widely in their attitudes from those in the local culture. Future research needs to look at the consequences of such identity confusion in the context of globalization, and how being marginalized affects psychological, social, and health outcomes across different cultures. As the authors note, while in some countries marginalization might take the form of passive withdrawal, in others it might result in active protests and even support for violence.

Conclusion

Globalization has increased dramatically in its scope and reach in the last several decades. The effects of globalization have been glamorized by its supporters and demonized by its opponents. Globalization has facilitated international trade and technological advances, and exposure to different cultures, which can promote learning and creativity. Yet at the same time, it has been criticized for eroding important cultural characteristics of societies, and as such globalization has met resistance from those who feel threatened by foreign influence, breeding distrust and suspicion throughout local communities. There have been numerous perspectives advanced on these issues in the interdisciplinary walls of academe over the last several decades. Psychology is a new on this interdisciplinary block to offer its insights into globalization, and as this special issue attests, provides novel perspectives on the way individuals make meaning of globalization and the factors that give way to integrative processes related to globalization while reducing exclusionary reactions to foreign cultures. The articles in this special issue have collectively paved the way for a psychological science of globalization that is a much needed perspective for theory and practice alike.

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