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Research Article

Attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China: Testing three theories of transnationalization

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Contents

1	Introduction	1414
2	Theoretical considerations and hypotheses	1416
2.1	Examining attitudes toward transnational marriage	1416
2.2	Transnational convergence	1417
2.3	Transnational distinction	1418
2.4	Individualized transnationalization	1420
2.5	Holistic formation of transnational orientation	1421
3	Data and method	1421
3.1	Data and sample	1421
3.2	Key individual-level variables	1423
3.3	Province-level variables	1425
3.4	Control variables	1426
3.5	Analytical strategy	1426
4	Results	1428
4.1	A Fourfold typology of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage	1428
4.2	Multilevel multinomial random-intercept regression results	1430
5	Discussion	1434
6	Acknowledgements	1437
	References	1438
	Appendix	1443

Attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China: Testing three theories of transnationalization

Yang Hu¹

Abstract

BACKGROUND

In an increasingly interconnected world, understanding the formation of transnational orientations is of great importance. Attitudes toward transnational intermarriage tell of people's view of the transnational world and their perception of the social distance between countries and regions.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this research is to identify the holistic formations of Chinese people's transnational orientations in relation to distinct countries and regions, and examine the individual- and province-level correlates of the distinctive profiles of transnational orientations in order to test theories of transnational convergence, transnational distinction, and individualized transnationalization.

METHODS

This research draws on individual-level data from the China General Social Survey ($N = 3,000$) and province-level data from the China Statistics Yearbook. Latent class analysis and multilevel multinomial random-intercept models are used to analyze the data.

RESULTS

A fourfold typology of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage is identified, namely cosmopolitan, pro-West, pro-East Asia, and anti-transnational. The results support the theory of transnational distinction rather than transnational convergence, as macro-level difference – instead of convergence in the level of transnational activity and, particularly, socioeconomic development between countries – fosters support for intermarriage. The thesis of individualized transnationalization is also supported, as individuals' region-specific cultural consumption positively predicts their exclusive support for intermarriage with people from these regions.

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CONCLUSIONS

The findings reveal the ways in which uneven socioeconomic development, globalization, and individualization configure people's transnational orientations in a development context.

1. Introduction

In all groups with developed 'ethnic consciousness', the existence and absence of intermarriage (connubium) would then be a normal consequence of racial attraction or segregation. (Weber 1978 [1922]: 385)

Since its publication in 1922, Max Weber's *Economy and Society* has inspired ongoing scholarly interest in intermarriage as an indicator of social distance between ethno-racial groups and between countries and regions of the world (e.g., Azzolini and Guetto 2017; Jones 2012; Kalmijn 1998). Although the behavioral enactment of intermarriage is subject to practical opportunities and constraints such as immigration policies, employment, and education (Fu 2001; Hu 2016a; Kalmijn 1998), people's attitudes toward transnational intermarriage offer insight into their latent tendency to form families across nation-state boundaries, the extent to which they view the world from a transnational perspective (Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Vertovec 2009), how they make sense of social distance between countries and regions (Pagnini and Morgan 1990), and how they may respond to and engage with macro-level transnational developments in an increasingly interconnected world (Held and McGrew 2007; Kellner 2002; Sassen 2013).

Exploring social attitudes toward transnational intermarriage also enables contending theories of the complex phenomenon of transnationalization to be tested. According to some modernization (e.g., Inglehart and Norris 2003; Goode 1970), world society (Meyer 2010), cosmopolitan urbanism (e.g., Binnie et al. 2005), and marriage market (Becker 1991) theorists, the conjecture of 'transnational convergence' posits that socioeconomic development, transnational trade, and population mobility between nation states may help establish a transnational marriage market and reduce social distance between countries and regions, thus fostering positive attitudes toward transnational marriage (e.g. Leung 2008; Routledge 2003; Vertovec 2009). Nevertheless, the opposite may hold true, because people may resist or resent rapid sociocultural homogenization and pursue greater distinctions across nation states. In this context, the theory of 'transnational distinction' indicates that it is the macro-level social difference rather than convergence in the levels of socioeconomic development and transnational activity between places that helps buffer the negative impact of close transnational

encounters and render transnational intermarriage a desirable means of attaining symbolic mobility (Constable 2010; Farrer 2008; Hou and Myles 2013; Hu 2016a). Besides these all-encompassing macro-level developments, modern communication technologies have equipped individuals with unprecedented opportunities to personalize their transnational preferences and practices (Castells 2010; Donald, Hong, and Keane 2014). As a result, the conjecture of individualized transnationalization posits that individual-level transnational cultural consumption may further nuance the configurations of attitudes toward intermarriage (Kim 2008; Ray 2007).

Mainland China (hereafter ‘China’) provides an ideal context in which to test these major contending theories, particularly given its rapid yet uneven socioeconomic development, urbanization, and transnationalization in the past few decades. First, the 1978 economic reform prioritized the development of urban and coastal areas, leading to considerable inter-province and rural–urban socioeconomic disparities (Whyte 2010). The rural–urban dichotomy has been further exacerbated by the *hukou* (household registration) system (Chan 2015). Second, although the 1978 open-door policy enabled population mobility and trade and cultural exchanges to take place between China and the international world, the policy was more vigorously implemented in urban areas and coastal provinces, resulting in a highly fragmented geographic pattern of transnationalization in China (Leung 2008). Third, the enforcement of collective socialist ideals has been relaxed in the post-reform era, enabling people to personalize their cultural consumption in relation to other countries (Donald, Hong, and Keane 2014; Fung 2013). Nationally representative research on attitudes toward transnational marriage is scarce in China. Situating existing theories in the Chinese context, this research holds the promise of yielding illuminating insights into how socioeconomic development and growing global interconnectedness intersect to configure individuals’ transnational orientations.

This research also suggests a further conceptual and methodological innovation in understanding the formation of transnational orientations. A major problem with past research on attitudes toward transnational intermarriage lies in the treatment of distinct countries and regions as separate, unrelated entities (e.g., Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Perry 2013). Nevertheless, perceptions of social distance between parts of the world are likely to be formulated in relative terms and in conjunction rather than in isolation. This requires scholars to duly acknowledge the underlying interconnections between individuals’ attitudes toward intermarriage with people from distinct countries. To detect these underlying interconnections, I use latent class analysis to identify the typology of Chinese people differentiated by their holistic configurations of attitudes toward intermarriage with people from distinct countries and regions. Whereas most existing research focuses on individual-level dynamics (Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Kalmijn 1998), I examine the correlates of the typology within a multilevel framework in order to

test the three sets of theories – transnational convergence and transnational distinction, which operate at a macro level, and individualized transnationalization at an individual level. The empirical analysis draws on the 2008 China General Social Survey and the 2009 Chinese Statistics Yearbook, which contain the most up-to-date nationally representative data on social attitudes toward intermarriage in China.

2. Theoretical considerations and hypotheses

2.1 Examining attitudes toward transnational marriage

The rate of transnational marriage remained low for decades in socialist China. Since the implementation of the open-door policy in 1978, the number of transnational marriages has grown rapidly (Farrer 2008; Hu 2016a). The burgeoning body of research on transnational marriage in China focuses predominantly on people's marital practices and migratory behaviors (e.g., Constable 2010; Farrer 2008), while no research has focused on social attitudes toward transnational marriage. As the ideational perspective is key to understanding family and demographic changes (Jayakody, Thornton, and Axinn 2012), it is pertinent to remedy the gap in existing research by explicitly examining attitudes toward transnational marriage in China.

Notably, one may well expect a gulf between social attitudes and enacted behaviors and between expressed attitudes and internalized values. Nevertheless, the importance of examining social attitudes does not lie in its capability to accurately predict social behaviors. Nor do we assume expressed attitudes to be insusceptible to social desirability. Rather, expressed attitudes are revealing of people's latent tendencies to respond to the structural conditions of life in the presence of normative expectations (Jayakody, Thornton, and Axinn 2012). Here it is crucial to distinguish generalized social attitudes from individual preferences, as the former concerns diffuse social acceptability while the latter is bound by specific individual circumstances, dispositions, etc., though the two are often mutually constituent.

In the West, existing research consistently reveals the 'fading of a taboo' as people exhibit increasing levels of support for intermarriage in countries such as the United States (83% approval in 2009, 48% in 1987; Pew Research Centre 2017) and the United Kingdom (83% approval in 2012, ca. 50% in the 1980s; Storm, Sobolewska, and Ford 2017). However, we should be cautious when comparing such statistics across countries, as the data in different countries measures very different types of intermarriage (e.g., race, ethnicity, nationality). Moreover, distinct social groups are used as cognitive cues in the construction of attitudes in different countries (e.g., racial groups in the United States, ethnic groups in the United Kingdom, national and migrant groups in the Netherlands).

2.2 Transnational convergence

One major theoretical conjecture regarding the formation of transnational orientation and family change across the globe is that of ‘transnational convergence.’ In line with the Weberian principle that intermarriage reflects the attraction between or separation of social groups (1978 [1922]), individual-level social attitudes toward transnational intermarriage may be closely associated with the macro-level social distance between countries and regions (Kalmijn 1998; Pagnini and Morgan 1990). Such social distance is widely believed to be narrowing, particularly in developed and urbanized areas (Sassen 2013). This belief is propelled by four major streams of theory.

First, some modernization theorists such as Goode (1970) and Inglehart and Norris (2003) predict a trend of global convergence, arguing that socioeconomic development will eventually lead to the diffusion and endorsement of a global culture (e.g., family and gender values) across geographic and nation-state boundaries. Second, it is argued that increasing transnational activities such as trade and cultural exchanges, economic interdependence, and population mobility may help blur nation-state boundaries, reduce social distance, create a diffuse world society, and bring people from different countries and regions closer together (Meyer 2010; Routledge 2003; Vertovec 2009). Third, these theories are echoed by cosmopolitan urbanism (Binnie et al. 2005), which suggests that people from metropolitan and urban places tend to be open to heterogeneity, accepting of hybridity, and thus likely to support transnational intermarriage. This may be further reinforced by the rise of ‘global’ cities, particularly as the processes of urbanization become increasingly homogenized around the world (Sassen 2013). Fourth, marriage market theorists underline the importance of opportunity structure in shaping marital orientations (Becker 1991; Kalmijn 1998). Despite a lack of national statistics on the transnational marriage market in China, existing region-specific studies indicate that the opportunity structure of transnational marriage closely mirrors the geographic patterns of international migration, global exposure, and interactions enabled by socioeconomic development and transnationalization (Farrer 2008; Hu 2016a; Nehring and Wang 2016).

In the past few decades, due to partial economic reforms and the limited reach of the 1978 open-door policy, China’s socioeconomic development, urbanization, and transnational activities have taken place unevenly across the country’s vast geographic span. The geographic divides operate along two lines. First, following the instruction of China’s former leader Deng Xiaoping to “let some people become rich first,” the economic reforms and open-door policy were prioritized in coastal provinces rather than in the western hinterland. This has led to considerable inter-province variation in the level of socioeconomic development and the volume and intensity of transnational activities (Li and Wei 2010; Whyte 2010). Second, China’s rapid yet uneven urbanization has led to entrenched rural–urban divides, as urban areas march far ahead of rural areas in terms of socioeconomic development and transnational activity (Whyte

2010). The rural–urban divide has been exacerbated by the hukou policy, which limits people’s geographic mobility by restricting access to welfare resources such as medical care, unemployment subsidy, and education to specific rural or urban locales (Chan 2015). Although recent changes in the hukou policy have led to phenomenal internal migration in China, rural hukou retains its low socioeconomic, cultural, and symbolic status relative to urban hukou, the level of transnationalization remains low in rural China, and rural-to-urban migrants are denied full access and exposure to urban culture (Chan 2015).

Therefore, if the conjecture of transnational convergence holds true, we would expect the influences of socioeconomic development, transnational activities, and urban (as opposed to rural) status to help foster supportive attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China, particularly with people from developed countries and regions.

Hypothesis 1: *Urban hukou holders are more likely to support transnational intermarriage than rural hukou holders (H1A), and individuals from more socioeconomically developed and more transnationalized provinces are more likely to support transnational intermarriage than individuals from less socioeconomically developed and less transnationalized provinces (H1B).*

2.3 Transnational distinction

By contrast, a second line of theories underlines the importance of ‘transnational distinction’ rather than homogenization in fostering supportive attitudes toward transnational intermarriage. According to Levi-Strauss (1978: 20), “there are contradictory tendencies always at work – on the one hand towards homogenization and on the other hand towards new distinctions.” On the one hand, instead of following macrosocial trends of transnational convergence, some people may resist or even resent rapid socioeconomic and cultural homogenization and thus pursue greater distinctions in response to the rise of urbanization and globalization (Held and McGrew 2007; Kellner 2002). Thus, individuals from more transnationalized places may develop an aversion to growing global interconnectedness and homogenization. This has been illustrated by accruing anti-globalization sentiments and movements in transnationalized and developed Western countries and regions in recent years (Veltmeyer 2008). Furthermore, the ‘contact-threat’ theory suggests that people may be more likely to endorse foreign concepts (e.g., migrants, intermarriage) from a safe distance rather than at close quarters (Seoane and Taddei 2002). In this light, the heterogeneity between places – ‘transnational

distinction’ – may serve as a safety buffer that encourages support for transnational intermarriage.

On the other hand, individuals may proactively value and seek transnational distinction. Building on Becker’s (1991) economic treatise on the family, intermarriage is conceptualized as a rational act of status seeking. Whereas classical status-exchange theories focus on socioeconomic characteristics at an individual level (Fu 2001; Hou and Myles 2013; Kalmijn 1998), recent theoretical developments have drawn attention to the role of country-level traits in motivating the pursuit of (more) generalized and non-pecuniary symbolic mobility through transnational intermarriage (Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Constable 2010; Farrer 2008; Hu 2016a). These theories posit that individuals may conceive intermarriage with people from (more) developed countries as a means of attaining upward mobility along a symbolic gradient of development (Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Glick Schiller and Salazar 2012), and the gradient is seen to closely mirror diffuse socioeconomic indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP) and levels of income and human development (Veltmeyer 2008). This proactive transnational status seeking is vividly exemplified by extensive examples of global hypergamy, passport unions, and mail-order brides that usually occur in marriages between more- and less-developed countries (e.g., Constable 2010; Farrer 2008; Zare and Mendoza 2012). In China, the belief is widespread that the West – namely North America and Europe – surpasses China in terms of socioeconomic and human development (Goodman 2004). China is also widely believed to rank below Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan in socioeconomic terms, although evidence has emerged that this belief is slowly diminishing due to China’s rapid development in the last few decades (Goodman 2004).

If the conjecture of ‘transnational distinction’ holds true, individuals with rural (as opposed to urban) hukou and from less transnationalized and less socioeconomically developed provinces in China may be more likely to view transnational intermarriage, particularly with people from developed countries and regions, as less of a threat, or as a means of attaining upward symbolic mobility. This leads to the second set of hypotheses.

Hypothesis 2: *Rural hukou holders are more likely to support transnational intermarriage than urban hukou holders (H2A), and individuals from less socioeconomically developed and less transnationalized provinces are more likely to support transnational intermarriage than individuals from more socioeconomically developed and more transnationalized provinces (H2B).*

2.4 Individualized transnationalization

Transnational orientation pertaining to marriage and family formation is not only shaped by all-encompassing macro-level processes operating from the top: it is also nuanced by diverse lived experiences on the ground. After the 1978 economic reform and the open-door policy, the Chinese government relaxed its enforcement of collectivist ideals. Instead of a centralized, collective economy it promulgated a market-oriented and state-guided economic system. These social events have contributed to the individualization of Chinese society (Yan 2009). Chinese people are no longer subsumed within collectivities and macrosocial trends, as they lift anchor from traditional moorings to pursue distinctive personhood (Halskov and Svarverud 2010). Meanwhile, modern media and communication technologies have rendered cultural materials such as music, films, and news readily accessible and easily affordable (Castells 2010). Chinese citizens are seen to personalize their daily consumption of transnational culture in virtual (e.g., internet, media) and physical (e.g., international travel) forms (Fung 2013), albeit constrained by state-guided censorship and border controls. Individual transnational engagement – its presence or absence – has become crucial to the formation of individual personhood in China (Donald, Hong, and Keane 2014).

The influence of individual agency on the formation of transnational orientation is core to the emerging theories of ‘individualized transnationalization’ (e.g., Kim 2008; Ray 2007). According to these theories, individuals’ consumption of specific transnational cultural genres may help cultivate a sense of sociocultural affinity (Kim 2008) and generate imaginaries of intermarriage with people from the countries and regions that are typically associated with these cultural genres (Ray 2007; Spigel 1992). In China, people actively associate distinctive cultural genres such as Japanese manga, Korean television drama, and Western jazz and classical music with distinct countries and regions of the world (Fung 2013; Olofsson and Öhman 2007). If the theoretical conjecture of ‘individualized transnationalization’ holds true, we would expect the consumption of specific cultural genres to inculcate country- or region-specific as opposed to cosmopolitan transnational orientations.

Hypothesis 3: *Individuals’ transnational cultural consumption in relation to specific countries and regions is positively associated with exclusive support for transnational intermarriage with people from these countries and regions.*

2.5 Holistic formation of transnational orientation

Most researchers have examined social attitudes toward transnational intermarriage with people from a single country or region (e.g., East Asia, Europe, and North America) or multiple countries and regions as separate unrelated entities (e.g., Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Perry 2013). This approach fails to account for the fact that individuals may have a holistic view of the transnational world, and that perceptions of social distance between countries and regions are formulated in conjunction and in relative terms rather than in isolation (Beck-Gernsheim 2007). Without profiling individuals' attitudes toward intermarriage with people from a repertoire of distinct countries as a whole, the approach of existing analyses limits their engagement with the key concepts and testing of major theoretical conjectures of transnationalization. For example, cosmopolites may embrace heterogeneity and thus consistently support intermarriage with people from all countries and regions, whereas others may object to transnational intermarriage altogether (Binnie et al. 2005; Olofsson and Öhman 2007). Meanwhile, the thesis of individualized transnationalization suggests that individuals may develop multifaceted orientations favoring certain countries and regions over others (Kim 2008; Ray 2007). Therefore, it is crucial to follow a holistic conceptualization of transnational orientation to delineate a full picture of the extent of individuals' transnational (dis)connectedness. This conceptualization equally requires an appropriate methodology to identify whether and how individuals' view of one given country or region is (un)related to their view of another country or region.

3. Data and method

3.1 Data and sample

The individual-level data is drawn from the 2008 China General Social Survey (CGSS, see www.chinagss.org). Although more recent waves of the CGSS have been conducted, the 2008 CGSS includes a special Globalization Module that provides the most up-to-date information on Chinese people's attitudes toward transnational intermarriage. Led by China's Renmin University and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the CGSS is one of the largest-scale nationally representative social surveys in China. The rate of response to the 2008 CGSS was 54.32%, which compares favorably with established surveys such as the 2014 European Social Survey in Germany (31.4%),

the United Kingdom (41.6%), etc. (Beullens et al. 2016).² In the Globalization Module, multi-stage stratified probability-proportional-to-size sampling was used to survey 3,009 individuals from 500 street areas in 125 cities and towns across China. One member of each household was randomly selected. To construct the analytical sample I eliminated 9 cases with missing information on key variables, yielding a final sample of 3,000 individuals. The province-level indicators are extracted from the 2009 Chinese Statistics Yearbook (CSY, see <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/>). Compiled by China's National Statistics Bureau, this database offers a comprehensive set of macro-level indicators of China's socioeconomic and cultural development in 2008. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the sample.³

² The modest response rate of the 2008 CGSS means the data could be susceptible to potential sampling bias, though the distribution of the CGSS sample resembles that of the 2010 Census in the dimensions of age, education, rural/urban residence, etc. (National Statistics Bureau of China 2011).

³ In addition to the variables reported in Table 1, I also experimented with including variables such as respondents' ethnicity, religiosity, current economic activity, whether they had one or more sons or daughters, whether they had living/co-residing parent(s), and their sibship, age (instead of generation) and marital status, because previous studies suggest that these variables may condition preferences and relative position in the Chinese marriage market (Hu 2016c). However, these variables are excluded from the analyses reported in this paper because 1) they were not significantly associated with attitudes toward transnational marriage, 2) their inclusion did not contribute to increasing the overall model fit, and 3) their inclusion did not affect the results for the other variables reported in this paper. This is not surprising because generalized social attitudes rather than personal preferences are examined in this research, and the effects of the variables may have already been captured by variables such as generation, education, etc.

Table 1: Sample characteristics (N = 3,000)

Parameter	Mean/ percentage	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Individual-level support for transnational intermarriage with people from...</i>				
Japan	.28	.45	0	1
South Korea	.44	.50	0	1
Taiwan	.63	.48	0	1
Europe	.41	.49	0	1
North America	.37	.48	0	1
<i>Individual-level characteristics</i>				
Male (ref = female)	.48	.50	0	1
<i>Generation</i>				
Pre-socialist (before-1950)	.16	.37	0	1
Socialist (1950–1965)	.33	.47	0	1
Cultural revolution (1966–1976)	.28	.45	0	1
Reform (1977–)	.23	.42	0	1
<i>Level of education</i>				
No	.09	.28	0	1
Primary school	.24	.43	0	1
Middle school	.36	.48	0	1
High school	.16	.37	0	1
Higher education	.15	.36	0	1
Urban hukou status (ref = rural)	.51	.50	0	1
Rural-to-urban migrant (ref = no)	.06	.24	0	1
CCP member (ref = no)	.11	.31	0	1
<i>Family income level</i>				
1 st quartile (lowest)	.29	.46	0	1
2 nd quartile	.24	.43	0	1
3 rd quartile	.19	.39	0	1
4 th quartile (highest)	.22	.42	0	1
NA (missing, refused, etc.)	.05	.22	0	1
<i>Individual-level transnational cultural consumption</i>				
East Asian cultural consumption ^a	0.00	0.75	-1.05	2.07
Western cultural consumption ^a	0.00	0.89	-1.66	2.64
Proficient English user (ref = no)	.13	.34	0	1
<i>Province-level factor</i>				
Level of transnational activities ^a	0.00	1.00	-0.62	4.20
Level of socioeconomic development ^a	0.00	1.01	-0.93	2.92

Note: CCP = Chinese Communist Party. Dummy variables are indicated by a minimum value of 0 (No) and a maximum value of 1 (Yes). Results for factor analysis of province-level indicators are reported in Appendix Table A-1 and descriptive statistics aggregated at province level are available upon request. Province-level statistics reported in this table are calculated based on the 28 provinces.

^a A larger positive score indicates a higher level.

3.2 Key individual-level variables

Attitudes toward Transnational Intermarriage. In the 2008 CGSS the respondents were asked the following question: “Would you accept people from Japan as kin by marriage?” The question was repeated for South Korea, Taiwan, and Europe and North America, respectively. The answers were recorded using a dummy variable distinguishing between “no” (0) and “yes” (1). It is worth noting that by asking people whether they would accept

transnational marriage as part of their kinship network instead of their own marital preference, this measure has been widely used to measure generalized social attitudes as opposed to specific individual preferences (Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Storm, Sobolewska, and Ford 2017), though the two are often mutually constituent.

Hukou status. Given China's rural–urban divide in social attitudes (Hu 2016b), and to distinguish between rural and urban areas that feature different levels of socioeconomic development and transnational activity, I include individuals' hukou status distinguishing rural and urban types. I use hukou rather than location of residence to distinguish between rural and urban status because hukou is primarily responsible for the rural–urban distinction in symbolic status and access to socioeconomic and cultural institutions in China (Chan 2015). Approximately 51% of the respondents had urban as opposed to rural hukou at the time of the survey.

East Asian cultural consumption. The 2008 CGSS included three measures of consumption of cultural and media content that are typically associated with East Asian countries, namely Japanese manga, South Korean television drama, and Chinese films. The responses for each genre of consumption were recorded on a four-point scale ranging from “often” (1), “sometimes” (2), and “seldom” (3), to “never” (4). The scales were reversed such that a higher score indicates a higher level of consumption. Cronbach's alpha test (0.65) reveals a medium level of internal consistency between the three items. Exploratory factor analysis further indicates that the three measures form a single factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1, and that the three items load more or less equally on the factor. I calculate the Bartlett factor score to obtain an index for East Asian cultural consumption. A higher value for the index indicates a higher level of East-Asia-related transnational cultural consumption.

Western cultural consumption. Rather than measuring individuals' actual consumption of Western cultural material, the 2008 CGSS contains a battery of measures on people's preference for certain Western cultural genres, namely Western classical music, rock music, and jazz music. The responses to each measure were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “like very much” (1) to “do not like at all” (5). The scales are reversed such that a higher score indicates a stronger preference for Western cultural genres. Cronbach's alpha test (0.84) reveals a high level of internal consistency between the three items. Exploratory factor analysis indicates that the three items form a single factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1, and that the three measures load more or less equally on the factor. The Bartlett factor score is calculated to yield an index for Western cultural consumption where a greater value indicates a stronger consumption preference.

Proficient English user. Language, and particularly the English language, plays an important role in transnational cultural consumption and communication in today's world. The 2008 CGSS measured individuals' self-reported English proficiency using

four measures: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The responses to each measure were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from “very poor” (1) to “very good” (5). As only a small proportion of respondents reported “good” (4) or “very good” (5) English skills, any respondent with a “good” or “very good” response for one or more of the four measures is coded as a proficient English user. Approximately 13% of the respondents reported themselves to be proficient English users.

3.3 Province-level variables

A wide range of indicators is used to measure the levels of socioeconomic development and transnational activities at province level (see Appendix Table A-1 for the list of indicators; descriptive statistics aggregated at province level are available upon request). Exploratory factor analysis, specifically Varimax rotation, is used to extract province-level factors (see Appendix Table A-1). Two factors are extracted with eigenvalues greater than 1. Factor scores are then calculated using the Bartlett method.

Level of transnational activity. In the last few decades, China’s macro-level transnationalization has been fueled mainly by international trade and commerce, as well as international population mobility such as tourism enabled by the open-door policy in 1978. Therefore, I include a comprehensive set of indicators to capture province-level transnational activity: the gross value of international imports, exports, and foreign direct investment (FDI), the number of FDI enterprises, the annual gross revenue from inbound international tourism, and the annual number of inbound international tourists. Unfortunately, data on outbound international tourism at province level was not collected in the CSY. The factor for transnational activity accounts for 58.84% of the variance in the province-level data. Provinces featuring a higher level of transnational activity have higher gross values for international imports, exports, and FDI, and a higher level of inbound international tourism.

Level of socioeconomic development. Based on past research on modernization and cosmopolitan urbanism (e.g., Binnie et al. 2005; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Olofsson and Öhman 2007), the level of socioeconomic development is reflected by indicators such as GDP per capita and level of income. The socioeconomic development factor accounts for 35.50% of the variance in the province-level data. Provinces that are highly developed in socioeconomic terms exhibit a high GDP per capita and a high average household income.

3.4 Control variables

While the key hypotheses concern the role played by macrosocial forces and individual transnational practices in configuring social attitudes toward transnational marriage, such attitudes may also be shaped by individual traits such as age/generation, gender, education, and socioeconomic status, which may determine opportunities, preferences, and constraints in the marriage market (Becker 1991). As men and women in China may relate to transnational intermarriage in different ways (Hu 2016a), I control for respondents' gender. Approximately 48% of the respondents were male. As different generations have been influenced by different institutional features and social events in China, such as socialist revolutions, the Cultural Revolution (a left-wing socialist movement between 1966 and 1976), and the 1978 open-door policy and economic reform, a categorical variable is derived from the respondents' year of birth, distinguishing between presocialist (born before 1950; 16% of respondents), socialist (born between 1950 and 1966; 33% of respondents), Cultural Revolution (born between 1966 and 1976; 28% of respondents), and reform (born after 1976; 23% of respondents) generations. It is worth noting that it may not be possible to separate generation from age in this cross-sectional analysis. Individual-level socioeconomic status is known to affect the pattern and dynamics of intermarriage (Kalmijn 1998). Therefore, I take account of respondents' level of education as a categorical variable, distinguishing between those who received no education (9%), primary school (24%), middle-school (36%), high-school (16%), and higher education (15%). I also control for the quartile rank of annual household income. To minimize sample loss, I code missing responses to annual household income as a separate category in addition to the quartile rank. Previous research indicates that rural-to-urban migration may affect sociocultural values in China (Hu 2016b). Based on whether their hukou matches their location of residence (rural or urban), a dummy variable is derived to determine whether each respondent was a rural-to-urban migrant at the time of the survey (6%). As political affiliation may have a significant influence on transnational engagement, I control for affiliation with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Around 11% of the respondents were CCP members.

3.5 Analytical strategy

The data analysis is conducted in two stages. The analytical objective of the first stage is to determine whether attitudes toward transnational intermarriage correspond to distinct holistic profiles. Accordingly, I use latent class analysis (LCA) to identify underlying latent classes among respondents (rather than variables, as in the case of factor analysis) (Nylund, Asparouhov, and Muthén 2007). Unlike traditional methods that treat attitudes

toward intermarriage with people from different countries as separate dependent variables, LCA enables the assessment of the key premise of the existence of distinct holistic formations of transnational orientations among Chinese people. The LCA is conducted using the *poLCA* package in R (Linzer and Lewis 2011). The optimal classification solution is determined based on a variety of fit indices: deviance statistic (G^2), Bayesian information criterion (BIC), and log-likelihood ratio.

In the second stage of analysis, building on the first stage, the distinct profiles identified by LCA are taken as the dependent variable. Accordingly, a two-level multilevel multinomial random-intercept regression model is used to test the hypotheses and to determine whether and how individual- and province-level factors are associated with distinct profiles of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China. The multilevel approach is particularly suited to this research because it accounts for the hierarchical nature of the data and unobserved heterogeneities at the province level⁴ (Snijders and Bosker 2011). I first report the routine coefficients and log-odds ratios from the regression model. Nevertheless, unlike in dichotomous logit regression, the fact that a predictor has a positive/negative coefficient on a log-odds ratio for a non-reference category does not necessarily imply a monotonic positive/negative trend in the corresponding conditional probability of being in that category, which is contingent on how the other log-odds ratios are changing with the same predictor (Mood 2010). To provide an intuitive illustration of the results, I plot the conditional probabilities of class membership against the key variables related to each hypothesis. The second stage of analysis is conducted using the *gsem* function in Stata (StataCorp 2015).

The results reported in this article are supported by a number of robustness checks. First, a variance inflation factor (VIF) test is conducted to ensure that the regression model is not affected by multicollinearity. The VIF values obtained for all of the variables are below the conservative threshold of 2.5. Second, the independence of irrelevant alternatives assumption is met, as the results from the multinomial regression are robust to alternative model specifications using a series of binary categorical dependent variables. Third, although the latent class method aligns closely with the conceptual approach, highlighting the holistic formation of individuals' transnational orientations, I also conduct robustness checks using the conventional separate-indicator

⁴ The observed inter-province differences in attitudes may result from unobserved heterogeneities between provinces, which are captured by the province-level variance parameter. One alternative consideration concerns the histories of colonization and Sino-Japanese wars. This consideration suggests that eastern China was more exposed to the historical events and may thus be less likely to support intermarriage with people from countries such as Japan. However, the predicted random intercepts from the multilevel model showed little support for this consideration. This is not surprising because such histories are widely diffused through moral socialization, compulsory schooling, and media propaganda in the construction of Chinese nationality, which is not limited to specific Chinese regions (Qiu 2006).

approach, taking attitudes to each distinctive country and region as the dependent variable in separate models, and yielding consistent results (available upon request).

4. Results

4.1 A Fourfold typology of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage

On balance, Chinese people show a low level of support for intermarriage compared with people from Western countries (cf. Pew Research Center 2017; Storm, Sobolewska, and Ford 2017). As presented in Table 1, 28% of the respondents are willing to accept Japanese people as kin by marriage, and 44% support transnational intermarriage with people from South Korea. Transnational intermarriage with people from Taiwan and Europe and North America is supported by 63%, 41%, and 37% of the respondents, respectively. It is worth noting that the high level of support for intermarriage with Taiwanese may be attributed to the concentration of ethnic Han Chinese people in Taiwan. Although Taiwan is not recognized as an independent nation state in various contexts, many scholars consider Taiwan–Mainland China intermarriage as *de facto* ‘transnational’ (Jones 2012). First, the social, political, economic, and cultural settings of Mainland China and Taiwan are very different. Second, border controls between the two places are strongly enforced. By contrast, the low level of support for intermarriage with Japanese people may be due to the historical conflict between China and Japan during World War II, which in China is known as the “anti-Japanese” war (Qiu 2006).

Table 2 presents the model fit indices for the LCA, with an underlying typology of respondents distinguished by their attitudes toward transnational intermarriage with people from distinct countries and regions. Model selection is key to LCA, and the goal is to find a parsimonious model solution that deviates as little as possible from the pattern observed in the data. Therefore, a better fitting model has a smaller (more negative) BIC statistic and a smaller G^2 . The results indicate that the four-class model best fits the data.

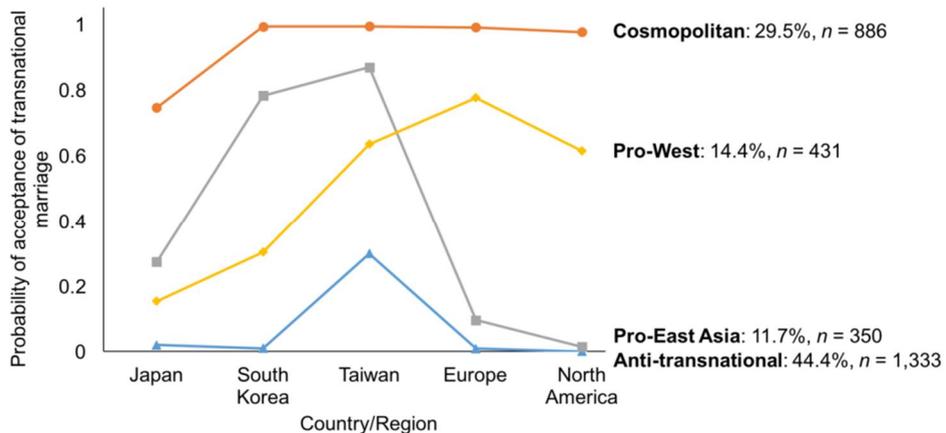
Table 2: Latent class model fit indices for typology of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage ($N = 3,000$)

Model	<i>df</i>	Log-likelihood	<i>BIC</i>	G^2
2-class	20	–7,282.09	14,652.25	714.43
3-class	14	–7,072.04	14,280.19	294.33
4-class	8	–6,928.48	14,041.10	7.20
5-class	2	–6,927.97	14,088.12	6.18

Note: *df* = degree of freedom. *BIC* = Bayesian-Information-Criterion. G^2 = Deviance Statistic. Best fitting model highlighted by shading.

Figure 1 depicts the fourfold typology of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China. Based on their distinctive features, I name the four profiles cosmopolitan, pro-West, pro-East Asia, and anti-transnational, respectively. Cosmopolitans account for 29.5% of the respondents and show a high level of support for intermarriage with people from all of the countries and regions under study, namely Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Europe and North America. Pro-West respondents account for 14.4% of the sample and show a relatively high level of support for transnational intermarriage with people from Europe and North America but a low level of support for intermarriage with people from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. By contrast, pro-East Asia respondents, who account for 11.7% of the sample, show a high level of support for transnational intermarriage with people from Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan but a low level of support for intermarriage with people from North America and Europe. Anti-transnational respondents account for 44.4% of the sample and represent the largest group, showing little support for intermarriage with people from any country or region. Whereas much previous research has focused on social attitudes toward transnational intermarriage with people from a single country or region (e.g., Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Perry 2013), the results reveal clear associations between people's attitudes toward transnational intermarriage with people from different countries and regions. Overall, the fourfold typology reflects the holistic formation of Chinese people's view of the transnational world as locally, regionally, or globally oriented.

Figure 1: A fourfold typology of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China ($N = 3,000$)



Note: See Table 2 for model fit indices for latent class analysis.

4.2 Multilevel multinomial random-intercept regression results

Table 3 presents the results for the multilevel multinomial random-intercept regression, with anti-transnational respondents as the reference category. Figure 2 presents the conditional probabilities of typology membership against the key variables that are related to the hypotheses. On balance, the results do not support Hypothesis 1 on transnational convergence, according to which attitudinal support for transnational intermarriage is positively associated with urban status, province-level socioeconomic development, and transnational activity, as predicted by some modernization, world society, and cosmopolitan urbanism theorists as well as the theory of opportunity structure in the marriage market (e.g., Becker 1991; Binnie et al. 2005; Goode 1970; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Meyer 2010; Olofsson and Öhman 2007; Routledge 2003). On the contrary, the results are consistent with Hypothesis 2 on transnational distinction (e.g., Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Constable 2010; Farrer 2008; Glick Schiller and Salazar 2012; Levi-Strauss 1978), which states that people with rural (as opposed to urban) hukou and from less socioeconomically developed and less transnationalized provinces are more likely to support transnational intermarriage.

More specifically, supporting Hypothesis 2A rather than 1A, the results indicate that urban (as opposed to rural) hukou holders are significantly less likely to be cosmopolites than anti-transnational respondents ($M1$, $OR = 0.73$, $p < .01$). This is illustrated by the conditional probabilities depicted in panels a1 and b1 of Figure 2. Therefore, urban status and metropolitanism do not seem to foster cosmopolitan attitudes toward transnational intermarriage, despite the rapid rise of global cities in China and homogenizing processes of urbanization across the globe (Binnie et al. 2005; Olofsson and Öhman 2007; Sassen 2013).

In support of Hypothesis 2B rather than 1B, the results show that a supportive attitude toward intermarriage is negatively associated with province-level transnational activity, and particularly socioeconomic development. Figure 2 illustrates vividly that individuals from provinces with a higher level of socioeconomic development are considerably more likely to be anti-transnational respondents (a3 of Figure 2) and less likely to be cosmopolites (b3 of Figure 2). This may be because rapid socioeconomic development, facilitated by the open-door policy and fuelled by economic globalization, has led to accruing anti-globalization sentiments in more developed and transnationalized Chinese provinces (Held and McGrew 2007).

Table 3: Multinomial multilevel random-intercept logistic regression models (reference category = anti-transnational, $N = 3,000$)

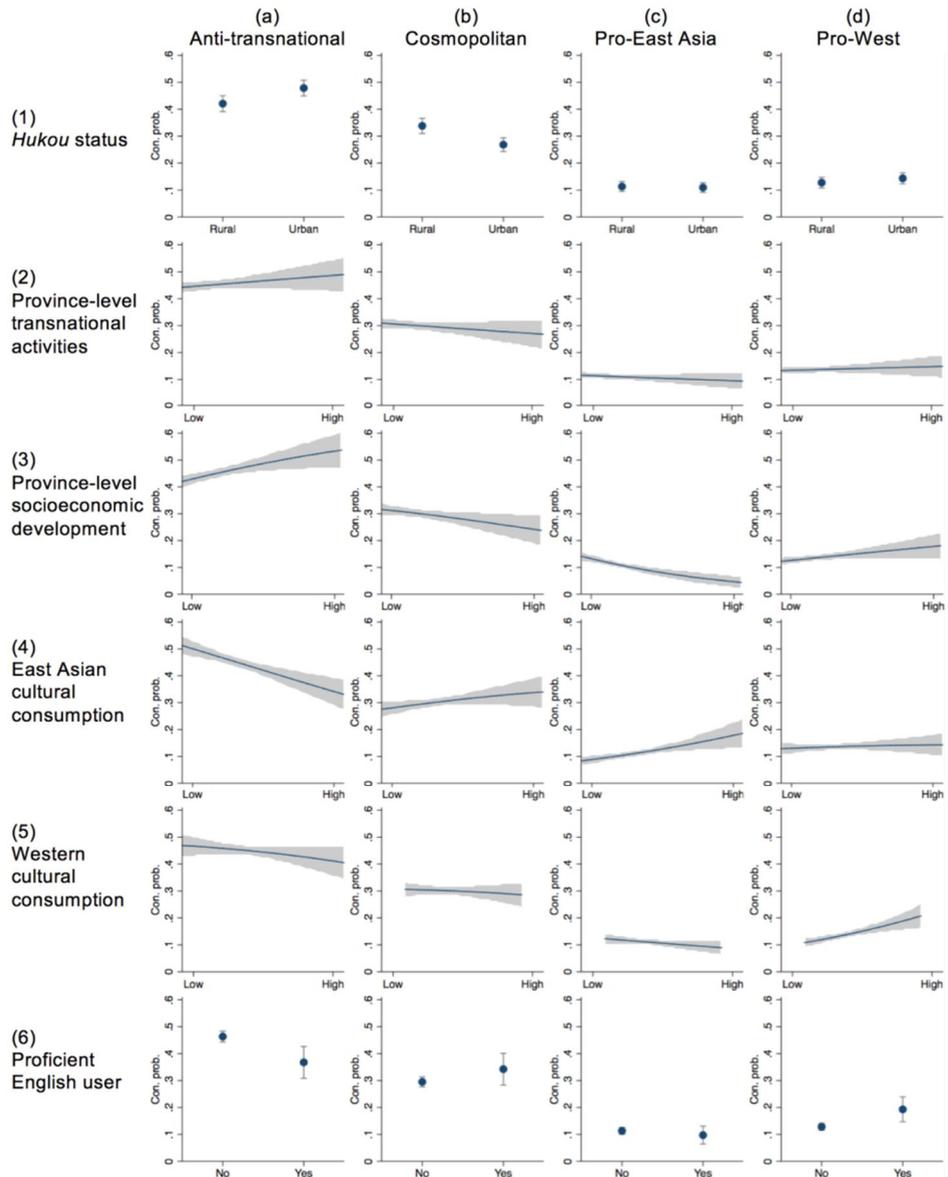
Parameter	M1 Cosmopolitan			M2 Pro-East Asia			M3 Pro-West		
	<i>B</i>	(<i>SE</i>)	<i>OR</i>	<i>B</i>	(<i>SE</i>)	<i>OR</i>	<i>B</i>	(<i>SE</i>)	<i>OR</i>
<i>Individual-level characteristics</i>									
Male (ref = female)	-0.04	(0.09)	0.96	0.21	(0.13)	1.24	0.08	(0.12)	1.09
Generation (ref = pre-socialist)									
Socialist	0.22	(0.14)	1.24	0.40	(0.21)	1.48	0.17	(0.19)	1.18
Cultural revolution	0.34*	(0.15)	1.40	0.66**	(0.22)	1.94	0.27	(0.20)	1.31
Reform	0.23	(0.18)	1.26	0.75**	(0.25)	2.12	0.39	(0.22)	1.48
Level of education (ref = no)									
Primary school	0.38*	(0.18)	1.47	0.44	(0.28)	1.56	-0.18	(0.24)	0.84
Middle school	0.39*	(0.19)	1.48	0.28	(0.29)	1.32	-0.14	(0.24)	0.87
High school	0.57**	(0.21)	1.77	0.27	(0.32)	1.31	0.03	(0.27)	1.03
Higher education	0.18	(0.25)	1.20	0.05	(0.36)	1.05	-0.36	(0.30)	0.70
Urban hukou status (ref = rural)	-0.31**	(0.11)	0.73	-0.11	(0.16)	0.90	0.04	(0.15)	1.04
Rural-to-urban migrant (ref = no)	-0.52**	(0.20)	0.60	-0.58*	(0.28)	0.56	-0.52	(0.27)	0.59
CCP member (ref = no)	0.12	(0.16)	1.12	0.45*	(0.20)	1.56	0.13	(0.20)	1.14
Family income level (ref = 1 st quartile [lowest])									
2 nd quartile	0.07	(0.13)	1.07	0.20	(0.18)	1.23	0.23	(0.18)	1.26
3 rd quartile	0.08	(0.15)	1.08	0.52**	(0.20)	1.69	0.60**	(0.19)	1.82
4 th quartile (highest)	0.29	(0.16)	1.33	0.61**	(0.22)	1.83	0.65**	(0.21)	1.91
NA (missing, refused, etc.)	0.25	(0.22)	1.29	0.20	(0.33)	1.22	0.09	(0.31)	1.10
<i>Individual-level transnational cultural consumption</i>									
East Asian cultural consumption ^a	0.19**	(0.07)	1.21	0.38***	(0.10)	1.47	0.17	(0.09)	1.18
Western cultural consumption ^a	0.04	(0.06)	1.04	-0.05	(0.08)	0.95	0.27***	(0.07)	1.31
Proficient English user (ref = no)	0.36*	(0.17)	1.44	0.07	(0.23)	1.08	0.62***	(0.19)	1.86
<i>Province-level factor</i>									
Level of transnational activities ^a	-0.09	(0.09)	0.91	-0.10	(0.10)	0.90	-0.03	(0.10)	0.97
Level of socioeconomic development ^a	-0.18	(0.10)	0.83	-0.44***	(0.13)	0.65	0.01	(0.10)	1.01
Province-level variance parameter				0.19**	(0.06)				
<i>Model fit indices</i>									
Log-likelihood (Null)	-3,600 (-3,721)								
AIC (Null)	7,329 (7,449)								

Note: CCP = Chinese Communist Party. OR = Odds Ratio. SE = Standard Error. AIC = Akaike-Information-Criterion. Individual-level intercept suppressed in the table.

^a A larger positive score indicates a higher level.

*** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Figure 2: Conditional probabilities of typology membership by key variables



Note: Predictions based on the model presented in Table 3. Error bars/bands indicate 95% confidence interval.

The results also delineate a more nuanced pattern: People from more socioeconomically developed provinces are significantly less likely to be pro-East Asia respondents than those from less developed provinces (c3 of Figure 2; M2, $OR = 0.65$, $p < .001$). Despite a widespread belief in the developmental hierarchy that places other East Asian countries and regions above China and below the West (Goodman 2004), China's rapid and segmented socioeconomic development in recent decades has led to an awareness that highly developed regions of China are catching up with Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, whilst still falling behind the West (Goodman 2004; Li and Wei 2010). According to the theoretical conjecture of transnational distinction, transnational intermarriage is viewed as a form of symbolic mobility, and difference rather than convergence in socioeconomic development is responsible for the generation of such symbolic currency in the first place. This means the relatively low level of support for East Asian transnational intermarriage among people from developed provinces in China may be attributed to the diminishing difference in the levels of socioeconomic development between these provinces and other East Asian countries and regions.

Hypothesis 3 (individualized transnationalization), which concerns the role played by transnational cultural consumption at the individual level in configuring region-specific orientations, is supported. The results reveal significant positive associations between individuals' cultural consumption practices and preferences related to given countries and regions and exclusive attitudinal support for transnational intermarriage with people from these countries and regions. Specifically, the consumption of East Asian cultural genres such as Japanese manga, South Korean television drama, and Chinese films predicts a significant decrease in the likelihood of being anti-transnational respondents (a4 of Figure 2) and an increase in the likelihood of being pro-East Asia respondents (c4 of Figure 2; M2, $OR = 1.48$, $p < .001$). Similarly, a preference for Western cultural genres such as classical, jazz, and rock music predicts a significant increase in the likelihood of being pro-West rather than anti-transnational respondents (d5 of Figure 2; M3, $OR = 1.31$, $p < .001$). Proficient English users are significantly more likely to be pro-West respondents than people with limited English proficiency (d6 of Figure 2; M3, $OR = 1.86$, $p < .001$). Because English is widely used for various forms of transnational communication in China, it is not surprising that proficient English users are more likely to be cosmopolites than anti-transnational respondents, as depicted in panels a6 and b6 of Figure 2 (M1, $OR = 1.44$, $p < .05$).

Revisiting Table 3 also reveals the important role played by some of the individual traits in configuring attitudes toward intermarriage in China. Education – particularly at the high school level and with the exception of higher education – is positively associated with the odds of being a cosmopolite rather than an anti-transnational respondent,

compared with those who received little education.⁵ Nevertheless, education does not appear to be associated with region-specific (i.e., pro-West and pro-East Asia) orientations of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage. A higher level of family income predicts an increased likelihood of being pro-East Asia and pro-West respondents respectively. Although previous researchers have found that Chinese women are more likely to intermarry than their male counterparts (Farrer 2008; Hu 2016a), no significant gender difference is found in attitudes toward transnational intermarriage. Compared with pre-socialists, respondents from the Cultural Revolution (M2, $OR = 1.94$) and reform (M2, $OR = 2.12$) generations are much more likely to be pro-East Asia than anti-transnational respondents ($p < .01$ for both).

5. Discussion

In an increasingly interconnected world, understanding the formation of transnational orientations is of utmost importance, because these orientations tell of the ways in which individuals respond to macrosocial trends of transnationalization on the ground, and they may shape the behavioral enactment of transnational practices such as marriage and family formation across nation states and regional borders. Attitudes toward intermarriage have long been considered as reflecting out-group orientation (Azzolini and Guetto 2017; Jones 2012; Weber 1978 [1922]), and, in the case of transnational intermarriage, transnational orientation in particular. Although prior research has noted a substantial increase in the number of transnational intermarriages involving Chinese nationals in recent decades (e.g., Farrer 2008; Hu 2016a; Nehring and Wang 2016), nationally representative research on attitudes toward transnational intermarriage in China remains scarce. Against this backdrop, there is a lack of empirical assessment of major theories on the formation of transnational orientation, and a number of important questions are left unanswered.

How do rapid, uneven, and segmented socioeconomic development, urbanization, and transnationalization at the macro level help configure individuals' transnational orientations across China? This research shows that individual endorsement of transnational intermarriage bears no positive association with the level of socioeconomic

⁵ Nine-year compulsory education is implemented in post-reform China. In principle, all school-age children are required to attend primary school (6 years) and middle school (3 years). High school is both voluntary and selective. The finding that high school graduates are particularly likely to be cosmopolites rather than anti-transnational respondents may result from both the self-selection and external selection processes that filter people into high school education in China. Whereas education may help cultivate cosmopolitan orientations (Olofsson and Öhman 2007), higher education may also enhance social and symbolic status, and thus exchange value in the marriage market. As a result, Chinese college degree holders may not favorably view transnational marriage as a way of attaining symbolic distinction, despite their cosmopolitan orientations.

development across China. It is worth noting that the results based on cross-sectional data should be interpreted in terms of geographical variation rather than temporal change. The findings contradict the theoretical conjecture of transnational convergence advanced by some proponents of modernization, world society, and cosmopolitan urbanism theories that socioeconomic development and growing transnational interconnectedness are positively associated with sociocultural convergence and cosmopolitan orientation in developed urban places (Binnie et al. 2005; Goode 1970; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Meyer 2010; Olofsson and Öhman 2007). By contrast, the findings lend support to Levi-Strauss' prediction (1978) that a growing sense of transnational homogenization may encourage individuals to seek greater distinctions, because difference (rather than homogeneity) in the levels of socioeconomic development and transnationalization between places seems to bolster support for transnational intermarriage.

On the one hand, the cross-sectional results also concur with the phenomenon of 'global hypergamy' (Constable 2010), and they echo the qualitative findings reported in a number of studies that underline the pursuit of symbolic distinction through intermarriage, which is predicated on heterogeneity between two places, and consequently between the two parties involved in the marriage (Farrer 2008; Hu 2016a). Therefore, ideational support for transnational intermarriage in China seems to be fashioned in part by a gradient of developmental status between countries and regions and motivated by the expectation of achieving symbolic mobility along this gradient. Notably, the theoretical underpinning of this active pursuit of 'transnational distinction' is considerably different from classical status-exchange and marriage market theories, which are largely predicated on individual-level traits, ethno-racial hierarchies, and migrant-host relations in Western developed countries (Becker 1991; Fu 2001; Kalmijn 1998). Rather, the taken-for-granted fixation on an association between the level of socioeconomic development and a status hierarchy may be responsible for the generation, diffusion, and validation of the symbolic currency of transnational marital mobility among Chinese people. On the other hand, the 'contact-threat' theory may also be at play (Seoane and Taddei 2002). In addition to people actively seeking transnational distinction, such distinction may be passively enacted. The rapid rise of anti-globalization movements in recent years implies that people's transnational encounters at close quarters may generate adverse views of transnational marriage (Held and McGrew 2007). By contrast, people in less socioeconomically developed and less transnationalized places who are distant from such encounters may be more likely to assume support for transnational marriage.

Coupled with the CCP's relaxing control and the advancement of modern communication technologies (Castells 2010; Fung 2013), macro socioeconomic development and transnational interconnectedness have also enabled diverse individual practices and preferences pertaining to transnational culture in China (Donald, Hong, and

Keane 2014; Kim 2008; Ray 2007). How do individualized transnational engagements influence the formation of transnational orientations? Do such influences align with those of all-encompassing macrosocial forces? Whereas growing transnational interconnectedness at the macro level has not necessarily encouraged support for intermarriage, the findings show that individual-level transnational engagements may operate independently of macrosocial forces in fostering a sense of transnational affinity. In support of the theory of 'individualized transnationalization' (Kim 2008; Ray 2007), individuals' transnational cultural consumption in relation to specific countries and regions is found to cultivate multifaceted country-specific as opposed to cosmopolitan support for intermarriage. The observed disjuncture between macrosocial factors and individual practices suggests individualized transnational practices and preferences may further nuance the formation of transnational orientation in addition to but not replacing macrosocial forces. Thus, macro-level theories are insufficient in providing a full understanding of how the processes of transnationalization may operate on the ground. Against a backdrop of relaxing centralized state control in China, it is particularly pertinent to adopt a multilevel framework to examine the roles assumed by both macro- and individual-level factors in configuring Chinese people's marital and family orientations in a transnational world.

The substantive findings of this research are not possible without a conceptual and methodological approach that underlines the holistic formation of transnational orientation. Theoretical developments pertaining to cosmopolitan or region-specific configurations of transnational orientation are no longer new. Nevertheless, the approach adopted by previous research that treats attitudes toward intermarriage with people from distinct countries and regions in isolation (Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Perry 2013) is highly inconsistent with the very stance of the theories postulating the relative and holistic formation of individuals' views of the transnational world (Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Kellner 2002). Addressing this inconsistency between theory and method, in this study the conceptualization of transnational orientations as holistically formulated and the use of latent class analysis have helped reveal four distinctive profiles of attitudes toward transnational intermarriage with people from different countries and regions, namely cosmopolitan, pro-West, pro-East Asia, and anti-transnational. For approximately 74% of the respondents (i.e., the cosmopolites and the anti-transnationalists), support for intermarriage with people from a given country/region is closely linked to support for intermarriage with people from other countries and regions. A relatively small proportion of Chinese people also develop country-/region-specific orientations, as they support intermarriage with people from certain countries and regions but not others. Therefore, examining the correlates of the distinct profiles enables a better understanding of the theoretically informed concepts of 'cosmopolites,'

‘regionalists,’ and ‘localists’ rather than mere (dis)approval of transnational intermarriage between specific countries and regions.

This research poses several challenges for future research and data collection. First, the 2008 CGSS only measures attitudes toward transnational intermarriage with people from a limited set of countries and regions. Future researchers should collect and analyze data on a wider array of countries and regions, particularly from less socioeconomically developed parts of the world. Second, due to data constraints, this research necessarily relies on objective indicators rather than perceptions of the socioeconomic development of Chinese provinces. Third, people may voice support for transnational marriage from a ‘safe distance,’ yet may oppose intermarrying themselves. This makes it important to distinguish generalized social attitudes from specific personal preferences. While the dependent variable used in this research is widely used to measure the former (e.g., Huijnk and Liefbroer 2012; Storm, Sobolewska, and Ford 2017), more fine-grained measures should be developed to explicitly compare the two concepts. Fourth, it is worth noting that the notions of transnational convergence and transnational distinction are operationalized in terms of geographic variation rather than temporal change. Against the backdrop of rapid social change in China, particularly individuals’ increasing exposure to and engagement with cultural and media content from other countries and regions of the world and changes in hukou policy, it will be profitable to build on this baseline research to examine the unfolding temporal and longitudinal dynamics underlying people’s views of the transnational world.

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Appendix

Table A-1: Factor loadings for province-level factors

Indicator	Meaning	Factor 1	Factor 2	h^2
<i>Factor 1</i>	<i>Level of transnational activity</i>			
Imports	Gross foreign imports (10,000 Chinese yuan)	.94		.01
Exports	Gross foreign exports (10,000 Chinese yuan)	.92		.01
FDIvalue	Gross foreign direct investment (10,000 Chinese yuan)	.91		.01
FDIregister	Gross foreign direct investment registration capital (10,000 Chinese yuan)	.80		.00
FDI	Total number of foreign direct investment enterprises	.81		.00
TouristInt	Total number of inbound international tourists	.97		.02
TourismInt	Gross revenue from inbound international tourism	.85		.01
<i>Factor 2</i>	<i>Level of socioeconomic development</i>			
GDPpc	Gross domestic product per capita		.93	.05
FincomeRur	Average annual family income in rural areas		.94	.04
FincomeUrb	Average annual family income in urban areas		.90	.03
Eigenvalue		5.75	3.47	
% Variance		58.84	35.50	

Note: 1 yuan \approx 0.14 USD in 2008. KMO = .82.

